EDUCATION IN ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

A GUIDE TO THE SYSTEM

Gill Holt
Catherine Andrews
Sigrid Boyd
Amanda Harper
Jenny Loose
Sharon O'Donnell
Claire Sargent

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new comprehensive index
expanded glossary
completely revised
3rd edition

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: A Guide to the System is based on text supplied for EURYBASE – the EURYDICE database on education systems. EURYDICE is the European Information Network on education in Europe and currently comprises members in 30 countries. EURYDICE is part of SOCRATES (the European Community education programme). The database was designed for European readers and the content and structure follow guidelines agreed at European level, although the text has been modified for the printed version and UK audience.

Earlier editions of this guide have been warmly welcomed by all sections of the education community. This new version incorporates most changes made before Spring 2002. References are made to the proposals in the Education Bill which, at the time of writing, was before Parliament but has now been enacted as the Education Act 2002. An analytical index has been created and the number of glossary entries has been expanded (a comprehensive list of UK terms can be found on the EURYDICE at NFER website: http//:www.nfer.ac.uk/eurydice.

As in the last edition, to help readers keep up to date with ongoing changes in education, a list of useful websites which cover all the principle Government departments and agencies has been included.

Gill Holt
September 2002

ABBREVIATIONS

ACAC	Curriculum and Assessment Authority (1994–1997) (now ACCAC)
ACCAC	Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (Welsh acronym)
ACE	Advisory Centre for Education
ACG	Annual Capital Guideline
AHRB	Arts and Humanities Research Board
ALG	Assembly Learning Grant
AEB	Associated Examining Board (part of AQA)
AEWM	Association of Educational Welfare Management
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate
AMP	Asset Management Plan
AmusD	Doctor of Musical Arts
AmusM	Master of Musical Arts
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
AQA	Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (formed by a merger of AEB, SEG and NEAB)
AST	Advanced Skills Teacher
ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
AUT	Association of University Teachers
AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education, commonly known as vocational A-level
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BBSRC	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
BECTa	British Educational Communications and Technology Agency
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BSc	Bachelor of Science
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council (part of Edexcel Foundation)
CASE	Campaign for State Education
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme
CCEA	Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (Logo may read CEA)
CCMS	Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools
CCTA	City College for the Technology of the Arts
CCTE	Chambers of Commerce, Training and Enterprise

CCW	Care Council for Wales
CDL	Career Development Loan
CEG	Careers Education and Guidance
CEO	Chief Education Officer
CEPD	Committee for Early Professional Development
CERUK	Current Educational Research in the UK (database)
CES	Catholic Education Service
CETW	National Council for Education and Training for Wales, the statutory name of ELWa (National Council)
CGLI	City and Guilds of London Institute
CILT	Centre for Information on Language Teaching
CoEA	Certificate of Educational Achievement
CPD	Continuing Professional Development of Teachers
CRAC	Careers Research and Advisory Centre
CSCFC	Conference of Scottish Centrally Funded Colleges
CSU	Careers Services Unit (Higher Education)
CTC	City Technology College
CUC	Committee of University Chairmen
CVCP	Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (now Universities UK)
DE	Department of Education (Northern Ireland) (1999–present)
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Regional Affairs (2001–present)
DEL	Department for Employment and Learning (Northern Ireland) (2001–present)
DENI	Department of Education Northern Ireland (now DE) (1973–1999)
DES	Department of Education and Science (1964–1992)
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions (1997–°2001)
DFE	Department for Education (1992–1995)
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment (1995–2001)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (2001–present)
DHFETE	Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment (1999–2001) (now DEL)
DLitt	Doctor of Letters
DoH	Department of Health
DPhil	Doctor of Philosophy
DSA	Disabled Student Allowance
DSc	Doctor of Science
DTLR	Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (2001–present)

DWP	Department for Work and Pensions (2001–present)
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EAZ	Education Action Zone
EBD	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
ECCTIS	Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Information
EDP	Education Development Plan (England)
EEA	European Economic Area
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELWa	Education and Learning Wales (the Higher Education Funding Council and the National Council for Education and Training are together referred to as ELWa)
EPPI	Evidence for Policy and Practice Information Coordinating Centre
EPSRC	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESP	Education Strategic Plan (Wales)
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
ESS	Education Standard Spending
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate (Northern Ireland)
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
EYDP	Early Years Development Plan
FAETC	Further and Adult Education Teacher's Certificate
FAS	Funding Agency for Schools (1988–1999)
FE	Further Education
FEDA	Further Education Development Agency (1994–2000)
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council (for England) (1992–2001) (most responsibilities now undertaken by the LSC)
FEFCW	Further Education Funding Council for Wales (1992–2001) (most responsibilities now undertaken by the National Council for Education and Training)
FENTO	Further Education National Training Organisation
FESDF	Further Education Staff Development Forum
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GEST	Grants for Education Support and Training
GM	Grant-Maintained
GMI	Grant-Maintained Integrated Schools
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
GRTP	Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes
GSB	General Schools Budget
GSCC	General Social Care Council (for England)

GTC	General Teaching Council for England
GTCW	General Teaching Council for Wales
HEADLAMP	Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HHEW	Heads of Higher Education Wales
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate also Her Majesty's Inspector
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
IAASE	Independent Appeals Authority for School Examinations
ICT	Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
IEP	Individual Education Plan
ILT	Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education
ISC	Independent Schools Council
ISI	Independent Schools Inspectorate
IT	Information Technology
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
KS	Key stage
LCCI	London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
LEA	Local Education Authority
LGA	Local Government Association
LMS	Local Management of Schools
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LSDA	Learning and Skills Development Agency (2000–present)
MA	Master of Arts
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (now DEFRA)
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MBS	Music and Ballet Scheme
MEd	Master of Education
MmedSci	Master of Medical Science
Mphil	Master of Philosophy
MRC	Medical Research Council
MSc	Master of Science
MSW	Master of Social Work
NAfW	National Assembly for Wales
NAHT	National Association of Head Teachers
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers

NASWE	National Association of Social Workers in Education
NATED	National Assembly Training and Education Department
NATFHE	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
NC	National Curriculum
NCET	National Council for Educational Technology (now BECTa)
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Body
NEAB	Northern Examination Assessment Board (now part of AQA)
NERC	National Environment Research Council
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NIACE	National Organisation for Adult Learning (formerly the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education)
NIHEC	Northern Ireland Higher Education Council
NITEC	Northern Ireland Teacher Education Committee
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headteachers
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NRA	National Record of Achievement
NTO	National Training Organisation
NUT	National Union of Teachers
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OCEAC	Oxford and Cambridge Examination and Assessment Council (now part of OCR)
OCR	Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (formed by a merger of the OCEAC, MEG and RSA Examining Board)
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
OU	Open University
PANDA	Performance and Assessment Reports
PAT	Professional Association of Teachers
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PPARC	Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (1997–present)
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
RgI	Registered Inspector
RRA	Regional Recruitment Adviser
RSA	Royal Society of Arts Examinations (now part of OCEAC)
RSG	Revenue Support Grant
RSM	Recruitment Strategy Manager
SACRE	Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education

SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (1993–1997) (now QCA)
SCITT	School-Centred Initial Teacher Training
SCOP	Standing Conference of Principals
SDPR	Staff Development Performance Review
SEDA	Staff and Educational Development Association
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SENT	Special Educational Needs Tribunal
SENTC	Special Educational Needs Training Consortium
SHA	Secondary Heads' Association
SKILL	National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
SLC	Students Loan Company
SSA	Special Support Assistant
SSC	Sector Skills Council
STA	Specialist Teacher Assistant
STAR	Specialist Teacher Assistant Record
STRB	School Teachers' Review Body
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council (1991–2001) (most of its responsibilities are now carried out by the LSC)
TCT	Technology Colleges Trust
TO	Training Organisation
TSO	The Stationery Office, London
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
UCAC	National Association of Teachers for Wales
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UCEA	Universities and Colleges Employers' Association
UCoSDA	Universities and Colleges Staff Development Agency
UfI	University for Industry
VA	Voluntary Aided
VC	Voluntary Controlled
VGCSE	Vocational General Certificate of Secondary Education
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WEA	Workers Education Association
WJEC	Welsh Joint Education Committee
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association
WO	Welsh Office

Section 1: 1

ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

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1. ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

1. ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

1.1 Historical overview of public education

England and Wales

Public funding of schools began in 1833 when Parliament voted in favour of assisting the provision and maintenance of church schools. A condition of grant was that schools were open to inspection and that they appointed local Boards of managers to oversee their affairs. The Elementary Education Act 1870 in England and Wales provided for the establishment of locally elected School Boards to raise rates for the provision of elementary schools (board schools) in areas where provision was inadequate. These schools were required to provide Christian worship and instruction. School attendance was made compulsory in 1880, and in 1890 became largely free.

The Education Act 1902 established local education authorities (LEAs) which assumed responsibility for both elementary and secondary education including board schools and voluntary (largely church) schools. The Act's main object was to promote the expansion of secondary education and, although it was not provided free of charge, LEAs offered scholarships to pupils who passed an entrance examination.

The Education Act 1944 established three phases of education: primary (5 to 11 years), secondary (11 to 15 – and later 16) and further education (which included what later became known as higher education). Secondary education was made available to all pupils based on age, ability and aptitude. Most LEAs set up grammar schools (for the more able pupils), secondary modern schools and, in some areas, technical schools.

During the 1960s, there was growing support for 'comprehensive' secondary schools – schools which catered for all children regardless of ability. The movement for comprehensive schools was encouraged by the publication by a Labour Government of Circular 10/65, which called for LEAs to submit schemes for the reorganisation of education on comprehensive lines. Although most areas adopted this system, some authorities have retained grammar schools.

The 1980s saw a wide range of legislation including the Education Act 1981 which implemented changes proposed by the Warnock Report[1] relating to the provision of education for children with special educational

needs (SEN) (see section 8.1 for more information). The Education (No. 2) Act 1986 revised the composition of school governing bodies, increased their powers and sought to reduce the dominance of LEAs. The Education Reform Act 1988 provided for the introduction of the National Curriculum and made important reforms to higher education.

Until 1996, the basis of legislation affecting primary and secondary education in England and Wales was the Education Act 1944. However, many changes had been made to schools' legislation during the period, and therefore two consolidation Acts were introduced. The Education Act 1996 brought together, into a single statute, the existing provisions of a wide range of laws enacted since the Second World War, although the substance of these laws was not changed. The Act repealed certain earlier statutes in their entirety, including the Education Act 1944, the Education Act 1981 and the Education Act 1993. Large sections of other major Acts, such as the Education Reform Act 1988, were also repealed. The Schools Inspections Act 1996 consolidated legislation relating to the inspection of schools. The 1996 Education Act 1996 did not alter the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 which remains the single most important piece of legislation governing these phases of education.

Since 1996, three major pieces of education legislation have been introduced in England and Wales. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 introduced measures to raise standards of school education, and created a new framework of community schools, foundation schools and voluntary schools, thus ending grant-maintained status (originally introduced by the Education Reform Act 1988). The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 made new provisions with respect to teacher training, and to student fees, grants and loans. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 reformed the organisations responsible for funding the further education sector (see Chapter 6.)

An Education Bill which will legislate for the proposals outlined in the recent White Paper, *Schools Achieving Success* (England. Parliament. HoC, 2001),[2] has been published. Key provisions of the Bill include a more flexible curriculum; measures to support a less rigid framework for the staffing of schools; enhanced provisions to tackle poor performance; greater flexibility for school governance; and greater transparency for school finance. The proposed legislation would allow schools in England to apply to the Secretary of State to be exempted from specific education laws where such action could be proved to raise standards. Although the Bill covers both England and Wales, many of the provisions will be enabling in character and therefore the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) will have discretion as to their application in Wales.

A Green Paper (DfES, 2002a)[3] has recently been published outlining Government proposals to improve education provision for 14- to 19-year-olds. Proposals include changes aimed at creating a more flexible curriculum and improving technical and vocational education and its status in society. The Government also aims to introduce changes which will make the education system more responsive to the specific needs of young people, particularly those in danger of social exclusion. A new matriculation diploma for those completing secondary/further education at age 18 or 19 will be introduced.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Intermediate Education (Ireland) Act 1878 established a Board whose purpose was the distribution of funds to intermediate schools.

The Education Act (Northern Ireland) 1947 introduced legislation similar to the 1944 Act in England and Wales. Important reforms have been introduced in recent years. These are broadly similar to those in England and Wales (see above). For information on the devolution of power to Wales and Northern Ireland, and the effects on education legislation and policy, see 1.4 and its subsections.

1.2 Fundamental principles and basic references

In England and Wales, the Education Act 1944 (Section 7) stated that the statutory system of education must be a continuous progression divided into three distinct stages, namely primary, secondary and further education. The last stage of education, 'further', included what was later to be defined as higher education. These stages are restated in the Education Act 1996, which superseded the Education Act 1944. The basis for the management of all schools is provided by the Education Act 1996. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 introduced a new framework for maintained schools. The principal pieces of legislation governing further and higher education are the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

The Education Act (Northern Ireland) 1947 was closely modelled on the Education Act 1944 (for England and Wales). It also stipulated three stages for education, namely primary, secondary and further education, and created new county authorities to be responsible for the administration of education within their respective areas. Subsequent legislation (the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, the Education (NI) Order 1987, the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993, the Education (Northern Ireland) Order

1996, the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 and the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998) has superseded this Act. Recent legislation has introduced similar, but not identical, reforms to those in England and Wales.

The Education Act 1944 for England and Wales and the Northern Ireland Education Act 1947 were both based on the principle of providing free, full-time education, suitable to their needs, for all children during the defined compulsory stage of education, and these principles are retained in current legislation.

Most legislation relating to schools applies only to maintained (publicly funded) schools.

1.2.1 Schools

The basic principle underlying school education is that it should provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum which is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs (SEN) the child might have. In England and Wales, the Education Act 1996 defines a balanced and broadly based curriculum as one which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
- prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 includes a similar definition.

The statutory school age in **England and Wales** is from five to 16 years. By law, all children of statutory school age must receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs (SEN) which they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. If a child does not attend school, then any alternative provision which is made is subject to the approval of the appropriate LEA.

Children are not required to start school until the start of the term after they have reached compulsory school age. Compulsory school age is reached on specific dates set by the Secretary of State and the National Assembly for Wales following the child's fifth birthday; these are normally: 31 August, 31 December and 31 March. However, most children start school earlier.

Since September 1997, young people have been required to stay at school until the last Friday in June of the school year in which they attain the age of 16.

In **Northern Ireland**, the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 revised the definition of compulsory school age, so that each child receives 12 full years of schooling. Thus, children must receive full-time education between the ages of four and 16 years. A child who reaches the age of four on or before 1 July must start full-time education on 1 September of that year; and a child reaching the age of four after 1 July must start full-time education in the following school year. Pupils who reach the age of 16 between 1 September and 1 July (inclusive) may leave full-time education on 30 June in that academic year; a pupil reaching the age of 16 between 2 July and 31 August must continue receiving full-time education for the next academic year.

Alternative provision to attendance at school is subject to approval by the appropriate Education and Library Board (Board).

Historical note on school leaving ages

England and Wales: Attendance at school became compulsory in 1880 for children between five and ten years of age, and the school leaving age was progressively raised to 14 by 1918. The Education Act 1944 raised the compulsory school leaving age to 15 and, in 1973, it was again raised to age 16. Prior to the 1997 reform, some 16-year-olds could legally leave school before the end of the year - either at Easter or at the end of May, depending on their birth date.

Northern Ireland: The compulsory school leaving age was raised to 15 in 1957, and to 16 in the 1972/73 school year.

1.2.2 Further education

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 **(in England and Wales)** defines further education as:

- full-time and part-time education suitable to the requirements of persons over compulsory school age (16 years), including vocational, social, physical and recreational training; and
- organised leisure-time occupation provided in connection with such education.

A similar definition appears in the Further Education **(Northern Ireland)** Order 1997.

However, full-time education for 16- to 19-year-olds is considered as secondary education (not further education) where it is provided in a school that also educates pupils of compulsory school age. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 allows secondary education to be provided in a school maintained by an LEA exclusively for 16- to 19-year-olds, where the school is established in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Learning and Skills Council (for England) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (now known as the National Council – ELWa) are responsible for securing the provision of, and funding, full- and part-time education and training for all persons over compulsory school age in:

- schools (via LEAs);
- further education institutions;
- adult education centres;
- work-based training on employers' premises; and with
- private training providers and voluntary organisations.

Further education is provided free of charge to home and EU students under the age of 19 who have been ordinarily resident in the UK for the previous three years. Fees are commonly waived for other students in receipt of certain state benefits. Courses for adults may be subsidised.

1.2.3 Higher education

Higher education is defined in the Education Reform Act 1988 (in England and Wales) and the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 as education provided by means of a course of any description that is of a standard higher than the standard of courses leading to General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level), or National Diploma or Certificate from EdExcel (formerly the Business and Technology Education Council, BTEC).

There is no single coherent body of legislation dealing with higher education. However, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 introduced major reforms in England and Wales, including the creation of a single sector for all higher education institutions. The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 made new provisions with respect to teacher training and to student fees, grants and loans.

In Northern Ireland, the merger in 1984 of the Ulster Polytechnic with the New University of Ulster to form the University of Ulster had already removed the binary divide which separated universities from polytechnics and other higher education institutions.

1.3 General structure and defining moments

1.3.1 Key stages and transfer between phases

In accordance with the Education Act 1996 (**England and Wales**), which superseded Part I of the Education Reform Act 1988 relating to the National Curriculum, the period of compulsory education in England and Wales is divided into four key stages: key stage 1 for pupils aged five to seven; key stage 2 for pupils aged seven to 11; key stage 3 for pupils aged 11 to 14; and key stage 4 for pupils aged 14 to 16.

The majority of pupils transfer from primary to secondary school at age 11 although where a system of middle schools exists, pupils may transfer at age eight or nine to a middle school, and subsequently to a secondary school at age 12 or 13. The great majority of secondary schools are comprehensive schools and do not select pupils on grounds of ability. Some cater for pupils up to the age of 16 only, and some cater for pupils up to the age of 19.

In accordance with the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, as amended by the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, compulsory education in **Northern Ireland** is divided into four key stages: key stage 1 for pupils aged four to eight; key stage 2 for pupils aged eight to 11; key stage 3 for pupils aged 11 to 14; and key stage 4 for pupils aged 14 to 16.

In Northern Ireland, most pupils transfer from primary to post-primary school at age 11. If pupils wish to be considered for a place at a grammar school, they must sit Transfer Tests. About 35 per cent subsequently attend grammar schools, catering for pupils up to the age of 19, with the remaining 65 per cent attending secondary schools, which cater for pupils up to the age of 16. A small number of pupils residing in the Craigavon area participate in the 'Dickson' plan which has a delayed system of selection until age 14.

At age 16, when education is no longer compulsory, the majority of pupils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland continue their studies, either at school or at a further education institution. It is more common for pupils wishing to undertake vocational education to transfer to a further education institution, although most schools offer a limited range of vocational courses. Most further education institutions offer both vocational and general academic courses.

Pupils wishing subsequently to continue their studies at a higher education level transfer to a higher education institution, normally at age 18.

1.3.2 Communication between phases of education

In England and Wales, the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989 require schools to keep a curricular record on pupils, covering their academic achievements, other skills and abilities and progress in school. Other material, such as details of pupils' school attendance or family background, may be recorded, if desired. The curricular record and the additional material form the educational record. Schools must pass on a pupil's educational record at the request of any school or training establishment to which the pupil transfers. Similar arrangements apply in Northern Ireland. There is normally close cooperation between institutions, particularly between primary and secondary schools, to facilitate the transition of pupils. The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, now the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), published *Promoting Continuity between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3* (SCAA) in 1996.[4] More recently, the QCA published *Building Bridges* (QCA, 1998).[5] Both publications provide guidance for primary and secondary schools in developing their procedures for the transfer of pupils.

From the autumn term 1999, a system of unique pupil numbers (UPNs) has been introduced in maintained schools in England. UPNs will facilitate the tracking of pupils' progress through the school system and are intended to yield better information to schools, LEAs, and central government on pupil performance and the contextual factors affecting performance.

Within the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), the Standing Conference on University Entrance (SCUE) considers matters of common concern to the higher education institutions in relation to entrance. It is consulted when possible changes in the curriculum and examinations for pupils aged 16–19 are being considered.

1.3.3 Framework of national qualifications

The qualifications and curriculum authorities are in the process of implementing the framework of national awards recommended by the Dearing review (Dearing, 1996).[6] The new framework embraces general academic and vocational qualifications at various levels:

- Entry level (National Curriculum levels 3, 2 and 1 (see 4.9.1));
- Foundation level 1 (GCSE grades D–G, GNVQ foundation level and NVQ level 1);
- Intermediate level 2 (GCSE grades A*–C, GNVQ intermediate level and NVQ level 2);
- Advanced level 3 (GCE A-level and GCE AS qualification, AVCE and NVQ level 3);

- Higher level 4 (sub-first degree level) and NVQ level 4; and

Higher level 5 (equivalent to first degree level) and NVQ level 5.

Note: From September 2002, GNVQ Foundation and Intermediate levels will become vocational GCSEs.

Within the school system, GCSEs and their equivalent qualifications are normally taken at age 16, and GCE A-levels and their equivalents are normally taken at age 18.

1.4 National administration

The United Kingdom is composed of Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) and Northern Ireland. Education is administered at both national and local level in each country.

This publication describes the education systems of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It does not include information on the Scottish education system.

England

Education in England is administered at both national and local level.

Primary legislation for education in England and Wales is enacted by the UK Parliament in London. Acts of Parliament often give government ministers or other authorities the power to regulate administrative details by means of 'delegated' or secondary legislation. This mostly takes the form of Orders and Regulations made by the Secretary of State for Education in England. These are collectively known as Statutory Instruments.

Central government has powers and responsibility for the total provision of the education service, for determining national policies and for planning the direction of the system as a whole. LEAs and individual institutions implement and administer the policies and also have their own statutory powers and responsibilities.

Wales

The Government of Wales Act 1998 established the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW). On 1 July 1999, devolved powers transferred from the Secretary of State for Wales to the Assembly. The Secretary of State for Wales, as a Cabinet member, continues to ensure that the interests and needs of Wales are fully considered in policy formation within the UK Government, and is responsible for taking through Parliament provisions in primary legislation which relate particularly to Wales.

Generally, education legislation contained in Acts of Parliament applies to both England and Wales. Although the National Assembly for Wales does not have powers to enact primary legislation, it does have powers to enact secondary legislation. This includes the implementation of policy in a range of areas, including education and training. In practice, this means, for example, that the Assembly is responsible for setting the content of the National Curriculum for Wales.

The education system in Wales is broadly similar to that in England and is administered at both national and local level. As in England, LEAs and individual institutions implement and administer policies determined at a national level; they also have their own statutory powers and responsibilities.

Special provision is made for teaching through the medium of Welsh. The Welsh Language Board was established under the terms of the Welsh Language Act 1993. Under the Government of Wales Act 1998, the Board has a statutory responsibility to advise the National Assembly for Wales on matters regarding the Welsh language. The Board is responsible for Welsh language schemes prepared by LEAs, school and college governing bodies and other public bodies involved in education in Wales. The Board also has a broader role, complementing the statutory responsibilities of the other agencies in their specific areas of operation by providing an overview to help ensure coherence and consistency.

Northern Ireland

The education system in Northern Ireland has its own legislation and structure.

Following the suspension of the Northern Ireland Parliament in 1972, when direct rule from the UK Parliament at Westminster was substituted, the great majority of Northern Ireland's primary legislation has been in the form of Orders. These were laid before Parliament under the Northern Ireland Act 1974. Much of the legislation has paralleled that for England and Wales, but some provisions have been specific to Northern Ireland.

Power was devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly and its Executive Committee of Ministers (the Northern Ireland Executive) on 2 December 1999. The Assembly has legislative authority in the fields previously administered by the Northern Ireland departments, including education. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is appointed by the UK Prime Minister and remains responsible for matters not devolved to the Assembly, including international relations, and represents the interests of Northern Ireland in the UK Cabinet.

Public education in Northern Ireland is administered centrally by the Northern Ireland Executive and locally by five Education and Library Boards (Boards). The Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools (CCMS), which was established by the Education Reform Order 1989, has certain responsibilities for all Catholic-maintained schools (see 1.4.7c).

1.4.1 Ministers with responsibility for education

England

In England, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills is appointed by the Prime Minister and is responsible to Parliament for controlling and giving direction to the public education system in England. The Secretary of State is currently supported by two Ministers of State and three Parliamentary Under-Secretaries. The Secretary of State represents education and training in the Cabinet. The Secretary of State for Education and Skills has overall responsibility for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), its policy and strategy, finance and public expenditure, and major appointments. He or she is assisted by the professional and administrative staff of the Department. He or she is kept informed of the quality of schooling by the non-ministerial government department the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), and is advised on all matters concerning the curriculum and assessment by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). Other non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) also assist.

The Education Act 1996, which superseded the Education Act 1944 and subsequent legislation, gives the Secretary of State important powers to prevent LEAs and school governing bodies from behaving unreasonably and to act as arbiter in disputes between LEAs, between school governing bodies and LEAs, or between parents and school governing bodies or LEAs.

Wales

The First Minister leads the Welsh Assembly Government. The Assembly Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning is a member of the Cabinet and is responsible for all matters relating to education and training. S/he leads the National Assembly Training Department (NATED). The Minister has similar powers to the Secretary of State in England with respect to arbitration between LEAs and school governing bodies.

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Executive has legislative authority in the fields previously administered by the Northern Ireland Departments, including

education. The Executive is led by the First Minister and includes: a Minister for Education who leads the Department for Education (DE) and is responsible for policy, legislation and resource issues relating to schools and the Youth Service; and a Minister for Employment and Learning who leads the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and is responsible for further and higher education, training and employment.

1.4.2 Ministries with responsibilities for education

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (in England), the National Assembly for Wales Training and Education Department (NATED) and, in Northern Ireland, the Department of Education (DE) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) are the government departments responsible for education.

a) Department for Education and Skills (DfES)

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is the central government department responsible for planning and monitoring the education service in England. The DfES is staffed by permanent civil servants, headed by a Permanent Secretary, who are responsible directly to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. The DfES has no regional structure, but it is divided into a number of Directorates responsible for different aspects or sectors of the education and employment service. Each Directorate is composed of several Divisions. Some of the DfES Directorates are located outside London.

The DfES publishes guidance to assist LEAs and schools to implement legislation and other regulations. *Statutory Instruments* provide detailed procedures for the implementation of Acts of Parliament (Laws) and have the power of law. *Circulars* or *Guidance* explain legislation and regulations, and provide detailed guidance on how they should be implemented, but they do not have the force of law.

The DfES commissions and publishes independent reports on aspects of the education system, which are advisory unless they become incorporated into legislation. The DfES also publishes statistical information.

The Department has published a strategy document (DfES, 2001a)[7] in which it sets out its aims, objectives and strategic directions to 2006. Three key objectives underpin the strategy. These are to:

- give children an excellent start in education, so that they have a better foundation for future learning;
- enable all young people to develop and to equip themselves with the skills, knowledge and personal qualities needed for life and work; and to

- encourage and enable adults to learn, improve their skills and enrich their lives.

The following areas will be educational priorities over the next four years:

- providing high-quality early education and childcare for more children;
- continuing the progress already made in primary education;
- transforming secondary education;
- developing a flexible and challenging 14–19 phase of education; and
- increasing and broadening participation in higher education.

The Department has set a range of learning targets which are designed to include individuals across the ability range. They include the following:

For **11-year-olds** by 2004:

- 85 per cent of 11-year-olds reaching the expected standard (level 4) in English and maths;
- 35 per cent reaching above the expected standard (level 4) in English and maths.

For **14-year-olds**, by 2004:

- 75 per cent of 14-year-olds reaching expected standards (level 5) in English, mathematics and ICT; and
- 70 per cent reaching expected standards (level 5) in science.

And by 2007:

- 85 per cent of 14-year-olds reaching the expected standard (level 5) in English, maths and information and communications technology (ICT); and
- 80 per cent reaching the expected standard (level 5) in science.

For **16-year-olds** by 2004:

- 38 per cent of 16-year-olds achieving 5 GCSE passes at grades A*–C; and
- 92 per cent obtaining 5 or more GCSE passes at grades A*–G.

For **19-year-olds** by 2004:

- 55 per cent achieving a level 3 (GCE A-level or equivalent; see 1.3.3)

For **adults** by 2004:

- reducing the number of adults who have literacy or numeracy problems by 750,000; and
- increasing the percentage of adults attaining a level 3 qualification (GCE A-level or equivalent; see 1.3.3).

Other key targets include reducing unauthorised absence from secondary school by 10 per cent by 2004, reducing the number of secondary schools classed as failing and ensuring that all pupils who are permanently excluded from school obtain an appropriate full-time education.

b) National Assembly for Wales Training and Education Department

Under devolution, the former Welsh Office Education Department has been restructured to form the National Assembly for Wales Training and Education Department (NATED).

The National Assembly has recently published a comprehensive strategic document (NAfW, 2001a)[8] on education and lifelong learning in Wales which outlines the Department's new policy directions as follows:

- creation of stronger foundations for learning, with major improvements for early years provision;
- overhaul of special educational needs (SEN) provision;
- new measures to secure better transitional arrangements for pupils as they move from primary to secondary school;
- new scope for schools to make more flexible provision for 14- to 19-year-olds;
- better services for young people;
- measures to promote greater access to lifelong learning (post-16);
- stronger support for practitioners; and
- modernisation of the collaborative efforts of higher education institutions in Wales.

A strategy for higher education in Wales (WAG, 2002)[9] has been published which outlines proposals to change the structure of higher education in Wales. Institutions will be free to develop individual missions and specialise in particular subjects. The sector will be defined by networks of excellence rather than institutions it will develop closer links with business and will be more vigorous in 'commercialising knowledge'.

NATED has set National Learning Targets for primary and secondary schools in Wales. The targets for 2002 include:

- between 70 and 80 per cent of 11- and 14-year-olds attaining the expected level (levels 4 and 5 respectively) in the separate subjects of English, Welsh (first language), mathematics and science;
- between 70 and 80 per cent of 11- and 14-year-olds attaining the expected level (levels 4 and 5 respectively) in English, Welsh (first language), mathematics and science;
- at least 54 per cent of 15-year-olds achieving 5 GCSE grades A*–C or the vocational equivalent;
- at least 91 per cent of 15-year-olds achieving 5 GCSE grades A*–G or the vocational equivalent;
- 50 per cent of 15-year-olds gaining GCSE grades A*–C in each of English or Welsh (first language) mathematics and science in combination;
- 50 per cent of children looked after by local authorities to achieve at least 2 GCSE/GNVQ qualifications by 2002, rising to 75 per cent by 2003.

The targets for 2004 include:

- between 80 and 85 per cent of 11- and 15-year-olds reaching the expected level (levels 4 and 5 respectively) or higher in English, Welsh (first language), mathematics and science;
- more than 50 per cent of 15-year-olds gaining GCSE grades A*–C in each of English, Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination (the core subject indicator);
- 58 per cent of 15-year-olds gaining at least 5 GCSEs grade A*–C or the vocational equivalent;
- 95 per cent of 15-year-olds gaining at least 5 GCSE grades A*–G or the equivalent;
- reducing non-attendance at school to below 8 per cent;
- reducting the number of 16- to 18-year-olds without qualifications to one in 20;
- reducing the number of 19-year-olds without NVQ level 2 to one in five.

The levels mentioned above refer to the National Curriculum level descriptions; see 4.9.1b.

c) *Department of Education (DE) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), Northern Ireland*

Following devolution, there are now two ministries with responsibility for education in Northern Ireland. They are staffed by permanent civil servants and each is headed by a Permanent Secretary who is responsible directly to the Minister of the Department concerned.

The **Department of Education** is responsible for all policy, legislation and resource issues relating to schools and the Youth Service. Its specific areas of responsibility are for the school curriculum; pupil assessment and examinations; raising standards in teaching and learning; transfer procedures and selection (for post-primary education); open enrolment; pupil support; special education; the Youth Service; and community relations among young people. In addition, the DE has responsibility for strategic planning and finance and the inspection of all phases of education, except higher education. The Department's strategic plan is currently under review.

The DE has also set learning targets for primary and secondary schools in Northern Ireland. For 2002, the aim is that 80 per cent of 11-year-olds should reach the expected standards for their age in both English and mathematics. In addition, by 2002 the DE expects all children at the end of key stage 1 – i.e. eight-year-olds in Northern Ireland – to reach the required standard for their age. This target excludes those children with severe special educational needs (SEN).

The main responsibilities of the **Department for Employment and Learning** (DEL) include: further and higher education; vocational training; employment services; employment law and labour relations; teacher training and teacher education; student support and post-graduate awards; and training grants. Within the Department, the Further and Higher Education Division has particular responsibility for the development of policy and the planning, funding and administration of further and higher education. Additional advice is provided by the Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (NIHEC) and the Further Education Consultative Committee. The key education-related goals of the DEL include:

- improving adult basic skill levels;
- supporting lifelong learning;
- increasing participation in, and widening access to, further and higher education;
- developing a curriculum entitlement for 16- to 19-year-olds;
- enhancing quality in further and higher education;

- providing support for university research, development and innovation;
- assisting universities and other higher education institutions in delivering their economic role (DEL, 2001).[10]

1.4.3 Funding bodies

A number of national agencies have responsibilities for funding further and higher education institutions in England and Wales.

Note: Schools in England and Wales are funded by LEAs. In Northern Ireland, all institutions are funded by the two ministries of education, although some categories of school receive this funding via Education and Library Boards.

For further information on how the funding is distributed to educational institutions by national and local bodies, see Chapter 2.

a) Further and adult education and training funding bodies

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Learning and Skills Council (for England) (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (now known as the National Council – ELWa), took over responsibility for planning, funding and improving the quality of all post-16 education and training (other than higher education) in England and Wales respectively from April 2001. The Further Education Funding Councils for England and Wales have been abolished, as have the local Training and Enterprise Councils.

The **Learning and Skills Council** (LSC) is a non-departmental public body, comprising 12 members including representatives of employers, trade unions, education and training providers and community groups. The LSC has two statutory committees (one covering adult learning and one covering young people) and operates through 47 local Learning and Skills Councils which cover a defined geographical area. Each of the 47 local Learning and Skills Councils has similar representation to the national Council; they are responsible for ensuring that the needs of local communities, including the needs of employers and individuals, are reflected and met through LSC-funded provision.

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the LSC must secure the provision of proper facilities for:

- full and part-time education (other than higher education) and training; and
- leisure-time occupations connected with such education and training for persons aged 16–19, and for persons aged 19 and above.

The work of the LSC covers:

- further education;
- work-based training;
- workforce development;
- adult and community learning;
- information, advice and guidance for adults; and

education business links.

The LSC's initial corporate plan sets out its strategic planning framework to 2004 (LSC, 2001).[11]

The **National Council for Education and Training for Wales** is an Assembly Sponsored Public Body and has powers to fund all post-16 education and training excluding higher education in Wales. It has similar duties to the Learning and Skills Council for England. Four regional committees exist to advise the Council on matters relating to education and training in their areas. In addition, Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) have responsibility for planning delivery of post-compulsory education and training at local level. CCETs act as a link between the National Council and the local learning markets and together have taken over many of the functions of the former Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). The National Council has issued a corporate strategy to 2005 (ELWa, 2002).[12]

Although its statutory name is the National Council for Education and Training for Wales, the body is now referred to as the National Council – ELWa. ELWa stands for Education and Learning Wales and is the joint name for the National Council and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW).

b) Higher education funding bodies

The **Higher Education Funding Council for England** (HEFCE) and the **Higher Education Funding Council for Wales** (HEFCW) are non-departmental public bodies established under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. They distribute public money for teaching and research to universities and other institutions which provide higher education, and so doing, they aim to promote high-quality education and research. The Councils also play a key role in ensuring accountability and promoting good practice.

Although its statutory name is the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), the body is now referred to as the Higher

Education Council – ELWa. ELWa stands for Education and Learning Wales and is the joint name for the HEFCW and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales.

The **Teacher Training Agency** (TTA) (see 9.1.1c) funds initial teacher training in England but this function is carried out in Wales by the Higher Education Council – ELWa.

1.4.4 Qualifications, curriculum and assessment authorities

England, Wales and Northern Ireland each have their own qualifications, curriculum and assessment authority.

England

The **Qualifications and Curriculum Authority** (QCA) is a non-departmental public statutory body formed in October 1997 by the merger of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) and the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ). Its remit is to promote quality and coherence in education and training, from pre-school to higher vocational levels. The QCA's prime duty is to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on all matters affecting the school curriculum, pupil assessment and publicly funded qualifications offered in schools, colleges and workplaces. Its remit does not extend to higher education.

The basis of QCA's activities is its statutory functions, as set out in Sections 21–26 of the Education Act 1997. QCA's functions include:

- reviewing the curriculum, school examinations and assessment for pupils of compulsory school age and providing advice to the Secretary of State;
- advising the Secretary of State on the approval of external qualifications for use by pupils of compulsory school age;
- reviewing all aspects of external academic and vocational qualifications;
- developing and publishing criteria for the accreditation of external qualifications and accrediting qualifications meeting such criteria;
- providing support and advice to those providing courses leading to external qualifications;
- publishing and disseminating information; and
- developing learning goals and related materials for the under-fives.

The QCA works closely with the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (known by its Welsh acronym ACCAC) in relation to matters pertaining to Wales, and with the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in relation to matters pertaining to Northern Ireland (see below).

Wales

The **Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales** (ACCAC) was created by the amalgamation of the Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACAC), which was established in April 1994, with the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) (Wales) Office in October 1997. ACCAC stands for its Welsh name: Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru. ACCAC is an Assembly-Sponsored Public Body (ASPB) accountable to the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW). The Authority has a wide range of contacts within Wales and works particularly closely with Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. It also works closely with the qualifications, curriculum and assessment authorities in England and Northern Ireland, and performs, in relation to Wales, functions similar to those exercised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in relation to England. The statutory basis for these functions is in Sections 27–32 of the Education Act 1997 and the Education (Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales) (Conferment of Functions) Order 1997 (SI 1997/2140).

The purpose of ACCAC is to advance education and training in Wales with a view to promoting quality and coherence. ACCAC is responsible in Wales for:

- ensuring quality and standards in external general and vocational qualifications;
- keeping under review all aspects of the school curriculum and statutory assessment arrangements for maintained schools;
- commissioning classroom materials to support the teaching of Welsh, other subjects through the medium of Welsh and Wales-specific aspects of the curriculum;
- advising on appropriate programmes of research and development (and carrying these out if requested); and
- publishing and disseminating information relating to qualifications, curriculum and assessment in Wales.

Northern Ireland

The **Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment** (CCEA) was established on 1 April 1994. The remit of the Council is set out in the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 and the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 as amended by the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. The Council is grant-aided, that is publicly funded, by the Department of Education (DE) and has a statutory responsibility to:

- keep under review all aspects of the curriculum, examinations and assessment;
- give advice to the Department of Education (DE) about the curriculum, assessment, examinations and external qualifications;
- publish and distribute information about the curriculum, assessment and examinations;
- carry out consultation with the educational community in Northern Ireland about proposed changes to legislation governing the curriculum, examinations and assessment;
- conduct and moderate examinations and assessment, ensuring that standards are equivalent in these areas to other parts of the UK.

The Council liaises with schools, with the Education and Library Boards (Boards), with the Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools (CCMS), and with curriculum and assessment councils elsewhere in the UK and in Europe. It monitors the appropriateness of the curriculum and associated assessment, and manages curriculum development projects. It consults with teachers about proposed changes to the curriculum and to assessment, and produces information and guidance materials. The CCEA also conducts or commissions research on the curriculum and assessment. Under the Education (NI) Order 1998, its remit has been expanded to include guidance and teaching materials for children aged between two and four years.

In addition, the CCEA has a remit for the development of educational technology and the production of multi-media resources.

The CCEA has also produced materials for teachers' continuing professional development, guidance and advice for teachers on various aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, and guidance materials to accompany new programmes of study. In addition, the CCEA conducts the Transfer Procedure tests for children moving from primary to secondary education (see 5.5.2).

1.4.5 Awarding bodies

Awarding bodies provide qualifications in respect of secondary, further and vocational education, for example, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level), the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Educaton (AVCE), General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). They are subject to statutory regulation. The role of the awarding body varies, depending on the type of qualification but, in general, they are responsible for:

- syllabus development;
- approving the centres which offer courses leading to their qualifications; and
- quality assurance, including monitoring the assessment process.

Centres include schools, further education institutions, adult education centres, training providers and higher education institutions. UK qualifications are available worldwide and therefore some centres are located overseas.

The Government has encouraged the rationalisation of the number of awarding bodies and some mergers and alliances between GCE A-level and GCSE examination bodies and vocational awarding bodies have taken place. The principal awarding bodies are currently:

- Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) –
  formed from the Associated Examining Board (AEB), the Southern Examining Group (SEG) and the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board (NEAB); the Alliance has also taken over the City and Guilds of London Institute's GNVQs;
- Edexcel Foundation –
  formed from the Business and Technology Education Council and the University of London Examinations and Assessment Council;
- Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) –
  the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examinations Board and the University of Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations merged to form the Oxford and Cambridge Examinations and Assessment Council (OCEAC). OCEAC has, in turn, merged with the Midland Examining Group, and the RSA Examinations Board, to form OCR;
- City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI);
- London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board (LCCI)

- Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)
- Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

Some National Training Organisations and some professional bodies also act as awarding bodies for National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) (see 6.11.1a).

Most higher education institutions have the power to award their own qualifications. In addition to granting awards in respect of the programmes they offer on their own premises, some institutions franchise courses leading to their qualifications to other institutions (often in the further education sector or overseas); some validate individual programmes designed and offered in other higher education establishments, or by industrial or commercial companies; and some license or accredit other institutions to offer programmes in their name; and some offer programmes through distance learning.

1.4.6 Inspection bodies

The inspection bodies for pre-school, primary, secondary and further education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have a national remit. However, higher education has a single quality assurance agency which covers the whole of the UK.

a) Ofsted – England

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) is a non-ministerial government department. Its functions include setting the framework for the system of regular school inspections as well as monitoring, regulating and keeping the inspection system under review. Ofsted also arranges for the initial and further training of the independent inspectors and keeps registers of those who have been approved to work as a member of inspection teams, and those who have been approved to lead inspections. It also monitors the work of the independent school inspection teams working under contract, corroborating their judgements as appropriate, and following up the progress of schools identified as causing concern. Finally, Ofsted reports on matters such as good practice in teaching and management, public examinations and international comparisons, produces analyses to identify trends, evaluates the effects of educational policy, and follows up on issues and concerns to which inspection findings have drawn attention.

The professional staff employed by Ofsted to carry out these functions include Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) who are civil servants. However, regular school inspections are conducted not by HMI, but by independent inspection teams operating under contract to Ofsted. Ofsted is led by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England (HMCI).

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 extends the remit of Ofsted to include inspection of provision for 16- to 19-year-olds in further education institutions.

b) Adult Learning Inspectorate – England

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established by the Learning and Skills Act 2000. ALI has nine members appointed by the Secretary of State. One member is appointed as Chairman and another as Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. Under the Act, the ALI must inform the Secretary of State about the quality, standards and value for money of the provision of education and training within its remit. It is responsible for the inspection of:

- further education for people aged 19 or over, which is funded by the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) or by an LEA;
- training provided wholly or partly on employers' premises for people aged over 16, which is wholly or partly funded by the LSC;
- training funded (through the Employment Service) under the Employment and Training Act, including the New Deals;
- training offered and funded by employers, at the invitation and expense of the employer.

In addition, the Secretary of State has specified the following functions for the ALI in 2001–02:

- inspection of Learndirect, operated under the auspices of University for Industry (UfI);
- inspection of learning in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majestys Chief Inspector of Prisons;
- inspection of adult and community education;
- inspection of vocational provision overseas, in support of the work of the British Council;
- area inspections of provision for 16- to 19-year-olds, in support of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted);
- production of thematic or survey reports from time to time.

The ALI's main aims are to:

- assess the standards achieved in adult learning;
- advise the Secretary of State on standards in adult learning;
- contribute to raising standards of adult learning by working in partnership with the funding bodies and providers which hold the responsibility for quality improvement;

- report on the extent to which the financial resources made available by the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) and the Employment Service (ES) to providers of education and training are used in a way which represents value for money;
- extend the use of inspection as a means to establish and raise the quality of privately funded learning in England and, where appropriate, overseas.

c) Estyn – Wales

Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (HMCI), performs in Wales similar functions to Ofsted and ALI. Estyn is led by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (HMCI). In general, HMCI has statutory responsibilities for providing advice to the Government on the quality of education and training, the standards achieved, whether the financial resources made available are managed efficiently, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

d) Education and Training Inspectorate – Northern Ireland

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is the sole body with responsibility for inspection of education and training in Northern Ireland. It is concerned with the quality of education and training. It inspects and reports on the work which is taking place throughout the education system (except higher education), including that done by the advisory and support service provided by the Education and Library Boards.

The Chief Inspector of the ETI in Northern Ireland is responsible for:

- the management, organisation and deployment of the Inspectorate;
- ensuring that the management plan for the inspection of schools and other organisations is fully implemented;
- notifying schools and other institutions about proposed inspections; and
- the preparation and publication of reports.

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 defined the responsibilities of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) throughout the education service.

The ETI is the main source of professional advice for the Department of Education (DE) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland as a whole, as well as in individual institutions. It seeks to maintain and, where possible, to promote the improvement of standards by reporting weaknesses where they exist and by disseminating examples of good practice.

e) Quality Assurance Agency – UK-wide

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) was set up in 1997 to provide an integrated quality assurance service for UK higher education institutions. The Agency is an independent body, funded by subscriptions from universities and colleges of higher education and through contracts with the funding bodies (see 1.4.3b). Its Board of Directors comprises 14 members: four are appointed by the representative bodies of the heads of higher education institutions; four are appointed by the funding bodies in higher education; and six are independent directors who have wide practical experience of industry, commerce, finance or the practice of a profession.

QAA's activities include:

- working with higher education institutions to promote and support continuous improvement in the quality and standards of provision;
- providing clear and accurate information to students, employers and others about the quality and standards of higher education provision;
- working with higher education institutions to develop and manage the qualifications framework;
- advising on the grant of degree-awarding powers and university title;
- facilitating the development of benchmark information to guide subject standards;
- promulgating codes of practice and examples of good practice; and
- operating programmes of review of performance at institutional and programme levels.

The QAA also operates mechanisms for access course recognition, and provides advice to the Government on applications for grant of university title and grant of taught and research degree-awarding powers.

1.4.7 Diocesan and church authorities

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the majority of religious or faith schools were set up by the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. However, there are also schools set up by other religious denominations such as Methodists, Muslims and followers of the Jewish faith. Foundation governors represent the interest of the founding body on the school governing body. The majority of faith schools are maintained schools. A recent White Paper (Parliament. HoC., 2001)[2] proposed increasing the number of maintained faith schools in England.

a) Church of England schools in England and Wales

The **Schools Committee of the Church of England** works in consultation with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), other professional bodies and education representatives of other denominations and faiths. It is involved with the whole statutory system of schooling, in particular, with Church of England schools, which may be voluntary-aided schools, voluntary-controlled schools, or independent schools with a Church of England foundation. The Boards of Education of the Church of England commit human and financial resources, centrally and through individual dioceses in England and Wales, to church schools to ensure that schools provide high-quality Christian-based education. Much of the Schools Committee's work is done in association with the National Society (see below).

The **National Society** is a Church of England and Church in Wales education service. It offers information and advice for children, students, teachers, school governors, parents and clergy, and parish, diocesan and LEA teams. It also provides in-service training and professional development for staff.

b) Catholic schools in England and Wales

The Catholic Education Service (CES) is the Catholic Bishops' Conference national education agency. It acts as an advisory body to the Bishops' Conference on all matters affecting Catholic primary and secondary schools and colleges of higher and further education. Each diocese is led by a Bishop, who is responsible for Catholic schools within the diocese. Catholic schools are mostly voluntary-aided schools. The CES negotiates with the Government and other national bodies on legal, administrative, professional and religious matters in education, in order to promote and safeguard Catholic interests in education and contribute to Christian perspectives within educational debate at national level. The CES also acts as a bureau of information and advice on any educational matters to Catholic bodies and individuals, publishes materials, organises in-service training, conferences and other events, and works internationally with Catholic bodies. In addition, it distributes travel grants to Catholic schools receiving no assistance from the local authority in this respect, and to parishes to enable them where there is extreme need for assistance with transport, to send children to the nearest available Catholic school.

c) Catholic schools in Northern Ireland

The Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools (CCMS) was set up under the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 and has certain responsibilities for all Catholic-maintained schools. The membership of the CCMS consists of trustee representatives appointed by the Northern Ireland Bishops, persons appointed by the Department

of Education (DE) in consultation with the Bishops, parents and teachers. The main purpose of the CCMS is to promote high standards of education in its schools. It employs teachers and promotes the effective management and the rationalisation of school provision in the Catholic-maintained sector. It advises Boards of Governors on criteria for admissions; supports them in the determination and review of the curriculum; draws up schemes for exclusions; and ensures special educational provision for children with special educational needs (SEN) (see Chapter 8). Boards of Governors must consult with the CCMS on the financing of schools and on the provision of further training and advice for principals, teachers and school governors. The CCMS prepares a scheme of management for all schools under its control, and liaises with the Boards on the complements of teaching and non-teaching staff for those schools with partially delegated budgets.

1.4.8 Advisory Bodies and umbrella organisations

There are many bodies which, in addition to their other functions, provide advice to the Government or represent the interests of particular groups or sectors and lobby the Government on their behalf. The list below is a selection of the principal bodies.

a) Founded in 1960, the **Advisory Centre for Education Ltd** (ACE) is an independent national advice centre for parents. ACE works for an education system that supports all children, and promotes the active involvement of parents in their children's education. It aims to provide the information, support and high-quality legal advice that parents need to help their children at school, particularly when there are problems.

b) The **Basic Skills Agency** (for England and Wales), and the **Basic Skills Unit** (for Northern Ireland), are the central agencies for developing adult literacy and numeracy and basic skills. See section 6.8.5 for more information on basic skills.

c) The **British Educational Communications and Technology Agency** (BECTa) is a Government- funded agency, operating on a UK-wide basis, designed to ensure that information and communications technology (ICT) supports the Government's efforts to improve standards in curriculum subjects, in the teaching of key skills, in institutional effectiveness and in the development of lifelong learning. BECTa is responsible for developing the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) (www.ngfl.gov.uk) which includes a collection of online resources for all phases of education, both formal and non-formal learning.

d) The **Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research** (CILT) is an independent charitable trust, supported by central government grants, which aims to collect and disseminate information on all aspects of modern languages, and on the teaching of modern languages.

e) The **Learning and Skills Advisory Board** advises the Department for Employment and Learning on the provision of further education and training in Northern Ireland.

f) The **Learning and Skills Development Agency** (LSDA), formerly the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA), is a strategic national resource for the development of policy and practice in post-16 education and training. The Agency provides a comprehensive training and conference programme for further education personnel, as well as managing a wide range of research and development projects and activities, working closely with the further education sector and other key education and training organisations. In addition to national headquarters, the Agency has nine regional offices in England and one office in Wales.

g) The **Learning and Skills Research Centre** has recently been established at the LSDA with a view to ensuring that research findings are embedded in policy and practice.

h) Established in 1997, the **Local Government Association** (LGA) represents all principal local authorities in England and succeeds the three previous local authority associations – the Association of County Councils, the Association of District Councils and the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. The LGA Executive, which has 14 members, steers the Association's work focusing, in particular, on broad strategy and the coordination of policy. Sixteen other executives of similar size are responsible for directing the LGA's work in each of the main policy areas, including education and lifelong learning. The aim of the Education Executive is to strengthen the status and influence of the local government sector of education. The Association holds General Assemblies twice a year, acting as a parliament for local government.

i) The **National Organisation for Adult Learning** (NIACE) is an advisory body and centre for information, cooperation and consultation in the field of adult continuing education. It receives funding from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the National Assembly for Wales, LEAs, universities, and commercial and voluntary organisations.

j) **National Training Organisations** (NTOs) are employer-led bodies whose role is to assess the current and future training needs of the sectors they represent, and to ensure that these needs are met. They are responsible for defining competencies and developing skills within their own industrial or commercial sector but also provide advice to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa). There are currently 73 officially recognised NTOs, each representative of an individual industry or organisation. NTOs work closely with employers, encouraging them to participate in the development and uptake of competence-based occupational standards, and also have a general role in promoting education and training qualifications among employers. Some NTOs act as awarding bodies for National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The NTO National Council, an independent national body, represents the constituent members of the NTO network. From early 2002, the National Training Organisations (NTOs) will begin to be replaced by a UK-wide network of employer-led Sector Skills Councils, supported and funded by a national Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA). The reorganisation will rationalise existing arrangements: the 73 NTOs will be replaced by a maximum of 25 Sector Skills Councils. The Sector Skills Councils will bring together employers, trade unions and professional bodies to work with government to develop the skills that UK business needs. They will work to reduce skills gaps and shortages; to improve productivity; and to develop apprenticeships and national occupational standards. The NTO National Council will be replaced by the national SSDA and will have responsibility for cross-sectoral skills and to advise sectors on specialist areas such as equal opportunities and sustainable development.

k) The **Northern Ireland Higher Education Council** (NIHEC) advises the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) on higher education policy, planning and funding, including teacher education.

l) The **Standing Conference of Principals** (SCOP) performs a similar role to Universities UK (see below) and represents non-university higher education institutions. **Heads of Higher Education Wales** (HHEW) was established in 1996 to represent the interests of Welsh higher education in its dealings with the, then, Welsh Office (now the National Assembly for Wales Training and Education Department – NATED), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and, on the broader stage, with the Government and with relevant UK and international agencies. It consists of the executive heads of all the higher education institutions in Wales.

m) The **Technology Colleges Trust** manages the Specialist Schools Programme (see 5.4.1) on behalf of the DfES. With a network of over 1,000 affiliated schools, the Trust has a mission to promote an educational culture that emphasises the specialist areas of maths/ science/technology, languages/internationalism, arts and sports. It also encourages schools to be active partners in a learning society with their local families of schools and the wider community.

n) The **Training and Employment Agency** (now a business unit of the Department for Employment and Learning – DEL) is Northern Ireland's leading provider of employment and training services. Its aim is to meet the skills and recruitment needs of employers and to help people find jobs by enabling them to receive the necessary careers guidance and competences. The Agency works with employers, employees and those seeking jobs, offering an extensive range of training programmes (see 6.8.9). Further education colleges may apply to the Agency to become recognised training providers and, as such, may be given contracts to provide training as part of Government-funded schemes.

o) **Universities UK**, formerly the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the UK (CVCP), is a consultative and advisory body. It consists of the executive heads of all the universities of the UK and is paid for by the universities through an annual subscription. It represents the full range of university interests and speaks on behalf of all UK universities in their relations with other sectors of education, with industry and with the Government.

Universities UK works closely with seven agencies:

- the Universities and Colleges Staff Development Agency (UCoSDA), which became the Higher Education Staff Development Agency (HESDA) in November 2000, and which provides support in the provision and evaluation of continuing professional and vocational development of staff in the higher education sector;
- the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS);
- the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA);
- the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA);
- the Careers Services Unit (CSU), which supports and assists the work of careers advisory services at the institutions;
- the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILT); and
- the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

p) The governing bodies of these agencies include representatives of one or more of the following bodies: Universities UK, the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP), the Committee of University Chairmen (CUC) and the Committee of Principals of Scottish Centrally Funded Colleges (CSCFC).

q) The **Welsh Local Government Association** (WLGA) was established on 1 April 1996, following the reorganisation of local government in Wales. It represents the interests of local authorities in Wales. The WLGA is a constituent part of the Local Government Association, but retains full autonomy in dealing with Welsh affairs. It exists to promote local democracy and represents the interests of local authorities in Wales.

r) The **Welsh Joint Education Committee** (WJEC) was established as a consortium of local education authorities in 1948 and is now a company limited by guarantee, owned and controlled by the 22 unitary councils (local authorities) in Wales. It exists to provide a range of educational services at an all-Wales level, including:

- examination syllabuses, marking services and access to vocational schemes;
- support for these syllabuses through in-service training for teachers (INSET), training materials and easy access to subject officers;
- Welsh-medium resources and support for the Curriculum Cymreig (Welsh curriculum);
- production of Welsh and bilingual computer-related resources;
- national programme of continuing professional development for teachers of Welsh;
- the Comenius Centre for Wales;
- coordination of Wales-Europe education and training projects and linking services with partner regions through its European Unit;
- support services for the National Youth Orchestra of Wales and the National Youth Theatre of Wales, and validation of courses in art and design;
- validated training and support for small businesses and industry;
- accreditation of centres for records of achievement.

1.5 Administration at local level

In this dossier, the management and administration of education at local level encompasses mainly the responsibilities of the LEAs in England and Wales and the Education and Library Boards (Boards) in Northern Ireland.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 made provision for a new, but temporary, type of organisational arrangement at local level in England. **Education Action Zones** (EAZs) consist of local clusters of up to around 20 schools, typically covering two or three secondary schools and their feeder primary schools. The Zones are based in areas facing challenging circumstances in terms of underachievement or disadvantage. Each is led by an Education Action Forum, which is a corporate body and membership of which usually reflects the local community and other partners and normally includes the LEA. The main object of the Education Action Forum is the improvement of standards in the participating schools. The Forum sets targets, which must be more demanding than those set for LEAs and schools outside the Zone, to reflect the greater investment of resources and expertise. Targets are of two main types: targets for improving pupil performance and for other educational and social objectives, including tackling social exclusion. Mini Action Zones work in similar ways but have fewer schools. The intention is to phase out EAZs within several years, by which time they are intended to have fulfilled their goals.

The Government has announced its intention to combine the country's EAZs with the Excellence in Cities Initiative. This initiative was launched in England, in March 1999, to target deprivation in six urban areas but now covers 58 local authority areas across all major cities.

There are no EAZs in Wales or Northern Ireland.

1.5.1 Local education authorities in England and Wales

a) Structure of local government

In **England**, local government is organised either as a single-tier system, where the local authority, which may be a London borough, metropolitan borough or unitary authority, provides all public services in the geographical area they represent, including education; or as a two-tier system, where county councils provide the bulk of services such as education and social services and the smaller district councils provide other services such as housing and refuse collection. In **Wales**, there is a single-tier system: all local authorities are unitary authorities. Local authorities or councils consist of democratically elected councillors.

The Local Government Act 2000 required each local authority to submit plans for modernisation to the then Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions in England and to the Welsh Assembly Government in Wales. This restructuring was intended to make them more efficient, open and accountable. It is expected that the majority of local authorities will have implemented modernised structures of decision-making by May 2002.

The Act also places a duty on all local authorities to prepare community strategies to promote the economic, environmental and social well-being of their areas. LEAs have a central role in these strategies through raising educational standards.

b) Education decision making

The local authority or council which has responsibility for providing education is known as the local education authority (LEA).

Prior to the Local Government Act 2000, most responsibilities for education were delegated to an education committee. However, following the restructuring of local government under the Act, the decision-making framework of local authorities was reformed, abolishing the traditional committee structure of local authorities and replacing it with management structures involving Cabinet-style governance with separate decision-making and scrutiny structures.

Education decision-making in local authorities is now shared between:

- the local authority executive – mayor or leader and cabinet;
- the scrutiny committees or panels; and
- the whole council.

The executive leads the planning process, consults on and draws up the annual budget, including capital plans, for submission to the full council and takes day-to-day decisions on resources and priorities to implement the strategies in accordance with the budget approved by the full council, consulting as necessary. The scrutiny committees/panels, which are likely to be cross-service committees rather than dedicated solely to education, consider and investigate broad policy issues and make recommendations to the executive or council; consider budget and other plans; provide advice to the executive on major decisions before final decisions are made; review decisions taken by the executive and how it is implementing council policy; and make reports and recommendations, including proposals for changes to policies or practices. The whole council agrees overall strategies, including such key plans as the education development plan, determines the revenue and capital budgets each year; makes appointments to committees,

subcommittees and the executive according to provisions of council's constitution; and makes or confirms appointments of the council's chief executive and chief officers.

Section 499 of the Education Act 1996 required local authorities to appoint representatives of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church to their committees dealing with education, while the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 provided for education committees to include representatives of parents. Guidance is provided for LEAs in England and Wales in DfEE Circular 19/99[13] and NAfW Circular 2/00[14]. The role of these representatives is to be incorporated into the new-style local authority structure through the scrutiny committees and subcommittees.

There is still a statutory duty for LEAs to have a Chief Education Officer (CEO) who is responsible to the elected members of the local council and is subject to their direction and control. The management of the education service is delegated to this officer (sometimes known as the Director of Education) who is assisted by professional education officers, advisers and administrative staff.

c) *Inspection of LEAs*

Since 1998, LEA inspections have been conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) (Estyn in Wales) under powers conferred on Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools by Section 38 of the Education Act 1997. The principal purpose of the inspections is to review the way LEAs perform their functions in support of school improvement, special educational provision, access and strategic management. By the end of 2001, the first cycle of LEA inspections was completed. A new framework for inspection came into operation in England for inspections from January 2002 (Ofsted and Audit Commission, 2001).[15]

There are three types of inspections:

- inspections of individual LEAs (organisational inspections);
- thematic inspections – across a number of LEAs, looking at a particular function;
- inspections of 'best value reviews' (BVRs) of education services.

Under the Local Government Act 1999, local authorities in England and Wales are required to produce Best Value plans. Best Value requires local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the way their functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

d) Responsibilities of LEAs

The extent of local authority control over the education system has diminished over the past 15 years. LEAs originally operated nursery, primary and secondary schools, as well as further education and non-university higher education institutions. The Education Reform Act 1988 removed polytechnics and higher education colleges from local authority control and established a national funding council; similar reforms were introduced for further education institutions under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The Education Reform Act 1988 allowed primary and secondary schools to opt out of LEA control as grant-maintained schools and, although this move was reversed by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, under Local Management of Schools (also introduced by the Education Reform Act 1988) and its successor Fair Funding, all maintained schools now have greater autonomy in terms of self-management and control of budgets. More recently, the Learning and Skills Act 2000 amended the Education Act 1996, transferring the statutory duties of LEAs to secure the provision of full-time (secondary) education for 16- to 19-year-olds, and certain types of adult and community education, to the Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa).

The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) (now DfES) published a policy paper in 2000 which set out the role of the LEA and how it can most effectively discharge its functions (DfEE, 2000a).[16] This document identified the local education authority's 'new' role as a service provider for schools with particular responsibilities for helping schools to improve their performance. A more recent publication (DfEE 2001a)[17] stressed that the basic principles governing the relationship between LEAs and schools are that 'good schools manage themselves', and that local authorities 'only intervene in schools' management in inverse proportion to those schools' success'.

The work of LEAs is now governed by national Codes of Practice issued under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The most recent issue of the Code of Practice in England (DfEE, 2001b)[18] provides statutory guidance for LEAs and schools on how they can work together effectively to raise standards; explains the main principles behind LEA intervention in schools; and describes how LEA powers may be used appropriately. A similar Code of Practice was issued in Wales in 2001 (NAfW, 2001b).[19]

LEAs currently have a statutory duty to secure the provision of pre-school, primary and compulsory secondary education. However, they retain the power to provide post-compulsory secondary education. Their rights, in this respect, were extended by the Learning and Skills

Act 2000 since it restored their power to set up and maintain schools exclusively for 16- to 19-year-olds (as they could prior to 1993), and the power to provide part-time education for 16- to 19-year-olds. The funding for such provision, however, will be derived from the LSC (in England) and the National Council – ELWa (in Wales).

The main responsibilities of LEAs currently include:

- the provision of school places and admissions;
- financial administration;
- monitoring and improving standards;
- staffing and staff development;
- ensuring regular school attendance;
- support for inclusion and special educational needs;
- administering grants and allowances;
- dealing with complaints; and
- school meals and transport.

See the following subsections for further details.

(i) Provision of school places and admissions

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the sole responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient schools to provide efficient education to meet the needs of the population of their area and to deliver the National Curriculum, rests with local education authorities (LEAs) although LEAs are not required to provide all such schools themselves. There is a new duty on LEAs, under the Act, to ensure that the provision of nursery education in their area is sufficient (see 3.2.1.).

The Act also introduced new arrangements for the planning and organisation of school places, and for school admissions. Since 1 April 1999, LEAs have been required to draw up school organisation plans describing how they intend to secure the provision of primary and secondary education to meet the needs of the population in their area. In England, these plans require the unanimous approval of the local School Organisation Committee which has members representing the LEA, the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and school governors. Plans provide a context against which proposals for change to the organisation of individual schools can be decided by the School Organisation Committee. Where a Committee cannot decide a plan or a proposal, it is referred to an independent adjudicator (appointed by the Secretary of State). In Wales, the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) has the power to approve statutory proposals and consider any objections to them.

The admissions policy of individual schools is determined by the LEA for most community schools and voluntary-controlled schools. For all other schools, the admissions authority is the school governing body. However, under the 1998 Act, admissions authorities within a particular area must consult one another on any proposed changes and, in England, must refer objections to the adjudicator. In Wales, any disputes are referred to the NAfW.

Under the Education (School Information) England (Amendment) Regulations 1999 and the Education (School Information) (Wales) Regulations 1999, LEAs are required to publish a single prospectus offering parents details of the admissions policies of all LEA-maintained schools in their area, so that parents can have the information in an accessible form. The regulations also place a duty on the governing body of every maintained school that will be covered in the prospectus to provide the necessary information to the LEA. The information provided in the prospectus should include details of admissions arrangements, and numbers of places, and the numbers of applications for those places in the previous year.

The LEA is also responsible for facilitating any parental appeals against school placements and, in accordance with the 1998 Act, must ensure that the membership of appeal panels is properly independent of the admissions authority.

(ii) Financial administration

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, LEAs finance all maintained schools within their areas.

LEAs set a budget for the education service in their area and determine the funding for individual schools. School budgets are calculated and delegated in accordance with the 'Fair Funding' scheme, which succeeded the local management of schools (LMS) scheme in 1999. Each LEA establishes its own scheme in accordance with national regulations which are updated annually. LEA finance teams monitor budgets and provide advice and support to schools.

LEAs are also responsible for applying for and administering specific grants, for example, the Standards Fund grants in England, which are available from central government to support a range of national priorities. For further information on how schools are funded see Chapter 2.

LEAs are required to produce asset management plans (AMPs). The aim of AMPs is to set out the information needed, and the criteria used, to make decisions about capital spending on school premises. LEAs secure capital funding from central government via the overall local authority capital settlement, and also deliver the capital programme.

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training in Wales (National Council – ELWa) took over LEA duties in respect of the funding of adult and community learning from April 2001.

Historical note: Prior to the introduction of this Act, there were grant-maintained schools (now foundation schools) which were funded by central government through the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS).

(iii) Monitoring and improving standards

Local education authorities are responsible for quality assurance in the schools which they maintain and for taking initial action in failing schools.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 has strengthened and clarified the role of the LEA in these areas. It imposes a duty on every LEA to exercise its functions with a view to promoting high standards of education for pupils of school age in its area.

The provisions of the 1998 Act require the Secretary of State and Welsh Office (now the National Assembly for Wales – NAfW) to issue a Code of Practice containing practical guidance for securing effective relationships between LEAs and schools. The Codes (DfES, 2001b and NAfW, 2001b), [18, 19] set out the principles which should underpin the relationship between LEAs and schools, and explains how the role of LEAs in supporting schools is expected to work in practice. The Codes also provide guidance on the exercise of those LEA powers and responsibilities which are most relevant to raising standards, in order to ensure that schools receive effective support without being subject to unnecessary intervention.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 also requires LEAs to prepare an Education Development Plan (EDP), consisting of a statement of their proposals for developing the provision of education for children in their area. The EDP must be approved by the Secretary of State. In Wales, the Plan is known as an Education Strategic Plan (ESP). The Local Government Act 2000 places a further duty on local authorities to prepare community strategies to promote the economic, environmental and social well-being of their areas. Work to improve education standards, through the EDPs, is a central role in these strategies.

In addition, since May 2000, LEAs have had a statutory duty to make unannounced visits to 10 per cent of the maintained schools in their area conducting National Curriculum key stage 2 and 3 tests either before, during or after the test period. The aim of the visits is to ensure that schools are complying with the statutory arrangements for the tests.

For further detail on the role of LEAs in improving standards see Chapter 10.

(iv) Staffing and staff development

Although the responsibility for deciding the number of teaching and non-teaching staff required, as well as for recruiting and selecting staff, is delegated to the school governing body of each individual school, the LEA remains the formal employer of staff in community schools, voluntary-controlled schools and special schools which are community schools. The respective powers and duties of LEAs and governing bodies for these categories of schools are set out in Schedule 16 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. In foundation schools and voluntary-aided schools, the school governing body is, in general, the employer, although the LEA may employ some non-teaching staff directly.

In community schools, special schools which are community schools and voluntary-controlled schools, the Chief Education Officer (CEO), or his/her representative, has a legal right to attend proceedings concerning the appointment or dismissal of staff employed to work at the school, for the purpose of giving advice. The CEO is not required to attend, but has discretion to decide when he thinks it would be useful. In foundation and voluntary-aided schools, the CEO does not have the same automatic statutory right of attendance at appointment and dismissal proceedings, although these may be accorded by the school governing body. If the governing body does not agree such rights, the CEO may seek a decision from the Secretary of State giving him/her such rights. The Code of Practice on LEA-School Relations (DfES, 2001b)[18] provides statutory guidance for LEAs, governing bodies and headteachers on this and other matters concerning raising standards in schools.

Local education authorities are responsible for making statutory checks on the background of all teachers and people employed in schools maintained by them, in accordance with DFE Circular 9/93[20] and the corresponding Welsh Office Circular 54/93.[21]

LEAs support teachers through advisory and support teams and the provision of professional development courses. LEAs previously oversaw the appraisal of teachers. However, following on from proposals in the Green Paper *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change* (DfEE, 1998a),[22] the Education (School Teacher Appraisal) Regulations 2000 introduced revised performance management arrangements. For further information on teacher appraisal see 9.2.1.

(v) Ensuring regular school attendance

Under the Education Act 1996 (which superseded the Education Act 1944), parents have a duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age (five to 16) receive an efficient full-time education suitable to their

age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs (SEN) they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

LEAs are charged with ensuring that parents meet this responsibility and, under the Education Act 1996, have a range of powers available to them. LEAs can issue a School Attendance Order requiring the parent to register the child at a school named in the Order (failure to comply is an offence); initiate legal proceedings against parents, where a registered pupil of compulsory school age is failing to attend school regularly; or may apply to the courts for an Education Supervision Order (Section 36 of the Children Act 1989) in relation to a particular child. From September 2002, all schools whose unauthorised absence rate is above the average for the sector, will have to set targets for improvement in discussion with their LEA.

The school attendance enforcement functions of LEAs are usually carried out by LEA employees called Education Welfare Officers (EWOs), or in some areas, Education Social Workers. EWOs work closely with schools and families on attendance and related pupil welfare issues. It is for each LEA to decide how many EWOs to employ and how best to deploy them. However, pilot projects are currently taking place to assess whether pupil attendance levels rise and truancy decreases if EWOs are managed by schools rather than by LEAs. There are two national associations representing the interests of EWOs: the Association for Education Welfare Management (AEWM) and the National Association of Social Workers in Education (NASWE).

All schools are required to keep a central record of pupils in the form of an admission register, more commonly known as the 'school roll'. In addition, schools are required to maintain an attendance register on which the presence or absence of each pupil (other than boarders) is recorded. The attendance register must be taken twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The attendance register must indicate whether the pupil was present, engaged on an approved educational activity, or was absent. Where a day pupil of compulsory school age was absent, it is to be made clear whether the absence was authorised by the school or unauthorised. Guidance on how to classify different types of pupil absence has been issued to all schools and LEAs (DFE, 1994).[23] Comparative tables for each secondary school, which include the percentage of half-days lost through authorised and unauthorised absence, are published annually in England and are available on the Department for Education and Skills's (DfES) website (www.dfes.gov.uk).

(vi) Inclusion and special educational needs provision

Local education authorities are responsible for assessing and making provision for the special educational needs (SEN) of children aged between two and 19 years, in mainstream schools, special units or special schools. LEAs must maintain an educational psychology service to assess the special educational needs of individual children. The Education Act 1996 empowers LEAs to make exceptional provision, in school or otherwise, for those pupils who are not attending schools because of illness or because they have been excluded, for example, in pupil referral units (PRUs).

Under the Education Act 1997, LEAs are required to prepare a statement of their arrangements for the education of children with behavioural difficulties. Advice is provided in DfEE Circular 1/98[24] and the corresponding Welsh Office Circular 19/98.[25] This statement, known as a Behaviour Support Plan, should include:

- arrangements for the provision of advice and resources to schools for promoting good behaviour and discipline, and for dealing with pupils with behavioural difficulties;
- provision for pupils educated otherwise than at school, for example, because of exclusion; and
- assisting pupils with behavioural difficulties to find places at suitable schools.

Guidance on all aspects of schools' pastoral and disciplinary policies, with examples of good practice, is contained in DfEE Circular 10/99[26] and NAfW Circular 3/99.[27]

In England and Wales, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) imposes a duties on LEAs and schools to plan strategically and to make progress in increasing accessibility to schools' premises, the curriculum and to improve the ways in which written information is provided to disabled pupils.

vii) Dealing with complaints

Section 409 of the Education Act 1996 requires all LEAs to make formal arrangements (subject to approval by the Secretary of State or the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW)) for dealing with complaints from parents or others. Such a complaint may be made against the LEA, or against the school governing body of an LEA-maintained school, and may concern the delivery of the National Curriculum and other related matters. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 imposes a new general requirement on school governing bodies to establish complaints procedures.

(viii) School meals

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 provides the Secretary of State in England and the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) with a power to set nutritional standards, or other nutritional requirements for school lunches, for registered pupils at maintained schools. In England, new nutritional standards for school meals were introduced from April 2001 under the Education (Nutritional Standards for School Lunches) (England) Regulations 2000, and guidance has been published for caterers on meeting nutritional standards for school meals (DfESE, 2001b).[28] The Act also places a duty on LEAs to provide school lunches for those pupils who wish to buy them. The Act makes no change to the legal requirement that children whose parents receive certain social security benefits, defined in the Education Act 1996 as income support and income-based Job Seekers Allowance, must receive free lunches. All other pupils must pay.

(ix) Grants and allowances

Under the Education Act 1996, LEAs also have the power to provide clothing for children who would otherwise be unable to take advantage of the education provided. LEAs may also pay grants for the purpose of enabling pupils to take advantage without hardship to themselves, or their parents, of any education facilities available to them. These powers were originally bestowed on the LEAs by the Education Act 1944 and other postwar legislation but, apart from the provision of clothing allowances by some LEAs, have largely fallen into disuse.

In September 1999, LEAs in 15 areas of England began pilot schemes of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for young people aged 16–19 who remain in post-compulsory education. This provision was extended to a further 41 areas in September 2000 (see 2.4.2).

LEAs also have the responsibility for assessing the eligibility of higher education students for assistance with tuition fees and the means-tested element of student loans. LEAs make the public contribution towards tuition fees to the higher education institutions and are reimbursed by the Government. For further information on grants and loans for higher education students, see 2.4.3.

(x) Other responsibilities

Local education authorities must:

- provide transport free of charge for pupils who do not live within walking distance of the nearest suitable school (see 1.11.2);
- compile returns and reports and respond to enquiries from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and other statutory bodies, such as the Local Government Ombudsman and the Audit Commission;

- set term and holiday dates for community schools and voluntary-controlled schools;
- devise and publish a curriculum statement;
- establish and service its Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE);
- establish health and safety policies and procedures and ensure that the school premises regulations are respected;
- secure the availability of governor training; and
- provide a youth service.

1.5.2 Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards (Boards)

In Northern Ireland, the local authorities which deal with education are the five Education and Library Boards (Boards), each of which includes one or more of the 26 district council areas. Boards are reappointed every four years, following the district council elections. Forty per cent of the members of each Board is made up of district councillors who have been nominated for appointment by their respective district council; 22 per cent represent the interests of the Protestant and Catholic churches; and the remaining members are appointed by the Minister on the basis of their interest in the services for which the Boards are responsible – for example, teachers, library and youth interests, trade unionists and business interests. Boards have their own finance establishment and architectural services and are independent of any other local government body. Boards may not raise their own income through rates and taxes and are wholly funded by the Department of Education (DE).

The Boards are responsible for pre-school, primary and secondary education, and for youth services and for library and information services in the local communities. They must ensure that there are sufficient schools to meet local needs. Boards employ teachers and are wholly responsible for the schools under their management, which are known as controlled schools, although most schools have delegated responsibility for managing their own budget and for enrolment arrangements. However, Boards have no powers to inspect the quality of education in the schools which they control. They are responsible for enforcing school attendance and provide a curriculum advisory and support service to all the schools in their area. They are required to prepare a statement of their arrangements for the education of children with behavioural difficulties. They also provide school meals services and transport to and from school. Boards assess students' eligibility for financial assistance towards tuition fees and living costs.

The Boards have no direct involvement in initial teacher training or higher education, although they are represented on the governing bodies of such institutions.

1.6 Administration and management at institutional level

1.6.1. School management and administration

Following the introduction of local management of schools (LMS) under the Education Reform Act 1988 and the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, most school administration and management functions are now delegated to school governing bodies and headteachers. However, delegation may, in certain specified circumstances, be withdrawn.

In order to make the self-management of schools effective, the DfES recommends the use of a school development plan. Advice on how to formulate the plan is given in two handbooks (Hargreaves *et al.*, 1989; Hargreaves, 1991).[29,30] The former Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI), now the Department of Education (DE), has published guidance (DENI, 1998),[31] and the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has carried out an evaluation of school development planning (ETI, 2001).[32]

a) Legal status of schools

Publicly funded education for pupils of statutory school age (five to 16 years) in **England and Wales** is provided largely in maintained schools. Some schools also provide for pupils aged 16–19.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 created a new legal framework of maintained schools:

- **Community schools** (formerly county schools) are mostly set up by LEAs; the school premises are owned by the LEA and the schools are fully funded by LEAs for both revenue and capital expenditure. The LEA employs staff and is the admissions authority.
- **Foundation schools** (many of which were formerly grant-maintained schools) are owned either by the school governing body or by trustees of the school, but they are funded by LEAs in a similar way to community schools. The governing body is the admissions authority and employs staff.

- **Voluntary-controlled schools** and **voluntary-aided schools**. These categories of school remained largely unchanged by the Act although they also now include former special agreement schools and those grant-maintained schools which had originally had voluntary- aided status. They are owned either by school trustees or by the founding body of the school (such as the Church of England or the Catholic Church). Both types of school receive full funding for revenue expenditure, but voluntary aided schools are expected to contribute 15 per cent of capital costs. The LEA employs the staff and is the admissions authority in voluntary-controlled schools, while the governing body performs these functions in voluntary-aided schools.

Note: City technology colleges (CTCs), city colleges for the technology of the arts (CCTAs) and city academies were established by the Education Reform Act 1988, but although they are largely publicly funded, they have been designated as independent schools (see 1.7.2).

All categories of maintained schools enjoy a high level of autonomy, but the school governing bodies of voluntary-aided and foundation schools have a greater number of responsibilities than community and voluntary-controlled schools. The composition of the governing bodies varies between the different categories of school but voluntary-aided, voluntary-controlled and foundation schools (where relevant) must include representatives of the school's founding body – 'foundation governors'. Foundation governors are appointed to make sure that the character of the school is preserved and developed. For voluntary-aided schools, foundation governors must outnumber the rest of the governors on the governing body.

Publicly funded schools in Northern Ireland are known as grant-aided schools. There are now four main categories of grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland. These are:

- **Controlled schools** (including controlled integrated schools). Education and Library Boards own and fund them for capital and revenue expenditure and also employ the staff. The school Board of Governors decides on admissions.

- **Maintained schools** are owned mainly by the Roman Catholic Church. They are fully funded for revenue expenditure by the Education and Library Boards but receive capital funding direct from the Department of Education. The school Board of Governors employs the staff and decides on admissions.

- **Grant-maintained integrated schools** are owned by trustees or the school Board of Governors. They are fully funded for both revenue and capital expenditure by the Department of Education.

The school Board of Governors employs the staff and decides on admissions.

- **Voluntary grammar schools** are owned by trustees or the school's founding body. The school Board of Governors is the employer and the admissions authority. Most voluntary grammar schools are fully funded for revenue and capital expenditure by the Department of Education, but some contribute towards capital costs.

b) School Governors

England and Wales — school governing bodies

All LEA-maintained schools in England and Wales must have a school governing body. Set up by law as corporate bodies, responsibility lies with the whole governing body rather than individual members. The size and composition of governing bodies varies according to the category and size of school. Each school has an Instrument of Government which specifies the constitution of its governing body. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 changed details of the composition, powers and proceedings of governing bodies. Since September 1999, the smallest primary school has been able to have as few as three governors, excluding the headteacher, while a large secondary school may now have a governing body of more than 20. Governing bodies include the following categories of governor:

- the headteacher, unless he or she chooses not to be a governor;
- parent governors, who are elected by parents of registered pupils at the school;
- LEA governors, who are appointed by the LEA;
- teacher governors, who are elected by teachers at the school;
- staff governors, who are elected by non-teaching staff at the school;
- co-opted governors, who are appointed by the governing body at the school;
- foundation or partnership governors (foundation schools and voluntary controlled schools only), who are appointed, for example, for the purpose of preserving the school's religious character.

The Education (School Government) (England) Regulations 1999, Education (School Government) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2000, and the Education (School Government) (Wales) Regulations 1999 cover current practice and procedure in all aspects of school governance, as required by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Education (School Government) (Terms of Reference) (England) Regulations 2000 clarify the roles and responsibilities of

governing bodies and headteachers, and set out the terms of reference for governing bodies. These came into force on 1 September 2000. Further guidance for LEAs, governing bodies and headteachers on how they can work together effectively to raise standards in schools is provided in the Codes of Practice on LEA-School Relations (DfES, 2001; NAfW, 2001).[18, 19]

The main roles of the governing body are:

(i) To provide a strategic view. It decides the general direction of the school and its curriculum, subject to the requirements of the National Curriculum. It must ensure that the National Curriculum is implemented and that religious education is taught. The school governing body decides how the budget will be spent and determines the number and composition of the staff. It is responsible for selecting all members of staff, including the headteacher, and is responsible for promoting and disciplining staff other than the headteacher. Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, there is a new duty on governing bodies to conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Since September 1998, all governing bodies have been required to set and, in some cases, publish targets each year for pupil performance in the core subjects (English, mathematics and science) at the end of each key stage. The targets are published in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents. Guidance on the role of governors in setting targets for school performance is provided by the DfES (DfES, 1998).[33]

(ii) To act as a 'critical friend' to the school, by providing support, advice and information, and by monitoring and evaluating the school's effectiveness. It also acts as a link between the local community and the school.

(iii) To ensure accountability. The headteacher and staff report to the governing body on the school's performance, and in its turn, the governing body answers for its actions to parents and the wider local community for the school's overall performance. It is required by law to prepare an annual report and to hold an annual parents' meeting.

(iv) To establish a written performance management policy to govern the implementation of school teacher appraisal, after ensuring all teachers at the school are consulted. The DfES has published guidance for school governors and headteachers on performance management arrangements in DfEE Circular 0051/2000.[34]

In practice, the governing body delegates much of the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school to the headteacher, while

retaining its strategic role in developing and monitoring the implementation of policy at the school.

Northern Ireland – Boards of Governors of grant-aided schools

The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 and the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 prescribe the membership, procedures and duties of the Boards of Governors of grant-aided schools, that is those which receive financial support from the Department of Education (DE). As in England and Wales, the size and composition of Boards of Governors varies according to the size and category of the school. Each school has a scheme of management which specifies the constitution of its Board of Governors. Boards of Governors include the following categories of governor:

- parent governors;
- teacher governors;
- in primary and secondary controlled schools – representative of the Protestant church authorities and Education and Library Boards (Boards);
- in nursery schools, grammar schools and special schools which are controlled schools – Education and Library Boards and the Department of Education (DE);
- in maintained schools – trustees, Education and Library Boards and, in the case of schools which are entitled to 100 per cent capital funding, the DE;
- in voluntary grammar schools – rustees and the DE and, in some cases, Education and Library Boards;
- in grant-maintained integrated schools – foundation governors and the DE.

As in England and Wales, there is also provision for members of the local business community to be co-opted on to the Board of Governors.

The roles and functions of Boards of Governors are broadly similar to those of governing bodies in England and Wales. Boards of Governors are required by law to prepare a governors' annual report and hold an annual parents' meeting. As described in the Education (Target Setting in Schools) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998, schools are also required to set their own targets for improvement in key stage assessments and public examinations.

c) Responsibilities of headteachers

Every school has a headteacher who is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school. Headteachers operate within the framework set by the school governing body for the

development of the school, and any other relevant authority, such as any foundation trust deed which may exist in relation to the school. They must, of course, abide by education legislation and the terms of their appointment. In carrying out their duties, headteachers must consult, as appropriate, with the local education authority, the school governing body, the staff of the school and the parents of its pupils. The headteacher usually delegates the management of specific aspects of curriculum organisation, teaching methods or pastoral care to senior members of the teaching staff.

(i) Organisation

Within the framework agreed by the governing body, headteachers are responsible for the general organisation of the school, and for its management and administration.

(ii) Staff management and leadership

Headteachers are responsible for day-to-day staff management and leadership. They are responsible for assigning duties, for supervising and participating in the appraisal of teacher performance, and for promoting the continuing professional development of all teachers. They also participate in the recruitment and appointment of the teaching and non-teaching staff.

(iii) Curriculum

The headteacher is responsible for day-to-day decisions about the management of the curriculum. Together with the school governing body, headteachers must ensure that the National Curriculum and its assessment procedures are carried out. Headteachers of maintained primary schools must also ensure that all pupils at the relevant stage of their education are assessed under the baseline assessment scheme adopted for the school.

(iv) Promoting good relations

Headteachers must promote good relations between the school and the parents of its pupils, by providing regular reports on pupil progress and information about the curriculum, organisation and other matters affecting the school. They should provide the governing body with the information, advice and recommendations it needs to carry out its role effectively and to understand how the school is performing.

(v) Resources

Headteachers may control some expenditure if asked by the governing body. They must also make arrangements for the security and effective supervision of the school buildings and their contents and of the school grounds.

(vi) Teaching

In so far as their other responsibilities allow, headteachers participate in the teaching of pupils at the school, including the provision of cover for absent teachers. In some very small schools, they may have joint responsibility for teaching a class. In a small school, the headteacher may take on the role of special educational needs (SEN) coordinator (SENCO) (see 8.8.1).

(vii) Evaluation

Headteachers are responsible for the regular review of the organisation of the school and of the standards of teaching and learning.

In Northern Ireland, headteachers are generally known as principals.

1.6.2 Management and administration of further education institutions

Further education colleges, tertiary colleges and sixth-form colleges are autonomous institutions which receive funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in England, or the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa), or the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland. Adult education centres in England and Wales are largely operated by LEAs but, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, LEAs will apply for funding to the LSC (in England) or the National Council – ELWa (in Wales).

a) Further education institutions in England and Wales

Under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, most further education institutions became autonomous from local education authorities as further education corporations and designated institutions. These institutions included further education colleges (both general and specialist), tertiary colleges and sixth-form colleges. Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, former voluntary aided schools which had joined the further education sector in 1992 as designated institutions also became incorporated. As public corporations, further education institutions are subject to company law. Further details are given in *The College Governor* (FEFC, 2000).[35]

Under the 1992 Act, adult education centres which provided largely part-time further education courses for adults continued to be maintained by LEAs. However, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, any provision made by LEAs is now funded by the Learning and Skills Council in England, and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (commonly known as the National Council – ELWa).

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 provides for the 'incorporation' of the designated institutions which were not incorporated under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The members of the institution's corporation (usually called the governing body) have a role similar to the Board of Directors of a company. They are responsible, within the limits imposed by their statutory obligations, for all decisions affecting the institution.

The regulations for the governance of institutions in the further education sector are laid down in two Statutory Instruments: Education (Government of Further Education Corporations) (Former Further Education Colleges) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/1963); and Education (Government of Further Education Corporations) (Former Sixth-form Colleges) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/1957). For historical reasons, there are slight differences in the regulations for further education colleges and sixth-form colleges. The membership and terms of appointment of the governing body are set out in an Instrument of Government. The Articles of Government define the respective roles and responsibilities of the principal and the governing body and its committees.

The Government has consulted on proposed changes to the governance of institutions in the further education sector. These changes are intended to increase accountability by broadening the membership of governing bodies. Following the consultation process, a document, *The College Governor*, was produced by the Further Education Funding Council (now the Learning and Skills Council – LSC) (FEFC, 2000).[35] Currently, **governing bodies**, or corporations, of institutions in the further education sector should consist of between 12 and 20 members. These include the principal, members drawn from local business, industry or professions relevant to the activities of the institution, co-opted members, staff members, student members, parent members, local authority members and local community members. The members have a four-year term of office and should meet at least once a term. The governing body may set up committees and delegate functions to committees or to the chairperson or the principal. Committees may advise on matters such as finance or employment policy. The responsibilities of the governing body include oversight of the institution's activities, determining the educational character and mission of the institution and ensuring the effective and efficient use of resources. They are responsible for all matters relating to the appointment, remuneration and conditions of service of senior staff, and set the framework for the pay and conditions of other staff. They must make an annual statement of accounts in line with directions from the Learning and Skills Council and National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa).

The **principal** is responsible for the day-to-day organisation, direction and management of the institution and for the leadership of the staff, including the determination of the institution's academic activities, after consulting the academic Board as appropriate. The principal is also responsible for the maintenance of student discipline.

In institutions other than sixth-form colleges, an **academic Board** must be created to advise the principal on the standards, planning, coordination, development and oversight of the academic work of the institution, including the arrangements for the admission, assessment and examination of students, and the procedures for the expulsion of students on academic grounds.

There is no nationally recommended organisational structure, and institutions are free to adapt their structures to meet changing circumstances. Most institutions are organised into departments. The head of department is responsible for a group of courses. Large departments may have senior lecturers responsible for the work of sections of the department. In larger institutions, several departments may be grouped into faculties or schools.

Most institutions employ a chief administrative officer, responsible for the general administration of the institution and for the supervision of non-teaching staff.

b) Adult education centres in England and Wales

Most adult education centres (sometimes known as adult education institutions or community colleges) are run by local education authorities (although under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, funding is derived from the Learning and Skills Council or the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa). LEAs are permitted, but not obliged, to set up schemes for the local management of these institutions, delegating the management of the budget and staff to the institution.

Day-to-day management is delegated to the principal or director of the centre.

Adult education centres may be organised along departmental lines, similar to those of further education institutions. The centres usually have one administrative centre, with teaching spread across a number of sites, some of which may be on school premises which remain open in the evening. These centres have a small number of full-time staff who coordinate the work of a large number of part-time staff. However, the organisation of adult education may vary between LEAs (see 6.5.4).

c) Further education colleges in Northern Ireland

Under the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, the governing bodies of further education institutions are responsible for ensuring suitable provision of further education in their institutions, taking account of any other educational facilities in their area. They must also consider provision for people over compulsory school age with special educational needs (SEN).

Since April 1998, under the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, the responsibility for the management of institutions of further education has been transferred to the incorporated governing bodies, which now have a legal status similar to that of public companies. These changes are broadly similar to those which took effect in England and Wales in 1993.

The membership and terms of appointment of the governing body are set out in an Instrument of Government. The Articles of Government define the respective roles and responsibilities of the principal and the governing body and its committees.

Each governing body has between 12 and 18 members, at least 50 per cent of whom must be drawn from the local business community or professions. Either one or two are elected by the staff of the college; and one member is elected by the student body. Two members are appointed by the Education and Library Board in whose area the college is situated and no more than two members may be co-opted by the other members of the governing body. The principal of the college has automatic membership of the governing body.

The governing body of each college carries a major responsibility for ensuring the effective management of its education and training provision and for planning its future development. Together with the principal as chief executive, it constitutes the highest level of decision-making and has ultimate responsibility for all the affairs of the college, its organisation and its resources.

Day-to-day management is carried out by the principal and senior staff.

Further education colleges in Northern Ireland are organised along departmental lines similar to those in England and Wales (see above).

There are no sixth-form colleges in Northern Ireland.

1.6.3 Management and administration of higher education institutions

Most universities have been created by Royal Charter but others are based on Parliamentary Statute. Whatever the legal basis, each university is self-governing. Any amendment to charters and statutes is made by

the Crown, acting through the Privy Council, on the application of the universities themselves. The Education Reform Act 1988 made provision for higher education corporations and, in general, the 'new' universities are managed by such corporations. Most of the 'new' universities were previously polytechnics. Polytechnics were originally set up by charitable endowment, while many of the other higher education institutions were originally established by local education authorities, but now also enjoy autonomous status. The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 allows institutions of higher education to include the word 'university' in their title, subject to their fulfilling certain criteria. All universities and some other higher education institutions have the power to award their own degrees.

As autonomous institutions, universities and other higher education institutions are responsible for their own internal organisation. They arrange their own administration and recruit staff as they consider appropriate. However, broadly similar patterns are followed by all.

a) Universities

The overall head of a university is usually known as the Vice-Chancellor. The post of Chancellor is an honorary, non-executive position. The head of the administrative section is usually called the Registrar. The most senior governing body is known as the Court and comprises senior staff and elected external members. The Court determines matters of general policy and is not involved with the day-to-day running of a university.

The next most senior body is the Senate, which normally consists of professorial staff, heads of department and representatives of other interests such as non-professorial staff, trade unions, and so on. It takes decisions on matters which are beyond the competence of faculties.

Related departments in universities are grouped into faculties (for example, Faculty of Arts, Science, Social Sciences, etc.) for administrative purposes. The head of a faculty is known as the Dean, and this post sometimes rotates among senior teaching members of the departments within the faculty, with the term of office lasting for one, two or possibly three years. At some universities, the Dean devotes his/her whole time to faculty business and does not teach while in office, and at others, a Dean may have a reduced teaching commitment. All members of the teaching staff are members of the appropriate faculty, and the faculty is required to take certain actions and decisions, such as approving new courses and formally awarding degrees. The precise function of the faculty varies between universities. There may also be administrative groupings within a faculty, such as a School of Modern Languages within a Faculty of Arts. Every faculty forms a number of committees, and there is considerable variation between universities in the frequency of full faculty meetings and the number of committees.

There is no legislation requiring student representation on the bodies mentioned above, but many do have one or two student representatives, whose participation may be limited to a non-voting role. Student representatives may be asked to leave a meeting when certain issues are under discussion.

b) Other higher education institutions

Other higher education institutions have similar internal divisions, although names for these may be different and structures are generally simpler. The title of Provost, Rector or Principal may be given to the head of the institution, and the head of administration may be known as either Registrar or Secretary. As in universities, the governing bodies include representatives of the outside community.

1.7 Private education

In general, private education is that which is provided in institutions which are largely privately funded, receiving most of their income from tuition fees. There is private provision at all levels of education.

1.7.1 Private nursery provision

Private provision may take the form of day nurseries, pre-school groups or playgroups (often run by voluntary bodies), privately run nursery schools and nursery classes in independent schools.

In England, independent schools must be registered with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES); and, in Wales, with the National Assembly for Wales Training and Education Department (NATED) (boarding-schools must also register with the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales). In Northern Ireland, independent schools must register with the Department of Education (DE).

Under the Care Standards Act 2000, private nursery schools and day nurseries must be registered with the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) (in England), or the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (in Wales). Hitherto registration was the responsibility of the Social Services Department of the local authority.

The division between public and private provision at this level of education has become less distinct recently. Publicly-funded early years education is now being expanded and developed by cooperation with the private and voluntary sectors, who receive a nursery education grant subject to meeting certain conditions and requirements. In addition, the mandate of Ofsted and Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for

Education and Training in Wales, has been broadened to include an early years inspectorate, which inspects public and publicly funded private early years education and, in England, childcare provision.

1.7.2 Private schools

Private schools are often known as independent schools. Some long-established secondary private schools are known as 'public schools'. Apart from city technology colleges and city academies, independent schools do not receive direct government funding. However, most independent schools have charitable status and, as such, benefit from tax relief. They may also apply for some public support, for example, through the National Lottery.

a) England and Wales

In England and Wales, the Education Act 1996 defines a private or independent school as: 'any school at which full-time education is provided for five or more pupils of compulsory school age (whether or not such education is also provided for pupils over or under that age), not being a school maintained by a local education authority (LEA' (Education Act 1996, Section 463).

The regulatory requirements which independent schools must meet are laid down in Sections 463 to 478 of the Education Act 1996. They must provide satisfactory standards of premises, accommodation, instructions and staffing.

Independent schools must be registered with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) or the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) Education Department. Schools are normally inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) once every five years in order to advise the DfES or the Welsh Assembly about the school's fitness to be registered. The school receives, in confidence, a letter setting out the inspectors' findings. Schools which give rise to serious concerns may receive a further inspection and this normally results in a published report. Where independent schools are judged to be failing or likely to fail to give their pupils an acceptable standard of education, they are given the opportunity to make the necessary improvements. A school which fails to meet the required standards may be deleted from the register of independent schools.

Independent schools which are accredited by the Independent Schools Council (ISC) are inspected by arrangement with the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), under a framework[36] approved by the Government and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). The ISC represents the interests of eight associations of independent schools (two representing governing bodies, five for headteachers and one for

bursars). Of the 2, 400 independent schools in the UK, approximately 1, 275 belong to the constituent associations of the ISC; these schools educate some 80 per cent of pupils in the independent sector. A school must be accredited by the ISC before it is admitted to membership of a constituent association. Accreditation involves a full inspection followed by a written report. ISC schools are subsequently inspected every six years by inspection teams drawn from professional associations within the ISC and led by a trained team leader who may be a Registered Inspector. Inspections normally last five days and procedures are similar to those in maintained schools. The full inspection report is sent to the schools and a summary is given to parents.

The ISI also carries out certain statutory functions on behalf of the Government to ensure that standards required by law are met, enabling the school to remain on the register of independent schools.

The curriculum of independent schools is the responsibility of the headteacher and governors of the school, and although independent schools must have regard to the National Curriculum, they are not required to implement it fully. However, the curriculum is one of the major aspects considered in a school inspection, and both the range and the depth of the curriculum offered must be appropriate for the age, aptitude, ability and special educational needs (SEN) of the pupils in the school.

Conditions of employment for teachers in the private sector are drawn up by the governors of the school and may make reference to, or be independent of, the conditions applicable to teachers in the maintained sector. Although salary scales are usually similar to those of teachers in the maintained sector, they may be lower or higher. It is normally assumed that teachers in independent schools will take an active part in the extracurricular life of the school ,and this may be stated explicitly in their terms of contract, particularly in the case of boarding-schools. Teachers in independent schools are not required to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Note: Voluntary schools which are set up and, in many cases, owned by a voluntary body (usually a church body), are considered to be maintained schools rather than independent schools, since they are largely publicly funded and may not charge tuition fees.

(i) City technology colleges (CTCs) and city academies

City technology colleges

City technology colleges (CTCs) and city colleges for the technology of the arts (CCTAs) are a category of independent school originally created by the Education Reform Act 1988 and now governed by the Education Act 1996. The 1988 Act made provision for the establishment,

in urban areas, of CTCs for pupils of all abilities aged 11 to 19 years. CTCs are owned and managed by sponsors or promoters who have entered into agreement with the Secretary of State. Sponsors are required to make a substantial contribution towards the cost of buildings and capital equipment. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) provides an annual grant, at a similar level to comparable maintained schools, to cover normal running costs including staff salaries, overheads, repairs and maintenance, insurance, equipment and staff development. Unlike other independent schools, these institutions may not charge tuition fees. CTCs are not registered in the same way as other independent schools, but each has a separate agreement with the Secretary of State. However, they all have the following characteristics as laid down in Section 482 of the Education Act 1996:

- they must be in urban areas;
- they must provide education for pupils of different abilities from the age of 11 who are wholly, or mainly, drawn from the area in which the school is situated;
- they must provide a broad curriculum with an emphasis on science and technology, or, in the case of a CCTA, on the application of technology to the creative and performing arts; and
- they must not charge fees.

CTCs, like maintained schools, are inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) under the School Inspections Act 1996. Inspectors are required to report on:

- the quality of education provided by the school;
- the educational standards achieved in the school;
- whether the financial resources made available to the school are managed efficiently; and
- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school.

There are 15 CTCs in operation, in England, including one CCTA in South London.

There are no CTCs in Wales.

City academies

City academies are a new type of independent school in England; the first schools became operational in September 2001, although most will become operational from August 2002. These academies will replace seriously failing secondary maintained schools in urban areas. They will be built and managed by partnerships involving the Government

and sponsors from the voluntary sector, churches and business. They have the following characteristics:

- cater for all-ability 11- to 16/18-year-olds, according to the pattern of local provision;
- be registered as independent schools, subject to inspection by Ofsted, but charge no fees;
- have state-of-the-art facilities (whether in newly built or refurbished premises);
- offer a broad curriculum, but with a special emphasis on one area of the curriculum, such as science and technology, and an emphasis on the needs of the individual pupil;
- develop in their pupils the qualities of enterprise, self-reliance and responsibility which young people need for adult life.

(ii) Non-maintained special schools

Non-maintained special schools are schools in England approved by the Secretary of State as special schools which are not maintained by the state, but charge fees on a non-profit-making basis. Most non-maintained special schools are run by major charities or charitable trusts.

b) Northern Ireland

There are 22 independent schools in Northern Ireland. The Education (NI) Order 1986, as amended by the Education (NI) Order 1996, provides a similar definition for independent schools as that for England and Wales. However, a minimum number of pupils is not specified. Independent schools are required to be registered with the Department of Education (DE). The regulatory requirements which independent schools must meet are laid down in Articles 38 to 43 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986. Teachers in independent schools are not required to have eligibility to teach. In similar procedures to those for England and Wales, schools are normally inspected once every five years by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) which advises the DE about schools' fitness to be registered.

There are no city technology colleges (CTCs) or city academies in Northern Ireland.

1.7.3 Private further education institutions

There are a number of independent institutions which offer post-compulsory education. For the most part, these institutions offer an academic education leading to General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-Level) examinations and General Certificate of Education Advanced Supplementary qualification (GCE AS

qualification), English as a foreign language (EFL) courses, short re-sit programmes for students wishing to improve their grades and intensive revision programmes during Easter and other vacation periods. There are also a number of specialist institutions such as secretarial and business colleges, and art colleges.

The British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education (BAC) monitors standards and recognises as efficient those institutions which satisfy specific criteria.

The Conference for Independent Further Education (CIFE) was founded in 1973 as a professional association for independent sixth-form and tutorial colleges. It promotes best practice, high standards of professional conduct and provides a forum for the exchange of views and information between its member colleges. There are currently 34 CIFE colleges throughout England. Member institutions are subject to inspection at least every three years.

1.7.4 Private higher education

There is only one private university, the University of Buckingham. It receives no direct government funding. However, students on designated courses may be eligible for financial help in the form of a loan, and a means-tested contribution towards tuition fees and student support. The academic year begins in January or July and the standard honours degree is contained within two calendar years of four terms each.

There are also a small number of private institutions which offer courses of higher education.

1.8 Participation by and consultation of the wider community

Community participation in the education decision-making process is effected by various means:

- through the election, by the local community in England and Wales, of councillors to local authorities, and their subsequent representation on the authority's scrutiny committees;
- through the appointment of elected district councillors and representatives of local interest and community groups in Northern Ireland to the Education and Library Boards;
- through the representation of different groups on the governing bodies of institutions at all levels of education;

- through participation in government consultation procedures preceding reforms; and
- through participation in national and local pressure groups

Accountability to the local and wider community is enhanced by the legal requirement to publish a wide range of information about individual institutions (see following sections).

1.8.1 Community participation in schools

In England and Wales, under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents have a duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) receive an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs (SEN) they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. In Northern Ireland, the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 outlines the duties of parents to secure full-time education for their children and gives the Education and Library Boards (Boards) powers of enforcement.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 made it a statutory requirement to have parent representation on local authority committees dealing with education matters and, since the passing of the Local Government Act 2000, parents have been able to vote in committee on all education matters. A network for parent governor representatives has also recently been launched.

The composition of school governing bodies (in England and Wales) and boards of governors (in Northern Ireland) reflects several sectors of the community, including the local business community and parents.

There is also a measure of community participation in the school inspection process; school inspection teams must include at least one inspector (known as a Lay Inspector) without personal experience in the management or the provision of education in any school, otherwise than as a governor or in any other voluntary capacity (School Inspections Act 1996, Schedule 3). This Lay Inspector may be drawn from industry and commerce or from the wider community. In Northern Ireland, school inspection teams may also include a Lay Inspector but it is not obligatory.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires all schools to adopt a home–school agreement, drawn up in consultation with parents. The agreement must explain clearly the responsibilities of the school, and of parents, and what the school expects of its pupils. A parental declaration is used in conjunction with the agreement. However, the signing of such a declaration must not be made a condition for admission to the school.

a) Pupils' and parents' rights

Children have a right to 'a good education', and parents have a right to know what their child is being taught at school. A variety of legislation gives parents certain rights. These include the right to:

- free education for their child at their preferred school, provided that the places have not been filled with pupils who have a stronger claim;
- a written report on their child's progress; a summary of the school's inspection report; a performance table, giving comparable information on attendance rates and examination results in local schools; a school prospectus; and the governors' annual report;
- an assessment of their child's special educational needs (SEN) (if any) by the LEA and appropriate education provided in accordance with the Education Act 1996;
- stand for election as a parent governor or to vote for a person of their choice; and
- appeal on a number of issues, ranging from school admissions, SEN, examination results and exclusions from school.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 also makes provision for ballots of parents within a particular area or group of schools, at their request, to be held to determine whether grammar schools in that area (or which take entrants from that group of schools) should retain their selective admissions arrangements.

Schools may have Parent–Teacher Associations (PTAs). Some PTAs provide parents with the opportunity to raise and discuss issues of concern with teaching staff, but many function primarily as fund-raising bodies. Individual PTAs may belong to regional federations, such as the Greater London Federation of Parent–Teacher Associations, and through this to the National Confederation of Parent–Teacher Associations, which acts as a lobby group on behalf of parents.

Parents may also join other lobby groups, the most notable being the Campaign for State Education (CASE), which campaigns for:

- the right of all to experience the highest-quality state education, regardless of race, gender, home circumstances, ability or disability;
- a fully comprehensive and locally accountable education system; and
- the development of a partnership between home, school and the community.

Parents in Northern Ireland have broadly similar rights to parents in England and Wales.

b) Publication of information

A range of information about individual institutions is required by law to be made available to parents, prospective parents and the wider community. It is intended to inform parents' decisions about their children's futures, as well as to make institutions more accountable to the communities they serve and to encourage them to improve their performance. Information is published in:

(i) School prospectuses and governors' annual report

Schools must publish a prospectus and an annual report. In England, the prospectus must contain a range of information, including: [37, 38]

- a statement on the school's ethos and values;
- information on admissions;
- details of any affiliations with a particular religion and information concerning religious education.

The annual report must include:

- a financial statement;
- information on arrangements and facilities for pupils with disabilities;
- information on school security;
- pupil performance targets;
- information on teachers' professional development;
- a statement on progress made in implementing the post-inspection action plan.

Both the prospectus and the annual report must include the information about the school's special educational needs (SEN) policy and its implementation details of National Curriculum assessment results; and information about the rates of pupil absence from school. In addition, secondary schools must provide the results of pupils' performance in national examinations and information about the destination of school-leavers.

There are some differences in the requirements for school prospectuses and governors' annual reports in Wales. Full details are given in NAfW Circular 14/01[39] and NAfW Circular 15/01.[40]

A review of the contents of school prospectuses and governors' annual reports is currently taking place in Northern Ireland.

(ii) Comparative tables

Information on the performance of pupils and students in national assessments and on qualifications is also published nationally, in the form of comparative tables.

In **England**, tables are published for all primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and further education institutions. The tables also include results for independent schools.

The information published includes the performance of pupils in:

- the main public examinations and vocational qualifications normally taken at ages 16 and 18; and
- National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments taken at the end of key stage 2 (age 11).

Other information is also provided such as the percentage of total sessions (half-days) lost through absence. The information provided in the tables is intended to inform LEAs and institutions, and to focus their attention on areas where action is needed, as well as to inform students' and parents' decisions about their own and their children's futures. In 1999, for the first time, the published key stage 2 test results in England showed how pupils' achievements in these tests had changed over the four-year test period from 1996 to 1999. The tables are also available via the internet.

In **Wales**, the National Assembly collects and publishes the results of key stages 1 and 2 assessments and secondary school performance information for each local education authority area and for Wales as a whole. Since July 2001, following a period of consultation, the national publication of secondary school performance information for individual schools has been discontinued. Primary and secondary schools are, however, required to publish their results in the school prospectus. In **Northern Ireland**, until January 2001, information on the performance of pupils in secondary schools was also published in the form of comparative tables. However, following a Department of Education (DE) consultation, it was decided to cease publication of these tables.

(iii) School inspection reports and post-inspection action plans

When a school has been formally inspected (see 10.4.1), a summary of the inspection report must be sent to all parents and the full report is made available to parents and members of the public. Inspection reports on schools in England and Northern Ireland are also available via the internet. The school governing body must draw up an Action Plan highlighting areas of concern mentioned in the inspection report and detailing measures to be taken. This must also be sent to parents and made available to the public.

1.8.2 Community participation in further education

Community participation is currently assured by representation of community and business groups on the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) and their local councils and consortia, and on the governing bodies of further education institutions.

The LSC in England includes members appointed by the Secretary of State, drawn from business, industry, professional bodies and local authorities, as well as members from the field of further education. Like its predecessor (the Further Education Funding Council), the LSCs will consult widely before adopting new policies and procedures. The National Council – ELWa includes similar representation.

The formal participation of organisations from the local community is primarily through the membership of the institution's **governing body**. The Corporation (governing body) of a further education institution has between 10 and 20 members. At least half are from business and industry, including one nominee from the local Learning and Skills Council. The Corporation may also have up to two elected members of staff, an elected student member and up to five representatives of the local community. In former sixth-form colleges, there may also be an elected parent member and members representing the founding body of the institution.

In England and Wales, published information on the performance of students in national assessments and qualifications (see 1.8.1b) also covers further education institutions. The information published includes the performance of pupils in the main public examinations and vocational qualifications normally taken at ages 16 and 18. These tables are also available via the internet.

Students and employers have certain rights with respect to further education.

a) Students' rights

Prospective further education students have the right to:

- reliable and impartial advice, given at the right time, on: the choices available, including information from a careers officer or teacher on courses and qualifications at age 16; the schools and colleges that offer them; and what would be the most appropriate option for each student;
- information on how courses will be taught and assessed;
- information on colleges' policies and arrangements for students with learning difficulties and disabilities;

- information on accommodation, if it is necessary to live away from home;
- fair and efficient procedures for admission to an institution of further education;
- be shown teaching and other facilities available for students; and
- be told college charges and about any financial help that is available.

Existing enrolled students have a right to:

- prompt payment of grants or other financial assistance (see 2.4.3), where appropriate;
- high-quality teaching, subject to independent inspection;
- regular information on personal progress and achievements; and
- access to careers advice and other guidance and counselling.

b) Employers' rights

Employers dealing with further education institutions have the right to expect:

- efficient handling of enquiries;
- that the local college is a responsible and responsive part of the community;
- information to help recruit suitable employees and to place employees on the right courses;
- good teaching for employees; and
- information about any facilities and any charges made.

Everyone has the right to open, fair and effective complaints procedures if they are not satisfied with the services they receive.

1.8.3 Community participation in higher education

Different sections of the community at national and local level are represented on the councils of the funding bodies, on the Northern Ireland Higher Education Council and on the governing bodies of institutions.

The **Higher Education Funding Council for England** (HEFCE) and the **Higher Education Funding Council for Wales** (commonly known as the Higher Education council – ELWa; see 1.4.3) include members nominated by the Secretary of State, drawn from business, industry, professional bodies and local authorities, as well as members

from the field of higher education. In the case of the NIHEC, the membership reflects both UK national, academic and research interests and also local business and community interests.

The community in general is represented on the most senior **governing body** in a university, which is the Court. This comprises elected external members, as well as senior staff.

a) Students' rights

There is no legislation requiring student representation on the governing bodies of higher education institutions. However, most institutions invite participation or observation by elected student representatives.

Prospective students should receive clear and accurate information about universities and colleges and the courses they offer; the usual entry requirements; the quality of provision; the residential accommodation available; and any facilities for people with disabilities or learning difficulties. Their applications should be handled fairly and efficiently. If they apply for financial help, they should receive full and accurate information about what is available.

Existing students should receive prompt payment of grants for fees, loans and any other funds for which they are eligible. The university or college should explain the aims and structure of the course. Students should be able to register a view about the course. They should receive a high standard of teaching, guidance and counselling. There should be proper arrangements for student security and safety. Students are entitled to equal treatment regardless of their sex or ethnic background.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has published a code of practice on student complaints and appeals (QAA, 2000),[41] as part of a wider code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education.

b) Employers' rights

Employers should receive information about what graduates and holders of diplomas have been taught and can do, along with clear explanations about the purpose of work placements and the arrangements for supervising students. They are also entitled to ask for contracts for any research or consultancy work they ask the university or college to do.

1.9. Guidance services

1.9.1. Guidance in England

a) The Connexions Service

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 provides for the establishment of the Connexions Service in **England**. This is a new service to support and encourage young people to continue in, return to and participate effectively in education and training. The service brings together a range of providers of existing services such as careers services, youth services and other statutory and voluntary services, for young people to create an integrated and coherent service to provide information, advice and guidance. The service is delivered through the establishment of Connexions Partnerships, based on the same areas as those covered by local Learning and Skills Councils, who are responsible for strategic planning and funding. Local Management Committees are responsible for local delivery of services.

The Connexions Service is intended to be a universal service for all young people aged 13 – 19, but it will give particular attention to young people who are disengaged, or at risk of becoming disengaged, from education and training. A network of personal advisers (PAs) is being established to help young people gain the greatest personal benefit from education and training. PAs are expected to contribute to raising aspirations and removing barriers to effective engagement in learning, and provide extra support to young people facing particular difficulties and from particularly disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For example, those from some black and minority ethnic communities; those in and leaving care; young people with learning difficulties and disabilities; teenage mothers and young carers; and offenders and those who misuse drugs or alcohol.

PAs work with other staff in schools and colleges, including special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), education welfare officers (EWOs), learning mentors, work-experience coordinators and pastoral care staff. Some of the features of the PA role include:

- providing personal development opportunities, which enable young people to work with others, and take on leadership responsibilities, through access to sporting, cultural and volunteering activities;
- assessing, and subsequently influencing, the quality of education and training provision for young people;
- giving impartial advice and guidance to young people on learning and vocational opportunities;
- widening participation, preventing exclusion, increasing retention, raising achievement and progression.

b) Careers education

The Connexions Service also performs, for this age group, the duty of the Secretary of State to provide careers services to school and further education students set out in Sections 8 and 9 of the Employment and Training Act 1973. Careers education is defined as education designed to prepare people for taking decisions about their careers, including training, employment or occupation, or any course of education. Current guidance on all aspects of schools' pastoral and disciplinary policies which help schools reduce the risk of disaffection among pupils is provided by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) (DfEE Circular 10/99).[26] The guidance emphasises early intervention and prevention through cooperation with other agencies, such as the Youth Service and Education Welfare Service, and through partnership with parents.

Under the terms of the Education Act 1997, since 1 September 1998, schools have been required to offer a programme of careers education to all pupils aged 13 – 16 years. They must also provide an appropriate range of careers information to students in this age range; allow officers from the careers service access to pupils at key decision-making points during their education; and, in addition, are encouraged to provide careers education for younger pupils and for those in post-compulsory secondary education (age 16+). Details are provided in DfEE Circular 5/98[42] and DfEE Circular 5/97.[43]

The 1997 Education Act also required further education institutions to work with the careers services and to provide students with access to a wide range of careers information. Guidance on the legal requirements has been made available (DfEE Circular 6/97).[44]

1.9.2 Guidance in Wales

a) Careers Wales

A new careers service was launched in Wales in April 2001. Careers Wales provides an all-age, integrated advice, information and guidance service working with schools and colleges, employers and partners such as the Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) and the voluntary sector. Careers Wales consists of seven companies contracted by the Welsh Assembly Government to deliver careers advice and guidance to all young people up to the age of 19. It also supports schools and colleges in the delivery of work experience and enterprise awareness. Information and advice is also provided to adults.

The Education Act 1997 sets out the duties of schools and colleges with regard to careers education and guidance. The National Assembly has

now extended the age range covered by the 1997 Act. The Education Act 1997 requires that:

- all publicly funded schools provide a programme of careers education to all students aged 14–16 (Section 43);
- all publicly funded schools and colleges provide students with access to careers advisers to enable careers services to fulfil their contract duties on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) (Section 44);
- all publicly funded schools and colleges work with Careers Wales companies to ensure that students have access to materials providing careers guidance and to a wide range of up-to-date reference materials relating to careers education and career opportunities (Section 45).

The Education (Extension of Careers Education, Wales) Regulations, 2001, extends this Act by requiring that a programme of careers education be provided for all students aged 16–19 in schools and colleges. The law therefore effectively requires schools and colleges to provide a programme of careers education for all young people from age 13 (Year 9) to age 19.

b) Careers education and guidance

A non-statutory framework for Careers Education and Guidance (CEG) for 11- to 19-year-olds in Wales describes a common minimum CEG entitlement for young people aged 11–19 in schools and colleges in Wales. The aims of CEG programmes are defined within three areas. CEG programmes should provide the teaching, learning, information and advice that help young people to:

- increase their **self-awareness** and identify their personal **development** needs;
- become aware of changing **career opportunities** in the labour market, further and higher education, and self-employment;
- develop skills in **career planning** that help them make choices and manage their career development.

In addition to guidance on careers education, the National Assembly for Wales Training and Education Department (NATED) offers guidance on pupil support and social inclusion (NAfW, Circular 3/99).[27]

1.9.3 Guidance in Northern Ireland

Careers education is one of the six cross-curricular themes of the Northern Ireland Curriculum which must be provided during key stages 3 and 4. The objectives are to develop in pupils:

- personal knowledge and development;
- knowledge of opportunities available; and
- skills and personal qualities in relation to career development.

The Training and Employment Agency provides a careers service to schools and young people in Northern Ireland.

1.10 Academic calendar

The academic calendar is determined by the institutions themselves in further education and higher education and by local education authorities (LEAs) and school governing bodies in primary and secondary schools.

1.10.1 Academic year

Most educational institutions operate a three-term academic year, although the length of these terms may vary according to the level of education.

a) Academic year in schools

In **England and Wales**, the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations 1981 require schools to be open for a minimum of 380 half-day sessions per year. The legal school year runs from 1 September to 31 August. The LEA decides the dates of the school terms for community schools, special schools which are community schools and voluntary-controlled schools, and the school governing body determines the dates of school terms for voluntary-aided schools and foundation schools. The school year is divided into three terms: autumn term, spring term and summer term. There is normally a long summer break of about six weeks in July and August and shorter breaks of two to three weeks at Christmas and at Easter, although in some areas the autumn term begins before 1 September.

A commission set up by the Local Government Association (LGA) has recently recommended the reform of the traditional school year. The Commission favours the introduction of a six-term year. Each term would be broadly equal length (about 6 weeks) with two terms before Christmas. Holidays would include a two-week break in October; a Christmas break which is never less than two weeks; a summer break which is always more than five weeks; and five flexible days that can be used for holidays or term days according to local needs.

In **Northern Ireland**, schools are required to be open for 190 days a year. The dates of terms and holidays are set by the Education and Library Boards (Boards) for controlled schools. For all other schools, the dates of terms and holidays are set by the Board of Governors. The school year runs from the beginning of September to the end of the following June, with eight weeks' summer break and approximately two weeks at Christmas and at Easter.

b) Academic year in further education

The full academic year in further education runs from 1 September to 31 August in England, and from 1 August to 31 July in Wales, although the teaching year is generally shorter. Full-time students usually attend for three terms per year, with holidays at Christmas, Easter and in the summer. However, there is considerable variation in the way in which courses are organised. Some courses are offered on a sandwich-course basis. Colleges are increasingly offering courses throughout the year, including during the traditional holiday periods.

c) Academic year in higher education

The full academic year for higher education runs from 1 September to 31 August. The teaching year is considerably shorter. Organisation of courses is at the discretion of the individual institution, but follows similar patterns. For first-degree students, attendance is normally required from a date varying from the beginning of September to the beginning of October through to the end of June, with breaks lasting between three and five weeks at Christmas and Easter. The organisation of teaching traditionally reflected this three-term system. Institutions are now increasingly organising their teaching along the two-semester system, although this does not necessarily involve changing the dates of required attendance. All institutions have fewer teaching weeks in the third term to allow time for revision and examinations. Some cease teaching at the end of the second term. A few have a 'reading week' in the middle of a term, during which no teaching is done and students are expected to work independently. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have shorter terms. Certain institutions offer accelerated degrees which require student attendance for longer periods during the academic year.

1.10.2 Weekly and daily timetable

The weekly and daily timetable is decided at institutional level in all phases of education.

a) Weekly and daily timetables in pre-school settings and schools

The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999 and the Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) Regulations 2000 stipulate that a nursery school or nursery class maintained by an LEA must provide at least 1.5 hours of suitable activities, on every half-day session on which a school or class meets. However, sessions are generally longer, lasting 2–2.5 hours, with the majority of children attending for one session each school day, either morning or afternoon. Under the arrangements for payments of nursery education grant to private and voluntary providers of pre-school education, each session should be on average at least 2.5 hours. The number of sessions provided in a week and the number of sessions attended by each child, and the arrangement of those sessions, may vary.

In **England and Wales**, the school governing body determines the times at which a school opens and closes each day. In accordance with the Education Act 1996, in some categories of school, governors must discuss any proposed alterations in the times of school sessions with the headteacher, the LEA and with the parents at the Annual Parents' Meeting. In other categories of school, the governing body is advised, but not required, to follow these procedures. Schools are generally open between 9.00 a.m. and 3.30/4.00 p.m., with approximately 1 hour for lunch. A break of around 15 minutes may punctuate the morning and/or afternoon session.

Minimum weekly lesson times (including religious education) are suggested in DES Circular 7/90[45] and WO Circular 43/90.[46] These are: 21 hours for pupils aged five to seven years, 23.5 hours for pupils aged eight to 11 years and 24 hours for pupils aged 12 to 16 years. These times are in addition to the daily act of worship, registration and breaks for lunch and recreation. Most schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum.

In **Northern Ireland**, pupils under eight are required to attend school for a minimum of 3 hours a day. Those aged over eight must attend for 4.5 hours a day, in two sessions, separated by a period of not less than half an hour.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, classes normally take place five days per week, Monday to Friday, but there may be organised optional sporting activities on Saturdays.

Based on the above information and on a 190-day (38–week) school year, the annual minimum hours of taught time in England and Wales (hours of attendance in Northern Ireland) are:

Age	Annual minimum taught hours/hours of attendance	
	England and Wales	Northern Ireland
5–7	760	570
8–11	893	855
12–16	912	855

b) Weekly and daily timetables in further education

Unlike schools, institutions of further education operate three sessions per day: morning, afternoon and evening. They are generally open from around 9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.

Courses in further education institutions vary in their duration, and in the number of teaching hours per week, and may include:

- full-time courses lasting one or more academic years, but the number of hours students are required to attend each day is determined by course requirements;
- short full-time courses lasting 18 weeks or less, which are independent of any period of industrial training or employment;
- sandwich courses requiring students to spend 19 weeks or more in college during the academic year. Any period of industrial training forms an integral part of the course;
- day-release courses for employees released by their employer to attend courses on one or two days per week;
- block-release courses for employees released by their employers for one or more periods of full-time study per year; block-release courses average up to 19 weeks per academic year;
- part-time courses offered for students who can attend college during the day and/or evening, normally for a full academic year;
- evening-class courses lasting for several weeks or for a full academic year.

Courses in adult education centres are normally either part-time or evening classes.

c) Weekly and daily timetables in higher education

In higher education, teaching normally takes place between 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m., from Monday to Friday, but may take place at other times. Part-time courses may be offered during the day or in the evening. It is usual for institutions not to organise classes for full-time students on a Wednesday afternoon, so that students who wish to do so may participate in sporting activities.

1.11 Geographical accessibility

1.11.1 Pre-school education

Until recently, the geographical distribution of publicly funded provision for children below compulsory school age varied greatly from one area to another.

The Government has a policy to extend publicly funded provision to all four-year-olds in all areas of the UK, and, over time, to all three-year-olds. Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (Pre-school Education Advisory Groups in Northern Ireland) plan provision locally and are expected to pay particular attention to provision in rural and disadvantaged areas. Places should be reasonably accessible to where children live and, where appropriate, to where their parents work.

The Education Act 1996, as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, gives local education authorities the power to provide assistance with transport to children receiving nursery education otherwise than at school. However, the authority may make assistance conditional upon the making of a contribution to the cost by the child's parent or nursery education provider.

1.11.2 Primary and secondary education

Under Section 509 of the Education Act 1996, it is the duty of LEAs in **England and Wales** to ensure free transport to and from the nearest suitable school for all pupils of compulsory school age (five to 16 years) attending maintained schools in their area, if they do not live within walking distance of the school. Walking distance is defined as a distance of up to two miles (3.2 km) in the case of a child under the age of eight years, and three miles (4.8 km) in the case of a child who has attained the age of eight. This must be a route along which a child may reasonably be expected to walk in safety when accompanied by an adult.

A parent who chooses to send their child to a school that is not within walking distance and whose child could be offered a place at a suitable school within walking distance becomes responsible for providing any necessary transport. However, the LEA must have regard to any parental preference for the child to be educated at a school or institution in which the religious education provided is that of the religion or denomination to which the parents adhere.

The LEA is also liable to meet the cost of board and lodging, if such arrangements are made for the child, in order to ensure that the child receives education suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs (SEN) he or she may have. This is particularly relevant to those in remote rural areas and for island communities.

Authorities are not obliged to assist pupils over the age of 16 unless transport is considered 'necessary' – usually when they have special educational needs (SEN) or their parents are in receipt of certain state benefits.

School transport policies vary between local authorities. A report by the Education Management Information Exchange (Clark, 2001)[47] outlines current practice in a number of authorities.

There is no national policy for educational provision in remote rural and island communities. Minimum size of school and their numbers and any special provisions, such as housing for teachers, are at the discretion of the individual LEAs, within the limits of their resources and policies.

In **Northern Ireland**, under Article 52 of the Education and Libraries Order 1996, Education and Library Boards (Boards) are required to make such arrangements as they consider necessary to facilitate the attendance of pupils at grant-aided schools and certain pupils at institutions of further education.

Transport assistance is only provided where the pupil has been unable to gain a place in any suitable school within statutory walking distance (two miles for primary-age pupils and three miles for others).

1.11.3 Further and adult education and training

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (commonly known as the National Council – ELWa) are responsible for securing the provision of all post-16 education and training. The LSC works through a network of local LSCs, which plan and coordinate provision locally. The National Council – ELWa has regional committees which advise on provision in their area, and, in addition, Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs)

have responsibility for planning delivery of post-compulsory education and training at local level. In order to ensure wide accessibility of post-16 education and training, the LSC and the National Council – ELWa may fund provision not only in further education institutions and LEA adult education centres, but also in higher education institutions, privately run training centres and in centres operated by voluntary organisations.

1.11.4 Higher education

Students may apply to any higher education institution in the country regardless of geographical location. Student loans are higher for students living in London or away from the parental home.

1.12 Statistics

1.12.1 Schools, pupils and teachers in the United Kingdom 2000/2002[48]

		Number of schools 2000/01	Number of pupils (000s) 2000/01	Number of full-time (000s) 1999/00	Pupil-teacher ratio 2000/01
Public sector mainstream	Nursery	3, 228	152.2		26.5
	Primary (including nursery classes)	22, 902	5, 297.7		22.3
	Primary and Nursery			211.1	
	Secondary	4, 337	3, 916.9	223.0	16.5
All public sector mainstream		**30, 467**	**9, 366.8**	**434.1**	
Private mainstream		2, 414	626.1	51.2	9.7
Special schools	Public sector	1, 401	107.7		6.3
	Private	97	5.7		
	All special schools			16.6	
Pupil referral units		338	9.7		
All schools		**34, 717**	**10, 116.0**	**502.0**	**17.9**

Statistics are provisional.

	England	Wales	Northern Ireland
Percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need 2000/2001	3.1	3.3	2.5
Numbers of pupils in special schools 2000/2001	8 374.1	512.3	351.9

1.12.2 Further education and training

In 2000/01, there were 499 further education colleges, including sixth-form colleges, in the United Kingdom. The figures do not include adult education centres.

These figures include data for Scotland, as well as England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Information on further education in Scotland can be found in the Education System in the United Kingdom (Scotland) also on EURYBASE.

Additional statistical information on further education in England may be obtained from the Learning and Skills Council, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (ELWa) and from the DfES Analytical Services Directorate, the National Assembly for Wales and the Department for Employment and Learning (Northern Ireland).

Participation rates in education and training of 16- and 17-year-olds in England and Wales in 1998/99 (full-time and part-time education in publicly funded institutions and government supported training)

	England	Wales
16-year-olds	76.1	84.9
17-year-olds	65.3	70.4

1.12.3 Higher education

Number of higher education institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Total
Universities	72	2	2	76
Other HE institutions	46	6	2	54

1.12.4 Educational Expenditure

In 1999/00, total UK public expenditure on education was £40, 888 million, representing 4.5 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP).[48]

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2. FINANCING EDUCATION

2. FINANCING EDUCATION

In England, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) provides funds to the various statutory and non-statutory agencies, including the Learning and Skills Council and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The DfES also makes grants available to local authorities to meet specific Government education priorities. However, the majority of school funding is provided by local education authorities (LEAs).

The Department for Education and Skills's (DfES's) plans for funding of education in England are outlined in its annual Departmental Report (England, Parliament. HoC, 2001).[1] A summary of the Department's business plan is also available on the internet.

In May 2002, the responsibility for funding local authorities in England passed to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Revenue funding from the ODPM is known as the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and is based on the Government's standard assessment of the authority's expenditure needs as compared with the income it raises locally (the Education Standard Spending assessment (ESS) is the amount central government considers a local authority should spend on education). Although the RSG forms the bulk of local authorities' revenue they also have self-financed resources, primarily the Council Tax (a local property tax). Local authorities are free to decide how much of the total **revenue resources** available to them to devote to education.

All central government funding for education in **Wales** is provided through the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW). The Assembly decides the sums to be spent on its various areas of activities, including education, and distributes resources to local authorities, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (also known as the National Council – ELWa) and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (also known as the Higher Education Council – ELWa).

The expenditure of the **Northern Ireland** Assembly is met from the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund. This consists of the share of UK taxes attributed to Northern Ireland, the revenue raised by the Regional Rate, and a grant-in-aid from the Exchequer. The Department of Education (DE) is responsible for all resource issues relating to schools and the Youth Service. It funds the expenditure incurred by the five Education and Library Boards (Boards) which have statutory

responsibility for the provision of services. Relevant expenditure includes the salaries of teachers in schools. Other partner bodies which are grant aided by the DE include the Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS). The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is responsible for the funding of further and higher education.

The **National Audit Office** scrutinises public spending on behalf of Parliament. It is independent of government. It audits the accounts of all government departments and agencies, as well as a wide range of non-departmental public bodies, and reports to Parliament on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which government bodies have used public money. Around 50 reports are presented to Parliament on the value for money with which government departments and other public bodies have spent their resources. Under the 1983 National Audit Act, the National Audit Office can examine and report on the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of public spending.

The **Audit Commission** was established in 1983 to appoint and regulate the external auditors of local authorities in England and Wales. Its remit includes helping to bring about improvements in economy, efficiency and effectiveness, not only directly through the audit process, but also through value for money studies.

In England and Wales, LEAs must publish statements showing expenditure by schools and central expenditure on behalf of schools, and these are copied to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) when published.

Each school governing body is required to prepare and publish an annual report, containing a full financial statement to parents, for discussion at the annual parents' meeting.

The funding bodies (see 1.4.3) are responsible for monitoring the finances of the further and higher education institutions that they fund. Institutions must provide the financial information required by the funding bodies.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects and publishes financial information from universities and colleges.

2.1 School funding

2.1.1 School funding in England and Wales

Most maintained schools receive 100 per cent funding for both recurrent and capital expenditure. However, voluntary aided schools, which represent around 20 per cent of all maintained schools, do not. They receive 100 per cent funding for recurrent costs and are eligible for 85 per cent funding for capital expenditure, the remainder being the responsibility of the founding body, usually a religious organisation.

a) Revenue funding

Since April 1999, all maintained schools in England and Wales have received their recurrent funding from LEAs. Prior to this, the former grant-maintained schools (GM schools), which were introduced under the provisions of the Education Reform Act 1988, were financed by central government through the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS) in England, and by the former Welsh Office in Wales (now the National Assembly). Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, grant-maintained status has ended, and the FAS has been abolished.

Local authorities receive their funding principally from two sources:

- grants from central government (in the form of a Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and a share of the money raised by the National Non-Domestic Rate); and
- money raised by the local authority itself through the Council Tax (a charge levied on householders to cover the cost of local services), from its capital receipts, and from the income from charges for services.

The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) is paid by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (the National Assembly for Wales, in Wales) to cover all local authority services, including education. The level of the Revenue Support Grant for each authority is determined by deciding how much the authority should be able to raise itself, and then by taking account of factors such as social and economic disadvantage. Local authorities are free to decide how much of their total revenue should be devoted to education. However, central government does assess the amount it believes should be spent on education – this is known as the Education Standard Spending Assessment (ESS) – and is indicated to local authorities.

In addition to the RSG, the DfES and NAfW also provide local authorities with grants which must be spent on specific education priorities.

The Government is reforming the LEA and school funding systems with effect from 2003-04. Central to this will be a reform of Education Standard Spending (ESS) Assessments, which will in future deal separately with the spending needs of schools and those of the LEAs themselves.

(i) Fair Funding

The purpose of delegating funding to schools is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by enabling the governing bodies and headteachers to make more effective use of the resources available to them, and by allowing them to be more responsive to the needs and wishes of parents, pupils, the local community and employers.

Arrangements for delegating funding to maintained schools changed under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The new funding arrangements, known as 'Fair Funding', were implemented from April 1999.

Under 'Fair Funding' arrangements, LEA expenditure is divided into three categories:

- 'non-school expenditure' (including education for children under five outside primary and special schools);
- 'ongoing school-related expenditure' (including, among other items, servicing and repayment of school-related capital debts, early retirement and redundancy costs arising from decisions made before April 1999, and expenditure on recruitment and retention schemes); and
- the 'local schools budget'.

(ii) Local schools budget

The 'local schools budget' comprises the LEA's central expenditure and the amount which is ultimately delegated to schools (the 'individual schools budget' – see below). Since April 1999, under 'Fair Funding' arrangements, LEAs are now able to retain funding centrally to support their roles in five key areas only:

- strategic management;
- access (planning of school places, admissions, transport, etc.);

- school improvement;
- special educational needs (SEN) provision; and
- contributing their share of funding to specific grants (see below).

LEAs must delegate funding for other services and activities to schools, although there should be arrangements in place to enable schools to buy back the services from their LEAs if they so wish. The main services for which schools now receive additional delegated funding include building repairs and maintenance, management support (payroll, etc.), curriculum and advisory services (other than those essential for LEA school improvement plans), supply cover and, since April 2000, school meals and central support/ancillary services. There are also new arrangements for funding LEA-wide services that fall outside the National Curriculum, such as music services, through specific grants. In England, LEAs are required to delegate to schools 87 per cent of the local schools budget.

(iii) Individual schools budget

Each school's budget share is calculated according to the formula agreed in the LEA's own Fair Funding scheme which is established within the framework of government regulations. Currently, at least 75 per cent must be awarded on the basis of pupil numbers. In order to provide funding which more accurately meets the needs of schools and pupils, LEAs may weight pupil numbers according to:

- age, including weighting according to key stage or year group;
- whether a pupil is provided with nursery education;
- the subject or course of study in the case of pupils in a sixth form;
- the special educational needs of pupils; and
- whether a pupil is being educated through the medium of Welsh.

Additional factors or criteria which may also be taken into account in the calculation of a schools budget share are many and varied, for example, the pupils for whom English is not their first language; the size and condition of a school's buildings and grounds relative to other schools, turnover of pupils other than as part of the general admissions process at a school, and teachers' salaries at a school. Although most LEAs' funding schemes have, in the past, included an element related to social deprivation, from 2002/03, it became compulsory for all LEAs in England to include a factor which distributes funding on the basis of some indicator of social deprivation. Such funding is intended to help schools meet additional teaching and pastoral costs.

(iv) Specific grants

Local authorities and educational institutions also receive specific grants for education from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) (in Wales) and from other central government departments.

Until recently in England, specific nursery education grant was provided to LEAs to fund places for three- and four-year-olds in maintained, private and voluntary sector provision which forms part of the local Early Years Development and Childcare Plan. Since April 2001, the funds now flow through Education Standard Spending (ESS), part of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) made to local authorities by central government (see above). Some funding for three-year-olds is also included in the ESS, although direct Nursery Education Grant continues to be allocated up to maximum levels agreed with individual LEAs (DfES, 2001a).[2]

The Standards Fund – England

The Standards Fund is the Government's main channel for targeting funds towards national priorities to be delivered by LEAs and schools. It provides funding for major initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies, Excellence in Cities, the National Grid for Learning, Ethnic Minority Achievement, New Deal capital support for schools, and other programmes.

Grants are currently made under six broad categories:

- school improvement;
- inclusion;
- standards and curriculum;
- diversity and excellence;
- teachers and support; and
- capital and infrastructure.

Each category has its own purpose, objectives, performance measures and formula for allocation. The professional development of teachers and other staff is included in each category.

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (formerly known as Section 11 grants and provided by the Home Office) is now paid by the DfES through the Standards Fund. It is intended to provide equality of opportunity for all minority ethnic groups, in particular, to meet the particular needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language

(EAL) and to raise standards of achievement for those minority ethnic groups who are particularly at risk of under-achieving.

In 2002–03 the Standard Fund grant rate to LEAs will be either at 100 or 52 per cent[3]. These allocations will normally be formula-based, for example according to numbers of schools or pupils. At LEA level, most allocations will continue to be 'ring-fenced' in the sense that LEAs will be expected either to spend the money themselves for the specified purpose, or to devolve it to schools under the same heading. However, at school level there will be considerable flexibility to vire funding between budget headings.

Grants for Education Support and Training – Wales

In **Wales**, grants are available through the Grant for Education Support and Training (GEST) programme, which is administered by the National Assembly for Wales Training and Education Department. Grants are available within broadly based activity areas. Each activity has its own specified priorities. The current activities are:

- raising standards;
- planning for success;
- early years learning;
- literacy and numeracy;
- tackling social disadvantage;
- special education needs;
- Welsh;
- Out-of-hours prospectus;
- ICT in schools;
- professional development.

The grant rate in 2002-03 will remain the same, that is at 60 per cent for all activities, except Ethnic Minority Achievement, which is 70%. Allocations under GEST are based primarily on a needs indicator based formula which was drawn up in consultation with LEAs. Competitive bids are requested from LEAs where this is considered appropriate. There is considerable flexibility for virement within the programme in order to give authorities and schools discretion to plan and deliver the programme in the most efficient and effective way. LEAs must delegate at least 50 per cent of their total formula-based allocation to schools.

The NAfW has issued a circular on the GEST programme for 2002-03 (NAfW, 2001).[4]

(v) Funding for post-compulsory secondary education

From April 2002, the Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) became responsible for funding all post-16 education and training. LEAs now apply to the Councils for funds to support school sixth forms and programmes of adult and community learning. LEAs remain responsible for capital funding.

The formula which the LSC uses to allocate funds for school sixth forms is broadly similar to that used for other post-16 provision. LEAs are not permitted to top-slice sixth-form funding from the LSC. They must pass on, in full, the allocation determined for each school. LEAs may add to the LSC's allocations for sixth forms if they wish. LEAs transmit funding to schools, as is usual under their Fair Funding scheme. Schools are free to continue to be able to move their funding flexibly between pre- and post-16 education.

b) Capital funding

Capital funding produces or protects an asset that will last a long time such as a building, machinery or large items of equipment. LEAs are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of maintained schools, however, their responsibilities towards voluntary aided schools differ from other categories of school. Capital projects are undertaken to address the following issues:

- the sufficiency of premises – ensuring that there are enough places to educate all children;
- the condition of premises – ensuring that the premises are in a good enough state;
- the suitability of premises – ensuring that the premises are as appropriate as possible for the teaching of the curriculum.

England

The total amount that a local authority may borrow to finance capital expenditure on all its services is determined each year by central government. Each local authority receives an Annual Capital Guideline (ACG), which is the Government's estimate of that local authority's capital expenditure needs. There are also a range of other capital grants available to LEAs and schools which are distributed in England through the Standards Fund (see above). Some items of expenditure, such as the removal of surplus school places, are supported by project-specific borrowing approvals through the Targeted Capital Fund (see below). The Government is also encouraging LEAs and schools to fund some capital projects as part of public-private partnerships (see below).

(i) Asset management plans

LEAs are required to produce asset management plans (AMPs). The aim of AMPs is to set out the information needed, and the criteria used, to make decisions about spending on school premises which will:

- raise standards of educational attainment;
- provide sustainable and energy-efficient buildings;
- provide innovative design solutions which reflect the future needs of ICT-based education;
- increase community use of school facilities;
- maximise value for money; and
- ensure efficient and effective management of new and existing capital assets.

Plans must span five years and cover capital works such as:

- site acquisition and disposal;
- school place provision and surplus space removal; and
- replacement, remodelling, extensions and improvement.

AMPs must take into account other plans such as education development plans and school organisation plans; they must also reflect the needs and priorities of individual schools.

(ii) Annual Capital Guideline

The Annual Capital Guideline (ACG) issued by central government consists of two elements: basic credit approval (BCA – the amount that the local authority can borrow) and receipts taken into account (RTIA – the capital expenditure the Government believes an authority can finance from its own resources).

The Annual Capital Guideline is broken down into 'service elements' to reflect the Government's view of the level of capital expenditure that the authority will incur in that service area. Education is one of those service elements. However, a local authority could decide to use the 'education element' on other capital expenditure priorities. Similarly, it could decide to spend some or all of the 'social services' or the 'housing' element on education capital projects.

It is the responsibility of each local authority to determine how its available resources are allocated between services, taking account of its statutory responsibilities and its perception of local needs and priorities.

Annually, each local authority submits details of its education capital expenditure needs to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in England to support the local authority's case for its ACG. ACG funding mainly covers 'Basic Need' funding to support each LEA's requirement for extra pupil places.

Local authorities can increase education capital investment by:

- using their existing usable capital receipts;
- spending new receipts; or
- spending revenue raised from council taxpayers.

(iii) Seed Challenge capital

These funds are intended to encourage enterprise among schools and to enable them to initiate and manage capital works. Funds are allocated by formula on the basis of set amount per LEA, plus a further share of the total budget based on pupil numbers. Schools may apply to the LEA for this money for up to 50 per cent of the cost of primary and special schools projects and 33 per cent of the cost of secondary school ones. Schools must raise the remainder of the finance themselves, and at least 75 per cent must be 'new' money, not derived from recycled grant income or savings from revenue funding.

(iv) New Deal for Schools

The New Deal for Schools programme was announced in July 1997. Under the programme, funds are made available to all maintained schools (in England) over the lifetime of the current Parliament, in addition to existing capital resources. There are three types of funding under the New Deal Programme:

1. Condition funding
   These grants were introduced to improve the condition of school buildings and enhance facilities for technology and, in particular, to target the backlog of urgent repair and maintenance projects. The grants are currently paid through the Standards Fund and are calculated on the basis of pupil numbers and relative need.
2. Modernisation funding
   This funding is currently delivered as Supplementary Credit Approvals to LEAs, and grant for voluntary-aided schools. Allocations are based on pupil numbers and relative need based on condition and suitability data supplied in Asset Management Plans (AMPs) (see above).
3. Formula Capital Grant
   Since April 2000, all maintained schools (except nursery schools) have received an allocation of Formula Capital Grant. Its primary

uses are to fund small capital projects; to pay for more substantial projects through accumulation over periods of up to three years; and as a contribution to a bigger project sponsored by the LEA, which might include Seed Challenge funded projects (see above).

The DfES makes Formula Capital Grant allocations to LEAs based on numbers of schools (except voluntary-aided schools) and pupils via the Standards Fund (see above). Authorities must allocate funds to schools on the basis of a given formula which includes a fixed amount per school, plus an allocation based on pupil numbers. The amount per pupil differs for primary pupils and secondary pupils and includes a higher rate for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Allocations to voluntary-aided schools are not paid from the Standards Fund, but direct to the school by the DfES (although the LEA is paid a percentage of the grant to meet its liabilities with respect to voluntary-aided schools). Pupils with SEN in mainstream schools attract the higher per pupil rate only if they have a statement of special educational needs. All pupils in special schools attract the higher per pupil rate.

Schools are allowed to accumulate Formula Capital Grant over a maximum of three years (i.e. entitlement in one year could be carried forward into the following year and/or the year thereafter) to pay for a more substantial project than would otherwise be affordable. If an allocation is not used within three years, it is lost. Grant must not be used for general maintenance, redecoration, day-to-day repairs, purchase of books or training materials/services. It is distinct from any element for routine repairs and maintenance which may be included in delegated Fair Funding budgets (see above).

(v) Targeted Capital Fund

The Targeted Capital Fund provides funding for projects which offer both educational and financial gain to LEA schools and are not covered by other funding streams. It encompasses, but is not limited to, project-specific borrowing approvals called surplus place removal (SPR) projects. It is provided in the form of supplementary credit approvals.

(vi) Public-private partnerships

The Government makes some capital funding available each year in the form of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits. PFI allows a local authority to purchase and maintain buildings, together with the possible provision of other services, through revenue payments to a company. Such arrangements need the agreement of all relevant governing bodies.

(vii) Voluntary-aided schools

Capital work at voluntary aided schools is funded through three main routes:

- Named Capital Projects – an allocation to a specific project at particular voluntary-aided schools. Decisions on which projects receive support are made centrally.
- LEA Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (formerly known as LEA Minor Works) – a formulaic allocation of funding, calculated using voluntary-aided pupil numbers within the relevant LEA's area. This budget is for capital work costing less than £250,000 that contributes to raising standards.
- Formula Capital Grants to Schools (see above). Decisions on the use of Formula Capital Grant are made by the school and should reflect priorities set out in the LEA's asset management plan and the school's development plan.

Except for formula capital funding, the normal rate of grant is 85 per cent.

Wales

The total amount that a local authority may borrow to finance capital expenditure on all its services is determined each year by the Welsh Assembly Government. Each local authority receives a General Capital Funding allocation. There are also capital grants available to LEAs which are distributed under the New Deal for Schools initiative (see below). LEAs and schools are also encouraged to fund some capital projects as part of public private partnerships (see below).

(i) Asset Management Plans

As set out in the National Assembly document *Better Wales*,[5] local authorities must develop Asset Management Plans (AMPs) for their entire estate by 2002.

(ii) Annual Capital Allocations

General capital funding allocations are made to local authorities on an annual basis. They are not broken down into individual service sectors, and it is the responsibility of each local authority to determine how its available resources are allocated between services, taking account of its statutory responsibilities and its perception of local needs and priorities.

Local authorities can increase education capital investment by:

- using their existing usable capital receipts;
- spending new receipts; or
- spending revenue raised from council taxpayers.

(iii) New Deal for Schools

The New Deal for Schools programme was announced in July 1997. LEAs are informed of their allocation (calculated using the education element of the General Capital Funding formula – see above) and submit applications to the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) to utilise the funds for projects at schools in their authority, in light of local needs and priorities over the lifetime of the current Parliament. The grants were introduced to improve the condition of school buildings and enhance facilities for technology and, in particular, to target the backlog of urgent repair and maintenance projects. Details of the grants are provided in the NAfW Circular 24/01.

(iv) Public-private partnerships

In Wales, £140 million has been made available in the form of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits in two separate tranches. PFI allows a local authority to make capital investment in and to maintain buildings, together with the possible provision of other services, through revenue payments to a company. Such arrangements need the agreement of all relevant governing bodies.

(v) Voluntary-aided schools

Capital work at voluntary aided schools is funded through three main routes:

- Named Capital Projects – an allocation to a specific school improvement / new school projects at particular voluntary aided schools. These are subject to an annual bidding round and decisions on which projects receive support are made centrally;
- repair projects (over £10,000) which require prior approval; and
- repair/maintenance projects (under £10,000) which can be submitted for grant at any time.

The normal rate of grant is 85 per cent.

2.1.2 School funding in Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, there is a variety of management arrangements but all grant-aided schools have their recurrent costs fully funded by the Department of Education (DE), either direct from the DE or through the Education and Library Boards (Boards). The DE also provides 100 per cent grant-aid for capital costs for controlled schools, which are owned by the Boards, and for grant-maintained integrated schools (GMI schools), which are privately owned. The DE also provides 100 per cent funding for maintained schools and voluntary grammar schools which have entered into capital funding agreements under which the DE

appoints one or more representatives to the Board of Governors. All other maintained schools and voluntary grammar schools, with very limited exceptions, are grant-aided, for capital costs, by up to 85 per cent by DE.

Local management of schools (LMS), introduced under the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, requires a high level of financial delegation to schools. Funding is allocated to schools according to a formula determined by pupil numbers, and other factors such as the premises, size of school, social/educational need, etc. All Board formulae conform to a broad framework set down by the DE.

Consultation has recently taken place on a common funding formula for all grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland. The new arrangements are expected to be implemented from April 2003.

As in England and Wales, many schools attract additional grants from specific initiatives. These cover a wide variety of areas but all are geared towards the achievement of objectives set for the education service. The School Improvement Programme, launched in 1998, is aimed at raising achievement in schools. Through the programme, additional resources are allocated by the DE to the Boards largely on the basis of the number of underachieving pupils. In consultation with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Boards then transfer funds to schools in accordance with schools' costed plans. The DE also provides grants to assist Boards in reducing class sizes in the early years; in implementing the *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs* (DENI, 1998)[6] and Children (NI) Order 1995; in training for headteachers; and in the early professional development of teachers.

2.2 Funding of further and adult education institutions

2.2.1 England and Wales

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (commonly known as the National Council – ELWa) became responsible, from April 2001, for funding the provision of full- and part-time education and training (except higher education) for students over compulsory school age (16 years). The LSC and the National Council may fund formal and informal learning in further

education institutions, adult education centres, school sixth forms, private training providers and voluntary organisations. The funding of work-based training on employers' premises is also within the remit of the Councils.

Bodies which provide post-16 education and training must set fees, make awards and recover costs from students, employers, etc. in accordance with criteria set by the Councils. Education and training is provided free of charge to 16- to 19-year-olds but not to adults. However, adults who are retired or who receive unemployment or certain other state benefits may have part or all of their fees waived.

England

A national funding formula for post-16 education and training has been developed by the LSC in England. The formula has five elements:

- the **national base rate** which reflects the basic cost of delivering the programme (taking into account the length of the programme);
- the **programme weighting** (taking into account the additional costs of providing some types of programme);
- **achievement** (a percentage of the two elements above, payable on condition that the learner successfully achieves the intended qualification);
- **disadvantage** (a percentage increase to encourage and support the recruitment of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds based on students' home postcodes);
- **area costs** (a weighting factor reflecting the significantly higher costs of delivering provision in London and some related areas).

Funds to support school sixth forms are paid via LEAs and include revenue costs only. LEAs remain responsible for capital funding.

Wales

Funding for further education institutions in Wales has three stages and is largely based on several types of funding units:

- Recruitment Units (RUs) – awarded to institutions for the number of individual students and, for example, the number of students from areas of social deprivation;
- Learning Units (LUs) – awarded on the basis of the nature of the qualification being sought by learners, their mode of study, additional support required and the area served (e.g. rural locations);

- Attainment Units (AUs) – awarded accorded to the types of qualifications achieved by learners;
- Support Units (SUs) – awarded to allow institutions to make their mainstream environment accessible to students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Other targeted funding is also available. For example, institutions may bid for additional funding to expand provision for particular groups such as adults in socially deprived areas and 16- to 19-year-olds at risk of social exclusion.

The National Council – ELWa also provides capital funding for further education institutions in Wales. Criteria for capital spending include widening participation in further education and supporting the skills (shortage) agenda, providing access for disabled students, improving ITC infrastructure and equipment, improving and updating buildings and equipment.

2.2.2 Northern Ireland

Further education colleges in Northern Ireland provide full- and part-time education for adults, as well as students between the ages of 16 and 19. They are funded directly by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). Colleges' main recurrent funding is provided through the FE Funding Formula, which is based on the measurement of student activity and achievement called a 'Student Powered Unit of Resource' (SPUR) and ensures that all colleges are funded on the same basis. Funding is also provided to colleges and students through a number of special initiative 'Earmarked' budgets, which are designed to widen access, increase participation, address skills shortages and enhance the role of the sector in supporting economic development.

2.3 Funding of higher education institutions

Higher education institutions in the United Kingdom receive funding from many different public and private sources. The largest single source of income for the sector is provided by the Government. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) provides funds through the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) through the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (commonly known as the Higher Education Council – ELWa). In Northern Ireland, higher education institutions are funded through the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), on the advice of the Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (NIHEC) and HEFCE.

Funds allocated to each university or college by the funding bodies to support teaching, research and related activities are provided in the form of a block grant. The funding bodies and DEL base their decisions as to funding levels for educational provision on planned student numbers, with consideration given to extra funding to encourage particular developments.

There are also a number of specific funding initiatives in operation. Examples in England include: Continuing Vocational Education Development Funding; the Fund for Teaching and Learning; and the DfES Innovations Fund (funds projects to boost equal opportunities for students and staff within higher education and improve links between higher education and employers).

2.3.1 Funding for teaching

The Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) funding method provides standard funding for each full-time equivalent student by banding courses into four price groups:

- clinical subjects;
- science, engineering and technology;
- other high-cost subjects with a studio, laboratory or fieldwork element; and
- all other subjects.

In addition to weighting student numbers by their subject price group, further weightings are applied to take account of student and institutional factors. For example, the extra costs associated with part-time or mature students, or operating in small institutions or in London. Allocations are made to institutions in the form of block grants which institutions are free to spend according to their own priorities within HEFCE's broad guidelines (HEFCE, 2002).[7]

In **Wales**, a new funding method for teaching was recently introduced by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) (commonly known as the Higher Education Council – ELWa). Like its predecessor, the current method has two main elements: formula and non-formula. The majority of funding (around 99 per cent) is allocated according to a formula based on student numbers, taking into account their level of study (e.g. undergraduate degree, undergraduate non-degree and post-graduate taught degree), mode (full-time/sandwich, part-time, and part-time franchised out) and subject (11 academic subject categories).

The funding structure for higher education in Northern Ireland is currently under review.

Funding is dependent on the Councils and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) being satisfied that provision is satisfactory. Institutions are accountable to the funding bodies and, ultimately, to Parliament for the use of these funds.

Initial teacher training in England is financed by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) using similar procedures to those of the higher education funding bodies. In Wales, this responsibility is undertaken by the Higher Education Funding Council -ELWa, and in Northern Ireland, by DEL. Additional funds are also available through the 'priority subject recruitment scheme' to encourage institutions to recruit students to train to teach subjects in which there is a shortage of teachers.

Tuition fees are the other major source of public funding. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) provide funds for tuition fees for students to LEAs in England and Wales. LEAs make payments to universities and colleges for eligible students. In Northern Ireland, the DEL makes tuition fee payments directly to institutions. Since the academic year 1998/99, institutions have also received contributions for tuition fees directly from new entrants to higher education who are not eligible for help from the LEA.

2.3.2 Funding for research

The main sources of public funding for research in higher education institutions are the higher education funding bodies, the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland, and the Research Councils (see below). Under this dual support system, the higher education funding bodies and DEL contribute to the basic structure needed for research — the salaries of permanent academic staff, and the costs of premises and central computing largely on the basis of assessment of the quality and volume of research. The Research Councils provide for direct project costs, plus a fixed percentage to cover indirect costs.

The Research Councils are:

- Engineering and Physical Science Research Council;
- Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council;
- Economic and Social Research Council;
- Medical Research Council;

- Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council; and
- Natural Environment Research Council.

In the case of humanities, funding is provided by the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) which has been established following agreement by the British Academy, the DEL and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

A Research Councils UK Strategy Group has been proposed. Its aims include:

- developing a collective voice for the research councils in order to increase their collective influence;
- encouraging systematic and regular dialogue for the research councils, as a group, with other science funding bodies; and
- helping to define the overall strategy for research and training funded by the Government science budget.

2.3.3 Alternative sources of higher education funding

All higher education institutions are encouraged to seek funding from alternative sources, in particular, through sponsorship and by obtaining commissions for research projects from industrial or commercial firms. They are also encouraged to devise means of marketing their services to obtain additional income. The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is also open to higher education institutions.

2.4 Fees, charges, grants and loans

In general, education is provided free of charge to full-time pupils up to the age of 19 in publicly funded schools and further education institutions.

Child Benefit is available to all families who have children:

- under the age of 16;
- under the age of 19 and studying full-time up to General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level), National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 or equivalent; or
- aged under 18 and registered with the Careers Service or Connexions service for work or work-based training for young people.

Child Benefit is paid at the same rate to all such families irrespective of income or savings.

Parents who have at least one child under 16 living with them may benefit from tax relief.

2.4.1. Pre-school, primary and secondary education

Pre-school

Although parents of nursery-age children in maintained schools (either nursery schools or primary schools) cannot be charged fees, many nursery-age children are enrolled in private and voluntary institutions, which normally charge fees. However, the Government is now expanding and developing publicly funded early years education by cooperation with the private and voluntary sectors, who are paid a nursery education grant, subject to fulfilling certain requirements, for each eligible child provided for. As a result, four-year-olds and many three-year-olds receiving nursery education in a pre-school setting participating in an Early Years Development and Childcare Plan (see 3.2.1) are not charged fees. The Government aims to extend free nursery provision to all three-year-olds by 2004 (2003 in Wales).

Primary and secondary education

No charge may be made for education provided wholly or mainly within school hours (excluding midday breaks) for pupils in maintained schools in England and Wales, and in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland, capital fees may be charged in voluntary grammar schools subject to a limit of £80 per year.

Under Section 450 of the Education Act 1996, education which takes place wholly or mainly outside school hours, which is part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination, or is part of the National Curriculum in England and Wales, or is part of statutory religious education, must also be provided free of charge. Charges may not be made for the cost of materials, books, instruments or any other equipment. Schools may also not charge for individual or small-group tuition in playing a musical instrument, provided within or outside school hours, where it is required as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is part of the National Curriculum. However, a charge may be made for activities which fall outside the above categories. Under Section 457 of the Act, LEAs must establish a policy on charging before they can charge for any school activity. Similar regulations exist in Northern Ireland.

Schools may also ask parents for a voluntary contribution to school funds, but they must make it clear to all parents that their child will not be deprived of any educational opportunity offered to the other children should they be unwilling or unable to contribute.

For information about LEA powers in respect of grants and allowances to parents, including clothing allowances and assistance relating to school transport, see 1.5 and 2.5.3.1.8 for provision for school meals, and 2.15.2 for Education Maintenance Allowances and Assembly Learning Grants.

Independent/private education

In England and Wales, most independent schools are financed by means of fees paid by parents and, in some cases, also by donations and grants received from benefactors.

At present, under transitional arrangements, some existing pupils may have part or all of their fees (depending on parental income) paid by the Government through the Assisted Places Scheme. This scheme was originally set up in 1981 under the provisions of the Education Act 1980, but was brought to an end by the Education (Schools) Act 1997.

The Music and Ballet Scheme (MBS) was also set up in 1981, to provide Government grant-aid with fees at seven independent specialist schools in England for children with exceptional talent in either music or dance. The Aided Pupil Scheme which operates within the MBS, is similar to the Assisted Places Scheme, but it also provides additional funds to cover the costs of specialist tuition and boarding fees. There are around 700 children participating in the scheme, which remained unaffected by the Education (Schools) Act 1997.

City technology colleges (CTCs), city colleges for the technology of the arts (CCTAs) and city academies are non-fee-paying schools, independent of LEAs, which are funded partly by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and partly by private sponsors.

There are 22 independent schools in Northern Ireland. There is no Assisted Places Scheme in Northern Ireland. However, there is a similar scheme to the Music and Ballet scheme, called the Talented Childrens Scheme, to help pupils gifted in music and dance.

2.4.2 Further education

In publicly funded further education institutions, 16- to 18-year-olds from the UK and the European Union/European Economic Area who

have ordinarily been resident in the UK for the previous three years are exempt from tuition fees. However, they may incur some costs, for example, for registration and exam fees, books and equipment or transport to and from college.

Students over the age of 19 may be charged fees and, in England, there is an expectation that approximately 25 per cent of the notional full cost of a course will be met by fees. Fees are not charged to students in certain circumstances:

- students (or their families) in receipt of income-related state benefits;
- unemployed people in receipt of 'Jobseekers' allowance';
- those taking courses in adult basic education or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL);
- asylum seekers in receipt of specific state benefits.

Students undertaking full-time education or training under the New Deal Programme have their fees paid for them.

In Northern Ireland, following the Student Support Review, fees have been abolished for students over 19 on full-time vocational courses in further education.

The following types of financial support may be available to students in the further education sector:

1. **Learner Support Funds** (Access Funds in Northern Ireland) – these are distributed by the funding bodies through individual colleges. They are targeted at those students in greatest need. The funds are intended to help students meet the costs of study, such as books and equipment, fees, transport, childcare and residential costs, at specific residential colleges. They are to be replaced in Wales by Financial Contingency Funds (see below).

2. **Hardship Funds** – these are available as bursaries from some colleges for students who meet financial difficulties during their course. They are to be replaced in Wales by Financial Contingency Funds (see below).

3. **Career Development Loans** – these are loans available from banks on which the Government pays the interest while a student is studying or training. Students over the age of 18 may borrow up to 80 per cent of their course fees (100 per cent if they have been

unemployed for three months before applying), plus the full cost of books and other course materials. Students on full-time courses may also borrow money to help with their living expenses.

4. **Dance and Drama Awards** – these are scholarships funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). They offer greatly reduced tuition fees and help with living and learning costs at some of the leading private Dance and Drama training providers in England. Each year there are 820 awards for new students. Students must be aged 16 and above for dance courses, and 18 and above for acting and stage management courses. To qualify for a Dance and Drama Award, students must have been ordinarily resident within the UK for the three years prior to the commencement of the course.

5. **Childcare Support Fund** – this enables institutions to offer free or subsidised childcare places to some students.

In England, **Education Maintenance Allowances** (EMAs) are currently being piloted to test whether a financial incentive to young people from low-income families would encourage more to stay in learning beyond compulsory education. Young people aged 16-19 living in the pilot areas are eligible to receive an EMA, depending on parental taxable income, if they are in full-time (non-higher) education. The original 15 pilot schemes were extended to a further 41 areas in September 2000.

In Northern Ireland, following the Student Support review, **discretionary bursaries** will be made available to students over 19 on vocational courses in full-time further education to promote access to the educational ladder for those from less well off backgrounds.

In Wales, from 2002-03, the **Assembly Learning Grant** (ALG) will be available to full- and part-time further education students from low-income families. Grants of up to £1,500 will be payable with supplementary elements for mature students (over 25) and those with childcare costs. Financial contingency funds will be made available to institutions (replacing Access and Hardship Funds) to provide a financial safety net for students not covered by the ALG.

2.4.3 Higher education

Responsibility for student support policy in England and Wales rests with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), although there are some differences in Wales. In Northern Ireland, the newly formed Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) has taken over responsibility for student support and postgraduate awards from the

former Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment (DHFETE).

Under the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, new arrangements for the financial support of students were introduced from September 1998. These new arrangements apply only to students whose course of study began in the academic year 1998/99 or later.

Students may receive financial support towards the cost of tuition fees, access to student loans and, where appropriate, help with living costs. There are different arrangements for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Undergraduate students apply for financial support to their local education authority, or Education and Library Board (Board) in Northern Ireland, which then carries out an income assessment. A notice is sent to the student advising how much support will be available in terms of grants and loans, and how much, if anything, the student or his/her family are expected to contribute. Some funds are administered by individual institutions.

Since 1986, students from other Member States of the European Union who satisfy all the conditions of eligibility may have the fees charged for admission, registration, matriculation, tuition or graduation for such courses reimbursed by the DfES via the LEA in which the higher education institution is located. Claims for reimbursement of fees must be submitted through the institution in which the student is studying. Non-UK EU students are not eligible for a UK student loan, supplementary grants or hardship loans.

More information is available from the DfES (DfES, 2002)[8] and DEL in Northern Ireland (DEL, 2002).[9]

a) Financial assistance towards tuition fees for undergraduate students

Most higher education institutions charge students fees for tuition and other costs associated with courses. Different levels of fees apply to overseas students (students who not nationals of the UK or European Economic Area (member states of the European Union, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland). The level of tuition fees is set by the individual institutions.

Under the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, students beginning a course since the start of the 1998/99 academic year are expected to pay

a contribution towards the cost of their tuition fees, depending on their own, their parents' or their husband's or wife's income. The rest of the cost of tuition fees is met by the Government. The maximum contribution a student has to make to their tuition fees represents around a quarter of the total cost of tuition (the average cost of a full-time course is around £4,000 per year). In 2001/02, the maximum tuition fee contribution for students is £1,100 but approximately 50 per cent of students do not make any contribution. The income thresholds on with the contributions are made are:

- income less than £20,480, students do not pay fees
- income between £20,480 and £30,501 (£33 662 in Northern Ireland), students pay part fees; and
- income of £30,502 or more (£33,363 in Northern Ireland), students pay the maximum contribution.

To qualify for assistance with tuition fees, students must have lived within the EU/European Economic Area (EEA) throughout the three years immediately before the start of the first academic year of the course for which they are seeking help with fees. Students (or parents) who have been temporarily absent from the EEA may still be eligible.

The Government recommends that students from outside the European Union ('overseas students') should pay fees that cover the full cost of their education. Institutions must decide what fees to charge overseas students in the light of this policy and of their own circumstances.

Non-UK EU students are not able to apply for student loans, supplementary grants, hardship loans or Access Funds.

b) Loans

(i) Student loans

Student loans were first introduced in 1990 as part of the student support package available to undergraduate students on full-time higher education courses and to those studying for the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). These loans are administered by the Student Loans Company (SLC) which is wholly owned by the Government.

In September 1998, a new student loan scheme was introduced. Those students entering higher education after this date receive income-contingent loans repayable through the tax system. Students who were already in higher education prior to 1998 continue to take out loans under the 1990 scheme repayable in fixed amounts to the SLC.

Since September 1999, students have applied for a student loan through their local education authority. The LEA assesses the amount of loan the student is entitled to and the student must then decide how much they want to borrow; 25 per cent of the loan is dependent on income. The maximum amount payable in 2002-03 is £3,905 (£4,815 in London).

The Government's policy is that loans should be available to students on favourable conditions, which require borrowers to repay, in real terms, broadly the same amount as that borrowed. Thus interest rates are indexed to inflation rates and adjusted each year in line with the Retail Price Index.

The student loans scheme is administered within the policy context set by the Government and the legislative framework of the Education (Student Loans) Act 1990, the Education (Student Loans) (Northern Ireland) Order 1990 and the associated regulations (for mortgage-style loans), the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended by the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998) and the Education (Student Support) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 and associated regulations (for income-contingent loans).

Loans are available to full-time students up to the age of 54. However, in autumn 2000 part-time higher education students on low incomes became entitled to take out student loans to help with the costs of their course.

(ii) Hardship loans

Hardship loans were introduced in September 1998 and are available to eligible students who have taken out the full income-contingent student loan. Students can apply once each academic year for an amount between £100 and £500, provided their institution has decided that they meet the criteria. To qualify for a hardship loan, a student must show that they are suffering financial hardship which could result in their having to abandon their studies. Hardship loans are paid by the Student Loans Company and are repayable with the student loan at the end of the course. Colleges are allocated set amounts for hardship loans each academic year.

(iii) Career development loans

Students who are not eligible for mandatory awards or other funding to help with the costs of courses may be able to apply for a Career Development Loan (CDL). The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) manages CDLs through a partnership with a number of banks. CDLs are intended to support courses in a wide range of vocational areas and are designed to cover course fees and other costs such as books, materials, childcare and, if the course is full-time, living expenses.

c) Grants and bursaries for students from low-income families

Since the 1999/2000 academic year, no students have been able to receive a means-tested maintenance grant to help with living costs. Maintenance grants have been replaced by income-related loans (see above). However, following the Student Support Review in Northern Ireland, and the Independent Investigation into Student Hardship and Funding in Wales, from September 2002 undergraduate students whose parents' residual income (gross income before deductions of tax and national insurance, minus certain allowances) is less than £15,000 per annum will be entitled to a bursary of up to £1,500. In Wales, this Bursary is called the Assembly Learning Grant (ALG) and will be available to full- and part-time higher education students from low-income families. Grants of up to £1,500 will be payable with supplementary elements for mature students (over 25) and those with childcare costs. Financial contingency funds will be made available to institutions (replacing Access and Hardship Funds) to provide a financial safety net for students not covered by the ALG.

(i) Supplementary grants for students in particular circumstances

Supplementary grants may be available for disabled students, students with dependants (including lone parents), those incurring travel costs in certain circumstances and those leaving local authority care to enter higher education. Local education authorities or Education and Library Boards assess students for their eligibility for extra help depending on their circumstances.

(ii) Disabled students

Students who are registered as disabled are eligible to apply for certain allowances. Details of the allowances for undergraduate students are published annually (DfES, 2001c).[10] Details of allowances for postgraduate students are available. from the individual Research Councils or other funding bodies.

Students who have a disability or specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia) may be eligible to receive extra funding through the Disabled Student Allowances (DSAs). Neither the income of the student nor that of the student's family is taken into account when an application for help from the DSAs is assessed. The allowances are intended to cover any extra costs or expenses that arise because of the student's disability. There are three allowances to cover different areas of need:

- the specialist equipment allowance: for major items of specialist equipment, for example, a computer or special furniture;

- the non-medical helpers' allowance: to help pay for helpers, for example, sign language interpreters or note-takers, who are necessary to enable the student to benefit fully from the course;
- the general disabled students' allowance: meant to cover any costs related to the student's disability and study, for example, books, tapes or braille paper, that are not covered by other allowances.

From September 2000, the disabled students' allowance was extended to new and existing part-time students.

Students may also qualify for an extra allowance to cover additional travelling expenses, which, because of their disability, are higher than they would otherwise be.

(iii) Lone parents and students with dependants

For lone parents and those who have family members dependent upon them, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) provides grants in the form of a Dependant's grant, Lone Parent's Grant, Childcare Grant, School Meals Grant, Mature Students' Bursary and Access Bursaries and Travel, Books and Equipment Grant.

(iv) Students leaving local authority care

The Care Leaver's Grant provides grants to help students leaving local authority care to help with accommodation costs over the summer vacation.

d) Hardship fund/support funds

Hardship funds (support funds in Northern Ireland) provide discretionary bursaries to help students who get into financial difficulties during the course. In England and Wales, the higher education funding bodies (see 2.5.1.3.) allocate the funds to their institutions, taking variations in regional private housing costs and student numbers into account. The individual institutions have developed their own arrangements for administering the funds. They are available to all students, whether undergraduate or postgraduate. In Northern Ireland, the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) allocates the funds to institutions providing higher education.

e) Dance and drama awards

Since September 1999, a limited number of awards have been available to higher and further education students of dance and/or drama who take up places in privately funded institutions. The funding bodies annually allocate places and funding to private schools of dance and drama. Students then

audition for these funded places. Successful students are required to make a contribution towards their fees. In order to be accepted into the scheme, private institutions must offer nationally recognised qualifications and be subject to an external assessment of standards.

f) Awards for postgraduate study and research

Awards or studentships for postgraduate study can be obtained for approved courses of advanced study (normally leading to a Master's degree or to certain professional and vocational awards) and for research (normally leading to the award of a Doctorate). Awards are available from the Research Councils (see 2.3.2), the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB).

Certain other awards are offered by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work. The latter organisation is being disbanded in September 2001 under the Care Standards Act 2000. It will be replaced by the General Social Care Council (GSCC) for England and a Care Council for Wales (CCW), to be known in Welsh as Cyngor Gofal Cymru.

Students taking courses leading to a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), or other postgraduate courses of initial teacher training leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or a specified equivalent qualification, are eligible for financial support in the same way as undergraduate students. Other incentives may also be available.

Disabled Student Allowances and Hardship Funds are available to postgraduate students.

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3. PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

3. PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

This chapter includes information on education and care for children below compulsory school age in a variety of settings within the voluntary and independent sectors, as well as the maintained schools sector.

3.1 Historical overview

Organised provision of care and education of young children began to appear in the late eighteenth century, generally on a voluntary and philanthropic basis. Pre-school education has been influenced by the ideals of Robert Owen, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel and Montessori, among others, and these ideals have been incorporated into the training of teachers of young children.

Although attendance in pre-school (or 'early') education is not compulsory, it is widespread and increasing. As a result of recent changes to Government pre-school provision policy, all local education authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales now have a statutory duty to secure a good-quality, free (part-time) place for all four-year-olds whose parents want it. Every four-year-old is therefore entitled to attend five two-and-a-half hour sessions per week. The Government has announced that from September 2004 this will be extended to three-year-olds in England. The National Assembly for Wales is also working towards the target of providing part-time nursery education to all three-year-olds by 2003. In Northern Ireland there is no statutory requirement for the provision of nursery education. However, Government initiatives in the late 1990s set targets to provide additional Government funded, part-time pre-school places in a range of settings and to increase this provision in the long-term to enable a full year of pre-school education for every child whose parents wish it.

The Government had also expressed a commitment to integrating early years education with pre-school childcare and out-of-school care (the care of pupils before and after school and during school holidays), to better meet the needs of children and their parents. Consequently, national childcare (education and day-care) strategies have been developed in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (DfEE, 1998)[1] (DENI, 1999).[2] In England and Wales the main aims of these strategies have been to raise the quality of care, make childcare more affordable

and more accessible by increasing places and improving information. The childcare strategy in Northern Ireland is based on the principals of inclusion, social justice, quality, affordability, flexibility, accessibility and partnership. The strategies are now being implemented through early years development and childcare partnerships in England and Wales and the pre-school education development plans in Northern Ireland; see sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 for further information.

In September 2000, the foundation stage of education was introduced in England. This caters for children from the age of three until the end of the reception class (usually aged five). It is a distinct stage and important both in its own right and in preparing children for later schooling. During the foundation stage, many children will attend some form of pre-school or nursery education, either full- or part-time, but others will attend a number of different settings. A few children will remain at home during the foundation stage, only attending school at the beginning of Year 1 (aged 5+).

3.2 Legislative framework

3.2.1 England and Wales

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 defines nursery education as full-time or part-time education suitable for children who have not attained compulsory school age (usually the term after a child's fifth birthday), whether provided at schools (usually nursery schools, nursery classes or reception classes in primary schools) or elsewhere. Other nursery provision is made by groups of parents and voluntary, private or independent bodies.

In order to achieve the Government's stated aim of providing a good-quality, free (part-time) place for all four-year-olds whose parents want it, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 imposed a statutory duty on LEAs to ensure the provision of nursery education in their area. This provision has to be sufficient to meet the needs of all resident children below statutory school age, but above an age specified in regulations laid down under the Act. The lower age limit was set at four, in the first instance, and will be reduced to age three by September 2003 (see 3.1). The LEA does not have to provide the nursery places itself and the provision does not have to be full-time. Before this Act came into force, LEAs had only a statutory duty to secure appropriate provision for children aged between two and five who were identified as having special educational needs. Some LEAs and school governing bodies made educational provision for children below statutory school age (i.e. children aged between two and five) if they wished.

In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, LEAs must also set up early years development and childcare partnerships for the provision of pre-school education and childcare. They are obliged to submit early years development and childcare plans to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in England or, in Wales, to the National Assembly Training and Education Department (NATED), which was previously the Welsh Office.

Early years development and childcare partnerships are expected to involve all pre-school education providers (including those from the private and voluntary sectors), who work in collaboration with LEAs and, consequently, receive some Government funding. Since April 1999, early years development partnerships have also included local childcare partnerships to help plan and deliver the National Childcare Strategy. There are currently 150 Early Years and Childcare Development Partnerships in operation in England.

The DfES has appointed a team of Partnership Advisers to help the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships in their ongoing work and in setting out their goals for the next three years.

Early years development and childcare plans usually consist of a statement of proposals outlining how LEAs will work with voluntary groups, the private sector and employers to provide the statutory provision now required (that is, currently at least a half-time, good-quality free place for every four-year-old whose parents require one). More details about these plans which have been extended to cover childcare and provision for three-year-olds, and which must indicate how early education will be integrated with pre-school day care can be found in the official planning guidance. [3] It is also intended that, wherever possible, provision for children with special educational needs should be integrated within early years development and childcare partnerships and plans; see 3.10.

The Care Standards Act 2000 combined the regulation and inspection systems for early years child care and education in England, which were previously carried out by separate organisations. Since September 2001, these functions have been undertaken by a new Early Years Directorate within the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). The Directorate is responsible for all early years regulations and operates at national, regional and local level. In Wales, these functions are carried out by Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, the Welsh equivalent of Osted; see section 10.4.1a for more information. Those involved in early years education are now judged on 14 national care standards which were published in May 2001. [4]

3.2.2 Northern Ireland

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 defines pre-school education as 'education provided for a child (whether at a school or any other premises) after he/she has attained the age of two years and before he/she has reached compulsory school age' (four years), 'otherwise than in the reception class of a primary school'.

The provision of nursery education in Northern Ireland is not a statutory requirement. However, under an ongoing Government initiative (DENI, 1998)[5] to increase early education provision through the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme, Education and Library Boards (Boards) are expected to submit pre-school education development plans to the Department of Education (DE) (Northern Ireland). The plans are expected to detail how Boards provide pre-school education for children resident in the local area (see 3.2.1 for early years development and childcare plans in England and Wales). Education and Library Boards are also expected to establish partnerships (pre-school education advisory groups), comprising providers of pre-school education in all sectors (statutory, voluntary, private, integrated and Irish-medium). Such partnerships collaborate on the provision of, and good practice in, pre-school education. The immediate objective of this programme (which commenced in September 1998) was to provide an additional 20 per cent of Government-funded part-time places in a range of pre-school settings. Its longer-term aim has been to provide a full year of pre-school education for every child whose parents wish it. In the initial expansion programme, children from socially disadvantaged circumstances and the oldest children in the pre-school cohort have been targeted.

3.3 Types of institutions

Within the school system, nursery education is provided in nursery schools and nursery classes of primary schools, free of charge.

In addition, children may be admitted to the reception class of primary schools before they have attained compulsory school age (see 4.4). Provision for these younger children is expected to be appropriate for their age and ability. However, in Northern Ireland, since September 1999, funding has no longer been provided for primary schools to take children of nursery age into reception classes

In some areas of England, Early Excellence Centres have been set up as models of good practice and innovation in integrated childcare and early education services. They are intended to play a key role in

showing what can be achieved by integrating and extending early education and childcare, involving and supporting parents, emphasising high standards and providing support and training for childminders and other providers in their area. There are currently 58 Early Excellence Centres in England, and the Government aims to have established a total of 100 centres by 2004. Consideration is also being given to their establishment in Wales and Northern Ireland.

For details of pre-school provision in other settings see 3.11.

3.4 Admissions requirements

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, pupil participation in nursery education is voluntary. Nursery schools and classes normally admit children from the age of three years in England and Wales, and two years in Northern Ireland, depending on the admissions policy and the number of places available. See Section 4.4.1 for the age at which pupils move on to primary school in England and Wales, and Section 4.4.2 for Northern Ireland.

3.4.1 England and Wales

In England and Wales, parents have a right to express a preference for a particular nursery institution for their child. Parents initially look to the local education authority (LEA) for guidance on the places available locally. In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, these may be places in nursery education provided directly by the LEA, or in other institutions (voluntary, private, etc.) which, as part of an early years development and childcare plan (see 3.2.1), receive some financial assistance from the Government in respect of the eligible four-year-olds they educate. In cases where demand for places exceeds availability, institutions follow their own admissions policy. It is recommended that, in deciding on their admissions policies, LEAs give priority to children with special educational needs (SEN) and to children from socially and economically deprived families (DES Circular 1/80). [6] Other admissions criteria may include the proximity to the school of the child's home and whether the child has any brothers or sisters already attending the school.

In Wales, institutions may again follow their own admissions policies when demand for places exceeds those available. In such cases admissions criteria may include the proximity to the school of the child's home, whether the child has brothers and sisters already attending the school, transport links, catchment areas, medical or social grounds, and parental ranking of preference.[7]

3.4.2 Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, in accordance with the provisions of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, each Education and Library Board (Board) makes arrangements for the parent of a child resident in the area of the Board who has reached the age of two years, but not attained the lower limit of compulsory school age (see 4.4.2), to apply for (the full- or part-time) admission of the child to pre-school education at a school if he/she wishes to do so. The number of full- and part-time places at a school are determined by the Department of Education (DE) (Northern Ireland). However, school Boards of Governors are responsible for ensuring that the number of full- and part-time nursery pupils registered at the school does not, at any time, exceed the school's full- or part-time enrolment numbers. Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland must publish the arrangements for the admission of children to pre-school education at each school in their area. Schools must publish criteria detailing how admissions decisions will be made in cases where applications exceed the number of places available. Since September 1999, all grant-aided nursery schools and classes have been required to give preference, through admissions criteria, to children in the target group (that is to say, children from socially disadvantaged circumstances and the oldest children in their final pre-school year). Circular 2001/13[8] provides full details of the pre-school admissions criteria regulations in Northern Ireland.

3.5 Levels and age groups

Children in nursery schools are normally aged between three and five years in England and Wales, and three and four years in Northern Ireland. They may be grouped according to age, depending on the number of pupils and the size of the classes.

3.5.1 England and Wales

There are no legal requirements concerning the number of adults per child needed in a nursery class in a maintained school in England and Wales. However, the guidance on the Children Act 1989 (DoH, 1991)[9] and DES Circular 2/73[10] recommend a minimum of two members of staff for every 26 children in nursery classes of maintained primary schools or in nursery schools, and a minimum of two members of staff for every 20 children where the teacher has other administrative duties to perform (for example, where he/she is also the headteacher). In both cases, one member of staff should be a qualified teacher and the other

a qualified nursery assistant. Similar guidance applies to private nursery schools. Circular 2/73 also recommends that reception classes in primary schools making provision for four-year-olds should ensure staffing levels are equivalent to those recommended for maintained nursery classes. Again, this is not a legal requirement. In line with a Government initiative to improve adult-child ratios in reception classes in schools, additional Government funding is being provided to some local authorities where there is a high level of social deprivation to finance the provision of qualified childcare workers to assist reception class teachers. The aim is to ensure an adult-child ratio in such classes of 1:15.

3.5.2 Northern Ireland

The recommended ratio of staff to pre-school children in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland is two members of staff to 26 children in full-time attendance; one member of staff must be a qualified teacher, the other a qualified nursery assistant. Previously the ratio stood at 2:25 but was brought in line with England and Wales after 1998, see 3.5.1. Pre-school education centres in Northern Ireland are also expected to ensure that there are at least eight children in teaching groups in the immediate pre-school year (regardless of whether the place is Government funded). This is because it is considered important for children in pre-school education to learn and play as part of a group of reasonable size.

For information on provision and staff:child ratios outside maintained or grant-aided schools, see 3.11.

3.6 General objectives

In **England and Wales**, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) set out goals for pre-school learning which emphasise early literacy, numeracy and the development of personal and social skills; see 3.7 and 3.7.1.

In **Northern Ireland**, the Department of Education (DE) (Northern Ireland), under the aegis of the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), produced the current curricular guidance for pre-school education in 1997, which aims to help raise standards in all pre-school settings; see 3.7.2.

3.7 Curriculum, subjects, number of hours

The provisions of the National Curriculum and the Northern Ireland Curriculum do not apply to pre-compulsory education, although providers of nursery education are expected to work towards early learning goals in England, desirable learning outcomes in Wales, and the relevant curricular guidance in Northern Ireland.

3.7.1 Curriculum: England and Wales

The headteacher and staff in a pre-school setting decide on the timetable and classroom organisation.

In England, although there is no prescribed curriculum for pre-school children, learning is based upon early learning goals. These were introduced in September 2000, following a review (commissioned by the Government) of the desirable learning outcomes by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). They form an integral part of the foundation stage and are in line with the national strategies for literacy and numeracy (see 4.7.1a). The following areas of development are covered:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- communication, language and literacy ;
- mathematical development;
- knowledge and understanding of the world;
- physical development; and
- creative development (QCA, 2000). [11]

In **Wales**, the same six areas of learning form the basis of curricular guidance for the foundation stage. They are still known as desirable learning outcomes and were redefined by the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC, 2000)[12] in 2000, to reflect the Welsh context and the revised National Curriculum in Wales.

The time to be spent on each area of development is not prescribed.

3.7.2 Curriculum: Northern Ireland

The headteacher and staff are responsible for the timetable and classroom organisation.

In 1997 the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) produced new curricular guidance for pre-school education (CCEA, 1997). [13] This guidance took account of the

Northern Ireland Curriculum (see 4.7.2.), and the desirable learning outcomes, which from September 2000 were replaced by early learning goals in England and remain in Wales (see above). All pre-school education providers are required to offer a curriculum which follows this guidance, by aiming to raise standards in pre-school settings through assisting those working with young children to identify learning potential within a well-organised programme of play. These curriculum guidelines list the following areas of learning as the basis for a balanced programme, which should provide for the developmental needs of each child:

- personal, social and emotional development;
- physical development;
- creative/aesthetic development;
- language development;
- early mathematical experiences;
- early experiences in science and technology; and
- knowledge and appreciation of the environment.

The guidance document also states that any pre-school curriculum should:

- meet the physical, social, emotional and cognitive needs of children at their particular stage of development;
- motivate, challenge and stimulate them; and
- be broad and balanced, allowing children to make choices and providing them with opportunities, through play and other experiences, to develop their learning.

The time to be spent on each area of the curriculum is not prescribed.

3.8 Teaching methods

The headteacher and staff decide on teaching methods in nursery schools and classes. In England and Wales, the LEA may give advice about the organisation of teaching and the teaching programme, but it has no powers to impose teaching methods.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) recognise a number of common features of good practice as being effective in supporting children's learning, including:

- children's participation in a range of activities which take due account of their interests and achievements and their developing physical, intellectual, emotional and social abilities; and
- the encouragement of children to think and talk about their learning and to develop self-control and independence.

In Northern Ireland, Education and Library Boards (Boards) have a similar role to local education authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales. As in England and Wales, teaching methods are decided by the headteacher and staff in each school.

3.9 Pupil assessment

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, there are no regulations specifically governing the assessment of performance of nursery pupils, but the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has recommended the following as good practice:

> *monitoring of each child's progress throughout the foundation stage is essential to ensure that they are making progress and that particular difficulties in any of the areas of learning, whatever the cause, are identified and addressed.* (QCA, 2000)[11]

In England, there is a statutory requirement for all children to be assessed on entry to primary school (at age four or five). Further details are provided in 4.9.1.

In Wales, guidelines recommend the following as good practice:

> *children's progress is assessed and recorded through frequent observation and is discussed regularly with parents and that strategies for early identification of children's particular needs are implemented and appropriate referral is made and support sought.* (ACCAC, 2000).[12]

The relevant curricular guidance for Northern Ireland also promotes the monitoring of children's progress as good practice. It is important for parents to be kept fully informed about the curriculum and their child's progress.

3.10 Special assistance for pupils

Local education authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales have responsibility for the education of children and young people with special educational needs between the ages of two and 19 years. A parent, health visitor or similar person may alert the LEA to a child's special needs and a parent of a child over two years of age may request a formal assessment which may lead to a statement of special educational needs (see 8.6.3).

In Northern Ireland, Education and Library Boards have similar responsibilities in relation to special educational needs to LEAs in England and Wales.

Early years development and childcare plans in England and Wales and pre-school education development plans in Northern Ireland must ensure that appropriate provision is available for children with special educational needs. The plans must also ensure that all providers are able, with support where necessary, to identify and meet those needs, taking account of codes of practice on special educational needs (DfES, 2001b),[14] (DENI, 1998b),[15] (NafW, 2002)[16] (see 8.6.1). The revised Code of Practice in England and the new Code in Wales came into effect from the beginning of 2002.

3.11 Organisational variations, alternative structures

Outside the maintained schools sector in England and Wales, and the grant-aided schools sector in Northern Ireland, pre-compulsory education is provided in a wide range of settings.

There are private nursery schools and nursery classes attached to independent schools. Non-school provision is made in voluntary pre-school groups or pre-school playgroups. Voluntary groups are usually run by parents and other volunteers, while day nurseries are provided by both public and private bodies.

Many voluntary and independent providers of pre-school education are now grant-aided, that is, many now form part of an early years development and childcare partnership with an LEA in England or Wales, or a pre-school education advisory group with an Education and Library Board in Northern Ireland. Consequently, they are entitled to receive the nursery education grant, administered by the LEA for the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

In England and Wales, there are no legal requirements concerning the number of adults per child needed in day nurseries and pre-school playgroups. However, the Department of Health, with the approval of the then Department of Education and Science (now the DfES), recommends a staffing ratio of one adult per four children in the two- to three-year-old age group, and one adult per eight children in the three- to five-year-old age range (DoH, 1991). At least half the staff should hold a relevant qualification in childcare, education or social work. In the case of pre-school playgroups affiliated to the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA), staff should have completed a training course specified by the PLA or, in Wales, the Wales Pre-School Playgroups Association/PPA Cymru and Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (the Association of Welsh-medium Playgroups).

Where pre-school groups participating in early years partnerships employ a qualified teacher and a qualified nursery assistant, they may have the same pupil-teacher ratio as nursery school classes in the maintained schools sector (see 3.5.1).

Guidance on staffing levels for independent nursery schools is similar to that for maintained nursery schools, although there are no legal restrictions on adult-child ratios in independent schools.

As part of its recent consultation on the regulation of early education and daycare, the Government has been reviewing recommended adult-child ratios for three- to five-year-old children. The results of the consultation have not yet been published.

In Northern Ireland, staffing levels for all other providers (outside grant-aided nursery schools and classes) are subject to the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and relevant guidance. In pre-school education centres where new places are secured (that is, Government funded places under pre-school education development plans) an adult-child ratio of 1:8 is recommended, and at least half the staff must hold a relevant qualification in education or childcare.

3.11.1 Day nurseries and combined nursery centres

There are both public and private day nurseries providing daycare for children under the age of five. They are usually open from around 7.30 a.m. to around 6.00 p.m. throughout the year. Many establishments cater for children from the age of three months onwards.

Local authority social services departments, which provide day nurseries for children under the age of five, are permitted by law to make a charge for attendance. Local authority education and social services departments

may sometimes combine the services of a day nursery and a nursery school to form a combined nursery centre. Alternatively, LEAs may provide a teacher for social services nurseries. Admission to day nurseries provided by local authority social service departments and to combined nursery centres is based on the degree of the child's need for specialist help and the family's ability to provide for the child's health and educational needs. Local authorities are required by the Children Act 1989 to provide places for such children. They may provide for others if they wish to do so.

Privately run day nurseries also provide educational and developmental activities for the children in their care, usually by qualified nursery assistants, but in some establishments qualified teachers with experience of early years teaching are employed on a part-time basis to assist with the education of three- to five-year-olds.

Public and private day nurseries and combined nursery centres which have formed an early years development and childcare partnership with their local education authority in England and Wales, or a pre-school education advisory group with an Education and Library Board (Board) in Northern Ireland, may receive part of their funding (via the nursery education grant)[17] from this source; see 3.11.

See 3.11 for child-staff ratios.

3.11.2 Voluntary pre-schools and playgroups

There is an extensive network of pre-school groups and playgroups, which usually admit children from the age of two-and-a-half years. These groups are run by parents and other volunteers. At least half the staff should hold a qualification in childcare, education or social work approved by the local authority.

In Wales, nursery education is also offered through the medium of Welsh by Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (the Association of Welsh-medium Playgroups).

Pre-school groups registered as part of an early years development and childcare plan, (see 3.2.1) with their local education authority in England and Wales, or as part of a pre-school education development plan with their local Education and Library Board (Board) in Northern Ireland, may receive part of their funding from the Government, if they are educating eligible four-year-olds (see 3.11).

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3.
PRE-SCHOOL
EDUCATION

Section 4: PRIMARY EDUCATION

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4. PRIMARY EDUCATION

In general, primary education covers pupils who have reached, or are approaching, compulsory school age (five in England and Wales, four in Northern Ireland), up to the age of 11.

4.1 Historical overview

Elementary education provided by voluntary bodies became increasingly widespread throughout the nineteenth century. The Elementary Education Act 1870 provided for the creation of School Boards, which could set up new 'board schools' in areas where existing voluntary provision was insufficient. This marked a significant turning-point in state participation in education.

Until the introduction of the Education Act 1996, the Education Act 1944 provided the basis of legislation affecting primary education in England and Wales. With the introduction of the Education Act 1996, legislation relating to schools passed between 1944 and 1996 was consolidated into and superseded by the 1996 Act, although this Act did not change the actual substance of the law. In addition, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 has introduced a wide range of provisions which affect primary schools.

The Education Act (Northern Ireland) 1947 introduced legislation similar to the 1944 Education Act in England and Wales. Important reforms were introduced by the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, the Education (NI) Order 1987, the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993, the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 and the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.

4.2 Legislative framework

There is no single body of legislation covering primary education. Education in England and Wales is subject to separate legislation from that governing education in Northern Ireland. Since devolution, the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) has had responsibility for

implementing primary legislation in Wales and for formulating and implementing secondary legislation. Primary legislation-making powers for Wales rest with the UK Parliament in London.

England and Wales

Primary education is defined in Section 2 of the Education Act 1996, and normally caters for pupils between the ages of five (or almost five) and 11 years. Children are not legally obliged to start primary school until the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday, although many children start school earlier.

Part I of the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) (now superseded by the Education Act 1996) divided the period of compulsory education into four key stages. Of these, key stage 1 caters for pupils aged five to seven years and key stage 2 for those aged seven to 11 years.

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, children of compulsory school age may be educated outside school (see 1.2.1).

Education in (publicly funded) maintained primary schools must be provided free of charge. However, there may be charges for some extracurricular activities (see 2.4.1).

Northern Ireland

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 revised the definition of compulsory school age, so that each child in Northern Ireland has 12 full years of education. The period of compulsory education is from age four to 16, with primary education catering for children aged four to 11 years. Consequently, key stage 1 comprises the classes for pupils aged four to eight years and key stage 2 those for pupils aged eight to 11 years. The majority of children aged four to 11 in Northern Ireland are educated in primary schools but some attend the preparatory departments of grammar schools.

Education in (publicly funded) grant-aided schools must be provided free of charge.

4.3 Types of schools

All primary schools in England and Wales which are maintained schools, and all primary schools which are grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland, are non-selective and accept pupils regardless of ability (see 4.4.1 and 4.4.2).

For details of the various administrative categories of school and their legal basis, see 1.6.1.

In most areas of England and Wales, primary schools normally cater for pupils aged four or five (see below) to 11 years. However, some primary schools also have a nursery class, which provides pre-primary education for three- to four-year-olds. In some areas, there are separate schools for infant pupils (key stage 1, five to seven years of age) and junior pupils (key stage 2, seven to 11 years). Primary pupils usually transfer to secondary education at the age of 11 years.

In some areas of **England**, schools are organised in three phases: primary or 'first' schools for pupils aged five to eight or nine years, middle schools (pupils aged eight to 12 years or nine to 13 years) and secondary or 'high' schools (for students aged 12 or 13 to 16+ years). Legally, middle schools are classified as primary or secondary schools according to whether the majority of pupils are under or over 11 years of age. Middle schools do not exist in Wales.

Minimum standards for school premises which relate to the health, safety and welfare of pupils and others in maintained schools in England and Wales are laid down in the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999. These regulations include such matters as lighting, temperature and ventilation of buildings, as well as sanitary and medical facilities, staff accommodation and storage facilities; they also prescribe minimum areas for school playing- fields. Local education authorities (LEAs) or schools decide on space requirements for teaching accommodation and for other teaching facilities and equipment. However, detailed non-statutory guidance is available for schools regarding the provision of teaching and non-teaching areas for nursery, primary and secondary pupils. This guidance should be taken into account in any new building project (DfEE, 1996).[1] In Northern Ireland, a range of circulars and guidance such as 'Building Handbooks' for the planning and design of new school premises, guidance on fire safety and precautions, sanitary provisions and storage facilities are also in existence.

4.4 Admissions requirements

4.4.1 Admissions requirements: England and Wales

A school's admissions policy is established by the relevant admissions authority, which is either the LEA or the school governing body, depending on the category of school and the arrangements between the

LEA and the school. This policy must contain legally specified information. It must, for example, state how many pupils will be admitted to the school. This 'standard number' is agreed by the Secretary of State, and is set with reference to a school's capacity to accommodate pupils and to any class size limits which may apply (see 4.5.1). The admissions policy must also describe the application procedure and explain how places will be allocated if there are more applications than places at the school. For example, priority may be given to children who live closest to the school, to children who already have brothers or sisters at the school, or to children with special educational needs (SEN) which may be best met by the school. The criteria used to determine which pupils will gain a place in these circumstances must be within the constraints of the law, and the admissions policy must be published annually in the school prospectus.

Parents can express a preference for the school they wish their child to attend. A place at the chosen school must be provided unless all the places have already been offered to children who have a stronger claim under the school's published admissions policy. Parents have a legal right of appeal if a place is not offered at the school of their choice.

Some schools admit children who are beginning compulsory education once a year in September, while others phase the intake of new pupils, for example, by admitting a second intake of pupils in January (after the Christmas holiday) and sometimes a third in March/April (after the Easter break). Where schools phase the admission of pupils, children's dates of birth normally determine whether they are admitted in September or later in the year. A very large number of schools admit pupils to the reception class before they reach compulsory school age (see 1.2.1). Policies on early admission vary between LEAs and between individual schools.

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Secretary of State in England, and the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) in Wales, are each required to issue two Codes of Practice for admissions authorities, one on school admissions and the other relating to school admissions appeals.

In England, the *Code of Practice: School Admissions* (DfEE, 1999a)[2] came into force on 1 April 1999 and has applied to arrangements leading to primary and secondary school admissions since September 2000. This Code of Practice offers statutory guidance and guidelines on all aspects of the school admissions process. All parties involved in decisions about admissions to maintained schools in England – schools, LEAs, appeal panels (see below) and adjudicators – are required to have

regard to the Code. The aim is to ensure that admissions arrangements to primary and secondary schools are clear, fair, objective and straightforward and meet parents' preferences as far as possible.

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, a statutory Code of Practice on school admissions appeals also came into effect in England on 1 September 1999 (DfEE, 1999b).[3] This has applied to admissions appeals relating to primary and secondary school admissions since September 2000 and, as a result, appeals committees regarding school admission have been replaced by appeal panels. These are entirely independent of the local education authority and/or the school governing body.

Similar Codes of Practice, introduced under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, are also in place in Wales. The *School Admissions: Welsh Office Code of Practice* (WOED, 1999)[4] came into force on 1 April 1999 and has applied to admissions arrangements since September 2000. The *School Admissions Appeals: The National Assembly for Wales Code of Practice* (NAfW, 1999)[5] came into force on 1 September 1999, and has been implemented since September 2000.

In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, LEAs in England and Wales are permitted to direct an LEA-maintained community school or voluntary-controlled school (see 1.6.1) to admit a child who has been refused admission to, or excluded from, all schools within a reasonable distance from his/her home. (This Directive would not apply in cases where it would cause the school to breach any regulations on class size (see 4.5.1).) However, under the terms of the School Admissions Appeals Codes of Practice (DfEE, 1999b)[3], (NAfW, 1999)[5], a school governing body may appeal against an LEA directive to admit a child to the school, if the child in question has previously been permanently excluded from two or more schools. With further reference to excluded pupils, the Government has set a target that, by September 2002, all pupils excluded from school for more than 15 consecutive school days should be offered full-time, appropriate education while excluded.

Additional legislation relating to admissions is currently proposed. The measures suggested would include the statutory introduction of admissions forums to coordinate school admissions, measures to prevent parents from making multiple applications to schools in their area, and a new requirement for schools and LEAs to offer all parents in their area a school place on the same day.

4.4.2 Admissions requirements: Northern Ireland

The law requires that all schools in Northern Ireland must be open to all children regardless of religious persuasion. This policy is known as 'open enrolment'. Admissions to primary schools are governed by Part III of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, which sets out the statutory requirements for the admission of pupils to grant-aided schools under open enrolment and the Primary Schools (Admissions Criteria) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997.

In accordance with the above legislation, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) (DE) determines a maximum enrolment number (the number of pupils which may be enrolled in any school year) and a maximum admissions number (the number of pupils that may be admitted to the first year of compulsory education) for each school. As in England and Wales, these are determined with reference to the school's capacity to accommodate pupils and to any class size regulations which may apply (see 4.5.2).

Parents have the right to express their preference as to the primary school they wish their child to attend. Schools must comply with this preference if the school's enrolment or admissions number has not been reached, and provided that, in Years 1 to 4 (children aged four to eight years), they are not in breach of the class size policy which applies. Schools must also publish the criteria which will be used if a school is oversubscribed, such as a brother or sister already at the school or the geographical location of the child's home compared with the school. Admissions criteria are drawn up by the Board of Governors of a school and may take into account any representations made by the local Education and Library Board (Board) responsible for the management of the school, or, if it is a Catholic school, representations made by the Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools (CCMS). Admissions decisions are the responsibility of individual schools. Parents have a legal right of appeal (to an independent tribunal) if their child has been refused a place at the school of their choice and they consider that a school has not applied its admissions criteria or has not applied them correctly.

In accordance with the Primary Schools (Admissions Criteria) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997, as in England and Wales, pupils may not be selected for entry to primary school by reference to ability or aptitude, or by their performance in a test or examination held by, or on behalf of, the Board of Governors. These regulations also require

that admissions criteria should include the order of priority in which pupils will be admitted to a school, where the number of applications for admission exceeds the schools admissions number. They should also include the provision to give priority to children who have attained compulsory school age (four in Northern Ireland) over those who will not have attained compulsory school age at the time of their proposed admission (see below). In addition, admissions criteria must give priority to children who are resident in Northern Ireland over those who are not.

Compulsory education starts earlier in Northern Ireland than in England and Wales. In accordance with the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, a child who reaches the age of four on or before 1 July must start full-time education on 1 September of that year. Prior to the 1998/99 school year, some schools which had sufficient places available, also enrolled four-year-olds whose birthdays fell after 1 July (that is, children who had not reached compulsory school age) in primary school education. Since September 1999, this practice has only been allowed to continue in schools already using it. Schools which did not have this as an existing policy are no longer permitted to introduce a policy of admitting children under compulsory school age, even in instances where there is surplus capacity within their enrolment and admissions numbers as determined by the Department of Education (DE). Full details of admissions procedures for entry to primary education in Northern Ireland are provided in DE Circular 2000/07, [6] supplemented by Circular 2001/07 (DE, 2001a).[7]

4.5 Key stages, grouping and class sizes

In **England, Wales and Northern Ireland**, most children aged four/five to 11 are taught in mixed-ability classes with children of the same age, with one teacher in charge of the class. A teacher normally stays with a class for one school year, and at the end of each school year, pupils normally progress to the next class. However, many primary schools, particularly small schools, have one or more mixed-age classes, in which case the pupils might stay in the same class for more than one year.

4.5.1 England and Wales

In England and Wales, the primary school normally has seven year groups and comprises two key stages:

AGE	KEY STAGE	DESCRIPTION
Five or under	Foundation stage	Reception class
Five – seven	1	Years 1 and 2
Seven – 11	2	Years 3, 4, 5 and 6

The reception class often also includes younger pupils who have been admitted to school before they have reached compulsory school age (see 2.3). For details of adult:child ratios/class sizes in reception classes see 1.2.1.

Since September 2001, under provisions introduced under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, all maintained primary schools in England and Wales have been legally required to ensure that all five-, six- and seven-year-olds (in key stage 1) are taught in classes of 30 pupils or fewer. Under the Act, the Secretary of State in England and the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) may also set different maximum limits for different year groups. LEAs and schools have to comply with such limits. Where numbers rise above these limits, the school or the local authority can be required to pay for an extra teacher.

4.5.2 Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, primary schools normally cater for pupils aged four years (compulsory school age) to 11 years. Primary pupils usually transfer to secondary education at the age of 11 years. Key stage 1 covers children of between four and eight years of age and key stage 2 caters for children aged eight to 11:

AGE	KEY STAGE	DESCRIPTION
Four – eight	1	Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
Eight – 11	2	Years 5, 6 and 7

In accordance with the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Government has the power to establish a statutory limit to ensure that all pupils in key stage 1 (Years 1 to 4, ages four to eight years) are taught in classes of 30 or less. Initially, regulations were put in force for Years 1 and 2 (pupils aged four to six years). Consequently, since 1 August 1999, under the Class Sizes in Primary Schools Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999, all classes in these years have been limited to a maximum of 30 pupils. The policy was extended to Years 3 and 4 classes (pupils

aged six to eight years) in the 2000–01 school year. Full details of the Northern Ireland class size regulations are provided in Department of Education (DE) Circular 2000/01.[8] Additional information is available in Circular 2001/01 (DE, 2001b).[9]

4.6 General objectives

The basic principle underlying school education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is that it should provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum which is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs (SEN) which he/she may have. Section 351 of the Education Act 1996 and the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 define a balanced and broadly based curriculum as one which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
- prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The National Curriculum (in England and Wales) (see 4.7) aims to raise educational standards for all children aged five to 16.

National education targets for the proportion of primary-age children reaching the expected standards for their age are also set (see 1.4.2). In addition, the school governing bodies of individual schools in England and Wales and the Boards of Governors of schools in Northern Ireland are expected to set pupil performance targets; see 10.2.1.

4.7 Curriculum

In England and Wales, the legal basis for the National Curriculum is Section 351 of the Education Act 1996. In Northern Ireland, the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 introduced the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996 and the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, the amount of time to be spent per subject cannot be prescribed.

4.7.1 England and Wales

In England and Wales, the compulsory curriculum at primary level consists of the National Curriculum and religious education. The statutory bodies responsible for overseeing the National Curriculum and its assessment are the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) for England, and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (known by its Welsh acronym, ACCAC). The LEAs, school governing bodies and headteachers responsible for schools have a general duty to secure the implementation of the National Curriculum and assessment arrangements in schools, to monitor the consistency of assessments and to give professional support to teachers in making assessments.

It should be noted that the National Curriculum and religious education do not constitute the whole curriculum for schools.

The Education Act 1996 requires LEAs, school governing bodies and the headteacher of all maintained schools to guard against the political indoctrination of pupils, by forbidding the 'pursuit of partisan activities' by primary pupils, and the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in any school regardless of the age of the pupils. The Act also requires political issues, if discussed in class, to be presented in a balanced way.

a) National Curriculum: England and Wales

Section 351 of the Education Act 1996 states that every pupil of compulsory school age in maintained schools is entitled to a curriculum which:

- is balanced, broadly based and relevant to his or her needs,
- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
- prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The National Curriculum must be taught to children once they are of compulsory school age (the term after their fifth birthday), until the age of 16 (except in certain circumstances – see below and 5.8.1). Many children start school before their fifth birthday and schools may decide to teach the National Curriculum to these children also. One of the main aims in primary schools (key stages 1 and 2, pupils aged five to 11 years) is to ensure that all pupils make good progress in the basics of English (and Welsh in Wales, particularly where Welsh is a pupil's first language), mathematics and science.

In England and Wales, Section 364 of the Education Act 1996 allows modification of the National Curriculum and related assessment arrangements, or exemption from the National Curriculum, for individual students who have been given a statement of special educational needs; see 8.6.3 for further information.

Section 365 of the above Act also permits the headteacher of a maintained school to make temporary exemptions from, or modification of, the National Curriculum, for individual pupils, for a period of up to six months.

Schools in Education Action Zones in **England** (see 1.5) may also apply to the Secretary of State to modify the use of the National Curriculum.

For each subject in the National Curriculum, there are programmes of study and attainment targets; see 4.9.1b. Standards of pupils' performances are set out in level descriptions. There are also appropriate assessment arrangements for core subjects; see 4.9.1c.

The National Curriculum is regularly monitored and reviewed by the statutory bodies responsible for its oversight. In **England**, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has recently completed a major review of the National Curriculum and non-statutory subject areas. As a result, following a period of extensive consultation, a revised National Curriculum was introduced in August 2000 (QCA, 1999).[10]

In **Wales**, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) has undertaken a similar review and, as a result, revised curriculum and assessment arrangements were also introduced in Wales in August 2000 (ACCAC, 2000).[11]

ACCAC is also responsible for commissioning classroom materials to support the teaching of Welsh and the Curriculum Cymreig and has recently produced a strategy document outlining its priorities in this area for the period 2000–03 (ACCAC, 2000a).[12]

National Curriculum subjects: England and Wales

In **England**, the following compulsory subjects are included in the National Curriculum at key stage 1 and key stage 2:

- the core subjects – English, mathematics, science;
- the foundation subjects – information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, history, geography, art and design, music and physical education (PE).

In **Wales**, the following are compulsory in key stages 1 and 2:

- the core subjects – English, Welsh (where Welsh is studied as a first language in Welsh-speaking schools or classes), mathematics, science;
- the foundation subjects – Welsh (where Welsh is studied as a second language, that is in schools or classes which are not Welsh-speaking), technology including design and technology and information technology (IT), history, geography, art, music and physical education (PE).

Key stage 1 pupils in Welsh-speaking schools or classes are exempt from the key stage 1 programme of study in English.

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, the amount of time to be devoted to each subject cannot be prescribed. However, recent moves to ensure that literacy and numeracy are given priority in primary schools in **England** have resulted in Government recommendations for daily literacy and numeracy 'hours'. In **Wales** too, there is particular emphasis in the primary curriculum on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. However, literacy and numeracy hours as such have not generally been adopted.

The revised National Curriculum documents for England make clear that, although the school curriculum must include the National Curriculum and any other statutory requirements, schools have considerable flexibility in designing and timetabling their curriculum. Consequently, it is a matter for schools to decide how much time the National Curriculum should take. However, practical guidance on how primary schools might plan curriculum time is expected to be published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England in early summer 2002.

Programmes of study: England and Wales

Programmes of study set out the minimum statutory entitlement to the knowledge, understanding and skills for each subject at each key stage and teachers use the programmes of study as the basis for planning schemes of work (see 4.8). Particular teaching methods and textbooks are not usually prescribed as part of a programme of study, but are chosen by teachers, who may also add to the subject material specified in the programmes of study.

One of the aims of the revised National Curriculum, effective in schools in England and Wales since August 2000 (see above), was to introduce less detailed programmes of study. It was believed that this would offer

teachers additional flexibility to ensure that the curriculum offered in school meets the full range of their pupils' needs and abilities.

In England, a (national) structure has been established for the recommended 'literacy hour' which began in primary schools in September 1998. Since that time, primary schools have been expected to dedicate one hour every day to the teaching of reading and writing, for which a detailed national teaching framework and training materials have been provided by the Government. Schools are expected to follow this non-statutory framework, unless they can demonstrate that they have another, equally effective, literacy programme in place. Teaching materials have also been provided.

Similar arrangements for the teaching of mathematics came into effect in England in September 1999. All publicly funded primary and special schools are required to teach a daily mathematics lesson of between 45 and 60 minutes, depending on pupils' ages. It is recommended that lessons should last 45 minutes for pupils in Years 1 and 2 (aged five to seven years), 50 minutes for Years 3 and 4 (ages seven to nine) and 60 minutes for pupils in Years 5 and 6 (aged nine to 11 years). Such recommendations are, however, not statutory.

In Wales, an allocated amount of time is not specified for the teaching of English and/or Welsh (literacy skills) or mathematics (numeracy skills). This is considered to be a matter for local discretion. General guidance on good practice for the improvement of literacy and numeracy standards in schools in Wales has been produced by the Welsh Office (now the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) and Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales (Welsh Office/OHMCI, 1998b;[13] Welsh Office/OHMCI, 1999).[14] In addition, each LEA has produced individual literacy and numeracy strategies. These are approved by the NAfW and are based on the framework good practice documents, mentioned above.

In England, the revised programmes of study for English and mathematics introduced with the revised National Curriculum in August 2000 reflect the requirements of the literacy and numeracy strategies.

Key skills and common requirements in England and Wales

In **England**, six 'key skills' are embedded in the National Curriculum for key stages 1 and 2. Identified as the skills needed to succeed in work, education and everyday life, the key skills are communication, application of number, information technology, working with others, improving own learning and performance, and problem-solving.

'Thinking skills', which complement the above six key skills, are also embedded in the National Curriculum. It is intended that the thinking skills of information processing; reasoning; enquiry; creative thinking; and evaluation, should enable children to learn how to learn.

In addition to the compulsory curriculum subjects at key stages 1 and 2 in **Wales**, there are 'common requirements' that apply across all subjects in the National Curriculum. These common requirements include a statement of access for all students, including those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. The other common requirements are communication skills, mathematical skills, information technology skills, problem-solving and creative skills, personal and social education, and the Curriculum Cymreig (Wales-specific aspects of the curriculum). It is left to teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to have access to the common requirements across the National Curriculum, and to determine the appropriate number and range of such opportunities for individual pupils.

b) Non-statutory subject areas: England and Wales

The National Curriculum subjects (and religious education) are not considered to form the complete curriculum. The curriculum should, at appropriate stages, include other subjects, such as careers education, health education, sex education and other aspects of personal and social education. Schools may also cover other areas at a level appropriate to their pupils' understanding. Subjects may, for example, include foreign languages, economic awareness, environmental education and political and international understanding, including an awareness of European identity and European historical, cultural, economic and social aspects. Some of these will, however, be covered to some extent through the various National Curriculum programmes of study. In Wales, emphasis is placed on developing knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales.

Modern foreign languages

With respect to modern foreign languages in the primary school curriculum in England, in March 1999, the then Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) launched the Early Language Learning initiative. This aims to encourage the learning of foreign languages prior to the beginning of key stage 3, when a modern foreign language becomes a compulsory National Curriculum subject. A National Advisory Centre on Early Language Learning (NACELL) has also been launched, and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

(QCA) in England has produced a scheme of work (see 4.8) for those schools teaching modern foreign languages at key stage 2.

In March 2001, the QCA submitted a report[15] to the Secretary of State on the feasibility of extending the teaching of modern foreign languages to primary schools. The report concluded that there is support for the principle of entitlement to modern foreign language learning at this level. As a result, the Secretary of State has requested the Languages National Steering Group to take the report into consideration as part of its remit to take forward the Government's commitment to the promotion of foreign language learning.

Citizenship and personal, social and health education

Since the introduction of the revised National Curriculum in August 2000, all publicly funded primary schools in England have been expected to follow a broad, non-statutory framework of citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) in key stages 1 and 2. Initial guidance, including information on aspects such as drugs education, sex education and personal finance education, has been produced in support of the framework (QCA, 2000a).[16] In addition, schemes of work (see 4.8) for citizenship education in key stages 1 and 2 are currently being developed. In Wales, a new, non-statutory framework of personal and social education (PSE) was introduced in primary level education in August 2000 (ACCAC, 2000c).[17] Supplementary guidance has also been issued to help schools implement the framework (ACCAC, 2000d).[18]

Sex education: England and Wales

The school governing body of all primary schools which are maintained schools must decide whether, and at what stage, sex education should be introduced in the curriculum. It must keep an up-to-date written statement of the policy it chooses to adopt. If it decides sex education should be provided, it must publish, in its school prospectus, a summary of the content and organisation of the programme. The school governing body must also inform parents about the procedures for withdrawing their child from part or all of these lessons should the parents wish to do so. However, parents do not have a right to withdraw their child(ren) from lessons dealing with the biological aspects of human development and reproduction, which form part of the National Curriculum for science.

Since the introduction of the revised National Curriculum, in August 2000, and the new non-statutory framework for citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) in primary education in England,

the Government has recommended that sex and relationship education should form part of this citizenship and PSHE programme. New non-statutory guidance has been issued (DfEE, 2000a),[19] which recommends that, when children receive sex education, they should also learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the raising of children. In Wales, guidance on sex education forms part of the new personal and social education (PSE) framework, (ACCAC, 2000c).[17]

Drugs education: England and Wales

Certain aspects of drugs education – including tobacco and alcohol, as well as illegal drugs – are compulsory as part of National Curriculum science. In addition, guidance on drug prevention and the preparation of policies on drugs education and dealing with drug-related incidents is contained in Department for Education (now DfES) Circular 4/95;[20] in the new guidance for personal, social and health education (PSHE) in England, and for personal and social education (PSE) in Wales, and in the publication *Protecting Young People. Good Practice in Drug Education in Schools and the Youth Service* (DfEE, 1998a),[21] produced as part of the Government's ten-year anti-drugs strategy.

c) Religious education and collective worship: England and Wales

The Education Act 1996 (as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) requires all maintained schools – except nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools – to provide religious education and a daily act of collective worship. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from these activities.

Department for Education (now DfES) Circular 1/94[22] provides guidelines on religious education and collective worship in schools in England.

All LEAs are required to adopt a locally agreed syllabus for religious education (RE) that meets the requirements of the Education Act 1996. Denominational schools are exempt from this agreed syllabus framework. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), in cooperation with representatives of the different religious communities in England, has developed two model syllabuses for the teaching of religious education. These are non-statutory, general guidelines, which can be wholly adopted, or drawn upon, by LEAs in developing their own locally agreed syllabuses. LEAs must review their syllabuses every five years. In addition, and with a view to building on the model syllabuses (which date from 1994) and providing additional guidance on the effective teaching and assessment of religious education, QCA

has recently published new non-statutory guidance. This relates specifically to RE taught according to a locally agreed syllabus (QCA, 2000b).[23]

In 2000, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority also published non-statutory schemes of work for religious education in primary and secondary schools. These are designed to provide support materials for teachers, by demonstrating ways in which a locally agreed syllabus for religious education can be interpreted for the classroom. (Further information on schemes of work is available in section 4.8.)

The Education Reform Act 1988 (now superseded by the consolidated Education Act 1996) requires each LEA to establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The SACRE may require the LEA to review its locally agreed syllabus for religious education and has a role in supporting the effective provision of religious education and collective worship in schools. Each SACRE must comprise representatives from several groups, including local religious groups, teachers' associations and the LEA.

All locally agreed religious education syllabuses in England and Wales must *'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'*. The majority of acts of collective worship are required to be *'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'*.

Headteachers may apply for the requirement for broadly Christian worship to be lifted for some or all pupils, if this requirement appears to be inappropriate for the whole school or for a particular category of pupils. Applications are made to the local SACRE. At the request of parents, religious education and worship may be provided according to a particular faith or denomination, provided that denominational worship does not replace statutory non-denominational collective worship and the school does not incur additional cost.

4.7.2 Northern Ireland

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 introduced a common curriculum and a system of formal assessment for all pupils in grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Curriculum (DENI, 1996)[24] comprises religious education and six compulsory areas of study, only five of which apply to key stages 1 and 2 (primary education); the 'languages' area of study does not generally apply during these key stages, except in schools which are Irish-speaking.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum does not constitute the whole curriculum for schools. Schools are free to develop additional curriculum elements to express their particular ethos and to meet pupils' individual needs and circumstances.

A number of cross-curricular themes are also included in the curriculum for all schools. Boards of Governors may also choose to provide teaching in other subjects. For example, a European Dimension may be added either across the curriculum or as a free-standing element.

The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) is responsible for the oversight of the curriculum in Northern Ireland.

Education and Library Boards (Boards) are responsible for giving curriculum advice and support to schools, but the responsibility for ensuring that the curriculum is delivered in each school rests with the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors for each school must set out, in association with the headteacher and teaching staff, a curriculum policy. This policy must take account of any representation made by the relevant Education and Library Board, or the Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools (CCMS) if the school is a Catholic-maintained school. The Board of Governors must send a copy of its curriculum policy to the relevant Education and Library Board. The headteacher is responsible for organising the curriculum and ensuring that it is followed in the school.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum was first implemented in 1990. During 1994–95 a limited review was undertaken and a revised curriculum was implemented in schools from September 1996. At that time, schools were given an undertaking that there would be no further change to the statutory curriculum for a five-year period, until at least September 2001.

The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) is currently reviewing the Northern Ireland Curriculum (CCEA, 1999).[25] The second phase of this review was due to commence in January 2002. Initial consultations are expected to result in a revised curriculum, which will:

- clarify curriculum aims and values;
- provide greater curriculum flexibility at each key stage;
- improve curriculum relevance for all learners; and
- develop assessment mechanisms which better serve curriculum aims.

It is currently intended that schools would begin to implement the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum in September 2003.

a) Areas of study and compulsory subjects

The compulsory areas of study in primary education are:

- English;
- mathematics;
- science and technology;
- the environment and society; and
- creative and expressive studies.

Within each area of study there are a number of contributory subjects, of which the following are compulsory at primary level:

- English;
- mathematics;
- science and technology;
- history;
- geography;
- physical education;
- art and design; and
- music.

Religious education is also compulsory (see below).

For each subject in the Northern Ireland Curriculum, there are programmes of study and attainment targets. Standards of pupils' performances are set out in level descriptions. There are also appropriate assessment arrangements for each subject (see 4.9.2).

Programmes of study set out the opportunities which should be offered to all pupils, subject to their age and ability, in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding for each subject at each key stage. Teachers use the programmes of study as a basis for planning schemes of work (see 4.8).

There are a few primary schools in which Irish is the main medium for teaching and learning. For these schools, Irish is a compulsory contributory subject, and pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 (ages four to seven years) are exempt from the (standard) programme of study for English. Instead, pupils in Irish-speaking schools follow a special programme of study in English in Years 1–3. From Year 4 they are required to follow the (standard) programme of study for English.

The recommended, daily literacy and numeracy lessons in primary schools in England (see 4.7.1a) have not been introduced in Northern Ireland. However, the Department of Education (DE) has produced *A Strategy for the Promotion of Literacy and Numeracy in Primary and Secondary Schools in Northern Ireland* (DENI, 1998a).[26]

b) Cross-curricular themes

The following six cross-curricular themes are included in the Northern Ireland Curriculum:

- education for mutual understanding;
- cultural heritage;
- health education;
- economic awareness (post-primary schools only);
- careers education (post-primary schools only); and
- information technology.

Appropriate elements of the themes are included within the statutory requirements for individual subjects, that is to say, the cross-curricular themes are not separate subjects in their own right, but are woven through the main subjects of the curriculum.

c) Religious education

Religious education is a compulsory element of the curriculum. A common core syllabus has been drawn up with the agreement of the main churches, and must be taught in all grant-aided schools. In accordance with the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, parents have the right to withdraw children from religious education and collective worship, as is the case in England and Wales.

d) Relationships and sexuality education:

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is included on a statutory basis within the Northern Ireland Curriculum through the science programme of study and the health education cross-curricular theme (see above). Guidance for primary and post-primary schools on the teaching of RSE is provided in a Department of Education Circular and accompanying guidance documents (DE, 2001c).[27] Schools are expected, as far as possible, to make alternative arrangements for any pupil whose parent(s) would like him or her to be excused from particular or all sex education lessons. Schools are also expected to have a policy setting out how they address relationships and sexuality education within each pupil's curriculum.

4.8 Teaching methods

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, teaching methods and learning materials are usually decided by the class teacher, in consultation with the headteacher and subject leaders (in other words, they are not officially prescribed). Subject leaders (or subject coordinators) are classroom teachers who have additional responsibility for a particular subject area and who give help and guidance to their colleagues within the school. Each teacher is responsible for planning lessons and for drawing up schemes of work to ensure that the curriculum provided meets the statutory requirements. The teacher is also responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient opportunities for differentiated work for pupils of all abilities. Differentiation is defined as providing learning experiences which are matched to the needs, capabilities and previous learning of individual pupils.

Teaching normally takes place in mixed-ability groups or classes established to cover single year groups, where possible. Some larger primary schools may group pupils by ability in a particular subject (a practice known as 'setting'). This is used for some subjects only. Smaller or rural schools often have mixed-age classes.

Within mixed-ability classes, some forms of ability grouping may also be used. For example, many teachers use within-class ability grouping, which involves dividing a class into small groups for part of the school day, and instructing each group separately providing differentiated work.

Teaching does not necessarily have to be organised and delivered within subject boundaries but increasingly, at primary level, subjects are taught as individual, discrete areas. However, teachers do still organise some subject areas in an integrated way, using project work, for example, as a way to teach several subjects at once. There are no prescribed texts for primary pupils.

All schools have computers available for use by pupils. Teachers may also use audio-visual equipment such as video, slides, audio recordings and television. Most of the major terrestrial television companies broadcast programmes intended for schools. The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTa) is the focus for expertise in the use of technology in learning and is responsible for the National Grid for Learning (NGfL), the national focal point for learning on the internet (see 1.4.8). The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England, – along with two television broadcasting companies and the Independent Television Commission, – have published guidance for teachers on the use of video and audio resources (QCA, 2000c).[28]

Although particular teaching methods and learning materials are not usually prescribed, a national framework has been established for the recommended 'literacy hour', which commenced in primary schools in England in September 1998 (see 4.7.1a). Schools are expected to follow this framework, although it is not statutory. Learning materials have also been provided. A similar framework has been in operation for mathematics since September 1999.

In addition, teacher guidance documents for the teaching of specific curriculum subjects are often provided by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (in England), the National Assembly for Wales Education and Training Department (NATED) in Wales, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) (DE), the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) (England), the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

In **England**, for example, the QCA produces non-statutory, primary level schemes of work for science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, geography, history, art and design, music, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE). It has also produced a scheme of work for those primary schools teaching a modern foreign language at key stage 2. Schemes of work for citizenship education at key stages 1 and 2 are also currently being developed.

In addition, the DfES produces non-statutory guidelines for homework (its purpose, task type and the amount) for pupils in primary and secondary education (DfEE, 1998b).[29] This documentation recommends that pupils in key stage 1 should receive one hour of homework each week; those in Years 3 and 4 of primary education (aged seven to nine years) 90 minutes per week; and pupils in the final two years of primary level education (ages nine to 11) should receive 30 minutes' homework each day. Individual school governing bodies are required to publish a homework policy.

In **Wales**, the Welsh Office (now the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) and Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales, have produced guidance for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. In addition, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) commissions classroom materials to support the teaching of other subjects through the medium of Welsh, and Wales-specific aspects of the curriculum.

4.9 Pupil assessment

Statutory assessment procedures exist for pupils of compulsory school age and are related to the National Curriculum and the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Assessment procedures are intended to help teachers and pupils in a number of ways:

- Formative elements help teachers decide how a pupil's learning should be taken forward, and give the pupils clear and understandable targets and feedback about their achievements. This information helps teachers and others to identify the need for further diagnostic assessments for particular pupils in order to help their educational development. This form of assessment is becoming known as 'assessment for learning'.
- Summative elements provide evidence of pupils' achievements and of what they know, understand and can do, and is becoming known as 'assessment of learning'.
- Evaluative elements provide comparative information about pupils' achievements nationally, which may be used as an indicator of any need for further effort, resources or changes in the curriculum.
- Informative elements help teachers report on a child's progress to his parents and on the school's achievements to school governing bodies, LEAs and the wider community (DES, 1989a). [30]

There is no certificate awarded at the end of primary education.

Assessment arrangements in England and Wales differ in some respects from those in Northern Ireland.

4.9.1 Pupil assessment: England and Wales

Summary table: statutory assessment arrangements England and Wales

Assessment	England	Wales
Baseline assessment, school entry assessment, age 4/5	Statutory since September 1998, in language skills, mathematics skills and personal and social skills Takes place within seven weeks of a pupil starting primary school **Teacher assessment** against accredited assessment schemes	Statutory since September 1999, in language skills, mathematics skills and personal and social skills. Takes place within seven weeks of a pupil starting primary school **Teacher assessment** against accredited assessment schemes
Key stage 1 assessment, end of key stage, age around 7	Statutory assessment in English, mathematics and science involves: Externally provided **written tests** in reading comprehension (English), spelling (English) and mathematics. These are internally marked and externally moderated Externally provided **classroom-based** tasks in reading (English), writing (English) and mathematics. **Teacher assessment** against the attainment targets in English, mathematics and science	Statutory assessment in English, mathematics and science involves: **Teacher assessment** against the attainment targets Pupils in Welsh-speaking schools or classes are assessed by teacher assessment against the attainment targets for Welsh instead of English
Key stage 2 assessment, end of key stage, age around 11	Statutory assessment in English, mathematics and science involves: Externally provided (and marked) **written tests** in English (three tests – reading, writing, spelling and handwriting), mathematics (three tests – one without calculator, one with calculator, and mental arithmetic test) and science (two tests) **Teacher assessment** against the key stage 2 attainment targets in English, mathematics and science	Statutory assessment in English, mathematics and science involves: Externally provided (and marked) **written tests** in English (three tests as in England), mathematics (three tests as in England) and science (two tests) **Teacher assessment** against the attainment targets in English, mathematics and science In addition, pupils in Welsh-speaking schools and classes undertake written tests in Welsh (a reading test, a writing test and a reading/oral task) and are assessed by their teachers against the attainment targets for Welsh

a) Baseline assessment

Under the Education Act 1997 (Sections 15–18), all (publicly funded) maintained primary schools in **England** must assess pupils in language skills, mathematics skills and personal and social skills within the first seven weeks of entering primary school. Schools must use an accredited baseline assessment scheme, drawn up in accordance with criteria approved by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Schemes are accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). Headteachers, in consultation with the school governing body, are free to choose which scheme to adopt, but schools must include in their consideration the accredited scheme selected by the LEA. Baseline assessment schemes are intended to enable an assessment of each child's knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills on entry to primary school (which may be at age four or five), and consequently to allow staff to plan the curriculum appropriately and to provide learning activities that match the child's needs. Over time, baseline assessment will allow teachers to measure pupils' progress and will also provide a reference point for the measurement of school performance (see 10.2).

In England, the statutory requirement for schools to carry out baseline assessment started in September 1998 (QCA, 1998).[31] Guidance is provided in Circular 6/98 (DfEE, 1998c).[32]

In **Wales**, under the Education (Baseline Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 1999, baseline assessment became statutory in September 1999. Schools select an accredited baseline assessment scheme from a list of schemes published by ACCAC (the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales). As in England, children are assessed within the first seven weeks of starting primary school at age four or five (ACCAC, 1998).[33]

Schools are expected to discuss a child's baseline assessment results with parents, at a meeting which should normally be held during the term in which the assessment has taken place. In addition, schools must also pass these results on to the local education authority who, in turn, must pass all the information they receive from schools to the QCA in England, and to ACCAC in Wales.

Consultations have recently taken place in **England** regarding changes to the current system of baseline assessment. As a result, from the 2002/03 school year, it is intended that there will be one national baseline assessment scheme which will be administered during a child's first year in school. This scheme, which will be known as the 'National Foundation Stage Profile', will be based on informal observation of pupils.

b) National Curriculum attainment targets and level descriptions

Attainment targets

Attainment targets set out the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils are expected to achieve by the end of each key stage. Attainment targets are usually defined in terms of eight level descriptions of increasing difficulty, plus a description for exceptional performance above level eight, (see below for further information). Some subjects have several attainment targets which relate to aspects of the programmes of study; for example:

England

Key stage 1 and 2	English
Attainment Target 1	Speaking and listening
Attainment Target 2	Reading
Attainment Target 3	Writing

Key stage 1 and 2 mathematics

Attainment Target 1	Using and applying mathematics
Attainment Target 2	Number and algebra
Attainment Target 3	Shape, space and measures
Attainment Target 4	Handling data (not applicable at key stage 1)

Key stage 1 and 2 science

Attainment Target 1	Scientific enquiry
Attainment Target 2	Life processes and living things
Attainment Target 3	Materials and their properties
Attainment Target 4	Physical processes

Wales

Key stage 1 and 2	Welsh
Attainment Target 1	Oracy
Attainment Target 2	Reading
Attainment Target 3	Writing

Design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography, art and design, music and physical education each have a single attainment target. There are some variations in attainment targets in Wales.

Level descriptions

There are eight level descriptions per attainment target for all current National Curriculum subjects. Level descriptions provide the basis on which summative judgements about a pupil's performance are made, usually at the end of a key stage. Level descriptions allow judgements to be made against attainment targets, and indicate the types and range of performance that a pupil working at a particular level characteristically should demonstrate over a period of time. By the end of key stage 1, the performance of the great majority of pupils should be within the range of levels 1–3, and by the end of key stage 2 it should be within the range 2 to 5. National education targets for the proportion of primary age children reaching the expected standards for their age are set (see 1.4.2). In addition, individual schools set performance targets for their pupils (see 10.2.1).

At present, there is no national system for recording or monitoring the progress of pupils working significantly below age-related expectations. However, in **England**, to support target setting for pupils with special educational needs who achieve significantly below age-related expectations, performance criteria have been developed in English, mathematics and personal and social development (QCA/DfEE, 2001).[34] Curriculum guidelines for planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties have also recently been published (see 4.10.1). In **Wales**, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) has established a non-statutory framework for the assessment of pupils working towards level 1 of the National Curriculum level descriptions.

c) National Curriculum (England and Wales) assessment arrangements

In England and Wales, statutory assessment arrangements for the National Curriculum at primary school level cover the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and include teacher assessment and, in some cases, national tests and tasks against the attainment targets. Assessment takes place at the end of key stage 1 (7 years) and at the end of key stage 2 (11 years). For details of assessment on entry to primary education (baseline assessment), see above.

National tests and tasks aim to complement teachers' own assessment and schools' internal tests and examinations. They are designed to enable each pupil's progress to be measured against national standards in the core subjects.

Teacher assessments are based on observations of practical and oral work in the classroom and written work completed in class over the course of the key stage.

The results of the teacher assessment and the tests and tasks are expressed in terms of the National Curriculum level descriptions (see above).

Key stage 1 assessment arrangements

In **England**, at the end of key stage 1 (age seven), all pupils undertake statutory practical classroom-based tasks and written tests in English and mathematics. Although not all pupils take all the available tests and tasks. The tests are marked by the class teacher, but set and audited by an external agency. The written tests – in reading comprehension, spelling and mathematics – are usually distributed in April of the school year and may be implemented at any time during the month of May (the school year ends in July). The classroom-based tasks in reading, writing and mathematics are distributed in December of the school year and can be taken at any time during the assessment period, which runs from January of the academic year up to four weeks before the end of the summer term.

In addition, pupils are assessed by teacher assessment against the attainment targets in English, mathematics and science.

In **Wales**, in accordance with the Education (National Curriculum) (Assessment Arrangements for English, Welsh, Mathematics and Science) (Key Stage 1) (Wales) Order 2002, which came into force for the May 2002 testing period, national tests and tasks at the end of key stage 1 are no longer compulsory. Henceforth, statutory assessment at the end of this key stage comprises teacher assessment only in English (or Welsh in Welsh-speaking schools and classes), mathematics and science. The national tests and tasks in English (or Welsh in Welsh-speaking schools and classes) and mathematics, which were previously statutory, remain available to schools for optional use. See the summary table under 4.9.1.

Key stage 2 assessment arrangements

See the summary table under 4.9.1 in addition.

In **England and Wales**, at the end of key stage 2 (age 11), pupils take written tests in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in Welsh-speaking schools or classes in Wales also take tests in Welsh. The end

of key stage 2 tests must be administered according to a specified timetable, and usually take place during an allocated week in May. It is usually required that all children taking the end of key stage 2 tests in any one school should do so at the same time. Schools may choose the appropriate start time for each test within the identified day.

Pupils are also assessed by teacher assessment in relation to the attainment targets in English, (Welsh in Welsh-speaking schools or classes in Wales), mathematics and science.

National Curriculum tests at key stage 2 are set and marked by an external agency which, in England, is appointed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). In Wales, National Curriculum tests and tasks are set directly by agencies appointed by the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC).

National tests at the end of key stage 2 are not used to assess the ability or aptitude of pupils for the purpose of selection for secondary school. Selective secondary schools (England only) (commonly known as grammar schools) set their own tests for this purpose, and these are usually administered earlier in the school year than the key stage 2 tests.

Since May 2000, LEAs have had a duty to ensure that statutory arrangements for the key stage 2 tests are being followed.

For information on the publication of key stage 2 results see 1.8.1b.

Individual schools in England and Wales are expected to set pupil performance targets for the end of key stage 2 tests (see 10.2.1).

Able pupils and National Curriculum assessment

In **England**, able children in key stage 1, assessed by their teachers as working at level 4 (or above) of the National Curriculum eight-level scale (see 4.9.1b), usually take the key stage 2 tests (see above). At key stage 2, those pupils assessed by their teachers as working at level six (or above) of the National Curriculum eight-level scale take what are known as 'extension tests'.

In addition to the existing statutory arrangements for assessment during key stages 1 and 2, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England is currently piloting what are known as 'world-class tests'. Designed to stimulate the country's most gifted and talented children, the tests aim to encourage deeper thinking on the standard topics that

children have been taught. Paper-based and computer-based mathematics and problem-solving tests for nine-year-old pupils (in key stage 2) are being trialled.

In **Wales**, able pupils are not tested by means of extension papers or tests at any key stage; performance above the expected levels for a key stage is reported by teacher assessment only. It is not intended that world class tests will be introduced in Wales.

Provision for pupils performing below age-related expectations

At key stage 2, pupils working at or below level two of the National Curriculum eight-level scale (see 4.9.1b) are not required to sit the key stage 2 tests, but teacher assessment remains a statutory requirement for such pupils (see above).

In addition, the key stages 1 and 2 assessment arrangements may be disapplied completely for some pupils; see 8.1.2 for further information.

d) Non-statutory tests

Some primary schools require older pupils to sit tests at the end of the school year, often using commercially available standardised tests, such as those published by the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales (NFER). More recently, in **England**, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has produced non-statutory tests for eight-, nine- and 10-year-olds (Years 3, 4 and 5 of compulsory education). Usually taken towards the end of the school year, these tests, which include papers in reading, writing, spelling, mathematics and mental arithmetic, are intended to give schools an indication of whether students are on target to do well in the statutory tests at the end of key stage 2, age 11.

In **Wales**, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) has developed optional assessment materials (OAMs) to support teacher assessment in selected subjects at any point during key stages 1 and 2. The materials cover the programmes of study of the National Curriculum subjects and are structured to allow teachers to assess pupils and record the outcome.

4.9.2 Pupil assessment: Northern Ireland

Assessment arrangements in Northern Ireland differ in some respects from those in England and Wales.

Summary table: statutory assessment arrangements in Northern Ireland

Baseline assessment (school entry assessment), age 4/5	Takes place at any time during a child's first year in primary school, but must be completed before the end of this first year of compulsory education
Key stage 1 assessment, end of key stage, age around 8	Statutory assessment in English and mathematics involves: Externally provided short informal **tests** (Assessment Units) which are internally marked and externally moderated. **Teacher assessment** against the key stage 1 attainment targets in English and mathematics In Irish-speaking schools, pupils are assessed in Irish, not English
Key stage 2 assessment, end of key stage, age around 11	Statutory assessment in English and mathematics involves: Externally provided short informal **tests** (Assessment Units), which are internally marked and externally moderated **Teacher assessment** against the key stage 2 attainment targets in English and mathematics In Irish-speaking schools, pupils are assessed in Irish in addition

a) Baseline assessment

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 requires primary schools to assess all pupils who are in their first year of compulsory education, in accordance with the baseline assessment arrangements. This assessment must be completed before the end of a child's first year of compulsory education, although the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) recommends that it should take place during September or October of a child's first year in compulsory education. Under certain circumstances, headteachers may decide that some pupils are to be exempt from baseline assessment, or are assessed under modified assessment arrangements.

b) Northern Ireland Curriculum attainment targets and level descriptions

Attainment targets define the expected standards of pupil performance in particular aspects of a subject in terms of level descriptions. These provide the basis for making judgements on pupils' attainment at the end of each key stage. There are eight level descriptions – indicating the type and range of attainment that a pupil working at that level should typically demonstrate – for each attainment target. Teachers select the level description that best fits a pupil's performance over time. At the end of key stage 1 (aged eight in Northern Ireland), it is expected that the majority of pupils will be working at level 2; at the end of key stage 2, it is expected that the majority will be working at either level 3 or 4.

c) Northern Ireland Curriculum assessment arrangements

In Northern Ireland, the statutory assessment arrangements for the end of key stages 1 and 2 are as follows.

All pupils are assessed at age eight (end of key stage 1) and at age 11 (end of key stage 2) in English and mathematics. (In Irish-speaking schools, end of key stage 1 assessment is in Irish and mathematics, and at the end of key stage 2 it is in English, Irish and mathematics.) Assessment is on the basis of teacher assessment, combined with short, informal tests, known as 'Assessment Units', which are supplied by the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). Teachers choose, from a selection of Units, the most appropriate ones to assess work which each child will have covered in class. The Units are then used as part of normal classwork. At least two Assessment Units must be used in each subject during the assessment period (January to early May of the school year). These are marked by the pupil's usual class teacher, and are externally moderated by the CCEA. Final results are sent to schools (and forwarded to parents for individual pupils) but are not officially published.

Individual schools are expected to set pupil performance targets for the end of key stage tests; see 10.2.1.

A selective system of post-primary education operates in most areas of Northern Ireland. The outcomes from key stage 2 assessments are not used to decide the type of post-primary schools to be attended by pupils. Instead, those pupils wishing to transfer to selective grammar school education take specially designed 'transfer tests' (sometimes referred to as '11+' tests). These are based on the programmes of study in English (Irish in Irish-medium schools), mathematics, and science and technology. For further details see 5.5.2.

4.9.3 Pupil records and reports

Under the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2000, the Education (Pupil Records) (Wales) Regulations 2001, and the Education (Individual Pupils' Achievements) (Information) (Wales) Regulations 1997 (as amended), the school governing body of any maintained school is required to keep educational records for all registered pupils and to provide copies of records to pupils or parents of pupils on written request. In accordance with the above regulations, schools are required to:

- keep, and update at least once a year, a curricular record of each pupil. This is a formal record of academic achievement, other skills and abilities and progress in school, and includes the pupil's report. There may also be other records kept, such as details of behaviour and family background, but this is not compulsory; and
- automatically transfer a pupil's educational record (except for any report to a juvenile court, ethnically based data and results of assessments) to any school (maintained or independent) to which the pupil transfers. In addition, since May 2000, schools have also been obliged to forward a completed statutory transfer form, the Common Transfer Form – either in paper form or electronically – to the receiving school. This replaces the headteacher's report to a receiving school, which was previously required when a pupil moved between schools.

The Regulations do not require disclosure of:

- material supplied by persons other than the headteacher and teachers at the school, other employees at the school, employees of the LEA such as Education Welfare Officers, or those engaged under a contract of services by the school governing body;
- material whose disclosure might cause serious harm to the pupil or to someone else;
- material concerning actual or suspected child abuse;
- material concerning other pupils;
- references supplied to potential employers, other schools or places of education and training, or bodies such as the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) which administers applications for admission to higher education; or
- reports by a school to a juvenile court.

During the course of the year, parents must be sent a required minimum of information about:

- the pupil's progress in all National Curriculum subjects studied;

- her/his progress in all other subjects and activities;
- her/his general progress and an attendance record;
- for all pupils assessed under statutory arrangements at the end of key stage 1 and 2 in England, and key stage 2 in Wales, the pupil's National Curriculum assessment results and how these compare with results of pupils of the same age in the school, and also national comparative information about pupils of the same age;
- arrangements to discuss the report with the school.

For England and Wales, general guidance on pupil records and reports is provided in DfEE Circular 15/2000 (DfEE, 2000b).[35] Specific guidance on pupil records is also provided in Circular 17/89 (DES, 1989b).[36] The substantive guidance provided in this 1989 Circular remains largely current, except where highlighted in Circular 15/2000.

Since September 1990, schools have also been expected to collect aggregated ethnic data, collated by age and gender, so that LEAs can provide aggregated information on their area to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Information supplied to LEAs and the DfES does not name individual pupils.

In **Northern Ireland**, pupil records are governed by the Education (Pupil Records) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998 and the Education (Pupil Records) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001. In accordance with the above, all grant-aided schools must maintain a 'Record of Achievement' for all pupils. This is a formative record of progress and achievement, that is a formal record of a pupil's academic attainments, other skills, talents and achievements, and educational progress. A Record of Achievement must be provided for all pupils completing key stage 2 (age 11), whether or not they are transferring to a different school for secondary education. Where a pupil changes school prior to completion of key stage 2, this Record of Achievement must also be transferred to the new school.

In Northern Ireland, guidance on pupil records is provided in DENI Circular 1998/3 (DENI, 1998b)[37] and DE Circular 2001/17 (DE, 2001d).[38]

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force in March 2000 and broadens the scope of the Data Protection Act 1984, allows all individuals certain rights in respect of personal data held about them. These rights include access to personal information, whether held on computer or in paper form, compensation for inaccuracy, correction or erasure of inaccurate information and compensation for loss or unauthorised disclosure. As

a result, schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland must allow all pupils to have their educational records disclosed to them on written request. Schools must also provide an opportunity for the correction of inaccurate educational records.

4.10 Special assistance for pupils

4.10.1 Pupils with special educational needs

In England and Wales, under the terms of the Education Act 1993 (and the consolidated Education Act 1996 which superseded it), pupils with special educational needs (SEN) should be educated in mainstream schools, wherever possible. During the period 1994 to the end of 2001, in accordance with the *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs* (DFE, 1994b)[39], mainstream schools have followed a five-stage pattern of identification and assessment of special educational needs. The first three stages were based in the school (pupils were provided with differentiated work matched to their individual needs, capabilities and previous learning), and external specialists were called upon to help if necessary at stage 3. At stages 4 and 5, LEAs shared responsibility with schools.

Revised individual Codes of Practice for England and Wales were introduced on 1 January 2002 (DfES, 2001; NafW, 2002).[40, 41] These include a stronger right for children with special needs to be educated at a mainstream school, improved liaison with parents and other agencies, and a right for schools to request a statutory assessment of a child. The Codes also recommend a graduated response to a child's special needs. This involves making full use of all available classroom and school resources before calling upon outside help. (Further information is provided in Chapter 8.)

In Northern Ireland, a five-stage Code of Practice similar to that previously in operation in England and Wales has been in operation since September 1998 (DENI, 1998c).[42] Education and Library Boards (Boards) and Boards of Governors have a statutory duty to have regard to its provisions. (Further details are provided in Chapter 8.)

In line with Government policy on inclusion (see 8.9), during 2001, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) published a complete set of curriculum guidelines for teachers of pupils with learning difficulties. These include advice on planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum. In addition, a revised guidance document on setting

targets for pupils with special needs achieving significantly below age-related expectations was also published (QCA/DfEE, 2001). The above documents apply to mainstream schools, primary and secondary special schools, specialised units and independent schools in England. (See Chapter 8 for further information.)

For information regarding National Curriculum assessment arrangements for pupils performing below age-related expectations; see 4.9.1c.

4.10.2 Provision for able pupils

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has recently published two documents which aim to assist teachers in identifying, providing for and assessing gifted and talented pupils (Richardson, 2001; QCA, 2001b).[43, 44] In addition, QCA has launched a website of guidance for those involved in teaching gifted and talented pupils.

Section 4.9.1c provides information on National Curriculum assessment for able pupils, and Chapter 8 provides information regarding general arrangements for able children.

4.11 Organisational variations

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, children of statutory school age in England and Wales (see 4.2) may be educated either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. For children not educated at school the most common alternative provision is by education at home. Parents choosing this option have a duty to ensure that their children receive a full-time education which is efficient, effective and suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs (SEN) they may have. If a child does not attend school, any alternative provision which is made is subject to the approval of the appropriate LEA. Similarly, in Northern Ireland alternative provision to attendance at school is subject to approval by the appropriate Education and Library Board (Board).

In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schools in England may apply to become part of an Education Action Zone. Such Zones consist of clusters of schools wishing to work together for the purpose of raising standards. (Further details can be found in section 1.5.)

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5. SECONDARY EDUCATION

This section deals with educational provision **in schools** for young people aged 11 to 19 years. The education of young people between the ages of 16 and 19, **where it is not provided in schools**, is covered by the legislation relating to further education and is described in Chapter 6.

5.1 Historical overview

In England and Wales, the Education Act 1902 stated that counties and county boroughs should constitute the local education authority (LEA) for that county or borough, and provided for county secondary schools to be established. The Welsh Intermediate Education Act 1889 had already enabled Wales to provide secondary schools which were publicly-financed.

The Education Act 1944 was the original basis of legislation affecting secondary education in England and Wales. Important reforms were introduced by the Education Reform Act 1988 and the Education Act 1993. The Education Act 1996, which consolidated legislation from 1944 to 1996, is now the main legislation governing secondary education. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Learning and Skills Act 2000 have also introduced provisions which affect secondary schools. In addition, important reforms will be introduced to secondary education in England and Wales as a result of new legislation. The Education Bill 2001 legislates for changes which will facilitate increased flexibility in education for pupils aged 14–19.

In Northern Ireland, the Intermediate Education (Ireland) Act 1878 established a Board whose purpose was the distribution of public funds to intermediate (secondary) schools. The Education (Northern Ireland) Act 1923 constituted each county and county borough as the responsible education authority for its area.

The Education Act (Northern Ireland) 1947 introduced legislation similar to the 1944 Act in England and Wales. Important reforms were introduced by the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, the Education (NI) Order 1987, the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1993 and the Education (Northern Ireland) Orders of 1996, 1997 and 1998.

5.2 Legislative framework

There is no single body of legislation covering secondary education. Education in England and Wales is subject to separate legislation from that governing education in Northern Ireland. Since devolution, the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) has had responsibility for implementing primary legislation in Wales and for formulating and implementing secondary legislation. Primary legislation-making powers for Wales rest with the UK Parliament in London (see 1.4).

5.2.1 England and Wales

The scope of secondary education is defined in Section 2 of the Education Act 1996. The Education Reform Act 1988 (now superseded by the Education Act 1996) divided the compulsory phase of secondary education into two key stages. Of these, key stage 3 caters for pupils aged 11–14 years and key stage 4 for those aged 14–16 years. Education for pupils in key stages 3 and 4 is provided in secondary schools, which may also cater for pupils aged 16–18+ in post-compulsory education. In such cases, this full-time, post-compulsory provision is considered to be secondary education.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 enabled further education institutions in England and Wales, in collaboration with LEAs, to provide secondary education for pupils aged 14 to 16 years (key stage 4). The Learning and Skills Act 2000 has extended the powers of further education institutions in this respect (see 6.2).

Education for young people between the ages of 16 and 19 has recently been the focus of extensive reform and reorganisation in England. Details of key changes being introduced under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 are provided in 6.2.

Education in maintained schools and in city technology colleges (CTCs) (see 1.7.2) must be provided free of charge, with the exception of extracurricular activities which are provided outside school time.

A Government consultation paper on post-14 education has recently been launched (DfES, 2002).[1] The document's key proposals include:

- increased flexibility in both the curriculum and the pace of study for pupils aged 14–19;
- parity of status between the vocational and general/academic qualifications available at this level; and
- the introduction of an overarching matriculation diploma, recognising achievement in all forms of study undertaken and wider activities beyond the curriculum, at age 19.

5.2.2 Northern Ireland

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 revised the definition of compulsory school age, so that each child has 12 full years of schooling. The period of compulsory education is from age four to 16. Compulsory secondary education caters for children aged 11 to 16 years. As in England and Wales, key stage 3 comprises the classes for pupils aged 11 to 14 years and key stage 4 caters for pupils aged 14 to 16 years.

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 permits institutions of further education to provide secondary education for pupils in key stage 4.

Education in grant-aided schools must be provided free of charge, but some voluntary grammar schools may charge minimal capital fees. Further details on the funding of schools in Northern Ireland are provided in 2.1.1.

5.3 General description of the structure of secondary education

The first five years of secondary education, from 11 to 16 years, fall within the period of compulsory education. Post-compulsory secondary education is provided for pupils aged 16 to 18 years. Secondary schools normally cater for pupils aged 11 to 16 or 18+ years, and pupils usually transfer from primary education at the age of 11.

In some areas of **England**, schools are organised in three phases: primary, sometimes known as 'first', schools for pupils aged five to eight or nine years; middle schools for pupils aged eight to 12 years or nine to 13 years; and secondary schools (sometimes known as 'high schools') for pupils aged 12 or 13 to 16 or 18+ years. Pupils in these areas may transfer to secondary schools at the age of 12 or 13 years. Legally, middle schools are classified as primary or secondary schools according to whether the majority of pupils are under or over 11 years of age.

Post-compulsory education is offered in the sixth form of many secondary schools (post-primary schools in Northern Ireland) and in further education institutions (see Chapter 6). Where post-compulsory education is provided full-time in the sixth form of schools, it is considered to be secondary education and is subject to Schools Regulations. The sixth form comprises the final two years of secondary education for pupils aged 16–18+. The Learning and Skills Act 2000

brought together the planning and funding of all post-compulsory education and training in England and Wales, including that provided in school sixth forms (see 6.2).

5.4 Types of secondary schools

5.4.1 England and Wales

Most secondary schools which are maintained schools in England and Wales are non-selective and accept pupils regardless of ability. These are known as comprehensive schools.

In some areas of England, there are also schools which select all their pupils by ability. Schools which are designated selective schools are commonly known as grammar schools. In January 2001, there were 159 maintained grammar schools in England. There are no grammar schools in Wales.

In accordance with the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, parents may request a ballot to determine whether a particular grammar school or group of grammar schools should retain their selective admissions arrangements.

As a result of previous Government legislation, some secondary schools currently select a minority of their pupils by reference to ability. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 prevents such schools extending the operation of selection procedures, but permits the continuing operation of existing arrangements. Parents may, however, challenge existing partial selection arrangements.

The 'specialist schools programme' allows maintained secondary schools to specialise in a particular area of the curriculum, while still delivering the full National Curriculum. Currently, there are schools specialising in modern foreign languages (Language Colleges), arts (Arts Colleges), sports (Sports Colleges) and technology (Technology Colleges). Schools specialising in four new areas – business and enterprise, engineering, mathematics and computing, and science – will begin to come into existence in September 2002. Specialist secondary schools, which may select up to 10 per cent of their pupils by aptitude for the specialist subject, receive additional funding from the Government and sponsors in industry who may be represented on the school governing body. The specialist schools programme applies to **England only**, and the schools are spread across all parts of the country, including rural, inner city and urban areas. As a result of recent

Government moves to extend the programme, the number of specialist schools has increased from 535 in September 2000 to 834 for the start of the 2002/03 school year, of these 409 will be Technology Colleges, 143 will be Arts Colleges, 141 Language Colleges and 141 Sports Colleges. The current Department for Education and Skills (DfES) target is 1,500 specialist schools by 2005.

See also section 1.7.2 for information on city technology colleges, the city college for the technology of the arts and city academies.

Minimum standards for school premises which relate to the health, safety and welfare of pupils and others in maintained schools in England and Wales are laid down in the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999. Further details are provided in section 4.3.

For details of the various administrative categories of school and their legal basis see section 1.6.1.

In England and Wales, full-time post-compulsory education is offered in the sixth form of many secondary schools, where it is considered to be secondary education (and subject to Schools Regulations). Full- and part-time post-compulsory education is also provided in sixth-form colleges, tertiary colleges and in further education colleges; see section 6.5.

5.4.2 Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, where, with the exception of one area (see below), there is a selective system of secondary education, 'post-primary schools' is often used as the collective term describing grammar schools and other secondary schools. Pupils transfer to voluntary grammar schools, grammar schools which are controlled schools, or secondary schools at the age of 11. Some secondary schools, which are not grammar schools, do have a recognised grammar stream.

In one area of Northern Ireland, pupils automatically transfer from primary school to what is known as 'junior high school' at age 11. Academic selection for senior high school then takes place at age 14.

Proposals from an independent review body regarding the future of the selective system of post-primary education in Northern Ireland are currently the subject of extensive consultation.

In Northern Ireland, it is largely grammar schools which offer post-compulsory education to students, alongside further education colleges. Most other post-primary schools provide education for pupils up to the

age of 16 only, although some are now beginning to offer post-compulsory education on vocational courses. For information on the various categories of schools and their legal basis see section 1.6.1.

5.5 Admissions requirements

5.5.1 England and Wales

A school's admissions policy is established by the relevant admissions authority, which is either the local education authority or the school governing body, depending on the category of school. This policy must contain legally specified information. It must, for example, state how many pupils will be admitted to the school (based on the capacity of the school) and describe the application procedure. The admissions policy must also explain how places will be allocated if there are more applications than places at the school. For example, priority may be given to children who live closest to the school, to children who already have brothers or sisters at the school, to children who have attended designated 'feeder' primary schools, or to children with special educational needs (SEN) which may be best met by the particular school. The criteria used to determine which pupils will gain a place in these circumstances must be within the constraints of the law and the admissions policy must be published annually in the school prospectus.

Parents can express a preference for the school they wish their child to attend. They must have that preference met unless all the places have already been offered to children who have a stronger claim under the school's published admissions policy. There are no grammar schools in Wales. Parents have a legal right of appeal if a place is not offered at the school of their choice. Specialist secondary schools (see 5.4.1) may give priority to up to 10 per cent of pupils, by aptitude for the specialist subject.

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in England, and the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) in Wales, are required to issue a statutory Code of Practice for admissions authorities, along with a Code of Practice on schools admissions appeals. The Codes of Practice on school admissions came into force on 1 April 1999, and the Codes of Practice on school admissions appeals on 1 September of the same year. Full details are provided in section 4.4.1.

The School Standards and Framework Act also stipulates that LEAs are permitted to direct a school to admit a pupil who has been refused

admission to, or excluded from, all schools within a reasonable distance from his/her home. In instances where such a pupil has previously been permanently excluded from two or more schools, the school governing body may, however, appeal to an independent panel to have the LEA's admissions decision overturned. With further reference to pupils excluded from school, the Government has set a target that, by September 2002, all pupils excluded for more than 15 consecutive school days should receive full-time, appropriate education while excluded.

Additional legislation relating to admissions is currently proposed. The measures suggested would include the statutory introduction of admissions forums to coordinate school admissions, measures to prevent parents from making multiple applications to schools in their area, and a new requirement for schools and LEAs to offer all parents in their area a school place on the same day.

There are no official qualifications required for admission to the sixth form of a secondary school, but schools generally set their own admissions requirements. For example, schools commonly ask for a minimum of five General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) passes at grades A*–C for admission to General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) courses. Criteria for admission to GCE A-level courses also often include the achievement of good GCSE passes (usually grade C or above) in the subjects to be studied at GCE A-level. Other courses, for example, General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), may have different admissions requirements.

For admissions requirements to further education institutions; see section 6.6.

5.5.2 Northern Ireland

The law guarantees that every school in Northern Ireland is open to all children regardless of religious persuasion. This process is known as 'open enrolment'. A school must admit pupils up to its approved admissions number. In secondary schools, this is the number of pupils a school may admit at transfer (from primary to post-primary or secondary) stage. This figure is determined, by the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) (DE), with reference to the school's capacity to accommodate pupils. If a school is oversubscribed, it must decide which pupils to admit by applying published admissions criteria. The criteria, drawn up by the Board of Governors of a school, and which must be published in order of priority, may take into account any representations made by the Education and Library Board (Board) responsible for the management of the school or, if it is a Catholic school, representations made by the Council for Catholic-Maintained

Schools (CCMS). Only grammar schools (and those non-grammar schools with a recognised grammar stream) may include the academic ability of pupils among their admissions criteria. Parents have the right to express preferences for the school they would like their child to attend and may appeal to an independent tribunal if the child is not offered the school of their choice.

With the exception of one area of Northern Ireland, there is a selective system of secondary (post primary) education, with pupils transferring to (selective) grammar schools or (non-selective) secondary schools at the age of 11+ years. Specially designed 'transfer tests' in English (Irish in Irish-medium schools), mathematics, and science and technology are used to assess academic performance for transfer to grammar schools. The tests, which are based on the key stage 1 and 2 programmes of study are also known as 'eleven plus' tests. Pupils do not need to take the tests, which usually take place in the November of a pupil's final year in primary school, if they want to attend a secondary school. Assessments at the end of key stage 2 (see 4.9.2c) may not be used in the transfer procedure. Grammar schools must admit pupils who obtain higher grades in the transfer procedure tests before those with lower grades, although no grade guarantees admission to a grammar school. Some schools may be so popular that they are able to select only from pupils achieving Grade A in the transfer tests. A school's admissions criteria should describe how it will select between pupils with the same grade. The tests are centrally administered and marked by the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), which also produces annual 'Specifications for the Transfer Tests' for schools. Current arrangements for transfer from primary to secondary education are detailed in Department of Education Northern Ireland (DE) Circulars 2000/06 (DE, 2000a)[2] and Circular 2001/08 (DE, 2001a).[3]

The independent review body on post-primary education, which has been considering the effects of the selective system of entry into post-primary education in Northern Ireland, has recently reported its findings. The key recommendation of this report advocates the abolition of the transfer tests taken prior to entry to secondary education and an end to selection on academic grounds. Widespread consultation is taking place. Current arrangements will remain at least until the transfer tests have taken place in November 2002.

Admission to the sixth form of post-primary schools is based on similar requirements to those operating in England and Wales.

5.6 Key stages, grouping, class sizes and transition

5.6.1 Key stages

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the first three years of secondary education, catering for pupils aged 11 to 14 years, are known as key stage 3 and the remaining two years of compulsory education, catering for pupils aged 14–16, are known as key stage 4.

AGE	KEY STAGE	DESCRIPTION
11–14	3	Years 7, 8 and 9 in England and Wales, Years 8, 9 and 10 in Northern Ireland
14–16	4	Years 10 and 11 in England and Wales, Year 11 and 12 in Northern Ireland

5.6.2 Grouping

Pupils are organised into year groups with a senior teacher as head of year. Depending on the policy of the school, within the year group, pupils may be divided into classes or tutor groups with a designated teacher who has organisational and pastoral care responsibilities. Tutor groups in some schools may include pupils from different year groups. The organisation of teaching groups is also determined by the school. Pupils may be grouped by general ability (a practice known as 'streaming'), taught in mixed-ability groups or, more commonly, grouped according to ability in a particular subject (a practice known as 'setting'). Most schools use setting for some subjects only, such as mathematics and languages, and teach other subjects in mixed-ability groups. Other schools use a combination of these teaching groups/methods. The Government generally recommends that setting be used in secondary education (DfEE, 1997).[4]

Pupils are placed in a class according to their age and, at the end of each school year, they progress to the next class. In exceptional circumstances, the parents and the school may decide that a child would benefit educationally from an extra year in a particular class or, if they are particularly gifted, from missing out the next class. These instances are extremely rare. Instead, such pupils are usually catered for by differentiated teaching and study tasks (sometimes involving taking certain examinations early) and/or additional support.

In secondary schools, teachers usually teach one or more specialist subjects.

The National Curriculum and its key stages do not apply to pupils in post-compulsory schooling. The final two years of (post-compulsory) full-time secondary education for those aged 16–18+ are usually known as the sixth form. Pupils are taught by specialist subject teachers, usually in smaller groups than younger pupils. Pupils in post-compulsory education in schools and further education institutions can take either vocational or academic courses, or a combination of both.

5.6.3 Class sizes

In general, there are no regulations regarding the maximum number of pupils in a class. However, in Northern Ireland, regulation 15 of the Secondary Schools (Grant Conditions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) (1973) requires that the number of pupils under instruction by one teacher shall not exceed 20 for a class in a practical subject. Practical subjects include science, technology and design, home economics, art and design, physical education (PE) and music. There are, however, certain circumstances in which class sizes may exceed 20. Detailed, updated guidance is provided in DE Circular 2001/14 (DE, 2001b).[5]

5.6.4 Transition

On completing compulsory education at age 16, pupils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland may continue their education in school (where the school offers post-compulsory education), or they may apply to study at a further education institution (see Chapter 6).

Students completing post-compulsory secondary education may seek paid employment or continue their education in the further or higher education sector, depending on the courses studied and qualifications obtained. General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) examinations, GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualifications, Advanced Vocational Certificates of Education and Advanced Subsidiary Vocational Certificates of Education) are all acceptable for entry into further or higher education.

Young people who leave full-time education for paid employment may continue their education part-time in a further education institution. This may be independent of their employment or as part of an employed-status vocational training scheme, such as Government-sponsored Modern Apprenticeships; see 6.8.7. The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 and the Employment Rights (Time Off for Study or Training) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 also introduced legislation governing time off for study for young people in employment; see section 6.2.

5.7 General objectives

The general objectives for compulsory secondary education are the same as those for primary education (see 4.6.), although specific targets are also set regarding the proportion of students expected to achieve certain levels of qualification. See sections 1.4.2 for details of national education and training targets, section 10.2 for pupil performance targets determined by individual schools and 2.4.4 for details of the bodies with statutory responsibilities for overseeing and implementing the curriculum.

5.8 Curriculum

5.8.1 Compulsory secondary education

England and Wales

The compulsory curriculum consists of the National Curriculum (QCA, 1999)[6] and religious education. The National Curriculum was introduced by the Education Reform Act 1988 (now superseded by the consolidated Education Act 1996). The general principles governing the National Curriculum are described in 4.7.1.

The National Curriculum and religious education do not constitute the whole curriculum for schools. Although the National Curriculum programmes of study set out what pupils should be taught within the National Curriculum at each key stage, they are not designed to absorb the whole of school time. Schools have discretion to develop the whole curriculum to reflect their particular needs and circumstances. In particular, the flexibility at key stage 4 means that there should be room in the timetable for schools to offer pupils aged 14–16 a choice of subjects, in addition to those required by the National Curriculum. Furthermore, parts of the National Curriculum programmes of study may, exceptionally, be omitted for individual pupils during this key stage (see 5.12.2). The recently launched Government consultation paper on the future of 14-19 education (DfES, 2002) proposes further extending the flexibility offered to students during this key stage.

All secondary schools which are maintained schools must also offer a programme of sex education to pupils, which must include teaching about AIDS, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and be given in such a way as to encourage pupils to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons (see 4.7.1c).

The National Curriculum is monitored and reviewed by the statutory bodies responsible for its oversight (see 1.4.4). In England and Wales, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) respectively have recently completed major reviews of the National Curriculum. Following periods of extensive consultation in both countries, a revised National Curriculum for each country has gradually been introduced in schools since August/September 2000. In general, the previous compulsory curriculum subjects remain, but the programmes of study have been revised and reduced. The major changes which follow this review are the introduction of citizenship education and personal, social and health education (PSHE) in England, and the introduction of non-statutory frameworks covering personal and social education (PSE), and work-related education (WRE) in Wales.

Full details of the revised National Curriculum in England and Wales can be found at the following websites:

England – http://www.nc.uk.net

Wales – http://www.accac.org.uk

Secondary education in England and Wales is divided into two key stages: key stage 3 which caters for pupils aged 11–14 and key stage 4 for pupils aged14–16. The National Curriculum requirements vary according to key stage.

a) Key stage 3

Under the revised National Curriculum in **England**, pupils in key stage 3 study the following compulsory subjects:

- English, mathematics, science (the core subjects);
- design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography, a modern foreign language, art and design, music and physical education (PE) (the foundation subjects).

In addition, from August 2002, citizenship education (incorporating the three key areas of social and moral responsibility, community involvement, and political literacy) will, for the first time, become a compulsory subject for pupils in key stage 3 (and 4). Programmes of study for both key stages have been developed, as have schemes of work (see 5.9). Since August 2000, pupils in key stages 3 and 4 have also been expected to follow a non-statutory programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). Guidance has been provided (QCA, 2000a, 2000b).[7,8]

In **Wales**, in key stage 3, pupils study:

- English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information technology (IT), history, geography, a modern foreign language, art, music, physical education (PE) and Welsh.

In addition, since the introduction of the revised National Curriculum in August/September 2000, maintained schools in Wales have been expected to offer pupils in compulsory phase education (aged five to 16 years) a programme of personal and social education (PSE). This is, however, not a statutory requirement. A new, non-statutory framework has been produced (ACCAC, 2000a).[9]

See 1.9.1b for information regarding careers education.

b) Key stage 4

In **England**, the following are compulsory subjects within the National Curriculum at key stage 4:

- English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), a modern foreign language and physical education (PE).

As in key stage 3 (see above), citizenship education will also become compulsory for the first time in schools in England from August 2002.

Schools in England have the flexibility to omit or alter certain parts of the National Curriculum programmes of study at key stage 4 for certain pupils. Details are provided in 5.12.2.

In **Wales**, the following are compulsory subjects within the National Curriculum at key stage 4:

- English, Welsh*, mathematics, science, and physical education (PE).

*The provisions of the Education (National Curriculum) (Exceptions) (Wales) Regulations 1991 state that students who enter a secondary school in Wales in the final year of key stage 3 (ages 13–14) or during key stage 4 (ages 14–16) may – if they have not studied Welsh in the school curriculum for at least one academic year in the three preceding years – be exempt from the normal National Curriculum requirement to study Welsh.

During this key stage, in addition to English, Welsh, mathematics, science and PE, all pupils must also follow a programme of sex education, receive careers education and guidance, and study religious education. Other subjects usually studied at key stage 4 include modern

foreign languages, history, geography, design and technology, information technology, art and music.

Schools are also expected to offer pupils at key stage 4 in Wales a programme of personal and social education (PSE) (see above). In addition, since August/September 2000, all pupils in this key stage and beyond (aged 14+ to 19 years) have been expected to follow a NAfW-approved framework for work-related education (WRE). The PSE and WRE frameworks are non-statutory (ACCAC, 2000a, 2000b).[9, 10]

c) Other requirements at key stages 3 and 4

Key skills and common requirements

In **England**, six 'key skills' are embedded in the National Curriculum for key stages 3 and 4. In **Wales**, there are 'common requirements' that apply across all subjects in the National Curriculum; see 4.7.1 for full details.

Modern foreign languages

In key stages 3 and 4 in England and Wales, any one of a range of modern foreign languages may be studied as part of the National Curriculum. The language studied depends on those offered by the school, but all schools are required to offer at least one of the official languages of the European Union to their pupils.

d) Time allocation

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, the amount of time to be devoted to each subject in key stages 3 and 4 in England and Wales cannot be prescribed. Indeed, the revised National Curriculum documents in England make clear that the National Curriculum should be used as a framework which schools incorporate into their individual curriculum. Consequently, it is a matter for schools to decide how much time it should take up.

However, a new strategy for pupils in key stage 3 in England, introduced in September 2001, and which builds on the daily literacy and numeracy 'hours' for primary schools (see 4.7.1) has introduced a recommended minimum three hours of English teaching, plus a recommended minimum three hours of mathematics each week, for all pupils during this key stage. As with the primary literacy and numeracy strategies, detailed national frameworks, teaching objectives and guidance materials have been provided, alongside recommended teaching materials supplied by the Department for Education and Skills. The strategy aims to boost pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills and to motivate, inspire

and raise their expectations. It is intended that it will be extended to include science, information and communication technology and other subjects in the 2002/03 school year.

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Curriculum was introduced by the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. It comprises religious education and six compulsory areas of study. A number of cross-curricular themes are also included in the curriculum for all schools (see 4.7.2). Boards of Governors may also decide to provide teaching in other subjects. For example, a European Dimension may be added either across the curriculum or as a free-standing element. See 4.7.2 for information regarding the teaching of relationships and sexuality education (RSE).

The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) is currently reviewing the Northern Ireland Curriculum (CCEA, 1999).[11] The second phase of this review began in January 2002 and is expected to result in a revised curriculum which, among others, clarifies curriculum aims and values, provides greater curriculum flexibility at each key stage, improves curriculum relevance for all learners and develops assessment mechanisms which better serve curriculum aims. It is currently intended that schools will begin to implement the revised Northern Ireland Curriculum from September 2003.

a) Compulsory areas of study

There are six compulsory areas of study in secondary education (key stages 3 and 4). These are:

- English;
- mathematics;
- science and technology;
- the environment and society;
- creative and expressive studies; and
- languages.

Within each area of study, there are a number of contributory subjects. The following contributory subjects are compulsory at key stages 3 and 4 in Northern Ireland:

b) Compulsory contributory subjects

Key stage 3	Key stage 4
English	English
Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science
Technology and design	An additional subject chosen from the environment and society area of study. This must be either history, geography, business studies, home economics, economics, political studies, or social and environmental studies.
History	Physical education
Geography	A modern language
Physical education	
Art and design	
Music	
A modern language	

In addition, study of the core syllabus for religious education is a statutory requirement.

The teaching of cross-curricular themes (see 4.7.2) is also continued during key stages 3 and 4.

Since September 2000, schools in Northern Ireland have been permitted to apply to the Department of Education (DE) to disapply certain aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum for certain pupils at key stage 4 for a maximum of two years. Further details are provided in section 5.12.2.

c) Time allocation

At **key stage 4**, the Department of Education Northern Ireland (DE) recommends minimum time requirements for each area of study and for religious education as follows:

Religious education	5 per cent
English	12.5 per cent
Mathematics	12.5 per cent
Science and technology	12.5 per cent
The environment and society	7.5 per cent
Creative and expressive studies (physical education)	5 per cent
Language studies	5–7.5 per cent
Recommended minimum statutory curriculum time	60–62.5 per cent

The remaining curriculum time is used for:

- further study of the compulsory subjects;
- the study of additional courses within the area of study framework, e.g. 'technology and design' from the science and technology area of study, 'art and design', 'music' or 'drama' from the creative and expressive studies area of study; or
- the study of additional curriculum elements such as personal and social education and careers guidance (cross-curricular themes).

5.8.2 Post-compulsory curriculum

The National Curriculum and the Northern Ireland Curriculum do not apply to post-compulsory schooling. The curriculum for pupils depends on their choice of nationally recognised qualifications and the syllabuses laid down by awarding bodies. Pupils may choose from a range of subjects offered by the school in General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) examinations, General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary qualifications (GCE AS qualifications), Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education, (Vocational A-level) examinations, Advanced Subsidiary Vocational Certificates of Education (Advanced Subsidiary VCEs) or General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs).

Recent changes to the GCE examinations offered during this phase (see 5.11.5) aim to encourage pupils to study a wider range of (general/ academic and vocational) subjects during post-compulsory schooling. Previously, pupils studying GCE A-levels usually took between two and four subjects during the two years, one of which was often General Studies. Some pupils aged 16–18+ may also choose to follow General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses (see 5.11.1).

Schools must also provide religious education for all pupils aged 16–18+ (see 4.7.1c), although parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons.

In Wales, since the introduction of the revised National Curriculum in September 2000, all pupils following courses of post-compulsory education in schools and colleges (to age 19) have been encouraged to follow a framework of work-related education (WRE). This requirement is, however, not statutory (ACCAC, 2000b).[10]

5.9 Teaching methods

Teaching methods and learning materials are decided by the teacher, in consultation with the headteacher and the head of department (a teacher who has responsibility for a particular subject area and who gives help and guidance to other teachers). Each teacher is responsible for planning lessons and drawing up schemes of work to ensure that the curriculum meets the statutory requirements. The teacher is also responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient opportunities for differentiated work for pupils of all abilities. Differentiation is defined as the process of providing teaching which is matched to the needs, capabilities and previous learning of individual pupils. At secondary level, teaching is usually organised and delivered within subject boundaries, but in some subjects, teachers organise their work in an integrated way, using thematic work as a way to teach several subjects at once. See 5.6.2 for information on the grouping of pupils.

Although teaching methods and learning materials are generally decided by the teacher, in **England** non-statutory frameworks for the teaching of English and mathematics for pupils in key stage 3 were introduced in September 2001; see 5.8.1d.

In addition, teacher guidance documents for planning and teaching specific curriculum subjects are provided by national bodies and/or agencies. In **England**, for example, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has developed non-statutory schemes of work, based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. The schemes are designed to show ways in which the programmes of study set out in the National Curriculum can be interpreted for the classroom. Schemes of work for citizenship education at key stages 3 and 4 have also recently become available.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) also produces non-statutory guidelines for homework (its purpose, task type and the

amount) for pupils in primary and secondary education in England (DfEE, 1998).[12] This documentation recommends that pupils in key stages 3 and 4 (compulsory secondary education) should receive homework as follows:

Key stage/age range	**Recommended time to be spent on homework each day**
Key stage 3, Years 7 and 8, ages 11–13	45–90 min
Key stage 3, Year 9, ages 13–14	1–2 hours
Key Stage 4, Years 10 and 11, ages 14–16	$1^1/_2$–$2^1/_2$ hours

At post-compulsory upper secondary level, the Government does not recommend specific amounts of time to be spent on homework. For pupils aged 16+, the amount of homework depends on pupils' individual programmes. However, schools are encouraged to provide guidance to pupils and parents regarding what has to be achieved and how much time it might take to achieve the required standard.

Generally, there are no prescribed texts for secondary pupils, except those which are specifically required to meet the needs of examination syllabuses set by the examining groups, for example, literature texts. However, in **England**, pupils must study certain types of texts during secondary education. They must, for example, study some works of Shakespeare, together with some poetry from certain eras and authors from specific time spans. A non-statutory list of recommended authors is provided by the QCA as guidance for teachers. In addition, pupils taking the end of key stage 3 tests must study one of three prescribed Shakespeare plays.

All schools have computers available for use by pupils, and teachers may use audio-visual equipment such as videos, slides, radio and audio recordings, and television. Most of the major terrestrial television companies broadcast programmes intended for schools. The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTa) is the focus for expertise in the use of technology in learning, and is responsible for the National Grid for Learning (NGfL), the national focal point for learning on the internet (see 1.4.8). The QCA, along with two television broadcasting companies and the Independent Television Commission, has published guidance for teachers on the use of video and audio resources (QCA, 2000c).[13]

5.10 Pupil assessment

Assessment may be formative (assessment for learning), summative (assessment of learning), evaluative and informative and is intended to help both pupils and teachers in a variety of ways. For details of the aims of pupil assessment see 4.9.

There are some differences between the requirements for assessment in England and Wales and those in Northern Ireland.

5.10.1 National Curriculum assessment arrangements (England and Wales)

In all compulsory National Curriculum subjects, level descriptions – based on the National Curriculum attainment targets – provide the basis for making judgements about pupils' performance at the end of key stage 3. At key stage 4, national qualifications are the main means of assessing attainment in National Curriculum subjects.

For further details of National Curriculum attainment targets and level descriptions see 4.9.1b.

When citizenship is introduced as a compulsory National Curriculum subject at key stages 3 and 4 from August 2002 (see 5.8.1a), the expected performance of the majority of pupils will be set out in end of key stage descriptions for pupils in key stage 3. (Programmes of study and attainment targets have already been defined.) A General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) short course in citizenship studies (see 5.11.1) has also been developed for use in key stage 4 from August 2002.

The National Curriculum assessment arrangements consist of teacher assessment and national tests. The assessment arrangements for the end of key stages 3 and 4 are as follows:

a) Key stage 3

Teacher assessment of pupils' work in relation to all the attainment targets in English, Welsh (in Wales), mathematics, science, history, geography, design and technology, information and communication technology (information technology in Wales), modern foreign languages, art and design (art in Wales), music, and physical education. The teacher assessment draws on evidence of oral, written and practical work in class, homework and school examinations and tests.

Externally set and marked National Curriculum tests are provided in:

- English;
- Welsh, where Welsh is a pupil's first language in Wales;
- mathematics (includes a mental arithmetic test; one test paper in which no calculators are allowed; and one in which calculators are permitted); and
- science.

The tests usually take place during a specified period of around one week during the month of May. A timetable is provided by the external agency responsible for the tests (the Qualifications and Assessment Authority, QCA, in England, and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales, ACCAC, in Wales), but schools may choose the most appropriate start time for each paper within the morning and afternoon sessions. Generally, all pupils eligible to take the tests should do so simultaneously. Pupils may not take tests before the scheduled dates in the timetable provided. The tests are marked by external markers appointed by the external agency responsible for them.

Previously, pupils in England and Wales took the same National Curriculum tests. Since 1998, however, the end of key stage tests set for pupils in Wales have begun to differ from those set in England. For example, in Wales, pupils are no longer assessed on Shakespeare in the end of key stage 3 tests.

Since May 2000, LEAs have had a duty to ensure that statutory arrangements for the key stage 3 tests are being complied with. See 1.5.1d(iii).

The results of the teacher assessment and the national tests are expressed in terms of the National Curriculum level descriptions (a one- to eight-level scale, see 4.9.1b). By the end of key stage 3, the performance of the great majority of pupils is expected to be within the range of levels 3–7 of this scale. Level eight is available for very able pupils, and, to help teachers differentiate exceptional performance at key stage 3, a description above level eight is provided. The scale does not apply at key stage 4.

In England and Wales, special arrangements may be made in the national tests at the end of key stage 3 for those pupils working at levels

below or above those generally expected for their age (see 5.12.3). In addition, the key stage 3 assessment arrangements may be completely disapplied for some students with special educational needs; see 8.12 for further information.

Schools are required to publish the latest available information showing school and national key stage 3 assessment results in their prospectus; see 1.8.1b for further information.

In addition, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in **England** has developed **optional tests** in English and mathematics for use with pupils during years 7 and 8 (ages 11–12 and 12–13 respectively), alongside year 7 **progress tests** in English and mathematics. Both types of test aim to offer schools a means of measuring pupils' progress in the years between the statutory tests at the end of key stages 2 and 3. The specific purpose of the Years 7 and 8 optional tests is to support schools in monitoring pupils' progress during key stage 3. Year 7 progress tests in English and mathematics are for pupils who did not achieve level 4 at the end of key stage 2, but who, in Year 7, are working at level 3 or 4. The Year 7 progress tests and the years 7 and 8 optional tests were introduced for the first time in 2001.

Similarly, in **Wales**, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) provides **optional assessment materials** (OAMs) to support teacher assessment in selected subjects at any point during key stage 3. The materials cover the programmes of study of the National Curriculum subjects and are structured to allow teachers to assess pupils and record the outcome.

b) Key stage 4

Evaluation of pupils at key stage 4 is normally by General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination (see 5.11.1). For pupils who are not entered for a GCSE examination in a National Curriculum subject, or for an Entry Level qualification (see 5.11.4), the Government considers that the most appropriate way to measure achievement is by teacher assessment at the end of the key stage. Achievement is recorded on the pupil's National Record of Achievement (NRA) (soon to be replaced by the 'Progress File', see 6.10). National performance tables are published by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for England, and by the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) in Wales. These show the achievements of students in GCSE examinations and in specified vocational qualifications. However, since summer 2001, the tables for Wales no longer identify individual schools. Schools in England and Wales must publish their results in GCSE examinations and in specified vocational qualifications in the school prospectus; see 1.8.1b for further information.

5.10.2 Northern Ireland Curriculum assessment arrangements

At the end of a key stage, each pupil's progress in specified subjects must be assessed. At key stage 3, this is by both teacher assessment and formal tests, and schools are required to tell parents the level their child has reached in the subjects being tested. Statutory assessment came into effect for all pupils at the end of key stage 3, age 14, in September 1996. Specific arrangements for the end of key stage 3 and key stage 4 are as follows.

a) Key stage 3

Pupils are formally assessed by their teachers in English, Irish (in Irish-speaking schools only), mathematics and science during the final two terms of key stage 3.

In addition, pupils are required to sit formal, end of key stage tests in the above subjects. The tests for mathematics, science (and Irish where applicable) are set at different levels of difficulty. Teachers select the appropriate test for each child, depending on the level he/she is working close to at the time. There is one overarching test in English.

The end of key stage 3 tests, which are set and marked by the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), usually take place during one week in May. The CCEA decides on test dates and the timetable and informs schools accordingly. The results are sent to headteachers, who also receive information regarding the performance of their school in comparison with other, similar schools. Results are not published, but the results of the teacher assessment and the formal tests must be forwarded to parents, see 5.10.5c.

In Northern Ireland, some pupils working at levels below those generally expected for their age may be exempted from the key stage 3 tests.

b) Key stage 4

There is no statutory assessment at the end of key stage 4. The main means of assessment at the end of this key stage is by General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination (see 5.11.1).

Until January 2001, national performance tables were published showing the achievements of students in GCSE examinations and in specified vocational qualifications. However, following a public consultation on the future of national performance tables, publication was discontinued in January 2001.

Development work began in Northern Ireland in September 2000 on a scheme to introduce online GCSE examinations (the 'paperless' examinations project). The current aim is that a small number of students will be able to take a 'live' GCSE examination by 2004/05.

5.10.3 Assessment during post-compulsory secondary education

National Curriculum assessment arrangements do not apply to pupils in post-compulsory education. Evaluation depends largely on the requirements of the appropriate awarding bodies for particular qualifications (see 5.11).

5.10.4 Pupil records and reports

For England and Wales, general guidance on pupil records and reports is provided in Circular 15/2000 (DfEE, 2000a).[14] Specific guidance on pupil/school records is also provided in Circular 17/89 (DES, 1989).[15] The substantive guidance provided in this 1989 Circular remains largely current, except where highlighted in Circular 15/2000.

In Northern Ireland, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Records) Regulations (Northern Ireland) (1998) and the Education (Pupil Records) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001, all grant-aided schools are required to keep educational records for all pupils, and to allow pupils and parents access to this data on written request. Specified information regarding a pupil's academic achievement must be transferred to the pupil's secondary or grammar school on completion of key stage 2. Full details are provided in Department of Education Circulars 1998/3 (DENI, 1998)[16] and 2001/17 (DE, 2001c).[17]

See section 4.9.3 for further information.

5.10.5 Reports on individual pupils to parents

a) England and Wales: compulsory secondary education

In England and Wales, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and the Education (Individual Pupils' Achievements) (Information) (Wales) Regulations 1997 (as amended by the Education (Individual Pupils' Achievements) (Information Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2002), headteachers are responsible for ensuring that all parents of pupils in key stages 3 and 4 receive a written report on their child's achievements at least once during the school year. The Regulations prescribe the minimum requirements of pupils' reports at key stages 3 and 4; these include:

- a (brief) description of the pupil's progress in each subject and activity studied as part of the school curriculum (including religious education), the results of any public examinations entered by the pupil, any vocational qualifications achieved, or credits gained towards them;
- details of the pupil's general progress;
- arrangements for parents to discuss the report with a teacher at the school; and
- details of the pupil's attendance record.

In addition, in the final year of key stage 3, pupils' reports should include details of the pupil's National Curriculum assessment results. Comparative information regarding the attainment of other pupils of the same age in the school and nationally must also be provided. For England, guidance is provided in the annually updated publication (available from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)), *Key Stage 3 Assessment and Reporting Arrangements*. The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) produces a similar annual publication for Wales.

At key stage 4, for those pupils who are not school leavers, the report should detail, in addition and where applicable:

- the subjects in which the pupil was entered for any General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations and the grades achieved; and
- any other qualification or unit towards a qualification and the grade achieved (where available).

Those pupils who are intending leaving school at the end of key stage 4 must be provided with a report on their school achievements. This must include the results of any public examinations taken, qualifications achieved (including vocational qualifications) and credits towards them, and details of subjects and activities studied as part of the school curriculum other than those taken at examination level. This often takes the form of a National Record of Achievement (NRA) (soon to be replaced by the 'Progress File'; see 6.10) (or a form containing the same information), which is signed and dated by a teacher who is familiar with the student. There must also be provision for the student to sign the document.

Guidance on reporting on student achievement at key stage 4 and beyond is provided in Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Circular 17/99,[18] for England, and in National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) Circular 35/98 (NAfW, 1998)[19] for Wales.

Schools may issue more than one report in each academic year, for example, termly reports, but the minimum specified amount of information must be sent to parents by the end of the summer term (usually in July).

In addition, when a pupil moves from a maintained school to a new school, including instances where a pupil moves to an independent school, regulations require that a completed statutory transfer form (either in electronic or paper format) should be sent to the receiving school. In addition, the pupil's educational records, including copies of pupil reports, should be provided. (However, if a pupil is transferring to an institute of further or higher education, or any place of education or training other than a school, the transfer form should not be used, and the record should only be transferred if a written request is made by the receiving establishment.)

b) England and Wales: post-compulsory secondary education

Although National Curriculum assessment and reporting arrangements do not apply to pupils in post-compulsory education, Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Circular 17/99[18] and National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) Circular 35/98 (NAfW, 1998)[19] specify that, where post-compulsory education is provided in schools, headteachers must provide at least one written report each academic year on a pupil's progress. Where pupils are aged under 18 years, this must be provided to parents. Pupils who have reached the age of 18 receive the report themselves.

Schools may issue more than one report during the school year, provided that the prescribed minimum amount of information is issued by the end of the summer term (July). Where information, such as public examination results, is not available before the end of the summer term, headteachers must ensure that it is sent as soon as practicable, and in any case no later than 30 September.

For those pupils who are not school leavers, the report should detail:

- a pupil's progress in each subject and activity studied as part of the school curriculum; and
- the pupil's general progress;
- arrangements for parents (or pupils, where pupils are aged 18 or over) to discuss the report with a teacher at the school;
- details of the pupil's attendance record;

- where applicable, the subjects in which the pupil was entered for any General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations and the grades achieved;
- where applicable, the subjects in which the pupil was entered for any General or GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualifications (GCE AS qualifications) and the grade achieved;
- any other qualification or unit towards a qualification and the grade achieved (where available).

c) Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, in accordance with the Education (Individual Pupils' Achievements) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998 and the Education (Pupil Records) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001, schools must provide parents with an annual report on their child's achievements in every subject or activity which forms part of the child's curriculum and the results of any public examinations taken. In addition, all secondary school pupils must be provided with a Record of Achievement at the end of key stage 2 (age 11), key stage 4 (age 16) and, where appropriate, when he or she leaves the sixth form. The current requirements are given in DENI Circulars 1998/03[16] and 2001/17 (DE, 2001c).[17]

In addition, in accordance with the Education (Individual Pupils' Achievements) (Information) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999, all schools must report the results of key stage 3 assessment outcomes to parents. Schools are, for example, expected to provide parents with details of:

- the levels achieved by their child(ren) in the written tests for English, (or Irish, in Irish-speaking classes or schools), mathematics and science;
- the teacher assessed levels for English (or Irish, where applicable), mathematics and science; and
- the overall statistics for the school.

Details of current requirements are given in DENI Circular 1999/19.[20]

5.11 Qualifications

Nationally recognised qualifications are taken by the majority of pupils at the end of key stage 4, age 16, the end of the period of compulsory education. However, these qualifications may also be taken by students of any age, including adults in further education institutions. Arrangements may be made, by schools, for gifted or talented pupils to take these examinations at an earlier age than normal.

In England and Wales, under Sections 96 and 99 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, all courses of study leading to an external qualification, provided for pupils under the age of 19 in maintained schools must be approved. Approval is granted by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in England and by the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) in Wales.

For **England**, Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Circular 0329/2000 (DfEE, 2000b)[21] and Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Circular 0570/2001 (DfES, 2001a)[22] list all qualifications and specifications which are currently approved for pupils of compulsory school age (mainly in key stage 4) and for those over compulsory school age but under the age of 19.

In Wales, National Assembly Circular 16/01 provides similar lists of approved qualifications and guidance for their use (NAfW, 2001).[23]

Similarly, in Northern Ireland, under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, all courses leading to an external qualification, provided for pupils of compulsory school age in grant-aided schools, must be approved by the Department of Education (DE). Circulars DE 2001/12 (DE, 2001d)[24] and DE 2001/19 (DE, 2001e)[25] provide details of those courses approved for examination in summer 2003. The Department of Education seeks the advice of the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) before deciding on these approved qualifications.

Pupils in post-compulsory education may take a number of courses leading to approved qualifications such as:

- General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) examinations (5.11.5);
- GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualifications (GCE AS qualifications) (5.11.5)
- Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (Vocational A-levels) and Advanced Subsidiary Vocational Certificates of

Education (Advanced Subsidiary VCEs) (which replaced advanced-level General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) in September 2000 (6.11.2b).

Pupils are free to choose any combination of such courses within the limitation of a school's timetable and the range of subjects it offers.

In Wales, a new post–16 qualification – the Welsh Baccalaureate – is currently under development. This qualification would aim to provide equal recognition to academic and vocational qualifications and would sit alongside existing post–16 qualifications. A pilot programme is due to start in 18 schools and further education colleges in September 2002. In addition, the International Baccaulaureate is currently offered in three schools in Wales.

In England, the Government has recently announced proposals to restructure education and training for the 14–19 age group (DfES, 2002). These include the planned introduction of the Matriculation Diploma as an overarching award, which will recognise all forms of study undertaken and wider activities beyond the curriculum

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) have set out arrangements for the statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure standards are met. A Code of Practice for the GCSE, GCE, VCE and GNVQ is in place to promote consistency in each subject across different examining boards, between different syllabuses in the same subject, and from year to year (QCA, ACCAC and CCEA, 2001).[26]

The awarding bodies for GCE and GNVQ examinations (see 1.4.5) are accredited and regulated by the above qualifications and curriculum bodies.

A new framework of nationally-recognised general, vocation-related and occupational qualifications is being developed for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (see 1.3.3).

5.11.1 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

The examination most commonly taken at the end of key stage 4 is the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). The GCSE consists of a range of examinations in single subjects and there are no regulations

governing the minimum or maximum number of subjects to be taken by a pupil at any one time. A certificate is issued listing the grade which a candidate has achieved in each subject attempted. The results are reported on an eight-point scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G are recorded as 'U' for 'unclassified' and do not receive a certificate. Some GCSE subjects are examined by tier, that is different examination papers are targeted at specific ability groups. For subjects where evidence suggests that it is possible to set questions in examination papers which can apply to the whole ability range (history, music and art for example), there is usually only one tier. For others, there is a foundation tier covering grades G to C and a higher tier for grades D to A*. Mathematics GCSEs are examined by three tiers.

GCSE short courses may also be available. These are designed to be studied in half the time of a GCSE and are worth half a full GCSE.

In **England**, GCSE short-course syllabuses have been introduced in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, modern languages, music, physical education and religious education. In addition, a short course in citizenship studies will be introduced from August 2002, when citizenship becomes a compulsory National Curriculum subject at key stages 3 and 4. The tiering arrangements for GCSE short courses match those for the full GCSEs in the same subject (see above). GCSE short courses are also available in **Wales** in a full range of subjects.

The **Northern Ireland** Curriculum does not make provision for short courses in subjects for which there are programmes of study. GCSE short courses are therefore not generally approved for use.

The GCSE awarding bodies normally offer several syllabuses (now known as 'specifications') for each subject. The choice of awarding body and specification is made by the school, and schools may choose from different awarding bodies for different subjects. Further information on awarding bodies is provided in 1.4.5.

The GCSE grade awarded may be based partly on coursework done throughout a period of up to two years, as well as on the final examination or, for modular courses, the end of module examination. The proportion of the marks which can be awarded on the basis of coursework varies between subjects and specifications, but ranges from 25 per cent to as much as around 60 per cent for some practical subjects, such as technology.

Pupils have a right of appeal if they are not satisfied with the grade they receive. Appeals must be addressed, in the first instance, by the pupil's school and not the individual pupil (or by private candidates), to the appropriate awarding body. Grades can be lowered, raised or confirmed as a result of an appeal. Since 1999, the Examinations and Appeals Board (EAB) has heard appeals which have failed to be resolved by an awarding body's own procedures. (Previously, the Independent Appeals Authority for School Examinations (IAASE) heard such appeals. This body ceased to exist in 1999.)

As part of a pilot programme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, some pupils taking their GCSE examinations in the summer of 1999 were allowed to see their marked examination papers. This had not previously happened. The aim was to help schools and pupils to learn from their mistakes and to reduce the number of examination appeals. Since summer 2001, any pupil taking GCSE examinations in any subject has been able to have access to his/her marked examination papers. Copies of marked examination papers are only sent to schools on request. Requests can be made by schools or by pupils via the schools. A charge is made for this service.

The GCSE awarding bodies appoint the examiners and standardise the system of marking and grading. The Joint Council for General Qualifications (JCGQ) (formerly the Joint Council for the GCSE) is the central body. It acts as a clearing-house for the exchange of information, as a forum for the discussion of matters of common interest, and as the coordinator of the awarding bodies' activities for those matters on which they are expected to adopt uniform policies.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC), and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) are the regulatory bodies for GCSE examinations and are responsible for scrutinising procedures to ensure standards are maintained. They have produced a Code of Practice for the GCSE (and other qualifications) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA, ACCAC, CCEA, 2001)[26], to ensure consistency in the examining process across different syllabuses and examining bodies.

The GCSE examining groups are:

- Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA);
- EdExcel Foundation;
- Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations, OCR;

- Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC); and
- in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

For information on vocational GCSEs see section 5.11.3.

5.11.2 General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs)

General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) are designed to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in broad vocational areas related to a particular industry or sector such as business, health and social care, and information technology. There are currently 15 subject areas, offered at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced-levels, but not all of these are offered in schools. Further education institutions usually offer a wider range of GNVQ courses (see 6.11.2b). During compulsory secondary education, pupils usually either take Foundation or, in some cases, Intermediate Level GNVQs, or study for the Part One GNVQ. At post-compulsory level, pupils usually study the advanced-level qualification.

The Part One GNVQ is a two-year qualification, intended to broaden the range of qualifications available to 14- to 16-year-old pupils. It is offered in seven vocational subject areas: art and design; business; engineering; health and social care; information and communication technology (ICT); leisure and tourism; and manufacturing. Designed to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in these broad subject areas, and key skills in application of number, communication and information technology, pupils may study Part One GNVQs at either Foundation or Intermediate Level. (Foundation Level is equivalent to two General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) passes at grades D–G; Intermediate Level is equivalent to two GCSEs at grades A*– C.)

The Part One GNVQ is intended as an option to be studied alongside GCSEs, and should occupy about 20 per cent of curriculum time. It has been generally available in schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland since September 1999.

In line with the recent review of the structure of GCE A-levels and GCE AS qualifications (see 5.11.5), GNVQs are also being reformulated, with a view to enabling students in post-compulsory, upper secondary education (age 16+) to more easily combine academic and vocational study. See 6.11.2b for details of recent and forthcoming changes.

See 5.11 for details of the Code of Practice for GNVQs and other qualifications.

Since September 2000, the responsibilities of the Examinations Appeals Board (see 5.11.1) have been extended to include GNVQs. Additionally, since January 2001, pupils taking Advanced Level GNVQs, are able to request, via their school, college or examination centre, to see their marked examination papers.

5.11.3 Vocational GCSEs

The Government has recently announced that Foundation and Intermediate Level GNVQs and Part One GNVQs will begin to be replaced by new vocational General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) from September 2002. Vocational GCSEs will initially be available in eight vocational subject areas: art and design; business; engineering; information and communications technology (ICT); health and social care; leisure and tourism; manufacturing; and science. Their aim is to provide an introduction to a vocational subject area, and to enable young people either to progress to further study, or to move on to apprenticeships or full-time employment. Although vocational GCSEs are explicitly designed to be taken by pupils at key stage 4 (ages 14–16) of compulsory education, they will also be available for those in post-16 education, for example, 16- to 19-year-old students in college or school education, wishing to study a vocational course below advanced level.

Vocational GCSEs are equivalent to two GCSEs in terms of size and demand. Each consists of three units. In most subjects, two of the units will be assessed internally through portfolios of students' work; the remaining unit will be assessed externally. Results will be reported on the same A*–G scale as other GCSEs. Double grades will, however, be reported (e.g A*A* or DD) to reflect the double-size nature of these qualifications.

With regard to the statutory curriculum at key stage 4, see 5.8.1, vocational GCSEs in engineering and manufacturing both meet the National Curriculum programme of study for design and technology. The ICT qualification meets the programme of study for ICT and, in **England**, the vocational GCSE in science meets the requirement to study science at key stage 4. In **Wales**, where the vocational GCSE in science does not meet the National Curriculum requirements for science, this qualification will only be available in post-16 education.

5.11.4 Entry level qualifications

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, there are a number of approved qualifications in literacy, numeracy and information technology, which are aimed at pupils who are not ready for General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) qualifications, Foundation Level General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) or Part One GNVQs. These have been available for use since September 1996 and aim to encourage progression to higher-level awards. These qualifications informed the development of a range of national awards at 'Entry Level', originally proposed in a review of the qualifications framework (Dearing, 1996).[27] The first Entry Level qualifications/awards were accredited in June 1998 and began to be available for pupils in September of the same year. Since that time, an increasingly wide range of awards has been approved, including academic qualifications below the level of GCSE, vocational awards, skills for independent living, personal skills, preparation for work skills and other skills. The qualifications are offered at three levels which are broadly equivalent to National Curriculum levels 1, 2 and 3 (see 4.9.1b).

Under section 96 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, schools, further education institutions and employers may only offer a publicly funded course leading to an external qualification, to those under 19, if the qualification has been approved by the Secretary of State. In Wales, approval is granted by the National Assembly for Wales. Under the provisions of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Department of Education approves qualifications for students over compulsory school age.

5.11.5. GCE A-levels and GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) qualifications

General Certificate of Education Advanced-level examinations (GCE A-levels) are single-subject examinations, which may be studied in any combination, within the limitation of a school's timetable and the range of subjects it offers. Schools or further education institutions generally set their own admissions requirements (see 5.5). Courses normally last two years and most students take the examinations at age 18 but arrangements can be made for gifted and talented students to take them earlier than the normal age. The examinations are also open to those who have followed part-time courses, including adults, or who have undertaken independent study in the UK or overseas.

GCE Advanced Supplementary examinations (GCE AS examinations) were introduced in 1987 to facilitate a broadening of the curriculum for those studying for GCE A-levels. GCE AS examinations were of the same academic standard as GCE A-levels, but included only half the

content and, in September 2000, were replaced by GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualifications (GCE AS qualifications), see below.

The structure of GCE A-levels and GCE AS examinations has recently been reviewed with the aim of broadening the subjects studied in the first year of the course. As a result, since September 2000, pupils have been encouraged to study up to five subjects in the first year of the sixth form. On successful completion, students are awarded the new GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification (GCE AS qualification). Pupils then go on to study up to three of these five Advanced Subsidiary qualification subjects at GCE A-level in the second year. To facilitate this process, GCE A-level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification courses consist of units – six for the full A-level and three for the GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification – and pupils select either modular or end-of-course assessment. The first examinations for the new GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification took place in summer 2001; those for the revised GCE A-level will be taken in summer 2002.

GCE A-level passes and GCE AS qualifications are graded on a scale of A to E. The grade U denotes a fail and the grade N a narrow failure. Pupils have a right of appeal if they are not satisfied with the grade they receive. Appeals (from the pupil's school or examination centre, not the individual pupil, or from private candidates) must be addressed in the first instance to the appropriate awarding body. Grades can be lowered, raised or confirmed as a result of an appeal.

As part of a pilot programme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, some pupils taking their GCE A-level examinations in the summer of 1999 were allowed to see their marked examination papers. This had not previously happened. The aim was to help schools and pupils to learn from their mistakes and to reduce the number of examination appeals. Since summer 2000, all pupils taking GCE A-Level and GCE AS qualifications have been able to have access to their marked examination papers, on request. Requests can be made by schools, colleges or examination centres or by students via their school, college or examination centre. A charge is made for this service.

The current GCE examining groups are:

- Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA);
- EdExcel Foundation;
- Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR);
- Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC); and
- in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

5.11.6. Advanced Extension Awards

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, an additional qualification for pupils in post-compulsory education in schools is also currently under development. Advanced Extension Awards, which will be available from September 2002, will provide the opportunity for the most able advanced level students to demonstrate a greater depth of understanding than required in GCE A-level, but will be based on the same curriculum content. The Awards will be available initially for some GCE A-level subject areas only.

5.11.7 Key Skills qualification

Since September 2001, separate voluntary 'Key Skills' qualifications in communication, application of number, and information technology have been available to pupils aged 16+ in post-compulsory secondary education. Earlier, a combined Key Skills qualification in the three key skills was offered, but this was discontinued. These qualifications are intended to be taken in tandem with other courses and are, consequently, available for all pupils, whether they are following General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level), Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (Vocational A-level), GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification, Advanced Subsidiary Vocational Certificate of Education, (Advanced Subsidiary VCEs) General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) or General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses in schools or colleges. They are also available for post-16 students participating in work-based training programmes.

In addition to the specific Key Skills qualifications, the Government recommends that all post–16 programmes (GCE A-levels, GNVQs, etc.) should incorporate aspects of all six key skills (application of number, communication, information technology, improving own learning and performance, problem solving, and working with others).

5.11.8 Free-standing maths units

Since September 2000, free-standing maths units have been available as national qualifications for students aged 16+. Introduced to encourage students in post-compulsory education in schools and colleges to continue studying maths, the units are available at foundation, intermediate or advanced level. They involve teacher-directed study; require students to apply maths to other areas of study; are assessed by equally weighted elements of coursework and external, timed assessment; and are graded in the same way as GCE A-levels.

5.12 Special assistance for pupils

5.12.1 Pupils with special educational needs

Under the terms of the Education Act 1993 (and the consolidated Education Act 1996 which superseded it), pupils with special educational needs should be educated in mainstream schools wherever possible. During the period 1994 to early 2002, the *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs* (DFE, 1994)[28] was in force. This recommended that mainstream schools should follow a five-stage pattern of identification and assessment of special educational needs. During the first three stages, special assistance was provided by schools (pupils were provided with differentiated work, matched to their individual needs, capabilities and previous learning), and external specialists were called upon to help if necessary at stage three. At stages four and five, local education authorities shared responsibility with schools.

Revised individual Codes of Practice for England and Wales were introduced on 1 January 2002, (DfES, 2001b; NAfW,2000).[29,30]. These include a stronger right for children with special needs to be educated at a mainstream school, improved liaison with parents and other agencies, and a right for schools to request a statutory assessment of a child. The Codes also recommend a graduated response to a child's special needs. This involves making full use of all available classroom and school resources before calling upon outside help. Further details are provided in section 8.6.1.

5.12.2 Special National Curriculum arrangements for mainstream pupils at key stage 4

Since September 1998, schools in **England** have been permitted by law to alter certain parts of the National Curriculum for certain pupils at key stage 4, in order to put into place work-related learning programmes. All pupils have to continue to study English, mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education, and schools have to continue to provide religious education, sex education and careers education and guidance for all pupils. However, individual pupils may be allowed to meet the statutory requirement to study design and technology, a modern foreign language; and/or science through specified qualifications that do not meet the programme of study in full.

In addition, since the introduction of the revised National Curriculum in August 2000, the above initiative has been extended to allow schools the flexibility to adapt the National Curriculum to the specific needs of

individual pupils who are making significantly less progress than their peers, or to pupils who have specific talents in particular subject areas. Guidance has been produced regarding the disapplication of the National Curriculum for pupils in key stage 4 in schools.

The recently launched Government consultation paper on the future of 14–19 education (DfES, 2002) proposes further extending the flexibility offered to students during this key stage.

In **Northern Ireland**, since September 2000, a pilot programme has been in operation whereby individual schools can apply to the Department of Education (DE) for written permission to disapply certain aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum for certain pupils at key stage 4. This is in order to focus on work-related learning programmes and associated qualifications, such as Part One General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) for such pupils. The programmes may involve work experience and study for recognised qualifications at a further education college or training organisation. There is a limit of 40 per cent of a pupil's time for these non-school-based activities. Detailed guidance is provided by the Department of Education (DE, 2002).[31]

5.12.3 Special National Curriculum test arrangements for mainstream pupils performing below expectations

In **England**, pupils in key stage 3 working at levels one to two (of the National Curriculum one- to eight-level scale) (see 4.9.1b) in mathematics and science, and levels one to three in English, do not usually take the national end of key stage 3 tests (see 5.10.1a). Such pupils are assessed by teacher assessment alone, although classroom-based tasks may be used with these pupils on an optional basis to support teacher assessment.

New tests for pupils entering key stage 3 (age 11+ years) and performing below the expected standard for their age were introduced in September 2001. The tests, in English and mathematics, are known as 'progress tests'; see 5.10.1a for further information.

In line with Government policy on inclusion (see 8.9), during 2001, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) published a complete set of curriculum guidelines for teachers of pupils with learning difficulties. These include advice on planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum.

In addition, a revised guidance document on setting targets for pupils with special needs achieving significantly below age-related expectations

was also published (QCA and DfEE, 2001).[32] The above documents apply to mainstream schools, primary and secondary special schools, specialised units and independent schools in England.

In **Wales**, pupils working at level two or below of the National Curriculum scale in English (Welsh where Welsh is their first language), mathematics and science are assessed by teacher assessment alone, and do not take the national tests at the end of key stage 3.

In **Northern Ireland**, pupils working below level three of the eight-level Northern Ireland Curriculum scale are assessed by their teachers at the end of key stage 3, rather than taking the end of key stage tests.

5.12.4 Special National Curriculum test arrangements for mainstream pupils performing above expectations

In **England**, those students assessed by their teachers as working at level eight of the National Curriculum scale at key stage 3 may take what are known as 'extension tests' or 'extension papers' in addition to the standard national tests. In **Wales**, able pupils are not tested by means of extension papers or tests. Results for such pupils are reported by teacher assessment only.

In addition, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in **England** is currently developing what are known as 'world-class tests'. Designed to stimulate the country's most gifted and talented children, the tests aim to encourage deeper thinking on the standard topics that children have been taught. Paper-based and computer-based mathematics and problem-solving tests (in mathematics, science, and design and technology) are available. These are targeted at 13-year-old pupils (in key stage 3) (and 9-year-olds in key stage 2, in addition), but pupils can take them as soon as they are ready.

It is not intended that world-class tests will be introduced in **Wales**.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has also recently published a document which aims to assist teachers in assessing gifted and talented pupils (Richardson, 2001).[33] In addition, QCA has launched a website of guidance for those involved in teaching gifted and talented pupils.

For additional information on provision for gifted children see Chapter 8.

5.13 Education–business links

The aim of education–business links is to ensure that young people are better prepared for the world of work. The main aspects of education–business links include work experience for pupils and teacher placements in industry. These activities are intended to motivate young people and improve their core skills, and enhance teachers' understanding of business, leading to a more relevant curriculum and better-informed pupils. There is a national network of Education–Business Partnerships or consortia which coordinate local education–business activities in collaboration with the regional network of Learning and Skills Councils established under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, LEAs and local employers.

In England and Wales, work experience is governed by the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Under the terms of the 1996 Act, pupils in their last year of compulsory schooling became eligible for work experience; the School Standards and Framework Act extended this eligibility to the final two years of compulsory education (pupils in key stage 4, ages 14–16. Work placements take place on the employer's premises and pupils carry out a range of tasks or duties similar to employees, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience. Pupils normally have two weeks' work experience and those under school leaving age may take part only in schemes for which the arrangements have been made or approved, as part of a pupil's education, by the LEA. Similar arrangements have been introduced in Northern Ireland under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.

The recently launched Government consultation paper on the future of 14–19 education (DfES, 2002) proposes further extending the flexibility offered to students during key stage 4. As a consequence, in future more pupils at this level look likely to take part in some form of work experience.

5.14 Organisational variations

Children of statutory school age in England and Wales must receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. For information on education in independent schools see 1.7. For children not educated at school the most common alternative provision is education at home; see 4.11.

Post-compulsory education is also provided in further education institutions; see Chapter 6.

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6. FURTHER AND ADULT EDUCATION

This chapter deals with the education and training of young people **outside of schools** and of adults. For information on the education of young people between the ages of 16 and 19 **in schools** see chapter 5.

6.1 Historical overview

Adult and further education developed mainly from the Mechanics Institutes in the early nineteenth century and later led to the establishment of technical schools. Mechanics Institutes were originally established to provide tuition for working people in the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic but, as the availability of free elementary education improved, they broadened their range to include scientific and technical subjects.

The further education sector in England and Wales was reformed in 1992. The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 transferred the responsibility for the provision of certain types of further education from the local education authority (LEA) to the Further Education Funding Council for England (FEFC) and the Further Education Funding Council for Wales (FEFCW). The Act also granted further education institutions autonomous status as further education corporations.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 disbanded the Further Education Funding Councils and the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England and Wales (local companies which organised training at local level), and created new bodies which bring all post-compulsory education and training of young people aged 16+ and adults into one sector.

In April 1998, further education colleges in Northern Ireland became autonomous institutions independent of Education and Library Boards and now have a legal status similar to that of public companies.

6.2 Legislative framework

Until recently, the principal legislation covering further education in England and Wales was the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The Act continues to define further education as:

- full-time and part-time education suitable to the requirements of persons over compulsory school age (16 years), including vocational, social, physical and recreational training; and
- organised leisure-time occupation provided in connection with the provision of such education.

A similar definition appears in the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 has radically reformed the post-compulsory sector in England and Wales and has amended much of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. Planning and funding for **all** post-compulsory learning below higher education, **including that provided in schools,** is now integrated into one overarching sector.

The key features of the reforms are:

6.2.1 England

- The Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) (a non-departmental public body (NDPB), was created. It is now responsible for the planning and funding of all post-16 education and training including that provided in schools (up to higher education).
- A new youth support programme, the Connexions service, was established in England and phased in from 2001 (see 2.9).
- A new Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was set up in April 2001 to inspect all further education for those aged 19 and over and work-based training for all ages (see 10.4.2).
- The functions of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) have been extended to include responsibility for the inspection of provision for 16- to 19-year-olds in further education institutions as well as in schools.

6.2.2 Wales

- The creation of the National Council for Education and Training for Wales, commonly known as the National Council – ELWa (see 1.4.3a), with a similar remit to the Learning and Skills Council.

- The remit of Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales (see 1.4.6c), has been widened to include the inspection of post-16 education and training.
- The establishment of a new youth support service for 11- to 25-year-olds in Wales. The National Assembly for Wales has set up 'Careers Wales' to cater for this need (see 1.9).
- The legislation also enables the National Assembly for Wales to introduce other new structures for post-16 education and training as necessary.

Full-time education for 16- to 19-year-olds is considered to be **secondary education** when it is provided in a school which also educates pupils of compulsory school age and as such is subject to Schools Regulations (see 5.3). This also applies, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, to schools maintained by local authorities which cater exclusively for 16- to- 19-year-olds, where such schools have been established in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

In England and Wales, the Learning and Skills Act 2000 has extended the powers of further education institutions to provide secondary education to key stage 4 pupils, aged 14-16. Such provision, funded through the Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa), can, for example, enable young people to undertake vocational or work-related learning at further education colleges. This measure supports a current drive to increase the flexibility of the curriculum for 14- to 16-year-olds and the launch of vocational General Certificates of Secondary Education (vocational GCSEs) in September 2002 (see 5.11.3).

6.2.3 Northern Ireland

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 applies to England and Wales only. The principal legislation in Northern Ireland remains the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997. Following devolution in Northern Ireland, the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment (DHFETE), now known as the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) was established within the Northern Ireland Executive (see 1.4.2). The Department's strategic plan sets out its plans to 2004, including those for further and adult education and lifelong learning (DEL, 2001a).[1]

6.2.4 Other legislation

Other key legislation relating to further and adult education includes:

- The **Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997**, as amended by the **Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998**, which permits further education institutions to provide secondary education for pupils at key stage 4 (14–16 years) under arrangement with the Education and Library Board (Boards) in Northern Ireland.

- The **Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998** and the **Employment Rights (Time Off for Study or Training) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998** amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to allow employees aged 16 or 17 to take paid time off during normal working hours to study or train for a relevant qualification. This applies to those not in full-time secondary or further education and who have not yet achieved a qualification at level two (see 1.3.3). The Department for Education and Skills (as the Department for Education and Employment) has issued guidance on the provision for time off for study or training which came into force on 1 September 1999 in England and Wales (DfEE, 1999).[2] Similar guidance has been issued in Northern Ireland where the entitlement came into effect in September 2000 (DHFETE, 2000).[3]

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has issued a Green Paper in which is set out proposals for the reform of education and learning for 14- to 19-year-olds (see 5.2) (DfES, 2002).[4]

6.3 Decision-making bodies

In England, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) are responsible for the broad direction of policy, while the Learning and Skills Council and its local arms implement policy and have statutory obligations for provision.

In Wales, responsibility lies with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, the National Assembly for Wales and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) (see 1.4.3a).

The further education and learning division of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) (see 1.4.2c) of the Northern Ireland Executive has responsibility for the planning, funding and administration of further education in Northern Ireland.

Further education institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are autonomous bodies and have a legal status similar to that of public companies. The institution's corporation (usually called the governing body) is responsible, within the limits imposed by their statutory obligations, for all decisions affecting the institution (see 1.6.2).

6.4 Structure of further and adult education

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 changed the structure of the phase of education traditionally known as further education in **England and Wales**, by creating a new further education sector, which was known as the Further Education Funding Council sector (FEFC sector). This sector consisted largely of institutions previously maintained by LEAs, but which became autonomous institutions and received funding through the Further Education Funding Councils. Institutions which provide mostly part-time recreational activities for adults (see 6.5.4) were not part of the FEFC sector, yet were still defined as further education by the 1992 Act.

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 also granted independent status as further education corporations to existing LEA-maintained further education colleges (both general and specialist), tertiary colleges and sixth-form colleges, which had at least 15 per cent of their students (in full-time equivalent terms) attending full-time on sandwich courses, day-release courses or block-release courses. Voluntary-aided sixth-form colleges and some other institutions are included in the further education sector as 'designated' institutions. These corporations and 'designated' institutions offer full- and part-time further education courses to students over compulsory school age (16 years).

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 has radically reformed further and adult education and training in England and Wales. All post-compulsory education (excluding higher education) is now considered as one sector under the auspices of two national bodies: the Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (commonly known as the National Council – ELWa). The Councils operate through local branches: local learning and skills councils in England, and through regional committees and community consortia for education and training (CCETs) in Wales (see 1.4.3a). The Further Education and Funding Councils and Training and Enterprise Councils were disbanded. See section 6.2 for further details of this reform.

In **Northern Ireland**, further education colleges have been autonomous institutions since April 1998. They offer full- and part-time courses of general education, vocational education and recreational activities to students over compulsory school age (16 years). Following devolution, the colleges are funded directly by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

6.5 Types of institution

The types of institution which provide further education in England and Wales include further education colleges, tertiary colleges, sixth-form colleges and adult education centres. In Northern Ireland, only further education colleges exist. They provide academic, vocational and recreational courses.

Centres of Vocational Excellence are units based within further education institutions, established to develop and deliver high-quality, specialist provision in a specific vocational subject or area. Such centres focus on developing skills and meeting the needs of employers. Centres of Vocational Excellence have been set up in England and Northern Ireland. In Wales, the Networks of Excellence programme involves similar centres built around a single further education institution or group of institutions.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has recently invited collaborative bids from consortia comprising further education institutions, higher education institutions and other partners to set up New Technology Institutes (NTIs). Intended to be operational from autumn 2002, NTIs will offer a range of employment-related courses with the aim of increasing the supply of higher-level technical and ICT skills in the workforce; see 6.10.

6.5.1 Further education colleges

Further education colleges (FE colleges) provide full- or part-time education and training largely for students over compulsory school-leaving age (16 years). Further education colleges traditionally offered courses of a vocational nature, but many now also offer academic courses. Increasingly, courses leading to higher education qualifications, particularly those at sub-degree level (see 7.8.4) are also provided in further education colleges in collaboration with the Higher Education Funding Councils.

There are some specialist further education colleges, which provide courses in a specific area of the curriculum such as art, or in a vocational area such as agriculture.

In Northern Ireland, FE colleges also offer part-time recreational courses for adults.

6.5.2 Tertiary Colleges

Tertiary colleges in England and Wales combine the functions of a further education college and a sixth-form college. Some were formed from the amalgamation of a sixth-form college and a further education college. All provide a full range of academic and vocational courses.

Tertiary colleges do not exist in Northern Ireland.

6.5.3 Sixth-form colleges

Exclusive to England and Wales, sixth-form colleges offer largely full-time academic courses to students over compulsory school-leaving age (16 years). They were once governed by Schools Regulations, but were brought into the further education sector by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.

6.5.4 Adult education centres

Adult education centres may also be known as adult education institutes or community colleges. They offer part-time education and training, as well as leisure courses, to students over compulsory school age (16 years). Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, adult education centres are now funded by the Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa; see 1.4.3a). There are no separate adult education centres or institutes in Northern Ireland, where adult education courses (including academic, vocational and leisure courses) are provided by further education colleges.

6.5.5 The Workers' Educational Association (WEA)

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA) is a voluntary body which aims to encourage adults to undertake continuing education. It was founded in 1903 and has over 650 local branches. It provides courses for adults in a wide range of subjects of varying lengths, from weekend seminars to three-year courses. The majority of the provision made by these associations for students is on a part-time basis. The WEAs in England and Wales are designated institutions under the

Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and as such receive funding from the Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa).

6.6 Admissions requirements

There are no formal qualifications required for admission to an institution of further education or to an adult education centre, although individual courses such as those leading to GCE A-levels may have specific requirements (see 5.5). Many colleges have introduced access courses aimed specifically at people with no academic qualifications. Following the Kennedy Report (1997),[5] most institutions are focusing efforts on widening participation in further education. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 has imposed a statutory duty on the Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) to encourage participation in further education and training.

6.7 General objectives

The purpose of the statutory system of public education, including further education, as originally laid down in the Education Act 1944 (now superseded by the Education Act 1996) in England and Wales, is to contribute to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community. However, it is generally now accepted that educational institutions have a duty to prepare students for adult and working life.

See 1.4.2 for National Learning Targets for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

6.8 Courses and programmes

The National Curriculum and Northern Ireland Curriculum do not apply to post-compulsory education. Students may choose from a wide range of courses available in further education institutions, adult education centres and through open and distance learning. The content of courses is determined either by the awarding body (in the case of nationally recognised qualifications) or by the institutions themselves

(in the case of courses designed in-house). The duration of courses varies, as does the mode of study which may be full-time, part-time, day-release or block-release.

A number of Government-sponsored training programmes are available, many of which lead to nationally recognised qualifications. Off-the-job education and training for trainees may be provided by further education institutions or private training providers.

6.8.1 Courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications

Most further education institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland provide both academic (general education) and vocational courses, leading to nationally recognised qualifications of a number of national examining and awarding bodies. The subjects of study and the number of hours involved vary between courses. See 6.11.2 for details of vocational qualifications and 5.11 for academic (general education) qualifications.

A recent development in further education is that some institutions now offer courses of higher education in collaboration with the Higher Education Funding Councils, mainly leading to sub-degree level qualifications (see 7.8.4).

6.8.2 Language courses

Most further education institutions offer foreign language courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications, such as the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) and General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary qualification (GCE AS qualification). Many also offer courses leading to City and Guilds of London language qualifications, which are vocationally oriented. English as an additional language (EAL) courses are also available, in some areas, for students whose mother tongue is not English.

6.8.3 Recreational courses

A wide variety of recreational courses, which do not lead to a particular qualification, are available to adults and are usually provided in adult education centres in England and Wales. These courses may include arts subjects (e.g. painting, drawing, photography); crafts (e.g. pottery, dressmaking, flower arranging); health and wellbeing courses (e.g. physical exercise, stress management, aromatherapy); and ICT.

In Northern Ireland, further education colleges provide part-time recreational courses for adults.

6.8.4 Access courses

In recent years, further education institutions have provided an increasing number of access courses to prepare students without academic qualifications for higher education. These courses are aimed mainly at mature students and are designed and taught to meet their needs. Some provide access to a particular institution of higher education, which may thus be involved in designing the course, but most are designed to offer access to higher education in general. Some are discipline-related, or related to progression to particular professions, such as access to nursing, social sciences or teaching.

There are no formal requirements concerning minimum age, but age limits may be prescribed for individual courses. Most applicants are required to attend an interview. Many access courses were originally developed in response to an invitation made by the Government in 1978 to selected LEAs to design courses for students from the United Kingdom's black and minority ethnic communities in inner city areas. The initiative was introduced to increase the number of teachers and social workers coming from these communities. Since then, a more general focus has evolved: to provide a second chance for those showing evidence of a background of educational disadvantage, including the long-term unemployed, and for women returning to study after child-raising or wishing to study disciplines in which they are under-represented.

6.8.5 Adult literacy and basic skills

Adult literacy and basic skills courses are designed specifically for adults and include very flexible and informal programmes. They often take the form of drop-in workshops, where voluntary tutors provide tuition on a one-to-one basis. The Basic Skills Agency (formerly the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit), originally set up by the Department of Education and Science (DES), now the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), is the central development agency for adult literacy, adult numeracy and related basic skills learning in England and Wales.

In Northern Ireland, the Basic Skills Unit based within the Educational Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA) has taken over the work of the Adult Literacy and Basic Education Committee and focuses on improving adult literacy and numeracy skills of the people in Northern Ireland.

6.8.6 Continuing vocational education

The Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) and the Higher Education Funding Councils provide financial support for institutions in their respective sectors to develop continuing vocational education or continuing professional development courses. The courses themselves are intended to be self-financing and are mostly held in the institutions themselves, although a substantial proportion are held on company premises or at other venues. Increasingly, courses are run for individual employers or organisations and tailored to the specific needs of the client. Courses vary from short seminars to full-time degree courses. Longer courses may be split into short, self-contained modules to make it easier for employees to attend.

6.8.7 Modern Apprenticeships

Foundation Modern Apprenticeships are a work-based training option for young people and employers, similar to Advanced Modern Apprenticeships (see below), but based on national vocational qualifications (NVQ level 2). Training frameworks have now been developed in over 80 sectors of employment. Foundation Modern Apprenticeships have replaced much of the training previously provided under the Youth Training (YT) scheme.

Advanced Modern Apprenticeships were introduced in 1995 and are a partnership initiative between government and industry to provide a high-quality, work-based route to NVQ level 3; they also aim to provide the broader skills and qualifications needed by industry and employers. Advanced Modern Apprenticeships are intended largely for school leavers aged 16, but they are also open to more mature trainees who are able to complete their training before the age of 25. Most advanced modern apprentices have employed status and are paid a salary by their employer. Training frameworks have been developed by National Training Organisations (NTOs) (which will begin to be replaced from early 2002 by a UK-wide network of employer-led Sector Skills Councils; see 1.4.8j) and Industry Training Organisations for over 80 sectors of industry and business ranging from engineering and construction to business administration, banking, information technology and the retail sector.

Following the report of a review body (DfES, 2001),[6] the Government has recently announced plans to reform Modern Apprenticeships. These measures include:

- a national framework for apprenticeships to define standards and to strengthen relationships between the employer and apprentice;

- an entitlement to a Modern Apprenticeship for all 16- and 17-year-olds with five or more General Certificate of Education (GCSE) passes from September 2004;
- the development of a new technical certificates for Modern Apprenticeships (see 6.11.2c);
- the introduction of an overarching apprenticeship diploma to encompass the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), key skills and technical certificate elements of the apprenticeship programmes; and
- a drive to encourage employer participation in Modern Apprenticeships, particularly in underrepresented areas of the economy.

6.8.8 New Deal for 18–24-year-olds

Under the 'New Deal' for unemployed people, young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who have been unemployed for six months or more have the option of a job in the private or voluntary sector with day release for education or training, or a full-time education or training programme designed to lead to an appropriate qualification. Those employed under the scheme are paid normal rates by their employer but the Government subsidises employment and training costs. Allowances are paid to those young people in education and training programmes and to those on work placements in the voluntary sector.

6.8.9 Jobskills (Northern Ireland)

Jobskills is the Training and Employment Agency's (a business unit of the Department for Employment and Learning) training scheme for young people. The programme comprises three separate but interlinked strands: Access, Traineeships and Modern Apprenticeships which lead to national vocational qualifications (NVQ) at levels 1, 2, or 3 respectively (see 1.4.8n). Training is provided by approved Training Organisations (TOs) which can include further education colleges, local and national employers and community organisations, funded by the Training and Employment Agency. Trainees receive a training allowance, paid through the Training Organisation.

The recently issued report of the Northern Ireland Skills Taskforce recommended that greater emphasis should be placed on the Modern Apprenticeship strand of the Jobskills programme to help raise the level of skills attainment (DEL, 2001b).[7]

6.8.10 Other training for young people

The former Further Education Funding Councils and the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) also provided other training opportunities for young people in England and Wales. In particular, they continued to provide training for young people which used to be provided under Youth Training (YT), but which now falls outside the schemes of Foundation Modern Apprenticeships and Advanced Modern Apprenticeships. Following the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Secretary of State has recently announced that 'other training' which falls outside mainstream government schemes should be phased out by 2002.

Note: Youth training (YT) was a scheme for young people in England and Wales who were not in full-time education. It aimed to provide broad vocational education and training mainly for 16- to 17-year-olds. The Government paid a limited allowance to the trainee and the employer sometimes made an additional contribution. Employers were not obliged to employ the trainee at the end of the course.

6.8.11 Work-based learning for adults

Work-based learning for adults replaced the Training for Work scheme in March 1998. Programmes of work-based training are tailored to meet local needs within a framework provided by central government. The aim of work-based learning for adults is to help long-term unemployed adults aged 25-63, particularly those at risk of exclusion from the job market, to secure and sustain employment or self-employment through an individually tailored combination of guidance, structured work experience, training and approved qualifications. Several different models of training are offered within the programme:

- a combination of enhanced pre-vocational training and occupational training;
- employed status with additional training;
- occupational training which significantly improves skills in demand in the local labour market.

The programme also offers transitional support to participants immediately following their entry into employment and encourages the use of lifelong learning.

In England, responsibility for work-based learning for adults was transferred from the former Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) to the Employment Service, part of the Department for Work and

Pensions in April 2001. At this time, responsibility for this provision in Wales passed to the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa).

6.8.12 New Deal for people aged 25 plus

New Deal for people aged 25 or over aims to help people who and have been unemployed for two years or more back into work. A personal adviser helps people seeking work to develop a plan that suits their needs, combining existing provisions for people who have been unemployed for two years or more (see above) with new measures such as subsidised employment and education and training opportunities.

6.8.13 Modern Skills Diploma for Adults (Wales)

Following a pilot programme, the Modern Skills Diploma for Adults, a Welsh initiative to raise adult skills levels in business, was introduced in April 2001. The diploma programme provides structured training for the over 25s in or out of employment, along the lines of Advanced Modern Apprenticeships (see above). Practical training in the workforce is integrated with off-the-job learning and key skills, leading to national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 3 and above.

6.9 Teaching methods

Institutions and teachers are free to choose the appropriate teaching methods for the courses they are teaching. Courses may be structured in a variety of ways and the degree of practical training will depend on the course syllabus and the requirements of the awarding body (see 1.4.4).

6.10 Student assessment

Student performance may be assessed by a variety of methods including examinations, continuous assessment or a combination of the two, depending on the course and the requirements of the awarding body. Students have a right to regular information on their progress and personal achievements but these arrangements are decided by the individual institution. The Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force on 1 March 2000, broadened the scope of the Data Protection Act 1984 and allowed students access to personal information held on them by the institution of further education.

The **National Record of Achievement (NRA)** was originally launched in 1991 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland as a Government-backed initiative which allowed young people to record academic, career and personal achievements in a nationally recognised format; it was also intended to be a tool for lifelong learning and career planning.

The NRA includes a personal record which may be started by those still at school, and thus provides a summary of achievements in specific subjects and attendance rates. Individuals can make additions to their record throughout their life. The NRA includes a set of sheets on which to record:

- personal details;
- a personal statement highlighting plans and aims for the future;
- employment history;
- achievements and experiences, including sports and social interests and contributions to the community; and
- qualifications and credits.

In September 1999, the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE, now the DfES) began a three-year trial period of the 'Progress File'. A wide range of school, further and higher education, training provider and employer-based demonstration projects are running until July 2002. It is planned that the Progress File will eventually replace the NRA and is expected to assist both pupils (from age 13) and adults to plan and manage their learning throughout their lives.

6.11 Certification

Further education institutions offer courses, which lead to a range of nationally recognised qualifications, awarded by a number of different bodies. These qualifications may be academic (general education), general vocational or job-specific. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires most publicly funded courses of study (except for courses of higher education) leading to external qualifications to be approved. In England, approval is granted by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and, in Wales, by the National Assembly for Wales. Under the provisions of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, the Department of Education approves qualifications for students over compulsory school age.

Following a public consultation, a number of reforms to the qualifications aimed primarily at 16- to 19-year-olds were introduced in September 2000 (see subsections). Known as 'Curriculum 2000', these changes are designed to increase flexibility and breadth in the post-16 curriculum. Guidance on these changes has been issued by the qualifications and curriculum bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (QCA/ ACCAC/CCEA, 1999).[8]

The Government has recently announced proposals to restructure education and training for the 14-19 age group (DfES, 2002). These include the planned introduction of a Matriculation Diploma as an overarching award, which will recognise all forms of study undertaken and wider activities beyond the curriculum.

6.11.1 Academic qualifications

Syllabuses and examinations in academic subjects are set by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and the General Certificate of Education (GCE) awarding bodies (see 1.4.4). These are the same qualifications as those offered in schools. GCE courses lead to either General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) or General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary qualification (GCE AS qualification), which replaced General Certificate of Education Advanced Supplementary examinations (GCE AS examinations) (see 5.11).

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) regulate these qualifications which are awarded by a variety of awarding bodies.

6.11.2 Vocational qualifications

The main national qualifications for vocational education and training are General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) (job-specific vocational qualifications). These qualifications are also regulated by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), but are awarded by a variety of awarding bodies. Awarding bodies also offer a range of qualifications outside the NVQ/ GNVQ framework.

a) National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are job-specific vocational qualifications aimed largely at people who have left full-time education. NVQs are awarded to students who provide evidence of competence in one of 11 occupational framework areas (see below). The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England and, in respect of NVQs, in Northern Ireland, and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) ensure that NVQ qualifications offered by awarding bodies meet particular criteria and are broadly comparable across different sectors.

NVQs are based on National Occupational Standards (NOS) which are statements of performance standards, which describe what competent people in a particular occupation are expected to be able to do. They cover all the main aspects of an occupation, including current best practice, the ability to adapt to future requirements, and the knowledge and understanding which underpins competent performance.

National Occupational Standards are devised by National Training Organisations (which will begin to be replaced from early 2002 by a UK-wide network of employer-led Sector Skills Councils; see 1.4.8n). 'Competence' is defined as a combination of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding and the ability to apply them. Units of Competence, which may have been achieved in a range of different ways and over a period of time, may be combined into an NVQ. An awarding body may accept a variety of evidence that someone has reached the necessary standards of competence.

The occupational framework areas are:

- tending animals, plants and land;
- extracting and providing natural resources;
- constructing;
- engineering;
- manufacturing;
- transporting;
- providing goods and services;
- providing health, social and protective services;
- providing business services;
- communicating;
- developing and extending knowledge and skill.

NVQs are divided into five levels, which equate to the following levels in the workplace:

- Level 1 – Foundation skills in occupations;
- Level 2 – Operative or semi-skilled occupations;
- Level 3 – Technician, craft, skilled and supervisory occupations;
- Level 4 – Technical and junior management occupations;
- Level 5 – Chartered, professional and senior management occupations.

b) General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs)

General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) were developed as alternative qualifications to General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) and General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-levels and are aimed primarily at young people over compulsory school age (16 years) who remain in full-time education, although they are open to students of any age. In addition, the Part One GNVQ is available to pupils aged between 14 and 16 years in some subject areas (see 5.11.2).

GNVQs are intended to offer a comprehensive preparation for employment, as well as a route to higher-level qualifications, and are designed to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in broad vocational areas. The subject areas cover:

- art and design;
- business;
- construction and the built environment;
- engineering;
- health and social care;
- hospitality and catering;
- information and communication technology;
- land and environment;
- leisure and recreation;
- leisure/travel and tourism
- manufacturing;
- media, communication and production;
- performing arts;
- retail and distributive services;
- science.

The qualifications are awarded by the awarding bodies and regulated by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). These regulatory bodies have jointly published a code of practice which seeks to ensure appropriate and consistent standards are applied in assessment and marking (QCA/ ACCAC/CCEA, 2001).[9]

Most subject areas will eventually be available at three levels: foundation, intermediate and advanced:

- **Foundation level** requires three compulsory units of study, plus three optional units. It is equivalent to four General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) passes at grades D–G and normally takes one year of full-time study.

- **Intermediate level** requires three compulsory units of study and three units chosen from a list of options. It is equivalent to four or five GCSE passes at grades A*–C and usually takes approximately one year to complete.

- **Advanced level** requires six compulsory units of study and six units chosen from a list of options. It is equivalent to two passes at General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) and usually takes approximately two years to complete, although there are no set time limits.

Recent and current changes to GNVQs

The structure of GNVQs is currently the subject of significant revision.

In September 2000:

- Advanced-level GNVQs were renamed Advanced Vocational Certificates of Education (AVCE) or, more commonly, 'vocational A-levels'. These are available in six- and 12-unit awards, roughly equivalent to one or two traditional (general/academic) A-levels respectively. Their introduction aimed to provide greater flexibility and allow students to combine study for AVCEs with that for other qualifications. (AVCEs are graded on a five-point scale from A to E, in line with the GCE A-level.)

- Three-unit advanced-level GNVQs, now known as the Vocational Advanced Subsidiary or the Advanced Subsidiary Vocational Certificate of Education, were introduced in four vocational areas.

- A new key skills qualification was introduced (see 5.11.7), which replaced the previous system whereby the key skills of communication, application of number and information technology were tested as part of the GNVQ at intermediate and advanced levels.

From September 2002:

- Foundation, Intermediate and Part One GNVQs will be renamed Vocational General Certificates of Secondary Education (Vocational GCSEs) as the new alternative for 14- to 16-year-olds. The vocational GCSE will be available in similar subjects to the current GNVQs. It will provide an introduction to a broad vocational area; enable progression to further education, training or employment; and be available to both key stage 4 and post-16 students.

c) Technical Certificates

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), along with the National Training Organisations (NTOs) (see 1.4.8n) and awarding bodies, is currently developing the Technical Certificate qualification which will form a component of the Modern Apprenticeship programme (see 6.8.7). Technical Certificates will be vocationally related qualifications which will equip the Modern Apprentice with the knowledge and understanding which underpins the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) relevant to their chosen programme. Unlike the NVQ qualification, the 'technical certificate' will cover specialised occupational knowledge directed at the off-the-job training. The Technical Certificate will form part of the overarching Modern Apprenticeship diploma currently under development.

6.12 Assistance for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Depending on their individual needs, students over the age of 16 years may continue their education in mainstream schools, mainstream further education institutions or in special schools or colleges.

6.12.1 Specific legislative framework

Sections 13-14 and 41–42 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 require the Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (known as the National Council – ELWa) to have regard to the needs of people with learning difficulties

when securing further education provision. The Councils must also have due regard to the need to promote equal opportunities between people who are disabled and those who are not. Article 13 of the Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 requires the governing body of further education institutions to 'have regard to the requirements of persons over compulsory school age who have 'learning difficulties'.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires governing bodies of institutions of further education to publish disability statements at prescribed intervals. A disability statement contains information on the provision of facilities for education made by an individual institution in respect of disabled persons.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 requires further education institutions to not treat disabled students less favourably, without justification, than non-disabled students. It also requires them to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people who are disabled are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared with those who are not disabled in accessing further education. The Disability Rights Commission will publish a Code of Practice to providers of post-16 education on the implementation of this new law during 2002.

6.12.2 Provision for students with special educational needs

New codes of practice for special educational needs came into force on 1 January 2002 in England and Wales (DfES, 2001; NAfW, 2002).[10, 11] These require that at annual review meetings of pupils aged 13 and above with statements of special educational needs, a Transition Plan must be drawn up and subsequently reviewed. Connexions and Careers Wales (see 1.9), the guidance services for 13- to 19-year-olds in England and Wales respectively, play an important role in the development of the Transition Plan, which draws together information to plan for the pupil's transition to adult life.

The annual review and Transition Plan has an additional significance as the young person approaches the age of 16. Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Connexions service (England) and Careers Wales (under contract to the National Assembly for Wales) have responsibility for ensuring that the needs of young people with special educational needs are assessed on leaving school and suitable provision for further education or training identified. In England, this statutory responsibility extends to those students without statements, but with special educational needs. Although not a statutory requirement in Wales, Careers Wales places particular emphasis on supporting disadvantaged students, including those with special educational needs but without statements.

In England, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has a statutory duty to take account of these assessments of learning difficulties and disabilities that are arranged by the Connexions service. Local learning and skills councils monitor the arrangements that are in place in their areas to meet the needs of these young people. Close cooperation between local LSCs and the Connexions Service, drawing in post-16 providers, schools and local authorities, as necessary, should ensure that appropriate funding and support are in place for the provision set out in Transition Plans. In Wales, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) also plays a key role in the transition process through its relationship with Careers Wales.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 places a duty on the Learning and Skills Council (England) and the National Council – ELWa (Wales) to consider funding places for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at residential specialist colleges (FEFC Circular 01/03[12] and FEFCW Bulletin B98/05,[13] which will shortly be updated to reflect the Learning and Skills Act)

The LEA continues to be responsible for the education of students aged 16–19 years with special educational needs (SEN), who want to continue their education in a school (i.e. an establishment providing education for pupils of compulsory school age). LEAs must also publish disability statements. Statements of special educational needs (see 8.5) implemented under the Education Act 1996 continue to apply to students only while they attend school. Statements do not have any force once the student has entered the further education sector, although institutions may take them into consideration when assessing the needs of students.

Similar provisions exist in Northern Ireland. The Code of Practice for Northern Ireland was introduced in 1998 (DENI, 1998).[14]

The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities: SKILL is a voluntary organisation concerned with developing opportunities in further education, adult and higher education and training for students with learning difficulties and disabilities and special training needs.

6.12.3 Courses and certification

Most further education institutions and adult education centres make provision for students with special educational needs (SEN) as part of their equal opportunities policy. However, these provisions vary because of the restrictions imposed on institutions by the nature of their premises, although some do have special facilities.

In addition to providing access to the whole range of courses, some colleges run special courses for students with learning difficulties. The programmes may include communication skills and independent living skills for people with moderate or severe learning difficulties. In Wales, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council– ELWa) makes specific funds available each year to institutions to make courses accessible to individual students with particular needs (National Council – ELWa, 2001).[15]

The Learning and Skills Council (England) also makes additional funds available for institutions to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties.

Most further education institutions and adult education centres appoint a senior member of staff to be responsible for developing and coordinating initiatives.

Many students with disabilities work towards the qualifications described in 6.11. However, a range of external qualifications at pre-foundation level have been developed to accredit the achievement of students with learning difficulties in further education. The former Further Education Funding Council (now replaced by the Learning and Skills Council) has published an evaluation of these awards (FEFC, 1999).[16]

6.13 Transition and education-business links

Students completing studies in further education institutions may transfer directly to paid employment or continue their education in the further and higher education sector, depending on the courses studied and qualifications obtained. Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (commonly known as the Vocational A-level and formerly advanced-level General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) and General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary qualification (GCE AS qualification) are acceptable for entry into higher education (see 6.11).

Most further education institutions have close links with local industry, either independently or through education-business partnerships (see 5.13), and many courses are developed to meet the needs of the local economy. Many students in further education are already in paid employment and follow day-release courses, part-time or sandwich courses. A period of work experience forms part of many courses.

6.14 Organisational variations, and alternative structures

6.14.1 Open and distance learning

Open and distance learning opportunities are provided by the National Open College Network, the Open College of the Arts and by private correspondence colleges. Further education institutions may also provide open learning workshops.

6.14.2 Extra mural courses

Many higher education institutions offer extramural courses that are specifically intended to meet the needs of the local community. Thus they may offer part-time courses providing professional updating, which people attend on day-release from work or attend in the evening, or leisure courses on matters of potential interest, such as local history or geography, or language or literature classes.

6.14.3 The University for Industry/learndirect

The University for Industry (UfI) is an initiative announced by the Government in 1998, with a remit to:

- stimulate demand for lifelong learning among businesses and individuals; and
- promote the availability of, and improve access to, relevant, high-quality and innovative learning, in particular, through the use of information and communications technologies (ICT).

The UfI acts as a broker helping people and businesses to identify their learning needs and to access this learning in the appropriate form. It aims to break down barriers to learning by making provision more flexible and accessible. It promotes learning ranging from the basic skills of literacy and numeracy to specialised technological skills and business management. The organisation carries out six key activities:

- analyses the needs of the market and potential customers;
- stimulates the demand for learning through mass marketing and promotion;
- provides people with information, advice and guidance;
- ensures the availability of, and connects customers to, high-quality learning programmes that match their needs;

- commissions new content where there are gaps in existing supply and demand which cannot otherwise be met; and
- ensures the quality of products and services which the UfI brokers or commissions (DfEE, 1998). [17]

The UfI (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) has been set up as a limited company. Although independent of the Government, the UfI is supported by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), to develop the initiative. A parallel body, Scottish UfI, has been established in Scotland.

The UfI is developing a network of learning centres under the brand name of 'learndirect'. Over 1,000 learndirect have been set up in a diverse range of settings such as libraries, sports clubs, shopping centres, churches and railway stations. Particular emphasis is placed on using the internet for flexible online learning. Users can access the online course materials at the development centres and receive support from centre staff or at home. Several hundred online courses are available in information technology, basic skills, general business skills and management skills, and in some more specialist business areas such as retail and distribution, multimedia, automotive and environmental technologies.

The national learning advice telephone helpline from 'learndirect' provides free information and advice about learning opportunities (both those provided by 'learndirect' and through more traditional educational institutions) and careers.

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7.
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7. HIGHER EDUCATION

7.1 Historical overview

The first universities, those of Oxford and Cambridge, evolved as private bodies during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Although other bodies, such as the Inns of Court (law) and Royal Colleges of Medicine and Surgery, became increasingly important as providers of professional training and regulation of competence, it was not until the nineteenth century that the major civic universities were founded in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Although there was government encouragement to promote science, technology and advanced vocational training, and occasional government financial aid, these remained private foundations.

In the first half of the twentieth century, many university colleges developed, catering mainly for local students taking University of London external degrees. Subsequently, the Education Act 1944 led to a vast increase in the number of qualified young people and the Barlow Report (1946)[1] recommended a doubling of university student numbers, especially in science subjects, to meet the need for scientific manpower. As a consequence, both government finance and student numbers were greatly increased in the immediate postwar period. In 1963, the Robbins Report (1963),[2] sponsored by the Government, laid down the basic principles which guided university development in subsequent years. The Report stated that: *'courses of higher education should be available to all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so.'* It recommended further expansion, a broadening of both the regional spread and of the scope and diversity of university education, and the creation of specialist technological universities which was effected by upgrading many technological colleges to universities. Since then, universities have received a large proportion of their funding from the Government, although they have retained their autonomous status.

Many universities were formerly polytechnics. These were originally set up by charitable endowment to enable working-class men and women to advance their general knowledge and industrial skills on a part- or full-time basis, and were later maintained and regulated by local authorities. The 1966 White Paper *A Plan for the Polytechnics and Other Colleges* (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1966),[3] described the

polytechnics as regional centres of higher education linking industry with business. Unlike their continental counterparts, they could offer the full range of academic qualifications up to, and including, doctorates and provided some programmes in traditional academic fields. The Education Reform Act 1988 removed higher education institutions in England and Wales from local education authority (LEA) control, and they are now autonomous institutions. The former polytechnics gained university status following the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 which reformed the structure of higher education in England and Wales into a single sector. In Northern Ireland, the merger in 1984 of the Ulster Polytechnic with the New University of Ulster to form the University of Ulster had already effectively removed the binary divide which separated universities from polytechnics and colleges.

Some present-day colleges of higher education were founded over 150 years ago and a significant number were established as Church Colleges. Colleges of higher education were subsequently maintained and regulated by local authorities, but since the implementation of the Education Reform Act 1988, they are now also autonomous institutions.

The past few years have seen a rapid expansion of the higher education sector. However, during the early 1990s, public funding for institutions fell by around 25 per cent per student, putting considerable pressure on universities and colleges. In 1994, faced with increasing demand for higher education, the Government imposed a ceiling on growth in full-time undergraduate student numbers. The result was that access to higher education for young people and adults became restricted.

Against this background, the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education was established in May 1996, by agreement between the main political parties, to make recommendations on how the purposes, shape, size and funding of higher education, including support for students, should develop to meet the needs of the United Kingdom over the next 20 years. The Committee, chaired by Sir Ron Dearing, reported in July 1997 (Dearing, 1997.)[4] Key themes and recommendations include the following:

- a new compact for higher education between the state, individuals and their families, graduates and institutions; each should contribute to, and receive benefits from, higher education;
- participation should be increased and widened mainly through two-year sub-degree courses of higher education provided in colleges of further education;
- students should receive high-quality education and be able to make informed choices about what is on offer, its standards, quality costs and intended outcomes;

- measures should be taken to improve standards in teaching and to ensure the comparability of qualifications;
- there should be a greater emphasis on the regional role of universities and colleges;
- universities and colleges should govern and manage themselves to obtain maximum efficiency and effectiveness;
- excellence in research should be supported.

The Committee also made a number of recommendations concerning funding of higher education, including a proposal that full-time students in higher education should pay some of the costs of their tuition fees. The Government response to the Dearing Report was published in February 1998 (DfEE, 1998)[5] in parallel with the Green Paper, *The Learning Age* (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1998.)[6] Many of these issues are being taken forward in current policy developments, as outlined in relevant sections of this chapter.

7.2 Legislative framework

For England and Wales, higher education is defined in Section 120 of the Education Reform Act 1988 as: *'education provided by means of a course of any description mentioned in Schedule 6 of the Act'*, that is, *'a course of a standard higher than the standard of courses leading to General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) or Business and Technology Education Council National Diploma or Certificate'*. The courses listed are:

- a course for the further training of teachers or youth and community workers;
- a postgraduate course (including a higher degree course);
- a first degree course;
- a course for the Diploma of Higher Education;
- a course for the Higher National Diploma (HND) or Higher National Certificate (HNC) of the Business and Technology Education Council (now awarded by Edexcel) or the Diploma in Management Studies;
- a course for the Certificate in Education (which grants Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), see chapter 9);
- a course in preparation for a professional examination at higher-level.

See 1.3.3 for information on the current framework of qualifications.

An identical list is given for Northern Ireland in Schedule 7 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, as applied by Article 30 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1993.

The legal basis for individual higher education institutions varies. Many universities were created by Royal Charter but others are based on Parliamentary Statute.

Whatever their legal basis, all higher education institutions are now legally independent self-governing institutions. All universities and some other higher education institutions have the power to award their own degrees. The Education (Recognised Bodies) (England) Order 2000 lists those universities, colleges or other bodies which are authorised by Royal Charter or by or under Act of Parliament to grant degrees.

There is no single coherent body of legislation dealing with higher education. However, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 introduced major reforms in England and Wales. It included the creation of a single sector for all higher education institutions and allowed institutions of higher education to include the word 'university' in their title, subject to their fulfilling certain criteria. The Act also made provision for new funding bodies for higher education.

The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 made new provision with respect to grants and loans to students in higher or further education and fees payable by them in England and Wales (see 2.4.3). The Education (Student Support) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 makes similar provision for grants and loans to students in Northern Ireland.

7.3 Structure of higher education and types of institutions

Following the implementation of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, there is now a single sector for all higher education institutions in England and Wales comprising universities, university colleges and higher education colleges. Higher education courses are also increasingly provided in some further education institutions (see 6.5.1).

7.3.1 Universities

All universities have their own degree-awarding powers and determine which degrees and other qualifications they will offer and the conditions which apply.

However, universities are diverse, in terms of size, mission, subject mix and history.

Universities range in size from a few thousand students to 28,000 students (Manchester Metropolitan University). The combined colleges, schools and institutes of the University of London, which has a federal structure, have around 100,000 students, and the Open University, which teaches largely by distance learning, is even larger.

Universities offer research opportunities, as well as a wide range of taught courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, although the balance between these activities varies between institutions. They may also offer some professional qualifications and certain qualifications below degree level (see 7.8.4).

There remain differences of mission and subject mix between institutions commonly referred to as the 'old' or 'pre-1992' universities, that is those established as universities before the implementation of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, and the 'new ' or 'post-1992' universities.

In general terms, the **'old' or 'pre-1992' universities** generally provide academic courses rather than professional training (although they do provide a range of professionally accredited degree courses, including engineering, accountancy, teacher training, librarianship and information science and medical studies).

Most of the **'new' or 'post-1992' universities** were previously polytechnics (see 7.1). In general, the 'new' universities place greater emphasis on the practical application of knowledge than do the 'old' universities. Consequently, they offer a wider range of courses leading to the professional qualifications recognised by professional institutions.

There is one **privately funded university**, namely the University of Buckingham, which runs mainly business and management courses.

7.3.2 University colleges and higher education colleges

Non-university higher education institutions include higher education colleges and university colleges. University colleges are independent institutions; they are not to be confused with the colleges that make up federal universities, such as London University.

These institutions provide degree courses, various non-degree courses and postgraduate qualifications. Some may also offer higher degrees. Degrees and other qualifications offered by most higher education

colleges are validated by external bodies such as a university or national accrediting body. University colleges and a small number of higher education colleges have the power to award their own degrees and qualifications. These degree-awarding powers are normally restricted to first degrees and taught (not research) master's degrees.

Colleges vary in size, mission, subject mix and history.

Colleges range in size from small specialist institutions with as few as 450 students to large multi-disciplined institutions of 13,000 students. Many colleges cover a wide range of subjects, while some specialise in one or two distinct areas. These include art and design, dance and drama, agriculture, nursing and teacher training.

7.3.3 Further education colleges

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 allows for the transfer of further education institutions into the higher education sector, if *'the full-time enrolment number of the institution concerned ... for courses of higher education exceeds 55 per cent of its total full-time equivalent enrolment number'* (Section 74).

The Dearing Report (Dearing, 1997) (see 1.4.2a) recommended that participation in higher education should be widened, and that this expansion should mainly focus on sub-degree level courses, provided in further education colleges. In England in 1999-2000, half of the 32,000 new higher education places at sub-degree level were funded in further education colleges, and the new foundation degrees are typically delivered by further education colleges. In Wales, the Higher Education Council – ELWa operates the 'HE in FE initiative' to fund such courses of higher education in Welsh further education institutions.

7.4 Student admissions

As autonomous institutions, universities and other higher education institutions determine their own admissions policies. However, overall student numbers are subject to a measure of central planning.

The funding bodies have a funding agreement with each individual institution, which specifies the targets relating to student numbers that it is expected to meet. In the early 1990s, universities and colleges consistently recruited more than the planned number of students. From

the mid-1990s, the Government required the funding bodies to set a maximum student number in order to restrict public expenditure on student support. This requirement was removed for 2002–03.

A quota applies to undergraduate medical and dental courses, to ensure that the intended number of medical and dental students required to meet national needs is delivered in return for the exceptionally high level of funding provided for such students.

The Secretary of State for Education and Employment determines the number of students to be admitted each year to initial teacher training programmes in England. In Wales, this is done by the National Assembly for Wales and, in Northern Ireland, it is the responsibility of the Department for Employment and Learning. Some institutional flexibility was announced in December 1991 with respect to admissions in subject areas where there is a shortage of qualified teachers.

7.4.1 Admission requirements

All major higher education institutions are autonomous bodies and each determines its own admissions policy. The traditional qualification for entry to degree study has been two or three General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) passes, as well as a minimum number of General Certificate of Secondary Education GCSE passes at grade C or above. These remain the most common form of entry qualification held by full-time undergraduate students.

However, a wide range of other qualifications is acceptable for entry. This includes Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education, (AVCE) qualifications, Edexcel BTEC National Qualifications and the International Baccalaureate.

Many courses require some or all of the qualifications for entry to be in specific subjects or in a specific range of subjects.

In practice, because entry is competitive, most institutions require levels of qualifications considerably above the minimum. These requirements may be expressed in the number of passes or in the grades to be obtained. For example, university departments of medicine usually require three A-level passes at grade A or two A-level passes at grade A, plus one pass at grade B, in specific subjects.

A new 'UCAS Tariff' has been developed to provide a points score system for reporting achievement for entry to higher education. The

new system is being introduced from 2002 as the first cohort of applicants with the new post-16 qualifications (introduced in September 2000; see 5.11.5 and 6.11.2b) enter higher education. It makes provision for a wide range of qualifications, including Scottish qualifications.

Most institutions also welcome applications from mature candidates who have had appropriate experience but may lack formal qualifications. Increasing numbers of universities offer courses on a modular and part-time basis, and many institutions now also give credit for prior study and informal learning acquired through work or other experiences (Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) or Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

Access courses (see 6.8.4) can also provide an entry point to higher education. These are courses offered largely by further education institutions which aim to prepare students without academic qualifications for entry to higher education. The courses are aimed mainly at mature students and are designed and taught to meet their needs. Such courses can, in certain circumstances, provide guaranteed entry to specific undergraduate courses.

The proportion of students admitted with non-traditional qualifications varies from 1 to over 70 percent, depending on the institution.

There are specific requirements for admission to courses of initial teacher training (see 9.1.1.e).

Students on higher education courses are expected to be able to follow lectures in English and to present their work and examinations in correct English. The University of Wales, and some other institutions in Wales, have provision for students to follow some courses through the medium of the Welsh language and to present work and take examinations in that language.

7.4.2 Admission procedures

There is a single clearing-house for applications for admission to full-time first-degree foundation degree and first-diploma courses at universities and other higher education institutions in the UK. The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) is a company limited by guarantee and a charity. Its income is derived from the fees paid by each applicant, subscriptions from participating universities and colleges (at a level based on the numbers of students they admit), and from commercial activities. UCAS does not set admission requirements or decide on the admission of individual students, but

provides information to prospective students on the choice of course, institution and entry qualifications normally required.

Applications are made to UCAS between 1 September and 15 January for entry the following September. Applicants may only submit one UCAS application form in each year's application cycle, although the application form may include up to six courses (only four for medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or veterinary science courses).

The application form requires a reference from, for example, the applicant's headteacher, which assesses the applicant's suitability for higher education. Applicants have normally not yet obtained their final qualifications when they make their applications, and if this is the case, the reference will include predicted grades. Based on the information provided, and sometimes after interviewing applicants, each institution named on an application form decides whether to make an offer to the applicant. For example, they might ask the applicant to achieve certain exam results. When exam results are published in August, the institution will confirm the place if the applicant meets the conditions of the offer. If the applicant holds no offers, or if the offer(s) are not confirmed, s/he is eligible for Clearing, a UCAS service that helps people without places to find suitable courses with vacancies.

UCAS does not handle applications for postgraduate courses; applicants apply direct to the institution.

A code of practice for the recruitment and admission of students has been developed by the QAA (QAA, 2001a).[7]

Further information for prospective students is also available from ECCTIS (Educational Counselling and Credit Transfer Information Service), the Government-supported computerised information database which provides comprehensive information on higher education courses throughout the UK. Access to the database is available through secondary schools, careers offices, further education colleges, higher education institutions and libraries.

A new internet gateway, HERO (Higher Education and Research Opportunities), has been developed to provide a single access point for information on broad aspects of UK higher education and academic research for a wide range of users, including prospective undergraduate and postgraduate students and their advisers (see list of useful websites); the Education UK website has been produced by the British Council to help international students interested in studying for a UK course or qualification (see list of useful websites).

7.5 General objectives

The concept of an education that provided training in abstract thought and that valued knowledge for its own sake has always been present. The Robbins Report (1963) specified four aims for higher education: instruction in skills suitable to play a part in the general division of labour; promoting the general powers of the mind; the advancement of learning; and the transmission of a common culture and common standards of citizenship.

The Dearing Report (1997) considered the intellectual and cultural purposes of higher education but also emphasised the economic benefits. The Report stated that higher education should aim to 'sustain a learning society' through the intellectual development of individuals: equipping them for work and enabling them to contribute effectively to society and to achieve personal fulfilment. Higher education should increase individuals' knowledge and understanding both for their own sake and for the sake of the economy and society. It should aim to serve the needs of an adaptable, sustainable, knowledge-based economy and shape a democratic, civilised and inclusive society.

In the Green Paper *The Learning Age* (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1998)[6], the Government set out its strategy for lifelong learning. This includes commitment to the principle that anyone who has the capability for higher education should have the opportunity to benefit from it. Current objectives for higher education include increasing and widening participation and improving standards and quality of teaching and learning.

In October 2001, the DfES announced a wide-ranging and fundamental review to help the higher education sector:

- widen participation and reach the Government's target that half the population will enter higher education by the time they reach 30;
- maintain the UK's lead as one of the foremost research nations in the world;
- embed universities in economies and regions through closer links with industry;
- maintain high standards in teaching and learning;
- ensure there are excellent management and leadership structures in place to meet these challenges.

See also 1.4.2a for the current aims of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for the education service.

7.6 Curriculum

Higher education institutions generally offer a wide range of courses. However, although many institutions offer courses across a wide range of curriculum areas, others specialise in particular areas such as music, art or business. Institutions which were originally set up as, for example, institutes of technology, but which subsequently received a university charter, tend to retain their technological specialism. Additional funding is available to encourage diversity, for example for specialist colleges and certain minority subjects.

The majority of students are expected to have identified their speciality when they apply for admission. Most programmes specialise in a specific subject area, where that subject is set in its broader context, although some students undertake a combined studies programme involving two or possibly three specialisations. Typically, there is a relatively fixed menu of course modules which are intended to cover the core knowledge of the subject, with an element of choice which increases in the later years of the course of study. There is often also an element of liberal studies or broadening, for example, through the existence of some electives. There are also some programmes which offer a wider range of subject areas providing a good advanced general education.

Each institution determines the number of hours of study required subject by subject. In general, students attend more classes for some subjects such as science-based disciplines; others may require students to spend more time in private study.

Institutions may also choose to offer courses that are specifically intended to meet the needs of the local community. Thus they may offer part-time courses providing professional updating, which people attend on day-release from work or attend in the evening, or leisure courses on matters of potential interest such as local history or geography, or language or literature classes.

The academic year has traditionally been divided into three terms. Terms are commonly of 12 weeks' duration, except for the universities of Oxford and Cambridge which are shorter. However, modular systems of study based on two semesters a year are becoming increasingly common, particularly in the 'new universities'.

Increasing numbers of courses are available on a modular and part-time basis. Modular courses provide increased flexibility to both institutions and students by making it easier for institutions to offer their courses

either full- or part-time and by enabling students to move in and out of study programmes and institutions.

Credit transfer schemes, which are becoming increasingly common and are often linked to modular systems of study, allow students to build up credits towards a full qualification. Although there is no single uniform credit transfer system in UK higher education, many institutions operate Credit Accumulation and Transfer Schemes (CATs) or join a consortium of institutions operating a common CAT scheme. These systems aim to help students create a personal programme of studies to complete a degree, and may give credit for previous study or work experience. CATs also facilitate degree completion by students who are unable to undertake one continuous period of study. Following a recommendation by the Dearing Report, and at the invitation of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), the key credit consortia in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have developed a set of non-mandatory credit guidelines designed to provide guidance to institutions on the operation of credit systems.[8]

7.7 Teaching methods

Teaching methods are decided by the individual teacher, department, faculty or institution, or a combination of these. Most courses involve a combination of formal lectures and less formal seminars, in which students are encouraged to participate and lead discussions. By their nature, certain courses require practical sessions such as work in a laboratory for science subjects and oral classes for foreign languages. Institutions may exploit information and communications technology, for example, using televised lectures, including interactive sessions. Some courses also include a work experience component.

Open and distance learning has expanded in recent years not only in the Open University (see 7.11.1), but also in other institutions which are increasingly offering these types of courses, often taking advantage of information and communication technology such as the internet and e-mail.

7.8 Student assessment and certification

In the UK, academic qualifications are not national awards, as in other European countries, but are granted by individual institutions. Degrees and other higher education qualifications offered by higher education institutions which do not have the authority to award their own degrees are validated by external bodies such as a local university or the Open University.

7.8.1 Assessment procedures

Assessment procedures are decided by the individual institution. Typically, except for modular programmes, students are required to sit final examinations, but the final qualification usually takes into account the student's performance in interim examinations and project work.

For the award of a doctorate, the student is required to submit a thesis of around 60,000 to 80,000 words in length to a panel of examiners. The student subsequently undertakes an oral examination, conducted by the examiners.

A Code of Practice for the assessment of students has been developed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA, 2000a).[9]

The assessment procedures include the appointment of one or more external examiners for each subject. Their role is to give an additional opinion on the performance of candidates for degrees and thus ensure compatibility of standards between universities, and that the examination system and the award of degree classifications is fairly operated. These examiners are usually senior members of the teaching staff of a similar department in another university. A Code of Practice for external examining has been developed by the QAA (QAA, 2000b).[10]

7.8.2 Progression and guidance

A student's continuation on a course of study and receipt of financial awards are usually dependent on satisfactory progress, although exceptions may be made in the case of students who have suffered prolonged illness. Each institution has regulations detailing processes to be followed in the case of short illnesses, illness during an examination, long periods of illness and lack of progress. In general, students who, for reasons other than illness, have not demonstrated sufficient progress at the end of a mid-course term or year may be requested to leave the course or may, in order to demonstrate progress over a vacation period,

be invited to re-sit an examination shortly before the beginning of the following term or academic year. Financial awards made to students are withdrawn if the institution reports unsatisfactory progress. Repetition of a year is very rare since students do not receive financial assistance for this and the institutions, in general, prefer not to allocate an available place to a student who has, in the recent past, failed to make satisfactory progress. However, institutions try to provide flexibility in transference from one course to another within and between institutions, which may involve a certain amount of duplication.

Institutions vary in the amount of guidance offered to students. It is usual for all students to be assigned to a member of the academic staff of an appropriate department to act as personal tutor. The tutor may arrange to see the student at regular intervals, and the student may at any time approach the tutor for guidance.

7.8.3 Recording and reporting

Records are kept of all marks awarded for students' work. These may be used simply to monitor progress but may also constitute a factor in deciding the class of degree awarded at the end of the course. The results of any tests and examinations may be used in the same way. Formal written reports are rare, except when the student fails to make adequate progress. However, lecturers give comments, both written and oral, on students' work and they discuss individual students' progress, both with the student and with their teaching colleagues.

The Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force on 1 March 2000, broadened the scope of the Data Protection Act 1984 and allows all individuals certain rights in respect of personal data held about them. These rights allow students access to the personal information held on them by the higher education institution, correction or erasure of incorrect information, and compensation for inaccuracy, loss or unauthorised disclosure.

The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education recommended in 1997 (Dearing, 1997) that progress files should be introduced into higher education. The committee proposed that these files should consist of two documents: a transcript recording student achievement which should follow a common format, and documents providing the means for personal development planning. Guidelines for higher education institutions have now been developed by Universities UK, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and others (QAA, 2002).[11]

7.8.4 Framework of Qualifications

The Dearing Report (1997)[4] identified the lack of a consistent rationale for the structure or nomenclature of awards across higher education. The Report recommended that the QAA should develop and maintain **qualifications frameworks for higher education qualifications** – one framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and a separate framework for Scotland.

Following extensive consultation, in January 2001, the QAA published *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (QAA, 2001b).[12] The qualifications framework is designed to ensure a consistent use of qualification titles. The main purposes of the framework are:

- to enable employers, schools, parents, prospective students and others to understand the achievements and attributes represented by the main qualification titles;
- to maintain international comparability of standards, especially in the European context, to ensure international competitiveness, and to facilitate student and graduate mobility;
- to assist learners to identify potential progression routes, particularly in the context of lifelong learning;
- to assist higher education institutions, their external examiners, and the Agency's reviewers, by providing important points of reference for setting and assessing standards.

The implementation date, based on the time when programmes commence, is the start of the academic year 2003/04.

The framework places higher education qualifications awarded by universities and colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland at five levels. In ascending order, these are the Certificate, Intermediate, Honours, Master's and Doctoral levels.

a) Certificate level

The holder of a Certificate of Higher Education is expected to have a sound knowledge of the basic concepts of a subject, and will have learned how to take different approaches to solving problems.

These courses are usually offered in a vocational subject. Certificates normally take one year's full-time study.

b) Intermediate level

Holders of qualifications at this level are expected to have developed a sound understanding of the principles in their field of study, and will have learned to apply those principles more widely.

The intermediate level includes ordinary (non-honours) degrees, the foundation degree, Diplomas of Higher Education and other higher diplomas.

An ordinary degree usually describes a bachelor's degree awarded without honours. It normally takes three years to complete.

Higher National Certificates and Diplomas are awarded by Edexcel (see 1.4.5) and usually take two years to complete – the Certificate by part-time study and the Diploma by full-time study.

Foundation degrees were introduced in September 2001, following proposals announced by the Secretary of State in February 2000. They are intended to help education providers to address the shortage of intermediate-level skills and to widen participation in higher education and stimulate lifelong learning. They are available in employment-related subject areas such as internet computing; learning support; and hospitality, leisure and tourism. Foundation degrees are intended to be completed in two years or an equivalent period part-time, and are designed to offer opportunities to progress to a honours degree first degree (HEFCE, 2000.)[13]

c) Honours level

An honours graduate will have developed an understanding of a complex body of knowledge, some of it at the current boundaries of an academic discipline.

Honours degrees form the largest group of higher education qualifications. Typical courses last for three years (if taken full-time) and lead to a bachelor's degree with honours, having a title such as Bachelor of Arts (BA(Hons)) or Bachelor of Science (BSc(Hons)). Also at this level are short courses and professional 'conversion' courses, based largely on undergraduate material, and taken usually by those who are already graduates in another discipline, leading to Graduate Certificates or Graduate Diplomas.

Note: Honours degree courses may be longer or shorter than three years. Longer courses include sandwich courses, which incorporate periods of practical work in organisations outside the university or college, and courses specialising in modern foreign languages, which normally

incorporate a year in the target language country. Shorter courses include accelerated two-year degrees which require students to study during the normal vacation periods.

Honours degrees are normally classified into first, second and third class. Second-class degrees are further divided into two divisions, upper and lower, also known as 2i and 2ii. Students who do not achieve a high enough standard for an honours degree may be awarded a pass degree.

d) Masters level

Much of the study undertaken at Master's level will have been at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline.

Master's degrees are awarded after completion of taught courses or programmes of research, or a combination of both. Longer, research-based programmes often lead to the degree of MPhil. Most Masters courses last at least one year (if taken full-time), and are taken by persons with honours degrees (or equivalent achievement). Some Master's degrees in science and engineering are awarded after extended undergraduate programmes that last, typically, a year longer than honours degree programmes. Also at this level are advanced short courses, often forming parts of Continuing Professional Development programmes, leading to Postgraduate Certificates and Postgraduate Diplomas.

Note: Common degrees obtained for taught courses or research (or a combination of both) at this level are Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Education (MEd), Master of Social Work (MSW), Master of Musical Arts (AMusM), Master of Medical Sciences (MMedSci) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil). The MAs granted by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge are not academic qualifications. Graduates of these universities (that is, holders of the degree of Bachelor of Arts (BA) may apply for the degree of Master of Arts (MA) on payment of the appropriate fee, without undertaking any further study or examination. The application may be made seven years after admission to the university (known as matriculation) in the case of Oxford graduates and six years after matriculation in the case of Cambridge graduates.

e) Doctoral level

Doctorates are awarded for the creation and interpretation of knowledge, which extends the forefront of a discipline, usually through original research.

The titles PhD and DPhil are commonly used for doctorates awarded on the basis of original research. Doctoral programmes that may include a research component, but which have a substantial taught element, lead usually to awards that include the name of the discipline in their title (eg EdD for Doctor of Education). A doctorate normally requires the equivalent of three years' full-time study.

Note: Universities may also award honorary higher degrees (often Doctorates) to persons of distinction in academic and public life, or to people who have made an outstanding contribution to the university or the local or national community. The titles of these senior doctorates normally reflect the field of the holder's interest more closely than do PhDs; thus titles such as Doctor of Letters (DLitt) and Doctor of Science (DSc) are awarded.

7.8.5 Professional qualifications

Some institutions offer professionally accredited courses in subjects such as engineering, accountancy, teacher training, librarianship/ information science and medical studies. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), for example, is a professional body which accredits degree courses in librarianship and information science offered by universities.

Qualifications specific to a profession and required for its practice, which may be taken at a university or after initial studies at university are completed, are more often obtained through successfully completing examinations set or accredited by professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the Inns of Court School of Law.

A comprehensive list of awards and professional qualifications made by higher education institutions and other professional and accrediting bodies is in the United Kingdom is available (Kogan Page, 2002.)[14]

7.9 Special assistance for students

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, governing bodies of institutions of further and of higher education must publish disability statements at prescribed intervals. A disability statement contains information on the provision of facilities for education made by an individual institution in respect of disabled persons.

The DDA 1995 has been amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, which will apply in England and Wales, but not Northern Ireland. With certain exceptions, the new legislation will be in force by 1 September 2002. Under the Act, it will be unlawful for institutions or other education providers to treat a disabled person 'less favourably' than they treat, or would treat non-disabled people for a reason which relates to the person's disability.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has issued a Code of Practice for the assurance of the quality of learning opportunities for students with disabilities in UK higher education institutions. The Code aims to assist institutions in ensuring that students with disabilities do not have a less favourable experience of higher education than their peers. Issues addressed by the Code include:

- the physical environment;
- selection and admission procedures;
- staff development;
- access to general facilities and support; and
- examination, assessment and progression (QAA, 2000c).[15]

Since 1993, higher education institutions in England and Northern Ireland have been able to bid to the Funding Council for funding for initiatives to encourage participation and improve provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities (HEFCE, 1996.)[16] The current funding programme of 1999–2000 to 2001–02 is funding 50 projects, coordinated by the National Disability Team, which aim to improve higher education provision for students with disabilities.

The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (now known as the Higher Education Council – ELWa) also allocates funds to higher education institutions after taking professional advice from the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities (SKILL).

The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) of the UK higher education funding councils (see 1.4.3b) has set up the TechDis service to support the further and higher education community in all aspects of technology and disabilities and/or learning difficulties. TechDis aims:

- to be the primary information and advice resource for institutions on the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) and how it relates to disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

- to promote, transfer and broker good and innovative practices in the use of technology to support learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- to monitor, review and advise on the accessibility of current and emerging technologies used in learning and teaching, research and administration.

The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities (SKILL), a charitable organisation, produces information for higher education students with disabilities, including a searchable database of institutions and the support they currently provide for disabled students.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind has set up a website, featuring specialist technology, which provides blind and partially sighted students with information and advice on higher education and student life (see list of useful websites).

7.10 Higher education and employment

All institutions make provision for career guidance for students who wish to take advantage of it. No higher education qualification gives automatic right to employment in a given profession. Sandwich courses are the traditional means for students to combine course work with work experience, but many higher education institutions now offer opportunities for students to gain work experience as part of their degree. Institutions also provide courses for employers such as professional updating or in-service professional training. Many employers regularly visit higher education institutions to give students the opportunity to discuss possibilities for employment.

In June 2000, the then Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) asked Professor Sir Martin Harris, Vice-Chancellor at Manchester University, to lead a review of Careers Services run by universities and higher education colleges in England. The need for a review was based on a recognition that some Careers Services operated at the margins of the life of the institution, with insufficient influence on students and their preparation for working life. The goal was to identify ways in which the performance of Careers Services could be improved, leading to a better service to their customers. The final report, which contained 41 recommendations, was published in 2001.[17]

In recent years, through the **DfES Innovations Fund**, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has funded a range of development activities with higher education institutions, employers and others to

enhance the employability of graduates and to further increase higher education's contribution to the economy. The Fund is administered by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Projects are funded under three broad themes:

- **Equal Opportunities**: projects looking at equal opportunities within higher education (for students and staff) and graduate employment.
- **Meeting the Need**: exploring ways to improve responsiveness to the changing demands of employers and the graduate labour market.
- **Making Change Happen**: projects to disseminate the lessons from the 1998–2000 development programme so as to maximise its impact.

The **Higher Education Reach-out to Business and the Community Fund** was launched in June 1999 by the then DfEE (now DfES) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), in conjunction with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and, in Northern Ireland, the then Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment (DHFETE), now known as the Department for Employment and Learning. The scheme seeks to encourage higher education institutions in England and Northern Ireland to respond to the needs of business and to contribute to economic growth and competitiveness, while improving opportunities for graduate employment, through innovative proposals. Separate measures exist in Wales and Scotland.

Graduate Apprenticeships were announced by the then DfEE in 1998 in the Green Paper *The Learning Age* (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1998).[6] They are sector-specific frameworks which integrate study at degree or diploma level with structured work-based learning focused on National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), NVQ vocational units and key skills units. The aim is to enhance entry into the labour market through a framework of learning opportunities.

The higher education funding bodies are seeking to involve employers in the development of new programmes and types of programme, for example, foundation degrees (see 7.8.4b), and New Technology Institutes (NTIs). NTIs, which are intended to operate from autumn 2002, are being set up by consortia of higher education institutions, further education colleges and private sector organisations, with support from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). They will offer a range of employment-related courses, including some at higher education level. They are intended to meet regional needs for: increasing the supply of people with technician and higher-level skills

in information and communications technologies (ICT) and other advanced technologies; and making available better advice and support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), through improved links with higher and further education, on the effective adoption of new technology and innovative business practices.

7.11 Organisational variations, alternative structures

7.11.1 Distance learning

A major provider of distance learning is the **Open University**. The Open University of the United Kingdom was granted its Royal Charter in 1969, and the first students were admitted in 1971. The Open University is now Britain's largest university in terms of student numbers, with some 160,000 students currently registered on its various programmes of study.

The Open University is an autonomous institution able to award its own degrees like other universities. Three main types of course are available from the Open University: undergraduate-level courses, postgraduate courses — both taught and research — and study packs. The courses are offered as part of certificate, diploma or degree programmes but can also be studied for credit, independent of any other qualification. Course materials include specially produced textbooks and course readers linked, in most cases, to other materials: radio and television programmes; audio and video tapes; home experiment equipment for science and other courses; CD-ROMs and computer software; and internet sources. All registered students have a local tutor and counsellor, whom they can meet along with fellow students at one of the network of some 250 study centres throughout the UK. Students are also encouraged to form informal networks among themselves, with electronic mail and conferencing becoming an increasingly important medium for communication. Elsewhere in Europe, similar arrangements are being made where there are sufficient numbers of students. Students also meet at the residential schools which are an integral part of many Open University courses.

Anybody over the age of 18 within the European Union and members of the British Forces posted overseas may enrol at the Open University. No entry qualifications are required for Open University courses, other than for higher degrees. Limits of staffing and resources govern how many students can study a course each year, so there are sometimes quotas and waiting-lists, but the basic principle is to accept anyone who

genuinely wishes to study. Applications from socially and economically disadvantaged students are particularly welcome and special provisions are made to enable those with special educational needs to participate. The Open University has a relatively large number of students with disabilities, and has recently opened a Centre for Assistive Technology and Enabling Research (Cater) to develop courses and communication technology learning strategies that are more accessible to students with disabilities.

Open University students pay their own tuition fees. However, some LEAs and employers do make contributions towards students' costs. The Open University also has a limited Financial Awards Fund which can provide assistance towards the costs of course fees for some students. These awards are not available to new students taking business and management or law courses, to students who are not UK residents or to those who are already in full-time education.

An online database of higher education courses offered by distance learning in the UK is maintained by the International Centre for Open Learning, based at the Open University (see list of useful websites).

UK eUniversities Worldwide is a joint venture between all the UK universities and colleges and the private sector. Its development has been coordinated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and the Government is allocating £62 million over 2001–04 to match contributions from the private sector. It aims to deliver high-quality education to a global market principally via the internet. Courses offered will include higher education courses and continuous professional development. The project was first announced by the then Secretary of State in February 2000. The company was incorporated on 19 October 2001 and the first courses will be available in January 2003.

7.11.2 University for Industry

The **University for Industry** (UfI) is an initiative launched by the Government which will play a key role in the strategy for lifelong learning as set out in the Green Paper *The Learning Age* (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1998.)[6] UfI, a limited company, has been established to take forward the Government's concept and is developing a network of learning centres under the brand name of **learndirect** (see 6.14.3).

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education has issued guidelines on standards for distance learning in higher education (QAA, 1999a).[18]

7.11.3 Collaborative provision

Higher Education Institutions may enter into a wide range of collaborative or partnership arrangements with other institutions or organisations, in both the UK and overseas. One example of such an arrangement is known as franchising, where an awarding institution agrees to authorise the provision of the whole or part of one or more of its own approved programmes, by a partner organisation.

A code of practice for collaborative provision has been developed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA, 1999b).[19]

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Section 8: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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8. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

This chapter refers largely to the educational provision for children with special educational needs (SEN) in pre-primary, primary and secondary education. For provision for people with SEN in further education see the relevant sections of this chapter and section 6.12 and for higher education see section 7.9.

8.1 Historical overview

As with mainstream education, education for children with special educational needs (SEN) in the United Kingdom began with individual and charitable enterprise. Schools for blind children and for deaf children were established, followed by schools for physically handicapped children and those with mental handicaps at a later date. Schools for delicate children or those with speech impairments were established later still. Over time, successive governments supported this voluntary effort and subsequently a national framework of partnership between public and voluntary agencies was developed.

The 1944 Education Act put responsibility for special education provision on to LEAs in England and Wales. The 1945 Handicapped Pupils Regulations (now defunct) set out categories of handicap. To be allocated special education provision, children had to be diagnosed by doctors in the School Health Service as belonging to one of these categories. Some children regarded as too handicapped to benefit from education were termed 'ineducable'; these children became the responsibility of the Health Service. In 1971, following the Education (Handicapped Children) Act 1970, LEAs assumed responsibility for the education of children with a mental handicap.

The Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People (Warnock Report, 1978),[1] commissioned by the Secretaries of State for England, Wales and Scotland in 1974, formed the basis of the 1981 Education Act. The 1981 Act defined special educational needs and established the policy of mainstream education for all but a very small percentage of children.

In September 1994, a *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs* (DFE, 1994a)[2] was drawn up by the Department for Education (DFE), (now the Department for

Education and Skills). The Code gives practical guidance to LEAs and the governing bodies of all maintained schools on their responsibilities towards children with special needs in England and Wales. A similar Code of Practice was introduced in Northern Ireland in 1998 (DENI, 1998).[3] A revised code of practice for England (DfES, 2001a)[4] and a separate code for Wales (NafW, 2002),[5] came into effect in January 2002.

In 1997, a National Advisory Group on SEN was established in England. Members of the Group were drawn from schools, LEAs and voluntary groups representing children and parents. In Wales, the Welsh Advisory Group on Special Education Needs (WAGSEN) was established to work with the then Welsh Office on the review and development of SEN policy and practice. One of the main roles of these bodies was the production of the SEN programmes of action (see 8.9) which set out the steps necessary to improve the education of children with special educational needs.

8.2 Legislative framework

The subsections provide information on the specific legislative framework for England and Wales. In Northern Ireland, the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 makes similar arrangements for the provision of special needs education to those outlined in the Education Act 1996. The arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for children who have special educational needs (SEN) are broadly similar to those in England and Wales. Special Educational Needs Tribunals (SENTs) were introduced in 1997 and, again, operate along similar lines to those in England and Wales.

8.2.1 Educational legislation

The Education Act 1981, which came into force in 1983, and the Education Act 1993 made major changes in the legal requirements for provision for children with SEN in England and Wales. This legislation implemented many of the recommendations of the Warnock Report.

The Education Act 1993, now superseded by the Education Act 1996, made provision for:

- the establishment of a Special Educational Needs Tribunal (SENT) to hear appeals against the contents of a child's statement of special educational needs (see section 8.6.3), or against the decision of the LEA not to make a statement;

- increased rights for parents in relation to the choice of school; and
- a Code of Practice (DFE, 1994a) (see 8.6.1) giving practical guidance to LEAs and the governing bodies of all maintained schools on their responsibilities towards all children with SEN.

The Education Act 1996 (amended by the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001, see below) brought together SEN legislation from earlier Acts.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 imposed a statutory duty on LEAs to ensure pre-school provision for all four-year-olds, including children with SEN, whose parents request it.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 made provision for new organisations to manage the further education sector. The Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (known as the National Council - ELWa) replaced the Further Education Funding Councils in April 2001. These new organisations are responsible for securing the provision of facilities for education and training of young people aged 16-19, which are sufficient in quantity and adequate in quality. The Act includes a definition of 'learning difficulties' similar to that in the Education Act 1996, and requires the LSC and the National Council - ELWa to have regard to the needs of those with learning difficulties when securing further education provision and to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and those who are not. Further information is available in section 6.12.

The Act also made provision for the creation of advisory, information and guidance services in England and Wales, the Connexions Service and Careers Wales respectively, to serve the needs of pupils aged 13-19, including those with special needs (see 1.9).

The **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001** (SENDA) came into effect in January 2002. This new Act fulfils the part of the SEN programmes of action (see section 8.9) which required changes to primary legislation. It makes the following changes to Part 4 of the 1996 Education Act:

- strengthening the rights of children with SEN to be educated in mainstream schools;
- requiring LEAs to make arrangements for services to provide parents of children with SEN with advice and information and a means of resolving disputes with schools and LEAs;

- changes to the procedures for Special Educational Needs Tribunals (SENT) (see 8.6.4); and
- placing a duty on LEAs to plan systematically to increase the accessibility of all maintained schools, maintained nurseries and pupil referral units for disabled children.

The second part of the Act places new duties on all education providers (schools, further education institutions and higher education institutions):

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably, without justification, for a reason which relates to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments, so that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to pupils who are not disabled.

8.2.2 Other legislation

Other legislation, which has an impact on SEN issues in education, includes the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Human Rights Act 1998. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) (Part 4, Chapter 50) amended existing legislation which related to the information which must be included in each school's annual report. Details must now be made available on the measures a school takes to provide physical access for pupils with disabilities and on the prevention of discrimination against pupils with special needs. DfEE Circular 20/99[6] and Welsh Office Circular 20/97[7] give guidance on the implications of the Act for schools and LEAs in England and Wales.

The **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995** also amends the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to require governing bodies of institutions in the further and higher education sectors to publish disability statements at prescribed intervals. A disability statement contains information on the provision of facilities for education made by an individual institution in respect of disabled persons. The DDA has been amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001; see 8.2.1 for further details.

The **Human Rights Act 1998** confirmed the rights of everyone to benefit fully from education. As part of the Government's human rights agenda, a Disability Rights Commission has been established. One of the Commission's roles is to keep disability legislation under review.

The **Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000** made provision for the extension of direct payments to disabled 16- and 17-year-olds. This will enable them, for example, to leave home or residential care to go into further or higher education.

8.3 Duties of LEAs, parents and school governors

8.3.1 Duties of LEAs with respect to special educational needs

Under the Education Act 1996, LEAs have a duty to:

- identify children with special needs;
- make an assessment of those needs, taking account of educational, medical, psychological and other factors; and
- where necessary, make a formal statement of those needs (see 8.6.3) and specify the provision which should be made to meet them.

The term special educational needs includes pupils with a range of needs or disabilities - physical, sensory, mental, emotional and behavioural, or a combination of these. Under the terms of the 1996 Act, LEAs have a qualified duty to place pupils with SEN in mainstream schools alongside children of the same age without such needs.

The Act also places a duty on LEAs to prepare a statement setting out their arrangements for the education of children with behavioural difficulties. These statements are referred to as behaviour support plans. DfEE Circular 1/98[8] and WO Circular 19/98[9] give advice on this matter for England and Wales respectively.

LEAs must draw up a special educational needs policy. This information must be published and should include planning for access to the National Curriculum for all children.

The **School Standards and Framework Act 1998** imposed a statutory duty on LEAs to ensure pre-school provision for all four-year-olds, including children with SEN, whose parents request it. This provision is ensured by plans set out by Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (see 3.2.1), which provide details of the information and advice available to parents about childcare and early education, including that for children with SEN, and the availability of family support services.

8.3.2 Duties of school governors

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

In England and Wales, school governors are responsible for:

- ensuring that a suitable procedure is established in school for identifying and helping pupils with SEN;

- publishing information about, and reporting on, the school's policy on SEN (the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999 and the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) (Wales) Regulations 1999 prescribe the information which schools must make available);
- providing information in its annual report on the implementation of its policy on pupils with SEN and any changes to the policy during the previous year;
- securing the best possible provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- ensuring that, as far as possible, a pupil with SEN in a mainstream school takes part in the normal activities of the school;
- naming a 'responsible person' (for example, the headteacher) who must make a child's statement of special educational needs known to all those who are likely to teach him; and
- ensuring that the responsible person fulfils his/her obligations and that all teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for pupils with special needs.

The school governing body of a special school which has a delegated budget must discharge the functions of the LEA specified under the Education Act 1996, in particular, the duty to secure the specified provision for any children with statements of SEN.

Many children without a formal statement of SEN do, nevertheless, have special needs. The governors in all maintained schools (and the LEA in the case of nursery schools) have a duty to ensure that provision is made to meet these needs as far as possible.

Under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, Boards of Governors of grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland are responsible for determining and keeping under review the school's policy on provision of education for children with special needs. The annual report of a grant-aided school must describe what steps have been taken by the Board of Governors to secure the implementation of this policy.

8.3.3 Rights and duties of parents

England and Wales

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, all parents of a child aged five to 16 in England and Wales must 'cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs (SEN) he/she may have, either by regular

attendance at school or otherwise'. If they fail to do so, the LEA may seek an attendance order. 'Parents' includes the child's parents and local authorities acting as corporate parents in cases where 'looked after' children are subject to care orders or are accommodated by the local authority. The Education Act 1996 describes the procedure to be followed by the LEA when seeking an attendance order in the case of a child with a statement of special educational needs. Parents are liable for financial penalties if a child under the age of 16 fails to attend assessment sessions without good reason.

The Education Act 1996 gives parents the right to:

- be informed of an LEA's decision to assess a child formally; parental consent to the formal assessment is required only when the child is under two years old;
- request that an LEA make a formal assessment of a child without a statement of special educational needs, and the LEA is obliged to comply with this request unless, in its judgement, such a request is unreasonable;
- be present during assessment procedures; the LEA, as part of the assessment, must take into account any representations made by, or on behalf of, parents; parents may include the views of others known to the child in their representation;
- receive copies of the reports provided in the course of formal assessments;
- have access to a named officer of the LEA to whom they can turn for help;
- appeal against the special educational provision specified in the statement;
- refer the matter to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal (see 8.6.4) if they are not satisfied with the school named by the LEA; parents, however, may not choose a school which, in the LEA's judgement, will not meet the child's special educational needs or which will entail an inefficient use of the LEA's resources;
- appeal against a headteacher's decision to modify or disapply (i.e. exempt the child from) the National Curriculum with respect to their child.

Guidance from the Code of Practice (see 8.6.1) stresses the importance of the involvement of parents from the beginning of assessment proceedings, together with reference to the wishes of the parents and reference also, wherever possible, to the wishes of the child.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has published a guide (DfES, 2001b) [10] for parents of children with special educational needs, which outlines the rights and responsibilities of parents as partners in the education of a child with SEN.

Northern Ireland

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 requires Boards of Governors of mainstream schools to report annually to parents on:

- any special arrangements for the admission of pupils who have special educational needs but for whom no statement is maintained;
- the steps taken to prevent pupils with special educational needs from being treated less favourably than other pupils; and
- the facilities provided to assist access to the school by pupils with special educational needs.

Information about school staffing policies and partnerships with other bodies related to the school's provision for children with SEN needs to be reported in school prospectuses.

8.4. Types of special needs provision

In England and Wales, LEAs have responsibility for the education of children and young people with SEN from the age of two to 19 years, who are educated in school. In Northern Ireland, this is the responsibility of the Education and Library Boards (Boards). Provision for students over compulsory school age who choose to continue their education in a further education institution in England is secured by the Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC), and in Wales by the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council - ELWa).

The Education Act 1996 for England and Wales, and the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 for Northern Ireland, places the emphasis on educating children with SEN alongside their peers in mainstream schools, wherever possible. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) (SENDA) strengthens the rights of children with special educational needs to be educated in the mainstream where parents want this and the interests of other children can be protected. LEAs are required to take into account the wishes of parents in the choice of a particular school, whether mainstream or special, when deciding what type of provision to make. They must also consider the individual pupil's needs, the needs of his or her peers and the efficient use of resources.

A small minority (about three per cent) of children need more help than a mainstream school can provide without additional staff or equipment or adaptation of school buildings. Provision for these children may take various forms:

- integration within an ordinary class, receiving extra help within this setting;
- attendance at special units or classes within mainstream primary or secondary schools;
- attendance at free-standing units;
- attendance at a special school on a part-time, daily or residential basis;
- education in hospitals;
- home tuition.

See the following subsections for further information on these different types of provision.

8.4.1 Mainstream schools

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, children with special educational needs (SEN) are integrated alongside their peers in mainstream education, wherever possible. Provision within a mainstream school may include integration within an ordinary class while receiving extra assistance or attendance at special units or classes within the school.

Education for a pupil with SEN in a mainstream school, rather than a special school, is subject to two qualifying factors. First, educating the pupil in this way must be compatible with:

- his/her receiving the special educational provision which his/her learning difficulty calls for;
- the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he/she will be educated; and
- the efficient use of resources.

Secondly, this method must be compatible with the wishes of his/her parents.

In England, the Schools Access Initiative, funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), invites LEAs to bid for funds to adapt buildings to include facilities such as wheelchair ramps and wide

entrances. LEAs in Wales, in addition to their normal General Capital Funding allocations, can also bid for capital in support of adapting buildings for better access for disabled pupils under the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) programme New Deal: Additional Capital Funding for Schools.

In addition, the Small Programme Fund was established in England to promote a 'one-sector' approach to meeting the need of children with SEN. It directs funding towards projects that improve the teaching and learning experiences of children with SEN. Schools are encouraged to appeal as part of a consortium with SEN Regional Partnerships, voluntary organisations or groups which are working with or seeking to support children with SEN.

8.4.2 Maintained special schools

The Education Act 1944, now superseded by the Education Act 1996, LEAs in England and Wales the power to establish special schools. Before a school is defined as a special school, approval must be obtained from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in England or the National Assembly for Wales. The conditions for this approval are set out in the Education (Special Schools) Regulations 1994. Special schools approved under these regulations may be LEA-maintained schools, or non-maintained schools which are run by charities or charitable trusts.

Special schools provide education for children whose SEN cannot be met satisfactorily in a mainstream school. They are generally much smaller than mainstream schools and may have pupils ranging from nursery-age to 16+. They usually have a lower pupil:teacher ratio than mainstream schools.

Special schools may be day or residential schools and some may make both day and residential provision. Special schools cater for pupils with a wide variety of (SEN) and include schools for blind pupils; pupils with speech and language impairment; pupils with moderate, severe or specific learning difficulties; pupils with hearing impairment; and pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD).

DFE Circular 9/94[11] provides guidance on the nature of educational provision which LEAs in England should make to meet the needs of pupils with EBD in special schools. In Wales, the equivalent circular is Welsh Office Circular 56/94.[12] The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) has produced guidance on the curriculum for pupils with EBD in Wales (ACCAC, 2000a.[13])

Wherever possible, separate primary and secondary special schools are made available for EBD children, since all-age schools tend to have a higher proportion of older pupils, which can be disadvantageous for younger pupils. Children with EBD should be included in mainstream education wherever practicable but it is recognised that there are pupils for whom special provision is, at least for a time, appropriate. The aim is to promote more effective intervention at the first sign of a pupil's behavioural problems emerging.

The school policy of a special school must set out:

- basic information about the school's special educational provision;
- information about the policy for assessment and provision for all pupils with special educational needs; and
- information about the school's staffing policies and partnership with bodies beyond the school, such as voluntary organisations who work on behalf of children with special educational needs.

The *Special Educational Needs Directory*[14] contains details of special schools, units, classes and organisations offering educational support and help, together with LEAs, hospital schools and the support services. It is updated annually.

8.4.3 Independent and non-maintained special schools

There are a number of independent schools catering wholly or mainly for pupils SEN. In England and Wales, to secure the approval of the Secretary of State or the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) as suitable for the placement, by LEAs, of children with statements of SEN schools must comply with the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Approval of Independent Schools) Regulations 1994 and the Education (Special Educational Needs) (Approval of Independent Schools) (Amendment) Regulations 1998. Alternatively, the Secretary of State in England or the National Assembly for Wales must give consent, under Section 347 of the Education Act 1996, to the child being educated at the school. These independent schools are required to meet similar standards in respect of premises, qualified staff, education and care to those in maintained and non-maintained special schools. Guidance is given in DFE Circular 3/94.[15].

Non-maintained special schools are schools in England approved by the Secretary of State as special schools which are not maintained by the state, but charge fees on a non-profit-making basis. Major charities or charitable trusts run most non-maintained special schools.

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 specifies that the Department for Education (DE) must approve special schools and also approve independent schools which make provision for pupils with SEN.

8.4.4 Other provision for children with SEN

Children with SEN may occasionally be educated at home. Home tuition is arranged through LEAs in England and Wales and through Education and Library Boards (Boards) in Northern Ireland, and is usually part-time. It is provided for pupils who are not in school for reasons such as long-term illness, injury or because they have been excluded.

For pre-school children, there are home-visits programmes, such as the UK-wide portage system, which provides planned home-based educational support for pre-school children with SEN. In many of these programmes, professionals collaborate with the parents in planning a programme of work at home and often assist the parents to carry out the programme. LEAs normally provide portage services.

Hospital schools are special schools located within the premises of a hospital to provide education for children who reside as patients.

8.4.5 Provision for gifted and talented children outside mainstream schools

Although 'gifted' is not a recognised category of special needs, special provision for these children is growing. The 2001 White Paper *Schools: Achieving Success* (England. Parliament. HoC, 2001)[16] announced the Government's intention to establish an academy for gifted and talented children in partnership with an English university. The Academy is intended to develop, implement, support and promote educational opportunities for gifted and talented children and young people up to the age of 19, as well as providing support for parents and educators.

The Government has supported a national programme of 500 summer schools for gifted and talented 10- to 14-year-olds. The programme is available to every LEA and Education Action Zone (see section 1.5) in England. Each summer school is developed through partnership between schools and another community partner, such as universities, businesses, museums or libraries. Summer schools are offered in a range of curriculum subjects and some are thematic or project-based, covering several different subject areas.

8.5 Relations with mainstream education

Under the special educational needs (SEN) action programmes in England and Wales (see 8.9), special schools are encouraged to work actively with mainstream schools to plan support for children with special needs who could benefit from a mainstream setting. Special schools should also act as a source of expertise, advice and professional development for mainstream colleagues.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, statements of special educational needs (see 8.6.3), must be reviewed annually and amended to reflect new needs. Similarly, it may be decided that the maintenance of a statement is no longer appropriate. As a result of the review, a pupil may change schools either at the point of transfer between school phases, such as from primary to secondary, or when a child's needs would more appropriately be met in a different school, for example, by integration in the mainstream.

A mainstream school's SEN policy must set out any arrangements whereby the school draws upon the staff and resources of support services and other schools, including special schools, to help the mainstream school's provision for pupils with special needs. Similarly, the policy should explain any arrangements which the school makes for integrating special schools' pupils into the mainstream, either on a part-time basis or otherwise.

A school's SEN policy should also cover arrangements for supporting the transition of pupils between schools or between school and further education or higher education or adult life, see 8.7.

8.6 Definition of special educational needs and identification and assessment of pupils

The Education Act 1996 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act - SENDA, 2001) for England and Wales, and the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 for Northern Ireland, states that a child has special educational needs (SEN) 'if he has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him'. Such provision is required when a child:

- has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his/her age; or

- has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided in schools, within the area of the local authority concerned, for children of his/her age; or
- is under the age of five years and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him/her, likely to fall within either of the above paragraphs when over that age.

The Education Act 1996 (as amended by SENDA 2001) defines special educational provision as provision which, in the case of children over the age of two, adds to or differs from provision made generally for pupils of the same age in maintained schools. In the case of children under two years of age, the Act defines special education as educational provision of any kind.

Pupils who need special help may be those with severe intellectual or physical disability, such as limited intellectual capacity, blindness or deafness, or those who have a milder form of disability or who are slow learners. The Warnock Report (1978) suggested that up to 20 per cent of schoolchildren might need special educational help at some time during their time at school.

A child cannot automatically be defined as having special educational needs under the Education Act 1996 solely because his/her mother tongue is not English.

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, giftedness is not recognised as grounds for identifying a pupil as having special educational needs. However, many LEAs cater for this situation in their special education provision (see 8.6.2).

Under Section 321 of the Education Act 1996, an LEA in England and Wales has a duty to identify pupils:

- who have SEN; and
- for whom special educational provision must be made because of any learning difficulty they may have.

The Education Act 1996 requires the LEA formally to assess a child in its area if, in its opinion, the child has, or probably has, SEN. A teacher, parent, health visitor or similar person may alert the LEA to a child's special needs and a parent may request a formal assessment. Parents of children under two years of age may request the LEA to make a formal assessment and the LEA may, at its discretion, make special educational provision for such children.

LEAs may request the help of the Local Health Authority, specifying the action needed. This might involve the provision, for example, of speech therapy, physiotherapy or psychotherapy. The Health Authority is under a duty, with certain exceptions, to provide such help. A Health Authority must also inform parents if it believes that a particular voluntary organisation could be of help.

In England, Connexions, the guidance service for 13- to 19-year-olds (see section 1.9.1) is responsible for arranging assessments of learning difficulties and identifying suitable provision for further education when a young person leaves school. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has a statutory duty to take account of these assessments. Local learning and skills councils monitor the arrangements that are in place in their areas to meet the needs of these young people. Close cooperation between local LSCs and the Connexions service, drawing in post-16 providers, schools and LEAs, as necessary, should ensure that appropriate funding and support are in place for the provision set out in Transition Plans (see section 8.7). In Wales, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) plays a key role in the transition process through its relationship with Careers Wales (see 1.9.2).

The Health Act 1999 introduced more flexible funding arrangements between education, health and social services. These arrangements came into effect in April 2000 in England and Wales, and should encourage greater partnership between services for special educational needs provision.

Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland have similar responsibilities to the LEAs in England and Wales. The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 makes similar arrangements for the provision of special needs education to those outlined in the Education Act 1996.

8.6.1 The Codes of Practice

The *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs* (DFE, 1994a)[2], which came into effect in England and Wales on 1 September 1994, gives practical guidance to LEAs and the governing bodies of all maintained schools on their responsibilities towards pupils with SEN. The Code, together with the specific provisions of the relevant legislation, set the future framework for special education. LEAs and schools, together with Health Services and Social Services, which help schools and LEAs to provide special education, must have regard to the Code of Practice.

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Code of Practice now applies also to all grant-aided nursery education providers also.

Revised codes of practice (DfES, 2001a)[4] and NAfW, 2002)[5], were introduced in England and Wales at the beginning of 2002. For the first time, there are separate codes for England and Wales. These new codes will take into account the provisions of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) but have similar aims and objectives to the existing Codes.

The *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs* published by the Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI, 1998)[3], now the Department of Education (DE), came into operation in September 1998. Education and Library Boards (Boards) and Boards of Governors have a statutory duty to have regard to the provisions of the Code of Practice.

a) Revised Code of Practice in England

In England, the revised Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a)[4] takes account of the SEN provisions of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the experiences of using the previous Code. It makes the following changes:

- a stronger right for children with SEN to be educated at a mainstream school;
- new duties on LEAs to arrange for parents of children with SEN to be provided with services offering advice and information and a means of resolving disputes;
- a new duty on schools and relevant nursery education providers to tell parents when they are making special educational provision for their child; and
- a new right for schools and relevant nursery education providers to request a statutory assessment of a child.

It contains separate chapters on provision in the early years, primary and secondary phases and new chapters on working in partnership with parents, pupil participation and working in partnership with other agencies.

The Code recommends that schools and LEAs should adopt a graduated response, which encompasses an array of strategies, to match special educational provision to children's needs. This involves bringing

increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing. However, schools should, other than in exceptional circumstances, make full use of all available classroom and school resources before expecting to call upon outside resources.

b) New Code of Practice in Wales

In Wales, the new *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales* (NAfW, 2002)[5] gives practical advice and guidance and stresses that the special educational needs (SEN) of children will normally be met in mainstream schools/settings. The Welsh code addresses distinctly Welsh issues, arrangements and structures. It aims to provide the following:

- for children – the *Code* promotes earlier identification of learning difficulties and the provision of effective help in school and an expectation that their views will be sought and listened to;
- for teachers and schools – it aims to reduce paperwork and improve teaching and learning; and
- for parents – it provides improved arrangements for getting help and information, independent support and access to a means of resolving disagreements while protecting their legal rights to appeal to the SEN Tribunal.

8.6.2 Identification and assessment of SEN and gifted and talented pupils

The original Codes of Practice in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland recommended that mainstream schools follow a five-stage pattern of identification and assessment of SEN. The first three stages were based in the school, with external specialists called upon to help if necessary at stage three. At stages four and five, the LEAs shared responsibility with schools.

In England, the revised Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a)[4] (in force from the beginning of January 2002) made several changes to the ways in which a child is identified and assessed as having special education needs. It reduced the number of stages on the identification of SEN from five to four:

> School Action (or Early Years Action for children at pre-school settings) – includes setting targets and creating an individual education plan (IEP) for the pupil. It is action taken at school level and decided on by a class teacher, parents and the school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCO).

School Action Plus (or Early Years Action Plus for children at pre-school settings), when the school action measures do not do enough to meet the needs of the child, external agencies are called in to advice on new and appropriate targets for a child with special educational needs.

The third step is to request statutory assessment from the LEA, this is only done when the measures at School Action and School Action Plus have not been sufficient to meet the needs of the child with SEN.

The final stage is statutory assessment.

The new Code of Practice for Wales (NafW, 2002)[5] makes similar changes.

Gifted pupils

Although 'gifted' is not a recognised category of special needs, the government has highlighted the need to improve the identification and educational provision for gifted and talented children.

The Government set up a national advisory group on gifted and talented pupils in 1998 to review key education policy areas, such as the National Curriculum and teacher training, to ensure the needs of gifted and talented pupils are met. The Education Sub-Committee carried out an inquiry into the education of highly gifted children and their report was published in April 1999 (GB. Parliament, HoC. Education and Employment Committee, 1999).[17] .The inquiry looked at children with generally high ability and children with ability in particular fields, for example, mathematics or music. As a result of this inquiry, the Government has developed a national policy to improve the education of gifted and talented pupils.

Much of the work relating to gifted and talented children is carried out under the auspices of the Excellence in Cities programme, which targets innercity secondary schools in selected cities in England.

All secondary schools participating in the gifted and talented children strand of the programme are required to identify a gifted and talented cohort comprising five to 10 per cent of pupils in each year group within key stages 3 and 4. Schools with sixth forms are strongly encouraged to make the same provision for pupils in Years 12 and 13 (ages16-18).

The cohort of gifted and talented pupils includes those with:

- academic ability – defined as ability in one or more subjects in the statutory school curriculum other than art, music or physical education;

- pupils with talent — defined as those with ability in art, music or physical education, or any sport or creative art; and
- 'all-rounders'.

As part of this programme, the Government has issued guidance on the identification of children who are gifted and talented.

8.6.3 Statements of special educational needs

A statement of special educational needs is a statutory document which details the SEN of a child, lists the special educational provision required, names an appropriate school or other arrangements and, if necessary, gives details of the non-educational provision required. The representations, evidence and information taken into consideration by the LEA in compiling the statement must be included within the statement.

a) Procedures for assessing and statementing pupils with SEN

England and Wales

When the LEA, in England and Wales, has decided that a child should be formally assessed for SEN) the authority's first duty, under Section 323 of the Education Act 1996, is to inform the parents of this decision in writing. This formal notification must include the following information:

- the fact that the LEA is proposing to make an assessment of the child's educational needs;
- the procedure which the LEA will follow in making the assessment;
- the name of an officer of the authority from whom further information may be sought by the parent(s); and
- the parents' right to make representations and submit written evidence to the LEA, within a period of not less than 29 days from the date on which the notice was issued.

LEAs must seek parental, educational, medical, psychological and social services advice. They must also seek any other advice they consider appropriate and, where reasonable, consult those whom the parents have named.

The LEA will make a statement of special educational needs if they decide that all the special help a child needs cannot reasonably be provided within the resources normally available to the school. If the LEA decides not to make a statement of special educational needs, it must notify the parents of this decision. In such a case, the LEA should

draw up a 'note in lieu of a statement' setting out the reasons for the decision. The parents have a legal right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal (SENT) (see 8.6.4) if they do not agree with the final statement, or if the LEA decides not to make a statement.

The revised English Code of Practice, effective from the beginning of January 2002, makes it a duty for LEAs to inform parents of the outcome of the assessment within 10 weeks of serving notice that they will be carrying out an assessment. It also includes more provision for the participation of the pupil being assessed in the process.

LEAs in England and Wales must ensure that the child receives the educational provision specified in the statement of special educational needs. If the LEA cannot meet a child's needs at one of its own maintained schools, it may recommend placing the child in an independent school or a non-maintained special school (see 8.4.3) and must, in such cases, meet all expenses. After consulting with the parents, the LEA may determine that a child's special educational needs may be met by provision other than at school, for example, by the Health Authority or the Social Services Department. The LEA may arrange for a child with a statement of special educational needs to attend an establishment outside England and Wales.

Northern Ireland

Similar arrangements exist in Northern Ireland. The Education (Special Educational Needs) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998 state that, from 1 September 1998, special educational needs assessments must normally be completed, and draft statements issued, within 18 weeks. In addition, Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts are required to provide assessment advice to Education and Library Boards (Boards) within six weeks of a request being made.

b) Statements for pupils with SEN after compulsory schooling

LEAs in England and Wales, and Education and Library Boards (Boards) in Northern Ireland, must maintain statements for young people over the age of 16 if they remain at school, but not if they move on to a further education college. The LEA or Board may not forward a statement of special educational needs to the college to which a young person transfers without the permission of the young person and of his/her parents. For details of the provision for special educational needs (SEN) in the further education sector see 6.12.

c) Review of SEN statements

England and Wales

Every statement of special educational needs made by a LEA in England and Wales must be reviewed at least once every 12 months from the date on which the original statement was issued, but the school may review the statement more often if considered necessary. The review meeting will normally be held in the school. Parents are invited to attend and to be accompanied by an adviser, friend or 'named person'. A named person can be a friend, a relative or a member of a voluntary organisation or parent partnership scheme organised by the LEA. The child may also attend at least part of the meeting and express a view on progress made in the past year. Following the review meeting, the LEA is sent a report from the school concerning the statement. If the LEA wishes to amend or cease to maintain this statement, it must write to the parents informing them of this intention and of their right to make representations concerning it. The LEA must consider any parental representations and inform the parents, in writing, of the result of their consideration. It must also inform parents of their right to appeal if they disagree with the LEA's conclusions. See 8.7 for information on transition plans.

If parents choose to make private arrangements for the education of their child who has a statement of special educational needs, the LEA must ensure that those arrangements are, and continue to be, suitable.

In the revised Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a)[4], effective from the beginning of January 2002, the Transition Plan is drawn and subsequently reviewed from the pupil's 13th birthday. It also becomes the responsibility of the Connexions service (the guidance service for 13- to 19-year-olds; see section 1.9.1).

In Wales, the Code (NAfW, 2002)[5] states that the annual review of a statement of special educational needs held in Year 9 (age 13) should involve all the agencies that may play a role in the young person's life during the post-school years. It must involve Careers Wales, the public service organisation which provides an all-age information, advice and guidance service (see section 1.9.2).

Northern Ireland

Under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, every statement of special educational needs made by the Board of Governors must be reviewed within 12 months of the initial statement being made or the last review.

8.6.4 Special Educational Needs Tribunal

England and Wales

The Special Educational Needs Tribunal (SENT) was an independent body, set up by the Education Act 1993, (now superseded by the Education Act 1996), to consider parents' appeals against the decisions of LEAs about a child's SEN, in cases where agreement could not be reached between the LEA and the parents. The Special Educational Need and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 changed the name of the Special Educational Needs Tribunal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST).

For each appeal, a legally qualified chairman is appointed, together with two 'lay members' from the locality who have knowledge and experience of SEN. Chairmen and lay members are drawn from special panels appointed by the Lord Chancellor. The tribunal normally sits in the area where the family involved lives.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the Special Educational Needs Tribunal Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 provide for the making of appeals, preparation for hearings, the determination of appeals and other provisions relating to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal. DENI Circular 1996/40[18] sets out the cases where parents have a right of appeal.

8.7 Levels, age groups and transition

The age range in special schools is usually nursery-age to 16+. In the case of schools for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), primary and secondary age pupils are increasingly catered for separately.

In mainstream primary and secondary schools, pupils are generally placed in classes according to their age and, at the end of each school year, normally progress to the next class. Exceptionally, the parents and the school may decide that a child would benefit educationally from an extra year in a particular class. Arrangements vary in special schools depending on the needs of individual pupils and the internal organisation of schools.

The first annual review of a statement of special educational needs after the child's 13th birthday, and any subsequent annual reviews until the child leaves school, should include a Transition Plan which draws together information to plan for the child's transition to adult life. LEAs must seek information from Social Services Departments, as to whether

a child with a statement of special educational needs is disabled and may require services from the local authority when leaving school. LEAs should also consult child health services and any other professionals, such as educational psychologists, therapists or occupational psychologists.

In England, the Learning and Skills Act 2000 gives the Connexions service (the guidance service for 13- to 19-year-olds; see 1.9.1) responsibility for ensuring that, on leaving school, an assessment of the needs of young people with special educational needs (with or without statements of special educational needs) is undertaken and suitable provision for further education or training is identified.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has a statutory duty to take account of these assessments of learning difficulties and disabilities that are arranged by the Connexions ervice. Local learning and skills councils monitor the arrangements that are in place in their areas to meet the needs of these young people. Close cooperation between local LSCs and the Connexions ervice, drawing in post-16 providers, schools and LEAs, if necessary, should ensure that appropriate funding and support are in place for the provision set out in Transition Plans. Students may be placed in residential specialist colleges.

Many students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities go on to further and higher education and attend ordinary courses at colleges and universities, with the help of special equipment or support. Some colleges organise special courses or have special units for these students. Skill, the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, is a UK-wide organisation working with and for students with disabilities. See section 6.12 for information on special needs in further education and 7.9 for higher education. The Connexions service in England and Careers Wales aim to help students, particularly those likely to underachieve, including those with SEN but without statements, make successful transitions to post-school education, training or work. See section 1.9 for further details.

8.8 Teachers and other staff with responsibility for SEN

Staffing for special schools consists of teachers, learning support assistants (LSAs) and, where appropriate, care staff and support staff.

The headteacher and any deputy headteachers of a special school are expected to undertake some teaching duties. DES Circular 11/90[19] gives a model for staffing which assesses staff time per pupil in terms of teacher and support assistants at primary and at secondary school

age, taking account of the particular learning difficulties of the child. It is based on observation of educational practice.

The Disability Trainers Network (or the organisation Disability Equality in Education) offers training to help schools and colleges provide an appropriate and high-quality education to disabled pupils alongside their peers. The training is aimed at governors, teachers, parents and pupils.

8.8.1 Teaching staff

In all mainstream schools, a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) should be designated and is responsible for:

- the day-to-day operation of the school's special educational needs (SEN) policy;
- liaising with and advising fellow teachers;
- coordinating provision for children with SEN;
- maintaining the school's SEN register and overseeing the records on all pupils with SEN;
- liaising with parents of children with SEN;
- contributing to the continuing professional development of teaching staff; and
- liaising with external agencies including the educational psychology service and other support agencies, medical and social services and voluntary bodies.

In a small school, one person may take on this role, possibly the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In larger schools, there may be a SEN coordination or learning support team.

The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) has set out national standards for SENCOs in England and Wales (TTA, 1998).[20] These define the particular knowledge, understanding, skills, attributes and expertise required by those coordinating SEN provision within a school.

The Excellence in Cities programme in England includes a three-year action programme to improve the attainment and motivation of gifted and talented children in inner cities. Under this programme, guidance has been issued on the role of the school coordinator for gifted and talented pupils. The coordinator's main duties include developing and monitoring school policy towards gifted and talented children, undertaking staff development activities and working with coordinators from other schools in the network. They are also expected to put in

place a teaching and learning programme and out-of-hours study support opportunities for the most able five to 10 per cent of pupils in their schools.

a) Initial teacher training

Mainstream teachers

In England and Wales, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and Bachelor of Education (BEd) courses must provide student teachers with basic knowledge and skills in the field of SEN. New requirements for initial teacher training courses ensure that all newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are familiar with the current Code of Practice *on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs* (DfES, 2001a)[4] and, as part of their responsibilities under the Code, they implement and keep records on individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils. They must also be able to identify pupils with SEN in their classes and know where to obtain help to give positive and targeted support.

Statutory induction standards for newly qualified teachers require NQTs to plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and, in collaboration with the SEN coordinator (SENCO), to make an appropriate contribution to the preparation, implementation, monitoring and review of IEPs.

Initial training for teachers in Northern Ireland offers, as an option, a short module in special education.

Specialist teachers

Education (Teachers) Regulations 1993 require that all teachers of classes of hearing-impaired pupils and visually-impaired pupils must obtain a relevant, additional, approved qualification within three years of appointment. Having been asked by the Secretary of State, during the year 2000, the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) carried out a review of the SEN Mandatory Qualifications (MQs) for teachers of children in England with hearing impairment, visual impairment and multi-sensory impairment. Following the review and subsequent consultation process, new specifications have been introduced and new providers of the mandatory qualifications appointed.

b) Continuing professional development

Continuing professional development (CPD) in special educational needs (SEN) is provided by a range of organisations, including LEAs, Education and Library Boards (Boards), higher education institutions and community agencies. Schools receive funding for staff development within their delegated budget but additional resources are also available.

The Standards Fund, in England, and the Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST) Programme in Wales (see 2.1.1), provides LEAs with funding for designated areas of training, including special educational needs. These programmes include, for example, funding to:

- support the training of teachers, headteachers, special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), learning support assistants (LSAs) and governors in maintained mainstream or special schools;
- teachers, LSAs and Educational Psychologists in LEA support services.

The aim is to equip teachers with the skills and competencies needed to improve the education of children with SEN and to help them to take account of revisions to the SEN Code of Practice. Both programmes also cover costs associated with the development of closer partnerships between parents, schools, LEAs and voluntary bodies to secure a better education for children with SEN.

The Department of Education (DE) in Northern Ireland also provides grants to Education and Library Boards (Boards) to assist them in implementing the Code of Practice and in the training of teachers or headteachers. The Teacher Training Agency has drawn up a framework of national standards for special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) in England and Wales (see above). The standards provide a framework for the development of targeted professional training in relation to SEN.

Revised National Standards for SEN Specialist Teachers were published in 1999 (TTA, 1999).[21] The standards are directed towards those teachers currently working with pupils with severe and complex forms of special education need, and other teachers thinking of specialising in this area. The standards set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes required by those who teach pupils with severe and complex forms of SEN; clarify specialist roles; and gauge the extent of training and development needs.

In addition, new national standards for headteachers indicate the importance of including pupils with SEN within the targets set for literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT); their responsibility to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and standards of learning and achievement of all pupils, including those with SEN; and their understanding of the role of the SENCO as set out in their national standards. All training programmes for headteachers are based on these national standards.

8.8.2 Non-teaching staff

Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide the extra help which is often needed to make it possible for children with special educational needs (SEN) to be educated within mainstream schools. An LSA will either be assigned to a particular pupil as one of the provisions in their statement of special educational needs or will provide support for a class with several pupils with special educational needs.

There are no national requirements for training or qualifications, although some LEAs – or Education and Library Boards (Boards) in Northern Ireland, and schools/institutions may stipulate their own requirements. Some LSAs may undertake training leading to qualifications awarded by the City & Guilds awarding body. Their main responsibilities depend largely on individual pupils' needs but, in general, they help to increase pupil/student participation in class activity, and may also assist with individual physical needs, such as physiotherapy, or carry out special programmes.

They may also be referred to as special needs assistants and teaching assistants.

8.8.3 Residential and care staff

DES Circular 11/90[19] offers guidance on residential childcare staff in special schools. There should be a qualified person who is designated head of care. This person should not be the headteacher of the school.

8.9 General objectives

A key objective regarding the education of children with special educational needs (SEN) is inclusion, that is integrating children with SEN into mainstream education alongside pupils of the same age without such needs. LEAs in England are required to set out their policy on inclusion in their education development plan (EDP). LEAs in Wales are required to set out their policy on provision for children with SEN and their plans to ensure as many children with SEN are included in mainstream education as possible in their education strategic plan (ESP); see 1.5.1 for further details of both EDPs and ESPs.

The fundamental principles for the education of children with SEN are that:

- a child with SEN should have their needs met;

- the needs of children with SEN will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings;
- the views of the child should be sought and taken into account;
- parents have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education; and
- children with SEN should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Curriculum.

National programmes of action

England

In 1998, following consultation on the Green Paper '*Excellence for All Children*' (DfEE, 1997)[22] on special educational needs (SEN) and taking account of advice from the National Advisory Group on SEN, the Government published a programme of action (DfEE, 1998).[23] This described steps to be taken to improve the educational achievements of children with SEN in England over the next three years. These steps included increasing the numbers of children included in mainstream schools, wherever possible; promoting local, regional and national partnerships in SEN; and providing better opportunities for professional development for teachers and others.

Wales

In 1997, the then Welsh Office (WO) produced a Green Paper *The Best for Special Education* (WO, 1997)[24] setting out its proposals and strategy for the future development of SEN provision in Wales. As a result of the Green Paper consultation and further advice from the Welsh Advisory Group on Special Educational Needs (WAGSEN), a programme of action for meeting special educational needs was launched in 1999 (NafW, 1999).[25] The programme of action sets out the goals of the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) for SEN education and identifies how the National Assembly intends to meet them. The programme's themes are similar to those identified in the English programme (see above).

The programme also stresses the importance of early identification and appropriate intervention to improve the prospects of pupils with SEN and, consequently, reduce the need for more expensive intervention later on. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) fulfils those parts of both the English and Welsh SEN programmes of action which required changes to primary legislation.

8.10 Curriculum

8.10.1 Modification of the National Curriculum for children with SEN

The Education Act 1996 requires all maintained schools, including special schools, to follow the National Curriculum (see 4.7.1 and 5.8.1). Wherever possible, children with special educational needs (SEN) must follow the National Curriculum. However, the Act allows modification of the National Curriculum, and related assessment arrangements, or exemption from the National Curriculum for an individual child who has a statement of special educational needs. The headteacher of a maintained school may make temporary exceptions from the National Curriculum for individual pupils for a period of up to six months (DfEE, 2000).[26] If parents disagree with the headteacher's arrangements, they may make their views known and, if necessary, appeal to the schools governing body.

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills in England and the National Assembly for Wales may modify or disapply parts of the National Curriculum and related assessment arrangements in specified general cases or circumstances. In Northern Ireland, under the terms of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, the special educational provision specified in a statement for any pupil may include modifying or disapplying the statutory curriculum. The principal of any grant-aided school may, for a specified period not exceeding six months, modify or set aside the curriculum for individual pupils. Governors must inform parents of the action, the reasons behind it, and the provisions being made for the pupil during the relevant period, and the proposed action following the period, such as a return to the normal curriculum or statementing. Parents may appeal to the Board of Governors against the principal's decision.

It is recommended that the National Curriculum is followed in maintained hospital schools, non-maintained special schools and independent schools. However, this is not compulsory.

The QCA has published guidelines (QCA and DfEE, 20010[27] on supporting the planning, development and implementation of the curriculum for those with learning difficulties. The publication draws on effective practice across a range of schools and can be used in maintained special, primary and secondary schools and special units. The guidelines relate to all pupils aged between five and 16 who are unlikely to achieve above level 2 when they reach key stage4.

The revised National Curriculum in Wales, implemented from August 2000, specifically aims to provide teachers with greater flexibility to respond to the needs of pupils with special needs, including gifted and talented pupils. Teachers are given greater scope to use materials from a lower key stage for pupils who are experiencing learning difficulties.

In Wales, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) has published guidance on the curriculum for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) (ACCAC, 2000b).[28]

8.10.2 Teaching time

The amount of time spent teaching each subject is not prescribed in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each teacher is responsible for planning lessons and drawing up schemes of work to ensure that the curriculum meets the statutory requirements (see 4.7).

8.11 Teaching methods

Under the terms of the Education Act 1996, governing bodies of maintained schools must ensure that any pupil with special educational needs (SEN) joins in the activities of the school, together with pupils who do not have SEN, where this is reasonably practical. Such action must be compatible with:

- all pupils receiving the necessary special educational provision;
- the efficient education of other children in the school; and
- the efficient use of resources.

Teaching methods and learning materials are decided by the class teacher in consultation with expert colleagues, such as special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), who have a particular responsibility for that area.

Most mainstream secondary schools appoint one or more teachers with specific expertise in the identification and teaching of children with SEN. Large secondary-level schools usually have a separate special needs department. Children may be withdrawn from the mainstream class for remedial classes, or a teacher may support children with SEN in ordinary classes, either individually or as members of a small group. SEN specialists may work with groups of teachers to develop curriculum materials or teaching techniques.

Information and communications technology (ICT) is being used increasingly to open up the curriculum for a whole range of learners who might otherwise be excluded, such as those pupils with sensory or motor difficulties. The special needs team at the British Educational Communications Technology Agency (BECTa) provides a national focus for this work. The UK-wide National Grid for Learning (NGfL) provides online learning resources for children with SEN, among others; see list of useful websites.

Guidance, aimed at teachers and other involved with the teaching of gifted and talented children, in England, is available online; see list of useful websites.

8.12 Pupil evaluation

England and Wales

Teachers, who may set their own internal tests and examinations, carry out a continuous assessment of all pupils' progress and attitudes, including those with special educational needs. All maintained primary schools must adopt an accredited baseline assessment scheme (see 4.9.1a) which is intended to enable an assessment to be made of each child's knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills on entry to primary school. Extended scales are available for baseline assessment of pupils with SEN. Towards the end of each of the first three key stages (see 1.3.1), teachers monitor pupils' progress against attainment targets for each of the National Curriculum subjects. Pupils are also assessed by means of National Curriculum Tests. Assessment of pupils at the end of key stage 4 is linked to the main external examination for secondary school pupils aged 16, the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE).

Assessment of pupils in special schools follows the same procedure as in mainstream schools (see 4.9), although, under Section 364 of the Education Act 1996, pupils with statements of special educational needs can be disapplied from the National Curriculum Tests.

If a pupil's statement of special educational needs modifies the statutory assessment arrangements, the provisions within the statement should be followed in respect to the statutory tests and tasks. See section 4.9.1.b for information on special arrangements for the evaluation of pupils performing significantly below age-related expectations and for arrangements for very able pupils.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England has produced some guidance to help the target setting process for children with special educational needs (DfEE and QCA, 2001).[29] It has also developed non-statutory assessment tools and guidance on target setting for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) (QCA, 2000).[30] This guidance is applicable to special schools, mainstream schools and pupil referral units.

Northern Ireland

Similar arrangements exist in Northern Ireland, although there are differences between National Curriculum assessment arrangements in England and Wales and the arrangements in Northern Ireland. For example, in Northern Ireland pupils who have statements of special educational needs and have been assessed as having severe learning difficulties are exempt from statutory key stage assessment at key stages 1, 2 and 3.

8.13 Certification

In general, the same examinations and certification are available for pupils with SEN as for mainstream pupils. The recently introduced qualifications framework, which covers existing academic and vocational qualifications (see section 1.3.3) includes Entry Level Awards. These awards are aimed particularly at pupils who have learning difficulties (see 5.11.4). Entry Level Awards should foster the development of the three key skills of communication (including self-expression), the application of number, and information and communications technology (ICT).

Special arrangements in examinations may be needed for some candidates. The Joint Council for General Qualifications publishes regulations and guidance for heads of examinations centres and examinations officers on these arrangements (JCGQ, 2001).[31]

Schools may, if they wish, enter talented or gifted pupils for public examinations at an earlier age than normal. This is encouraged in the Gifted and Talented strand of the Excellence in Cities programme, see section 8.6.2.

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9. TEACHERS AND EDUCATION STAFF

9.1 Initial training of teachers

Arrangements for initial training of teachers varies according to the sector (schools, further education or higher education) in which they are intending to teach.

9.1.1 Initial training of pre-school, primary and secondary school teachers

In **England and Wales**, teachers employed in maintained schools, including nursery schools, must have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or be otherwise licensed or authorised to teach by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, the National Assembly for Wales or by the Teacher Training Agency. Teachers of a class of pupils with hearing or visual impairments must, in addition, obtain a recognised specialist qualification within three years of appointment (see 8.8.1).

Under the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, all teachers in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools are required to register with the General Teaching Council for England or the General Teaching Council for Wales. These Councils were established in September 2000 (see 9.2.1a).

In **Northern Ireland**, teachers employed in grant-aided schools must have qualifications approved by the Department of Education (DE). The Education (NI) Order 1998 makes provision for teachers to be registered with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland. The Council will be established in 2002, and will advise the Department of Education and employing authorities on matters affecting teachers' professional standards.

a) Historical overview of initial teacher training for school teachers

England and Wales

Initial teacher training (ITT) for school teachers was traditionally provided by higher education institutions (HEIs) and students undertook block periods of school-based experience known as teaching practice. Since 1983, all newly qualified teachers trained in England and Wales have had graduate status.

In recent years, the initial training of school teachers has undergone reform according to the following principles:

- there should be a variety of high-quality routes to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), reflecting the different backgrounds and qualifications of candidates and responding to the increasingly diverse needs of schools;
- schools should play a much larger and more influential part in initial teacher training in partnership, where appropriate, with HEIs;
- accreditation criteria for institutions providing ITT should require HEIs, schools and students to focus on the competences of teaching, that is on the subject knowledge and skills required by newly qualified teachers, which equip them to teach effectively and are the foundation of further professional development; and
- institutions, rather than courses, should be accredited for ITT.

The trend towards placing students in schools for greater proportions of their training has resulted in a sharing of responsibility for ITT between the HEIs and the schools. Courses are now provided either by partnerships of HEIs and schools or, in a limited number of cases, by groups of schools, consulting HEIs and other agencies as required (see SCITT, 9.1.1d). The first 'employment-based routes' into teaching began operation in around 1990 with the introduction of the Licensed and Articled Teacher schemes. These have since been discontinued, but other employment-based routes (notably the Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes) are currently in operation. In recent years, in addition to employment-based routes, more flexible training programmes have been introduced which are designed to meet individual needs and circumstances.

The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 introduced significant reforms including:

- provision for the establishment of General Teaching Councils and the requirement for teachers to register with the appropriate Council;
- the requirement for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) to serve an induction period;
- the inspection of teacher training institutions by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector;
- the requirement for new headteachers to hold the professional qualification for headteachers (see 9.2.1d).

Northern Ireland

In 1996, the then Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) reviewed the criteria for, and provision of, initial teacher training. The main recommendations of the Northern Ireland Teacher Education Committee (NITEC) were accepted by the Education Minister and took effect from September 1996, as follows:

- the period of school experience was extended to ensure full weight is given to this important element of training;
- all teacher training courses in Northern Ireland are now based on the development of specific skills and competences;
- at the end of their courses, newly qualified teachers, known as 'beginning teachers' are provided with a career-entry profile of competences as an aid to further development during the period of induction and early in-service training; and
- responsibility for assessing students' progress during school experience remains with the higher education institutions, without formal, contractual participation by the schools, but with opportunities for fuller voluntary partnership where schools so wish (DENI, 1996).[1]

The teacher competences have been used as a basis for teacher education since the start of the 1996/97 academic year. The induction stage was introduced in 1997/98. The arrangements for early professional development commenced in 1998/99.

The training of teachers in Northern Ireland now comprises three integrated stages:

- initial teacher training in a higher education institution;
- an induction period in the first professional post; and
- a period of 'early professional development'.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the various teacher education partners in Northern Ireland is provided in *The Teacher Education Partnership Handbook* (NITEC and CEPD, 1998)[2] which draws on the model of partnership originally set out in the 1996 paper.

The Education (NI) Order 1998, articles 34–37, makes provision for the establishment of a General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland. This will be established during 2002.

b) Legislative framework of initial teacher training for school teachers

England and Wales

Institutions providing initial teacher training (ITT) courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) must be accredited by the Teacher Training Agency (in England) or the Higher Education Council – ELWa (in Wales). New standards for the award of QTS and the minimum requirements which all courses of initial teacher training must meet are set out in revised guidance (DfES and TTA, 2002)[3] which come into effect in England from September 2002. This revised guidance replaces DfEE Circular 4/98.[4] The equivalent Circular for Wales is WO Circular 13/98,[5] *Requirements for Courses of Initial Teacher Training.*

Northern Ireland

The Teachers' (Eligibility) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 made under the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 permit the Department of Education (DE) to approve the qualifications held by teachers in Northern Ireland. The DE approves all courses of initial teacher training which lead to eligibility to teach.

For further information on the regulations concerning teachers' qualifications and health standards see 9.2.1.

c) Decision-making bodies in initial teacher training for school teachers

England

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills is responsible (under Section 11a of the Education Act 1994) for ensuring that there are sufficient facilities for training teachers for service in maintained schools in England.

The responsibility for forward planning rests with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Projections of teacher supply and demand have been produced for many years. Since the late 1970s, the main purpose of these projections has been to set targets for initial teacher training. Planning is based on the number and type of teachers needed and assumptions of likely trends. The DfES then provides the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) with initial teacher training (ITT) intake targets, to use as the basis for its funding and allocation decisions in England. The aim is to manage teacher supply so as to avoid excessive surpluses and shortages. However, in recent years, there have been shortfalls in the number of applicants to teacher training and a range of measures have been introduced to improve recruitment to the profession.

The Education Act 1994 established the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and defines its functions with respect to England as:

- to inform and advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (formerly the Secretary of State for Education and Employment);
- to fund the provision of teacher training, subject to any general directions which the Secretary of State might make by Order;
- to provide information and advice on teaching as a career and to encourage recruitment to teacher training at all levels;
- to designate institutions, which satisfy the criteria and standards specified by the Secretary of State, as accredited providers of courses of initial teacher training and to monitor whether institutions continue to meet those criteria;
- to ensure the effective implementation of the national curricula for teacher training;
- to set standards and develop a strategy for the continuing professional development of teachers;
- to arrange, as appropriate, for the conduct of studies designed to improve the economy, efficiency or effectiveness in the management or operations of an institution; and
- to carry out or commission, as appropriate, research into improving the training of teachers or the standards of teaching.

The members of the TTA are appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

The Education Act 1994, as amended by the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England the power to inspect and report on initial and in-service training for school teachers and teaching assistants.

Wales

Recruitment to initial teacher training is undertaken by the TTA on an integrated England and Wales basis.

The National Assembly for Wales provides the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), now commonly known as the Higher Education Council – ELWa (see 1.4.3b), with targets for the recruitment of teacher trainees in Wales. The Council allocates these targets between institutions. The Council is responsible for the funding of initial teacher training for school teachers and the accreditation of providers of initial teacher training in Wales.

The Education Act 1994, as amended by the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, gives Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales the power to inspect and report on initial and in-service training for school teachers and specialist teaching assistants. Estyn is required to have regard to information about the quality of provision at institutions providing initial teacher training when making its decisions on the allocation of funding. The outcomes of the five-year cycle of inspection agreed with Estyn contribute to this process.

Northern Ireland

The Department of Education (DE) is responsible for the accreditation of initial teacher training (ITT) courses on the basis of reports by its Inspectorate. The DE sets annual quotas for ITT places in the light of assessed requirements of the number and type of teachers needed and assumptions of likely trends.

d) Institutions responsible for initial teacher training of school teachers

England and Wales

Higher education institutions (HEIs) in England and Wales whose initial teacher training provision satisfies the criteria laid down (see 9.1.1b) are accredited by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and the Higher Education Council – ELWa respectively, to offer programmes which lead to the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). HEIs, with the involvement of their partner schools, have responsibility for course planning and management and for the recruitment, selection, training, assessment and moderating of students.

The requirements for the provision of initial teacher training (ITT) specify what providers of ITT must do. They are organised in four sections:

- trainee entry requirements;
- training and assessment;
- management of the ITT partnership; and
- quality assurance.

Through their partnerships with higher education institutions, schools are also involved in planning ITT courses and recruiting candidates, and in teaching, assessing and moderating trainees.

School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) is a school-based postgraduate programme for training teachers. SCITT was introduced under Section 12 of the Education Act 1994 and empowers schools

accredited by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) to provide courses of initial teacher training. Schools take the lead in designing the training programme and can choose to work with a range of partners, including higher education institutions, LEA and others. Courses are available to those who hold a recognised university degree or equivalent, and lead to the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

A network of Regional Recruitment Advisers (RRA) has been created to coordinate and revitalise local and regional teacher recruitment activities and support the Teacher Training Agency's (TTA) national teacher recruitment strategy on a regional basis. There is an RRA in each Government office region in England, and a Recruitment Adviser in Wales. The task of RRAs is to advise and support providers of initial teacher training to improve recruitment to their training courses and programmes.

The TTA also provides funding for Recruitment Strategy Managers (RSMs), based in local education authorities, to establish strategic recruitment and retention projects in response to the teacher supply needs of local schools. Not all LEAs have an RSM; in 2000/01 over 80 RSMs were in post, targeted in areas of greatest need. The strategies being developed aim to:

- expand and improve links between LEAs and schools;
- instigate and incorporate local action in the support of national initiatives such as the Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes (see 9.1.1g);
- establish good data collection practices and benchmark teacher recruitment statistics to enable local needs analysis; and
- initiate local training initiatives, such as returner courses and 'taster' days, in conjunction with their local initial teacher training providers.

Northern Ireland

Initial teacher training (ITT) is provided by five higher education institutions (HEIs) in Northern Ireland, including the Open University (Northern Ireland) through undergraduate degree and postgraduate certificate courses. The programmes lead to 'eligible to teach' status and are prepared and delivered in partnerships with schools. Close partnerships between the relevant institutions (schools, Education and Library Boards and, where appropriate, the Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools) are considered to be important in all stages of teachers' development, from initial training through induction to early professional development. The partnerships between schools and ITT

providers include the development of arrangements for supporting students when they are in schools but responsibility for the evaluation and assessment of student teachers' progress during their school experience rests with the HEIs.

e) Admission to initial teacher training institutions

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The admission criteria for initial teacher training are similar in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Annex E to Welsh Office Circular 13/98 lay down current trainee entry and selection requirements in Wales. The requirements for England from September 2002 are contained in *Qualifying to Teach* (DfES and TTA, 2002). In Northern Ireland, guidance on the admission requirements for entry to initial teacher education is provided by the Department of Education (DE, 2000?).[6]

Access to all initial teacher training courses is restricted and subject to a preliminary selection process, including an interview, to determine the applicant's suitability for teaching as a career. Admission is also subject to physical and mental fitness to teach. Institutions must also check that applicants do not have a criminal background which might prevent employment as a teacher with children or young people (see 9.2.1). Since 1989, it has been a requirement that experienced practising teachers be involved n the selection process.

All prospective teachers must be able to demonstrate that they have attained the standard required to achieve a Grade C in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (or equivalent) examination in English language, mathematics and, for primary courses, science. Applicants for training according to concurrent training schemes must normally satisfy the criteria for university entrance. Applicants for consecutive training schemes must hold a recognised university degree or the recognised equivalent. Applicants for employment-based routes through the Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes (England and Wales only) must be over 24 years of age and have successfully completed either a first degree (for the Graduate Teacher Programme) or at least two years of relevant higher education (for the Registered Teacher Programme).

Some institutions in England offer Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses of two academic years' duration, which provide re-tutoring in certain subjects, as well as professional training. The courses are designed to enable graduates in a wide range of disciplines to train to be specialist teachers in the secondary age range, particularly in design and technology, mathematics, modern foreign languages and

science. For these courses, the content of the applicant's initial degree must normally include at least one year of full-time higher education study or equivalent relevant to the appropriate subject specialism.

Applications for entry to Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses, the consecutive route, are made through the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR). The GTTR is a central admissions service which acts on behalf of universities, colleges of higher education and certain groups of schools in England and Wales to process applications for entry to PGCE courses. Applications for undergraduate teacher training programmes (the concurrent route) are made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service for the UK (UCAS) (see 7.4.2). In Northern Ireland, applications are made directly to individual institutions.

f) Curriculum

The content of training courses and the minimum period of practical and teaching experience in schools are specified in broad terms by the Government. Institutions are accredited by the Teacher Training Agency (in England) or the Higher Education Council – ELWa in Wales. The detailed organisation of training courses is decided by the individual institution.

England

From September 2002, the standards and requirements contained in DfEE Circular 4/98[4] will be replaced by new arrangements set out in the DfES and TTA document *Qualifying to Teach* (DfES and TTA, 2002.)[3] The new standards and requirements have the same legal standing as those in Circular 4/98 and set out:

- the standards set by the Secretary of State which must be met by trainee teachers before they can be awarded Qualified Teacher Status; and
- the requirements for training providers and those who make recommendations for the award of Qualified Teacher Status.

The new standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status are 'outcome statements' that set out what a trainee teacher must know, understand and be able to do to be awarded QTS. They are organised in three interrelated sections which describe the criteria for the award:

- professional values and practice: these standards outline the attitudes and commitment to be expected of anyone qualifying to be a teacher, and are derived from the Professional Code of the General Teaching Council for England.

- knowledge and understanding: these standards require newly qualified teachers to be confident and authoritative in the subjects they teach and to have a clear understanding of how all pupils should progress and what teachers should expect them to achieve.
- teaching: these standards relate to skills of planning, monitoring and assessment, and teaching and class management. They are underpinned by the values and knowledge covered in the first two sections.

The standards apply to all trainee teachers, whatever route they take to QTS. They do not set a curriculum (as did the earlier standards) or specify how training should be organised or run, but allow providers of initial teacher training autonomy in deciding how they will organise their training and respond to an individual trainee teacher's needs.

Special educational needs

With regard to special educational needs (SEN), the National Standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status (TTA, 1998a)[7] state that all newly qualified teachers must demonstrate that they:

- plan their teaching to achieve progression in pupils' learning through identifying pupils who have special educational needs, including specific learning difficulties, and know where to obtain help in order to give positive and targeted support;
- are familiar with the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (see 8.6.1) and, as part of their responsibilities under the Code, implement and keep records on individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils; and
- understand how pupils' learning is affected by their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development.

Wales

All initial teacher training institutions in Wales must offer training in Welsh as a second language as an integral part of their courses of primary teacher training. Students who successfully complete this component are awarded a certificate of competence to teach Welsh in primary schools.

Welsh Office Circular 13/98[5] includes the following annexes:

Annex A – standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status

Annex B – Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary English

Annex C – Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary Welsh

Annex D – Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary Mathematics

Annex E – requirements for all courses of Initial Teacher Training.

Northern Ireland

In 1996, new arrangements were introduced for the initial training of teachers (ITT) leading to 'eligible to teach' status (DENI, 1996).[1] The new arrangements are based on the acquisition of key competencies within a coordinated, integrated scheme of education, linking initial teacher education, induction and early professional development.

The areas of competence are:

- understanding of the curriculum, and professional knowledge;
- subject knowledge and subject application;
- teaching strategies and techniques and classroom management;
- assessment and recording of pupils' progress; and
- foundation for further professional development.
- There are no requirements regarding the length of ITT courses in Northern Ireland although there are requirements for the minimum length of time spent in schools (see 9.1.1h).

g) Models of initial teacher training

Concurrent model

Most programmes following the concurrent model are for primary teaching, but there are also some programmes aimed at secondary teaching.

The concurrent education degree normally involves three or four years of combined full-time higher education and teacher training, leading to an education degree and to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or eligibility to teach in Northern Ireland. The qualifications awarded on successful completion of the course include the Bachelor of Education (BEd) and the Bachelor of Arts in Education BA(Ed), although other names may be used. The course includes curriculum, pedagogical and educational studies; university-level study of one or more main subject(s); and the application of the students' main subject(s) in primary or secondary schools, as appropriate. Two-year concurrent degree courses are available for mature students (except in Northern Ireland) who have already completed at least one year of relevant higher education. Some courses are available part-time.

Consecutive model

Traditionally, programmes following the consecutive model are for secondary teaching, but programmes for primary teaching are increasingly popular.

The consecutive training model involves three or four years of study leading to a first degree, followed by one year of professional training leading to the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). DfEE Circular 4/98[4] states that full-time primary postgraduate courses must last a minimum of 38 weeks and all other full-time postgraduate courses a minimum of 36 weeks. The PGCE focuses on curriculum (the National Curriculum or specialised subjects), pedagogical and educational studies, practical teaching skills and the application of the students' degree subjects to school teaching.

There are also a number of two-year PGCE 'conversion' courses which are designed to meet the demand for teachers in shortage subject areas at secondary level. These areas currently include science, mathematics, design and technology, information technology and modern foreign languages. Conversion courses are advised for those students wishing to teach a subject which was not the subject of their first degree. Candidates are normally expected to have completed at least one year of full-time higher education in the subject they wish to teach.

Flexible modular courses, designed to meet individual needs and circumstances which take account of the previous experience of the trainees, are also available. Such programmes start and finish at different points in the year to allow maximum flexibility. As for other training routes, practical classroom experience is a core requirement of such courses.

In England, the centrally managed 'Fast Track' Programme run by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), provides certain teachers with rapid career progression and enables them to manage their own development. Special 'Fast Track' initial teacher training courses are provided by selected ITT institutions.

Employment-based training

The Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes (GRTP) (England and Wales only) are aimed at trainees over the age of 24 and were introduced at the beginning of 1998. The programmes enable schools to employ teachers who are not yet qualified and to support them through an individual training programme leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Responsibility for the administration of the programmes lies with the Teacher Training Agency (in England) and with the National Assembly for Wales (in Wales). Trainees must first find

employment in a school and are paid as unqualified teachers. The school is responsible for assessing training needs and devising and overseeing the training plan, which is approved by the Teacher Training Agency or the National Assembly for Wales, and may include off-site training.

Since September 2000, schools involved in the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) can benefit from grants paid by the TTA to cover the salary costs of their trainees. Entry to the GTP is competitive, with a limited number of places each term being allocated to the best schools and best graduate trainees in priority recruitment areas and in shortage subjects. The TTA also pays an additional grant to cover the training and assessment costs of trainees. All maintained schools, non-maintained special schools and City Technology Colleges (CTCs) are eligible for both salary and training grants. GTP trainees follow a postgraduate programme which normally lasts one year. However, for those with significant teaching experience, this may be reduced to a minimum period of three months.

Trainees on the Registered Teacher Programme (RTP) must have successfully completed two years of full-time higher education (or the part-time equivalent) and spend up to two years working and training as a teacher while they complete a degree. The minimum period of training is one year. Training and assessment costs are met by the TTA but schools are responsible for the payment of salaries. There are no restrictions on the phase or subject being taught but there are restrictions on the number of places available on the programme. All maintained schools, non-maintained special schools and CTCs are eligible for training grants.

The Graduate and Registered Teacher Programmes are available to overseas trained teachers and have replaced the Licensed Teacher Scheme and the Overseas Trained Teacher Scheme.

h) Teaching methods

The concurrent degree (Bachelor of Education) is generally organised in an integrated pattern, comprising a mixture of higher education subject studies, theoretical classes and practical teaching activities throughout the period of study.

As the name suggests, consecutive courses (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) follow on from intensive degree-level study of one or more main subjects. Courses for intending secondary school teachers focus on the application of this subject(s) to classroom teaching and on pedagogical and educational studies.

New guidelines in England which will take effect from September 2002 state that providers of initial teacher training must ensure that all trainee teachers spend at least the following amounts of time being trained in schools, and that a trainee's former experience of working with pupils may count towards these totals:

- 32 weeks for all four-year undergraduate programmes;
- 24 weeks for all two- and three-year undergraduate programmes;
- 24 weeks for all secondary and key stages 2 and 3 postgraduate programmes;
- 18 weeks for all primary postgraduate programmes

Each trainee teacher must have experience in at least two schools. Time in schools may be completed on a part-time basis to make up the full-time equivalent amounts above. Teaching in other settings other than schools may also count towards these totals, provided that they enable trainee teachers to work towards the achievement of the standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status.

In Wales and Northern Ireland, concurrent courses leading to the Bachelor of Education (BEd) must include at least 32 weeks' practical teaching experience in the classroom. Consecutive courses leading to the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) must include at least 18 weeks (for intending primary teachers) or 24 weeks (for intending secondary teachers) of classroom-based experience.

i) Evaluation and certification

England and Wales

Students are currently supervised and assessed by tutors from the higher education institution and by senior teachers in the schools where they undertake their practical experience. Students are assessed against all the standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (see 9.1.1f). Teachers are partly responsible for assessing the students' competence to teach their specialist subject, to assess pupils and to manage classes. Assessment may include examinations and continuous assessment during the course.

Students following a concurrent course who satisfy these and any other specified criteria normally receive the award of QTS and a Bachelor of Education (BEd) or Bachelor of Arts in Education BA(Ed) degree, although other names may be used. Graduates of the shortened concurrent degree course are usually awarded the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and QTS is awarded to those who have successfully completed:

- a one-year full-time or a two-year part-time course of postgraduate initial teacher training; or
- a School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) course (see 9.1.1d), if it is validated by a university for the award of a PGCE.

Since May 2002, all trainees in England have been required to pass skills tests in numeracy, literacy and information and communications technology in order to achieve QTS. In England, computerised tests in numeracy and literacy were introduced in February 2001. Tests in information and communications technology (ICT) skills have also been introduced from September 2001. All trainees seeking to obtain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) from 1 May 2002 will be required to pass these skills tests before they can obtain QTS, register with the General Teaching Council (GTC) and begin their induction period. The tests will cover the core skills teachers need to fulfil their wider professional role in schools, rather than the subject knowledge required for teaching. The tests must be taken by all new entrants into the teaching profession regardless of the training route followed. Similar tests may be introduced in Wales at a later date, subject to the views of the National Assembly for Wales.

All providers of initial teacher training are required to provide every newly qualified teacher (NQT) with a Career Entry Profile. The profile is a document which summarises information about a new teacher's strengths and about priorities for their further professional development in relation to the standards for the award of QTS. It is designed to help schools provide targeted monitoring, training and support for NQTs in England during the induction period. For further information on induction see 9.2.1b.

The National Assembly for Wales has published guidance on career entry profiles for newly qualified teachers (NAfW, 2000).[8] Such profiles are intended to support the transition from initial teacher training (ITT) to teaching and continuing professional development by:

- providing information about new teachers' strengths and priorities for further professional development; and
- requiring new teachers to set objectives for professional development and develop an action plan for their first year of teaching.

- New arrangements to support all NQTs in Wales have recently been announced by the National Assembly for Wales. From September 2003, it will be a statutory requirement for all new teachers to undergo an induction year. A pilot induction programme will be launched in September 2002. A scheme of early professional development to support teachers in their second and third years of teaching will also be introduced.

For information on the qualifications of teachers who have obtained teaching qualifications in another Member State of the European Union, see 9.2.1b.

Northern Ireland

The Department of Education (DE) approves all courses of initial teacher training which lead to eligibility to teach in schools. Students are supervised and assessed by tutors from the higher education institution (HEI) and by those in teacher-tutor roles in the schools where they undertake their practical experience. HEI staff are responsible for assessing students' competence to teach their specialist subject, to assess pupils and to manage classes. Assessment may include examinations and continuous assessment during the course. Model profiles for both formative and summative assessment of competencies have been made available to higher education institutions (DENI, 1996). The summative profile is also known as the Career Entry Profile. A student who has demonstrated, in the classroom, the ability to teach effectively and to secure effective learning, the ability to maintain discipline and to manage pupil behaviour and any other specified criteria may be awarded one of the following:

- the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree on successful completion of the 4-year concurrent degree course; or
- the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), on successful completion of a one-year full-time or 18-month part-time course of postgraduate initial teacher training.

For information on the qualifications of teachers who have obtained teaching qualifications in another Member State of the European Union, see 9.2.1b.

9.1.2 Initial training of teachers in further and adult education institutions

In **England and Wales**, persons training to teach in the post-compulsory education sector can work in further education, tertiary or sixth-

form colleges. The sector also includes agricultural and horticultural colleges and there are also opportunities to work in adult and community education and in private training organisations. Maintained schools may also have post-compulsory age students in sixth-form classes: regulations concerning teacher training and qualifications for those teaching in these schools are covered by those for the school sector (see 9.1.1).

Teachers (often known as lecturers) in further education institutions or in adult education centres have been encouraged to undertake specialist training for further education teachers but, until recently, this has not been a statutory requirement. However, since September 2001, all new entrants to teaching in the post-compulsory sector are required to undergo teacher training and complete a professional teaching qualification that is endorsed by the Further Education Training Organisation (FENTO). Serving lecturers who were employed before September 2001 are also being encouraged to obtain relevant teaching qualifications through a process of continuing professional development.

In **Northern Ireland**, further education lecturers who do not have an initial teacher training qualification on appointment must hold an approved qualification such as a university degree or a vocational qualification in the subject they wish to teach. They are contractually required to obtain the Postgraduate Certificate (Further and Higher Education) within three years of appointment and are encouraged to extend this training to obtain the Postgraduate Diploma (Further and Higher Education).

a) Historical overview

Further education institutions traditionally concentrated on providing vocational education, and teachers (usually called lecturers) were normally drawn from the world of commerce and industry to pass on their skills to the next generation of young people. Many teachers of vocational subjects still start teaching on a part-time basis while employed in industry or commerce. However, further education institutions increasingly provide academic (general) courses in addition to vocational courses. Many teachers of academic subjects have the teaching qualification required to become a schoolteacher Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), having been previously employed in a school or having been employed by a sixth-form college during the period when Schools Regulations applied to these institutions (prior to the implementation of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992). Compulsory teaching qualifications for new further education teachers were introduced from September 2001.

b) Legislative framework

England and Wales

Since September 2001, all new unqualified teachers employed to teach a further education course in England which leads to a nationally recognised qualification, have been required to hold, or to work towards and achieve in a specified time, a recognised teaching qualification appropriate to their role as stated in the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2001. In Wales, the Teacher Training Incentive (Further Education) (Wales) Regulations 2001 enables the National Assembly for Wales to pay grants by way of incentives to encourage more people to undergo college-based postgraduate teacher training courses which are specifically designed to equip them to teach persons undergoing further education in further education institutions or other settings.

The Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (England) Regulations 1999 and the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (Wales) Regulations 1999 also include requirements relating to certain further education teachers.

The Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2000 (for England) and the Education (Restriction of Employment) (Wales) Regulations 2000 provide for a person's relevant employment to be prohibited or restricted on four grounds: medical grounds, misconduct, that he/she is not a fit and proper person to be employed as a teacher or in work that brings him/her in contact with children or young persons, or that he/she has been placed on the list of people considered unsuitable to work with children kept under Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999. Relevant employment includes employment by local authorities, schools and further education institutions as teachers or workers with young children or young persons under the age of 19.

Northern Ireland

Further education lecturers in Northern Ireland are not statutorily required to have an initial teacher training qualification on appointment, but they must hold an approved qualification such as a university degree or a vocational qualification in the subject they wish to teach. Holders of approved vocational qualifications must also have achieved a pass at grade C or above in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in English and mathematics, and normally have three years of relevant industrial or business experience. Newly appointed lecturers who do not have an initial teacher training qualification are contractually required to obtain the Postgraduate Certificate (Further and Higher Education) within three years of their appointment. They may extend this training to obtain the Postgraduate Diploma (Further and Higher

Education) although this is not a requisite for teaching in a further education institution. Guidance on the qualifications required to teach in institutions of further and higher education is provided in Department of Education Circular 2001/18.[9]

c) Decision-making bodies in initial teacher training

England and Wales

Traditionally, the initial training of further education FE teachers has not been a statutory requirement in England and Wales. Further education institutions, and LEAs in the case of adult education centres, determined their own requirements concerning staff qualifications and training.

From September 2001, the Department for Education and Skills has introduced compulsory teaching qualifications for further education teachers in England. In Wales, the National Assembly for Wales has introduced a teacher training incentive grant for those starting postgraduate initial teacher training at further education level in Wales between September 2001 and August 2002.

The qualifications for courses in England and Wales are based on national standards for teaching developed by the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) (FENTO, 1999).[10] FENTO is the national leadership body responsible for the development, quality assurance and promotion of national standards for the FE sector. It is one of around 80 UK-wide National Training Organisations (NTOs) which are employer-led organisations established to promote competitiveness by raising education and training standards in the industries and occupations they represent. For further information on NTOs see 1.4.8.

FENTO is governed by a council of 30 members drawn from a wide range of backgrounds including FE institutions, industry, government and trade unions. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are also represented on the Council.

Northern Ireland

The Department of Education (DE) determines the approved qualifications for further education teachers.

d) Institutions responsible for initial teacher training

Specialist courses for intending teachers in further education, adult education or community education are provided by further education institutions and higher education institutions.

e) Admission requirements

In England and Wales, intending teachers in further education (FE) and adult education are normally required to attend an interview to assess their suitability for teaching and to satisfy the medical requirements. Applicants are required to have a strong background in the subject, discipline or vocational area which they are intending to teach. This is normally based upon academic, trade or professional qualifications, and/or relevant industrial experience. A professional qualification at level 3 or above within the National Qualifications Framework (see 1.3.3) is normally required, but individual cases may be assessed on their merits as appropriate.

f) Curriculum, duration of training

The most common qualifications in England and Wales are the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), the Certificate in Education (Cert. Ed) for FE/post-compulsory education and the Further Education Teachers Certificate. In Northern Ireland, the Department of Education (DE) requires newly appointed further education teachers to obtain the Postgraduate Certificate (Further and Higher Education). Teachers are also encouraged to continue training to obtain the Postgraduate Diploma (Further and Higher Education).

From September 2001, all courses in England and Wales leading to a Further Education teaching qualification are based on standards developed by the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) and endorsed by FENTO as doing so. The standards consist of the following three main elements:

- professional knowledge and understanding;
- skills and attributes;
- key areas of teaching.

Professional training for further education teaching may be obtained by full-time study or by a part-time, employment-based route. The curriculum and duration of courses may vary according to the qualification and specialisation concerned. The following courses are available:

(i) The Postgraduate Certificate in Education or Certificate in Education course for further education/post-compulsory education

This qualification applies only to the post-16 sector and gives Qualified Teacher (FE) (QTFE) status for further education. It is different and distinct from a PGCE for school teaching, which confers Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In England and Wales, the qualification is

usually obtained after successfully completing one year of full-time study (or two years' part-time) of educational principles and their application to the teaching of specialist subjects. The courses are intended to develop teaching abilities by fostering practical skills and providing the necessary theoretical framework. Serving teachers may be admitted to in-service courses or day-release courses. The qualification is validated by universities or other higher education institutions but may be taught at further education institutions.

(ii) The Further Education Teachers Certificate

In England and Wales, courses leading to this qualification are offered on a part-time basis in daytime or evening classes, to meet the needs of students and include practical teaching experience. This route is aimed more at those who start teaching at further education institutions on a part-time non-permanent basis. The course is offered in three stages, Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3. Stages 1 and 2 normally take one year in total, and Stage 3 a further year. Completion of stage 3 will give an equivalent professional qualification to the PGCE/Cert. Ed. The qualification is validated and awarded by national awarding bodies, such as City and Guilds or Edexcel, and will be available at further education colleges with a tradition of offering teacher education.

g) Teaching methods

The choice of teaching methods is largely determined by the staff of the institution providing the training. Training involves both theoretical and practical elements. Courses may be offered on a full-time, part-time or day-release course basis. Practical teaching experience is an essential element in all courses.

h) Evaluation, certification

The assessment of students' performance for these qualifications is, like other teaching qualifications, increasingly based on demonstrated competences, and the practical teaching component is a particularly important part of the assessment. The most common qualifications awarded are outlined above.

9.1.3 Initial training of teachers in higher education

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) is not a requirement for a post in a higher education institution (HEI), except for teacher trainers, who must have QTS as well as considerable recent teaching experience in schools.

As HEIs are autonomous corporations, each determines its own requirements concerning staff and there is no single legislative provision in this area. Increasingly, institutions provide training for their teaching staff, especially those who are new to the profession. However, the admission requirements, curriculum content and method, and the evaluation and certification of any professional development offered to teaching staff in higher education institutions, vary from one institution to another.

See section 9.3.3a for organisations which promote professional development within higher education.

9.2 Conditions of service for teachers

The conditions of service for teachers vary according to the sector (schools, further education or higher education) in which they teach .

9.2.1 Pre-school, primary and secondary schools

England and Wales

Provisions concerning the appointment of staff to schools are included in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The employment of all teachers in maintained schools, and those appointed since 1 September 1989 to teach in maintained nursery schools for pupils aged under five years, is subject to the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (England) Regulations 1999 (or the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (Wales) Regulations 1999), the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1991 and the latest edition of the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* (DfES, 2001a),[11] which is issued annually by the Department for Education and Skills and applies equally to teachers in England and in Wales. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 allows for the School teachers ' Pay and Conditions Act to be disapplied for schools in Education Action Zones.

All teachers working in maintained primary, special and secondary schools, non-maintained special schools and pupil referral units in England or Wales are required to register with the appropriate General Teaching Council (GTC).

However, if a teacher is exempt from the requirement to hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), registration with the GTC is not necessary. Exemptions from holding QTS will include:

- trainee teachers undertaking teaching practice;
- teachers working towards QTS through an employment-based programme;
- teachers trained overseas (outside the European Economic Area) who can work in temporary teaching posts for up to four years without the requirement to hold QTS;
- unqualified teachers (e.g. instructors), where the school has been unable to find a qualified teacher with the necessary skills and expertise.

The employment of teachers is also subject to the Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2000 in England or, in Wales, the Education (Restriction of Employment) (Wales) Regulations 2000. The Regulations are made under the Education Reform Act 1988, the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 and the Protection of Children Act 1999. The Regulations provide for a person's relevant employment to be prohibited or restricted on four grounds: medical grounds, misconduct, that he/she is not a fit and proper person to be employed as a teacher or in work that brings him/her in contact with children or young persons, or that he/she has been placed on the list of people considered unsuitable to work with children kept under Section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999. Relevant employment includes employment by local authorities, schools and further education institutions as teachers or workers with young children or young persons under the age of 19.

Northern Ireland

The employment of teachers in Northern Ireland is subject to the Teachers' (Eligibility) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997. The Regulations concern the qualifications, age and health requirements for persons eligible to teach. Teachers in Northern Ireland will also be required to register with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland in due course.

a) Decision-making bodies in educational employment

England and Wales

Under the School teachers ' Pay and Conditions Act 1991, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills is responsible for determining teachers' pay and conditions of service. The Act established the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) which reports to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State on the statutory pay and conditions of school teachers in England and Wales. Its recommendations cover the duties and working time of school teachers, as well as their remuneration. Unless there are

clear and compelling reasons to the contrary, the Government has undertaken to implement the recommendations of the pay review body. The STRB works to an annual cycle, reporting to the Government each year in January in respect of the pay settlement due the following April. Each year the Secretary of State provides the STRB with a remit setting out the matters on which the review body is to report, although it can also report on other matters as it sees fit. The Secretary of State may direct it to have regard to certain considerations, such as affordability and the Government's policy on public sector pay, but cannot impose limits on what it may recommend, or the cost of its recommendations. The members of the STRB, who are appointed by the Prime Minister, are generally drawn from senior positions in business and the professions.

The remit for the STRB currently covers teachers in England and Wales. Following devolution, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills continues to have the statutory responsibility for the pay and conditions of employment of teachers in both countries. However, funding for all aspects of teachers' pay in Wales is provided by the National Assembly for Wales to local education authorities via the revenue support grant. This, together with the devolution of matters such as teacher appraisal, the new system of performance management and the separate funding arrangements which exist for schools in Wales, has implications for the operation of the overall pay and conditions framework. The STRB have raised this as an issue to be kept under review.

The Secretary of State also consults other representative bodies on any changes to teachers' pay and conditions before they are put into legislation.

The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 provided for the formation of **General Teaching Councils** for England and Wales respectively. The Councils were established in September 2000. The composition of the Councils represents a wide range of stakeholders, both current teachers and representatives of organisations involved with the teaching profession, while ensuring a majority on the Councils for teachers with current or recent teaching experience. Work is in progress to establish registers of members in both England and Wales. The development of a Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for members is also a key priority. The main functions of the Councils are to:

- advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in England, and the National Assembly for Wales, on matters relating to the standards of teaching, the standards of conduct for teachers, the role of the teaching profession and the training, career development and performance management of teachers;

- establish and maintain a register of teachers;
- establish and maintain a code of practice which lays down standards of professional conduct and practice expected of registered teachers;
- exercise disciplinary powers in relation to registered teachers and persons applying for registration.

Local education authorities determine the budget of LEA-maintained schools, which includes staff salary costs, according to a formula based on the number and age of pupils enrolled at each school. Depending on the category of school (see 1.6.1), the employer is either the LEA or the school governing body. However, the governing body has many of the functions of the employer, including determining the number and composition of staff. The governing body must ensure that the staffing complement provides a sufficient number of suitable teachers to secure the provision of education appropriate to the ages, abilities, aptitudes and needs of the pupils or students in accordance with the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (England) Regulations 1999.

The **Employers Organisation for Local Government** provides national support to local authorities in their role as employers. The organisation's main functions include national negotiations on pay and conditions of local government employees.
The associations which represent **school teachers ' interests** are:

- Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)
- National Association of Headteachers (NAHT)
- National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
- National Association of Teachers for Wales (UCAC)
- National Union of Teachers (NUT)
- Professional Association of Teachers (PAT)
- Secondary Heads' Association (SHA).

Northern Ireland

The Department of Education (DE) is responsible for the supply, training and superannuation of teachers.

Teachers' pay is administered by the DE, but they are employed by the Education and Library Boards (Boards), the Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools (CCMS) or by a school's Board of Governors. Each of the five Education and Library Boards employs all teachers in controlled schools in its area. The CCMS employs all teachers in

Catholic-maintained schools. Teachers in maintained schools (other than Catholic-maintained schools), in the 54 voluntary grammar schools and in the 26 grant-maintained integrated schools (GMI schools) are employed by the Board of Governors of these schools.

Schools with fully delegated budgets under local management of schools (LMS) have responsibility for determining the number and composition of staff.

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 made provision for the establishment of a General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland. The Council, which will commence operation in 2002, will advise the Department of Education and the employing authorities on a wide range of issues, including training, career development and performance management of teachers, and standards of teaching and standards of conduct for teachers. The Council will develop and consult on a Code of Professional Conduct and Practice expected of registered teachers, and will have powers to remove individual teachers form the register after due process if it finds them guilty of serious professional misconduct.

b) Entry to the profession and appointment procedures

Provisions for access to the profession and appointment in England and Wales differ from procedures in Northern Ireland.

England and Wales

The qualification requirements, induction arrangements and appointment procedures for teachers in England and Wales are considered separately in the following sections.

(i) Qualification requirements

All teachers who teach in maintained schools wholly or mainly for those of compulsory school age (5-16 years), and those appointed since 1 September 1989 to teach in nursery schools (age under five years), are required to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). QTS is not essential for teaching in independent schools. QTS can be obtained through a number of different training routes (see 9.1.1g). Teachers are also required to be registered with the General Teaching Council in England or Wales.

Irrespective of the training route followed, there is a single category of qualified teachers, comprising those who have QTS. Although qualified teachers may teach in any sector, they generally teach pupils within the age range for which they have specialised. All newly trained teachers, except those who are training under the Registered Teacher programme, must have a degree or equivalent.

QTS qualifies teachers to apply for appointment to individual schools but does not guarantee them employment.

A person who does not have QTS may teach in schools only as part of a period of training under the Registered or Graduate Teacher Programmes or in the capacity of an 'instructor', provided that a suitably qualified teacher is not available. Instructors are most commonly employed for short periods only, often for teaching technical subjects, or to teach the playing of musical instruments. Unqualified teachers who were employed in maintained nursery schools as assistant teachers before 1 September 1989 can remain employed in this capacity.

Teachers who have obtained teaching qualifications in another Member State of the European Union may apply to the Department for Education and Skills to have their qualifications recognised in accordance with Council Directive 89/48 EEC.[12] Overseas trained teachers may achieve QTS by following the Registered or Graduate Teacher Programme.

The Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (England) Regulations 1999 (as amended by the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2001) allow schools to appoint overseas-trained teachers without QTS in three circumstances:

- as trainees on an employment-based route;
- for no more than four years from the date of first employment as a teacher in this country; and
- as 'instructors' – persons offering particular skills who may be appointed when no suitable qualified teacher or trainee on an employment-based route is available.

Similar provisions for teachers in Wales are made in the Education (Teachers' Qualifications and Health Standards) (Wales) Regulations 1999.

(ii) Induction arrangements in England

Since May 1999, all newly qualified teachers in England have been required to serve an induction period of three school terms. The induction period must be satisfactorily completed to nationally set standards. Guidance on the arrangements for the completion of the induction period for those who wish to work in a maintained school is contained in DfES Guidance 582/2001.[13] The guidance incorporates the requirement for teachers who qualify between 1 May 2000 and 30 April 2001 to have passed a national test for teacher training candidates in numeracy (see 9.1.1i).

Teachers who are nationals of the EEA, who fall within article 3 of the Council Directive 89/48[12] EEC on a general system for the recognition of higher education diplomas awarded on completion of professional education and training of at least three years' duration, are exempt from induction.

Supply teachers working for less than one school term in any one post are also exempt from induction for one year plus one term, from the date of their first supply post.

(iii) Induction arrangements in Wales

Following consultation, the National Assembly for Wales has recently announced new arrangements to support newly qualified teachers in Wales. The arrangements include the introduction of an induction year, which will become a statutory requirement for all new entrants to the teaching profession from September 2003. A pilot induction programme will be introduced in September 2002.

(iv) Appointment procedures

The procedure for appointing staff is laid down in Schedule 14 of the Education Act 1996. Procedures differ according to the legal categories of schools (see 1.6.1).

For the appointment of headteachers and deputy heads in community schools and voluntary controlled schools, the school governing body must:

- inform the LEA of the vacancy;
- advertise the vacancy throughout England and Wales;
- appoint a selection panel of at least three governors who shall select suitable applicants for interview (and, where the post is that of headteacher, notify the LEA in writing of the names of the selected applicants), interview those applicants and, where appropriate, recommend for appointment one of the applicants interviewed;
- where appropriate, approve the recommendation of the selection panel and put forward the recommended applicant to the LEA for appointment.

The procedure for the appointment of headteachers and deputy heads in foundation schools and voluntary-aided schools is similar to that for community and voluntary-controlled schools except that the governing body, as the employer, is responsible for approving the recommendation of the selection panel and appointing the person recommended.

For other appointments, the governing body is responsible for deciding the complement of staff but would normally expect the headteacher to give advice on appropriate staffing levels.
The selection procedure of a teacher other than a head teacher or deputy may be delegated to:

- one or more governors;
- the headteacher;
- the headteacher with one or more governors.

The governing body must determine a specification for the post in consultation with the headteacher and send a copy of the specification to the LEA. Vacancies must be advertised unless the governing body recommend an existing staff member for appointment or accept somebody nominated by the LEA. If they decide to advertise, they must interview any suitable candidates and, where appropriate, either recommend to the LEA for appointment one of the applicants interviewed by them, or notify the authority that they accept for appointment any person nominated by the LEA. For community and voluntary-controlled schools, the LEA must appoint the person selected by the governing body unless they are not satisfied that the candidate meets the required staff qualifications. In foundation schools and voluntary-aided schools, the governing body, as employer, is responsible for the appointment of suitable applicants.

In community and voluntary controlled schools, the Chief Education Officer (CEO) of the LEA (or his/her representative) has the right to attend selection meetings in an advisory capacity, but in voluntary-aided schools where the governing body is the employer, the LEA can decide whether or not to accord the CEO such rights.
In order to comply with the requirements for the protection of children from people with a criminal background, the LEA or the governors, as appropriate, must, after a candidate has been recommended, check his or her background with the police. Applicants must also demonstrate evidence of physical and mental fitness for teaching (a medical certificate). Employers also have a duty to have regard to the provisions of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Recruitment procedures need not be followed for the appointment of temporary staff where the contract would be of less than four months' duration.

All teachers in maintained schools in England and Wales are required to register with the appropriate General Teaching Council (see 9.2.1a) and must meet any conditions for registration laid down by the Council.

Recruitment Strategy Managers (RSMs), based in local education authorities, receive funding from the Teacher Training Agency to establish strategic recruitment and retention projects in response to the teacher supply need of local schools (see 9.1.1d). The role of the RSM in relation to schools is to offer advice and support to fill teaching vacancies.

Northern Ireland

(i) Qualification requirements

Teachers must hold qualifications as approved by the Department of Education (DE) under the Teachers' (Eligibility) Regulations 1997. All newly trained teachers must have a degree or equivalent.

Teachers who have obtained a teaching qualification in another Member State of the European Union may apply to the Department of Education (DE) to have their qualifications recognised in accordance with Council Directive 89/48 EEC[12]. Other overseas trained teachers may be granted eligibility to teach by the DE, subject to evidence being provided that the course of initial training followed by the overseas teacher was comparable to initial teacher training courses in Northern Ireland. Further training may be provided by the employer.

(ii) Induction arrangements

The induction stage, which was introduced in 1997/98, forms a part of the integrated approach to teacher education. Teachers who have successfully passed the initial stage of teacher education (known as 'beginning teachers') are required to undergo the induction stage. Support for the teacher during this stage is provided by the curriculum and support service in each of the Education and Library Boards. The Teacher Education Partnership Handbook (NITEC, 1998) lists criteria to assist the Board of Governors of a school to confirm, on the recommendation of the principal, when the beginning teacher has completed induction and may commence the next stage of training, which is 'early professional development'. The Department of Education maintains a central record of teachers who have satisfactorily completed induction. Procedures for dealing with teachers whose work is unsatisfactory may be initiated for those beginning teachers who have not satisfactorily completed the induction stage.

(iii) Appointment procedures

Each of the five Education and Library Boards (Boards) must have a Teaching Appointments Committee, drawn from the membership of the Board. They must also draw up a scheme for the appointment of teachers. Posts are advertised and the Board passes the application forms of those candidates who appear to be qualified for the post to the Board of Governors of the school. The Board of Governors considers

applicants, interviews the candidates as it considers necessary, and submits to the Education and Library Board the names of up to three candidates whom it considers most suitable for appointment. In the case of assistant teachers (that is, all teachers except principals and deputy principals), the Board of Governors informs the Education and Library Board of the candidates whom it proposes should be appointed, in order of preference. If the Education and Library Board accepts the proposals, the preferred candidate is appointed. In the case of principals and deputy principals, the candidates recommended by the Board of Governors may be interviewed by the Education and Library Board, which may appoint any candidate so recommended.

The Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools (CCMS) is also required to draw up a scheme for the appointment of teachers to Catholic-maintained schools. The procedure involves the Board of Governors of the school, the Diocesan Office and representatives of the CCMS.

The Boards of Governors of maintained schools (other than Catholic-maintained schools), of the 54 voluntary grammar schools and of the 26 grant-maintained integrated schools (GMI schools) are responsible for all procedures relating to the recruitment or appointment of staff in their schools.

All teachers in grant-aided schools will eventually be required to register with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (see 9.2.1a) and must meet any conditions for registration laid down by the Council.

c) Professional status

England and Wales

Teachers are public employees, but not civil servants. They are employed either by the local education authority or the school governing body depending on the legal category of the school. They are not guaranteed employment at any stage of their professional life, but must apply for specific posts. Appointments may be made on a permanent (that is, open-ended) or on a fixed-term contract. General UK employment law applies.

Northern Ireland

Teachers are not civil servants, but employees of the Education and Library Boards (Boards), the Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools, or of the governing body of the maintained school (other than Catholic-maintained schools), the voluntary grammar school or the grant-maintained integrated school in which they work.

As in England and Wales, they are not guaranteed employment at any stage of their professional life, but must apply for specific posts. Appointments may be made on a permanent (that is, open-ended) or on a fixed-term contract. General UK employment law applies.

d) Advancement, promotion and performance management

Advancement and promotion

Following publication of the Green Papers *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change* (DfEE, 1998b)[14] and *The BEST for Teaching and Learning in Wales* (WO, 1999),[15] the Government introduced a national programme of reforms to the teaching profession. The reforms are based on the following objectives:

- to promote excellent school leadership by rewarding leading professionals properly;
- to recruit, retrain and motivate high-quality classroom teachers, by paying them more; and
- to provide better support to all teachers, and to deploy teaching resources in a more flexible way.

As part of these reforms, a new pay system was introduced in England and Wales from September 2000 which is designed to reward teachers for high performance and improve career prospects (see 9.2.1f). The changes included the introduction of a 'threshold scheme' which is intended to reward good teachers who want to remain in the classroom.

A new grade of teacher, the 'advanced skills teacher' (AST) has also been introduced in England. The AST pathway enables excellent teachers to progress as class teachers, without taking on management responsibilities, and to be rewarded accordingly. Teachers are required to undertake an external assessment before being appointed to an AST post. An AST's professional duties may include any of those listed in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document 2001 and are likely to focus on supporting the professional development of other teachers. It is expected that ASTs spend 80 per cent of their time in teaching their own classes and 20 per cent working with teachers from other schools, including advising on classroom organisation and teaching methods and developing teaching materials. Consideration is being given to the introduction of ASTs in Wales.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, teachers normally achieve promotion by applying for appointment to a more senior post which falls vacant, either at the school in which they are currently employed

or at another school. Examples of senior posts may include head of key stage (primary and secondary); head of year (secondary), which involves increased pastoral responsibility, including pupil support and guidance and liaison with parents; head of department (secondary) which involves increased subject and management responsibility; and, in due course, assistant headteacher/principal, deputy headteacher/principal or headteacher/principal (primary and secondary schools). A teacher's qualifications, experience and performance are taken into consideration whenever (s)he applies for a new post – e.g. subject leader or headteacher. Relevant continuing professional development (CPD) may therefore assist a teacher in securing promotion.

A new programme, known as the 'Fast Track Teaching Programme', is also being introduced in England. The aim of this programme is to recruit, develop and support high-calibre graduates and the most outstanding serving teachers and provide them with clear and rapid career progression. It is expected that the first 'fast track' teachers will take up teaching posts in 2002. In Wales, the National Assembly for Wales (NafW) has consulted interested parties on whether a Teachers' Accelerated Development Scheme is needed for Wales. The responses are currently being analysed.

Headteachers are qualified teachers who are appointed to undertake the management and administrative responsibilities involved in running a school. A national training framework of professional standards and qualifications, including a revised and strengthened National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH), has been introduced in England from 2000. The programme is designed to ensure that all heads have access to high quality training at every stage of their careers. The Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 allows the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring a person appointed as a headteacher, who has not previously held such a post, to hold a professional qualification for headteachers. The NPQH will become a mandatory qualification for all those taking up new headship posts in the future. In Wales, the National Headship Development Programme is the National Assembly for Wales overarching programme to support the professional development of headteachers in Wales. The Professional Qualification for Headship in Northern Ireland (PQH (NI)) has been introduced in Northern Ireland. For further details on the national training framework for headteachers see section 9.3.1d.

Many headteachers have also undertaken some form of sustained study after obtaining their initial qualification such as courses leading to the award of a higher degree or an academic diploma.

Performance management

England

From September 2000, revised performance management arrangements have been introduced for teachers and headteachers in maintained schools in England. The Education (School Teacher Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2001) form the legislative basis for the appraisal arrangements. The Education (School Government) (Terms of Reference) (England) Regulations 2000 require the establishment of a written policy setting out how school teacher appraisal at the school is to be implemented. A guidance pack on the arrangements for performance management to assist headteachers, teachers and school governors was produced by the then Department for Education and Employment (DfEE, 2000a).[16]

The Regulations provide for the appraisal of the performance of school teachers (including unqualified teachers and those employed on fixed-term contracts of less than a year) employed at maintained schools. The Regulations do not apply to teachers serving an induction.
The governing body of the school has a duty to ensure that the performance of all teachers at the school is appraised regularly. The appraisal cycle normally lasts for one year. The school governing body must also appoint an external adviser to assist with the appraisal of the headteacher. Two or three governors must also be appointed for this process.

The school's performance management policy should include:

- a commitment to agree, monitor and review objectives with every teacher;
- an annual timetable linked to the school planning cycle; and
- standard documentation for use with all teachers in the school.

The policy should provide teachers with a proper opportunity for professional discussion with their team leader about their work and their further professional development. It should encourage all teachers to share good practice across the school and to develop their professional skills and future careers. Throughout the process equal opportunities should be promoted.

The performance management cycle should involve three stages:

- planning: to discuss and record priorities and objectives with each teacher and to determine how progress will be monitored;
- monitoring: to keep progress under review throughout the cycle, taking any supportive action needed; a variety of methods to

monitor progress may be used including classroom observation; in appraising a teacher who is not a headteacher, the appraiser must observe the member of staff teaching on at least one occasion;

- reviewing performance: including reviewing objectives and standards, recognising strengths and achievements and identifying areas for development.

A review statement recording the outcome of the meeting, including any training and development needs, must be prepared within ten school days of the appraisal interview. Relevant information from review statements may be taken into account by those who are responsible for taking decisions about the performance, promotion, pay, discipline or dismissal of teachers.

Wales

Following the proposals contained in the Green Paper *The BEST for Teaching and Learning* (NAfW, 1999)[15], a consultation process on a new performance management system for teachers and headteachers has been carried out by the National Assembly for Wales. The new arrangements, which are expected to be introduced from the autumn 2002, will replace the Education (School Teacher Appraisal) (Wales) Regulations 1999 which currently set out the arrangements for the appraisal of teachers in maintained schools in Wales. The new regulations will amend these arrangements to introduce an annual performance management cycle for all teachers, with performance objectives set at the outset of the cycle, monitoring during the cycle, and a performance review at the end.

Northern Ireland

Common arrangements for reviewing the performance of teachers and school principals were phased into all schools between 1995 and 2000, starting with principals and other senior staff. The Staff Development Performance Review (SDPR) Scheme is intended to contribute to the overall quality of education for pupils, to further strengthen teachers' professional development and to give more focus to continuing professional development programmes. The Scheme does not involve the introduction of performance-related pay, nor is it linked to disciplinary procedures. The SDPR Scheme involves a two-year cycle with the following components:

- Year 1: (optional) self-review, initial meeting between reviewer and reviewee, information collection, classroom observation, review discussion, review statement.
- Year 2: discussion between reviewer and reviewee concerning progress on the targets agreed in year 1.

Advancement and promotion opportunities are similar to those in England and Wales.

e) Redundancy, redeployment and dismissal

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Where staff become redundant in a school they have no rights to be transferred to an alternative school since appointments to individual schools are controlled by each school governing body. Some LEAs have informal arrangements to assist redeployment in such cases but this is an arrangement based on goodwill alone.

Teachers are protected against unfair dismissal under general employment legislation. If a teacher fails to carry out his/her duties satisfactorily despite appropriate support and training, the LEA or governing body, as employer, is responsible for taking action in accordance with agreed procedures. A teacher found guilty of specific criminal offences may be summarily dismissed.

Teachers who seek a transfer to another school must apply direct to the school in response to an advertised vacancy.

All teachers in maintained schools will be required to adhere to the code of professional conduct and practice established by the General Teaching Councils under the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 and the Education (Northern Ireland Order) 1998. Teachers will be subject to any disciplinary procedures set up by the Councils. The General Teaching Councils will have a key role in promoting and upholding the standards of the teaching profession. As such, the Council must also determine whether those who have been found to perform below those standards – whether through serious misconduct or poor performance – should be deregistered and thus unable to teach in the maintained sector. This role, which will normally apply only in relation to those teachers already found to be below accepted standards by their employer, and after employer procedures have been completed, will enable the Councils to regulate the profession.

Since 1 June 2001, the General Teaching Councils for England and Wales have held responsibility for investigating and hearing cases against a registered teacher accused of unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence or where the teacher is convicted of a relevant offence. These powers are set out in the General Teaching Council for England (Disciplinary Functions) Regulations 2001 and the General Teaching Council for Wales (Disciplinary Functions) Regulations 2001.

f) Salary

England and Wales

Salary structures for school teachers and the monetary value of the points on the pay scales are determined annually by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. After the local government financial limits have been agreed, the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) (see 9.2.1a) receives submissions from associations representing teachers' employers and from teachers' associations, but does not enter into negotiations with them. The Secretary of State may accept or reject the recommendations of the STRB and determine how its recommendations are to be interpreted. The outcome is published as *The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document*, which is updated annually and sets the framework within which school governors must establish their salary policy for teaching and non-teaching staff. The latest provisions are contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2001 (DfES, 2001a).[11]

Following the recommendations contained in the Government's Green Paper *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change* (DfEE, 1998b)[14] on the modernisation of the teaching profession (see 9.2.1d) and the review carried out by the STRB (STRB, 2000),[17] a new pay structure was introduced in England and Wales from September 2000.

The new pay system is designed to reward teachers for high performance, and improve career prospects. Two pay ranges for classroom teachers are now available, with a performance threshold at the end of the first range giving access to a second range for high-performing teachers. Teachers at the top of the main scale may apply for a performance assessment against the national 'threshold' standards and, if successful, move to point 1 of the upper pay scale. This is a personal entitlement regardless of whether the teacher remains in the same school or obtains a post in another school. Progression on the upper pay scale is based on performance. New leadership group pay arrangements for heads, deputies and the new category of assistant head have also been introduced.

The key features of the new system are:

- the main pay scale for classroom teachers leading up to the performance threshold;
- success at the performance threshold requiring high and sustained levels of competence, achievement and commitment;

- higher pay ranges on the new upper pay scale for teachers above the threshold showing substantial and sustained performance and contribution to the school as a teacher; and
- new leadership group pay arrangements for heads, deputies and assistant heads.

Governing bodies may allocate additional spine points (incremental payments) to teachers who undertake specific extra responsibilities (usually administrative and managerial) within the school. Additional spine points, may also be given to teachers in recognition of outstanding classroom performance, or to recruit and retain teachers in subject areas where there is a shortage of qualified staff. School governors are required to give each teacher an annual statement of his or her position on the spine, including any spine points allocated to them for the above-mentioned reasons. Additional payments may be made to teachers (full-time, part-time and deputy headteachers) who undertake voluntary continuing professional development at weekends or during school holidays.

From September 2002, the main payscale will be shortened to six points, allowing teachers to reach the top of the scale after five years (or sooner).

The salaries of advanced skills teachers (ASTs) (see 9.2.1d) are based on a separate 27-point pay spine. When appointing an advanced skills teacher, the governing body must select a pay range consisting of five consecutive points on the spine. Movement up the pay spine is dependent on sustained high-quality performance by the teacher in question against previously agreed performance criteria.

The new performance management arrangements introduced in England from September 2000 allow the outcomes of the appraisal process to be used to inform decisions concerning pay and promotion of teachers and headteachers (see 9.2.1d).

Northern Ireland

Teachers' pay and conditions are negotiated through the Teachers' Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee (Schools). With respect to salaries, the Committee is largely guided by arrangements in England and Wales. There have been no performance-related pay pilot schemes in Northern Ireland. Changes to teachers' pay structure, including the establishment of a leadership scale, were introduced in 2000. The latest information on teachers' pay and allowances is contained in Department for Education Circular 2001/11 (DE, 2001).[18]

g) Working hours and leave

England and Wales

In general terms, teachers are required, as part of their conditions of service, to teach for 190 days a year and to be available for staff development or other duties for a further five days a year. It is expected that at least three of these non-contact days are used for continuing professional development (CPD). Within the 195 days, teachers must undertake duties at the direction of the headteacher for up to 1,265 hours per year. Directed duties include teaching, attendance at consultation meetings with parents and others, and staff development, but they exclude other professional duties such as the preparation of lessons, teaching materials and teaching programmes, the marking of pupils' work, and the writing of reports on pupils' progress, which must be carried out in addition to the directed duties. Full details are given in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* (DfES, 2001a)[11] which is issued annually. Apart from the five days required for staff development and other duties, teachers are not required to undertake directed duties during school holidays.

Teachers are entitled to 'a break of reasonable length', either between school sessions or between the hours of 12 noon and 2 p.m. However, on those days when the school is in session, teachers are required to remain on the school premises throughout the day, except during the midday break, unless they have special permission from the headteacher.

Northern Ireland

Arrangements are generally the same as those in operation in England and Wales. Full details are set out in the Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 and amendments.

h) Retirement and pensions

England and Wales

Although the official age of retirement is 65 years, the normal age at which both male and female teachers retire is 60. Teachers may, however, continue in employment until the age of 70, subject to annual agreement with employers. In recent years, it has been possible to take premature retirement from the age of 50, if the employer certifies that the teacher's contract has been terminated through redundancy or as a result of reorganisation leading to greater efficiency. A teacher who suffers from ill-health may be granted premature retirement on medical grounds.

Changes were introduced to the early retirement arrangements for teachers in 1997, when employers became responsible for the extra cost of teachers' premature retirement. The 1997 arrangements introduced the option of 'stepping down' as an alternative to early retirement. Under this option, teachers aged at least 50 who no longer want the responsibilities of their current post can move to a lower-paid post without a detrimental effect on their pensions. This option was introduced to provide an effective way of retaining the skills and experience of senior staff within the teaching profession.

The Teachers' Pensions Scheme is a contributory scheme which is open to all full-time and part-time teachers. The Scheme is not open to non-teaching staff, who instead come within the scope of the Local Government Pension Scheme. The scheme automatically covers full-time teachers who have not yet retired and who have not opted out of the scheme to make their own pension arrangements.

The Teachers' Pensions Scheme is managed by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the DfES but employers have an important role in administering the Scheme. LEAs are statutorily responsible for all matters relating to Scheme members employed by them or working in schools maintained by the LEA, including the collection and remittance of contributions. Teachers contribute 6 per cent of their pre-tax salary to the Scheme and their employers contribute a further 7.4 per cent of pre-tax salary (with effect from April 2000). The Scheme pays teachers a lump sum on retirement and a monthly pension which is adjusted annually to reflect inflation. The lump sum and monthly pension are calculated according to the number of years' service and the teacher's highest salary during the last three years of service.

Northern Ireland

Arrangements in Northern Ireland are generally similar to those in operation in England and Wales.

9.2.2 Further education

In **England and Wales**, terms conditions of service are agreed at local and institutional level in further education colleges and tertiary colleges and vary according to the institution and employer concerned. In sixth-form colleges, national agreements are in existence.

In **Northern Ireland**, from April 1998, further education institutions in Northern Ireland became autonomous and staff are now employed by the governing body of each institution. Pay and conditions of service for lecturing staff are, however, still negotiated and agreed centrally.

a) Decision-making bodies in educational employment

England and Wales

The governing body (or corporation) of each further education institution is responsible for all decisions affecting the institution, its organisation and its resources. The governing body is therefore responsible for the employment and management of staff.

The Association of Colleges and the Sixth Form Colleges' Employers' Forum (SFCEF) are the employers' organisations which recognise and negotiate with trade unions on behalf of institutions.

The Association of Further Education Colleges in Wales (Fforwm) is the national association representing further education colleges in Wales.

Adult education centres in England and Wales are largely operated by LEAs but, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, LEAs will apply to the Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (now known as the National Council – ELWa) for funding for these institutions. Day–to-day management is delegated to the principal or director of the centre.

The main professional associations which represent the interests of lecturers in further education colleges and tertiary colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are:

- the University and College Lecturers' Union (previously called the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education and still commonly known by the acronym NATFHE);
- the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL); and
- Unison, whose members include support staff.

In sixth-form colleges, the interests of lecturers are represented by the main teacher unions – the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) and the National Union of Teachers (NUT).

Northern Ireland

Since April 1998, the governing body has been the employer of staff in further education colleges. Lecturers' terms and conditions are currently determined by a contract agreed by the Further Education Negotiating Committee in 1996. The Association of Northern Ireland Colleges (ANIC) is the new employers' body for the colleges in Northern Ireland. The Association has set up Negotiating Committees to deal

with Directors, Lecturers and Non-Teaching Staff in negotiating Terms and Conditions of Service.

b) Access to the profession, appointment

England and Wales

Since September 2001, all new further education teachers in England are required to have a formal teaching qualification in accordance with the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2001 (see 9.1.2b). Many staff, especially those in sixth-form colleges, also have the teaching qualification required to become a schoolteacher, Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Staff in the further education sector are employed by the governing body of the institution. Lecturers apply to the governing body of the institution in response to advertised vacancies in the same way as school teachers . Staff in adult education centres are currently normally employed by LEAs, and apply direct to the LEA.

Northern Ireland

Governing bodies are the employers of staff in further education colleges. Lecturers apply in response to advertised vacancies in the same way as school teachers . Further education lecturers are not required to have an initial teacher training qualification, but those who do not must hold an approved qualification, such as a university degree or a vocational qualification in the subject they wish to teach. Holders of approved vocational qualifications must also have achieved a pass at grade C or above in the General Certificate of Secondary Education in English language and mathematics (or at least key skill level 3 in communication or application of number respectively), and have three years of relevant industrial or business experience. Approved qualifications are listed in the Department of Education Northern Ireland Circular 2001/18 (DE, 2001).[9]

New further education lecturers who do not have an initial teacher training qualification are required to obtain the Postgraduate Certificate (Further and Higher Education) within three years of their appointment. Lecturers are encouraged to extend this training to obtain the Postgraduate Diploma (Further and Higher Education).

c) Professional status

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Further education lecturers are not civil servants, but are public employees, and are employed by the college governing body, or, in the case of adult education centres, by the local education authority (LEA). They do not have guaranteed employment throughout their professional life.

d) Promotion, advancement

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Lecturers in further education normally achieve promotion by applying for appointment to a more senior post which falls vacant, either at their own institution or at another. Those with suitable qualifications and experience may seek promotion to senior posts. Job titles vary between institutions but may include, for example, senior lecturer, principal lecturer, head of department, vice-principal and principal, in response to advertised vacancies for these posts.

The Government has announced that a National Professional Qualification for College Principals will be introduced in England from 2002. New principals will be required to hold the qualification before taking up post, although a date for this requirement has yet to be specified.

e) Transfers, redundancy and dismissal

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Arrangements transfers and redeployment are similar to those outlined for access to the profession (see 9.2.2b). Arrangements for redundancy and dismissal are similar to those applicable to school teachers (see 9.2.1e).

f) Salary

England and Wales

Rates of pay for lecturers in further education colleges and tertiary colleges have traditionally been agreed at national level between employers and unions but in recent years no agreement had been reached for further education sector institutions. A new negotiating body, the Further Education National Joint Forum (NJF), has been established to consider pay and conditions in the further education sector. The NJF comprises the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, Association of College Management, NATFHE - the University and College Lecturers' Union, and other unions involved in the sector. The FE employers are represented by the Association of Colleges. Each institution has its own pay policy and decides how to use the recommended pay scales, for example, in determining on which point of the scale new staff are appointed.

The salaries and conditions of service of adult education teachers employed in local education authorities are now negotiated at local level. Most staff are paid at an agreed hourly rate. Rates of pay in sixth-form colleges are agreed nationally by the Sixth Form Colleges' Employers' Forum (SFCEF) and the main teacher unions.

Northern Ireland

Until April 1998, the pay and conditions for further education lecturers were negotiated centrally through the Further Education Negotiating Committee. The contract agreed in 1996 is currently still in force. Following the reform of further education, new negotiating bodies are currently being established, but it is expected that any new agreements will apply in colleges across Northern Ireland.

g) Working hours and leave

England and Wales

The teaching hours of lecturers vary between institutions in the further education sector. At present, there is no national agreement on working hours. However, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) has reached agreement with the majority of colleges in the sector which now limit weekly working hours to 37 hours, and teaching to between 800 and 850 hours per year, often with a weekly limit of 24 hours. In sixth-form colleges, staff are contracted to undertake 'directed' duties for 1,265 hours per year, over 195 days. There are no regulations regarding teaching or contact time. Within their contracted hours, staff may be required to work up to two evenings per week.

Adult education tutors normally work part-time and their working time is dependent on their individual contracts.

The annual leave of teachers in further education colleges and tertiary colleges is dependent on the contract issued by individual institutions. The Association of Colleges recommends that institutions provide for 37 days of annual holiday entitlement, plus bank holidays.

In sixth-form colleges lecturers are required to undertake 'directed duties' for 195 days per year. They are not required to undertake duties during college holidays.

The annual leave of adult education tutors employed by LEAs is agreed at local level.

Northern Ireland

Lecturers work up to a maximum of 200 days per year, of which 185 are for student contact time; 10 days are for other duties; and five days or their equivalent are for staff development. The working week is Monday to Friday and the working hours are 36 hours per week, of which up to 23 hours are student contact hours. Senior lecturers with management responsibilities may have a reduced number of student contact hours.

In Northern Ireland, lecturers are entitled to 49 days of annual leave. Staff paid on the management spine receive 35 or more days, depending on their amount of student contact time.

h) Retirement and pensions

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The normal age of retirement is 65 years, but lecturers may apply to retire at the age of 60. A teacher who suffers from ill-health may be granted premature retirement on medical grounds.

Both lecturers and their employers contribute to the Teachers' Pensions Scheme which is administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions. See section 9.2.1h for further details of the Scheme.

9.2.3 Higher education

Although all higher education institutions (HEIs) are autonomous, for historical reasons there is still a distinction between the conditions of employment of teachers in the 'old', pre-1992 and the 'new', post-1992 universities (see 7.3). There are two sets of common national salary and career structures for university teachers: one for staff employed in pre-1992 universities and one for staff in post-1992 universities.

a) Decision-making bodies in educational employment

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Universities are autonomous institutions and are therefore individually responsible for employing teachers and other staff. The umbrella organisation for all universities is Universities UK (formerly the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals in the Universities of the UK (CVCP)).

The organisation which represents the interests of the colleges of higher education is the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP). The Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA) is the employers' association for UK universities and colleges of higher education (except for 13 institutions in Scotland). As such, it negotiates with the appropriate trade unions on behalf of the institutions. The trade unions recognised by the Government and employers for negotiations about terms and conditions of employment of staff in higher education include:

- the Association of University Teachers (AUT);
- the National Association for Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE), whose members include lecturers, researchers and other staff working in higher education institutions; and

- Unison, whose members include support staff in universities.

The Bett Committee was set up in February 1998 as an Independent Review Committee on the framework for determining the pay and conditions of service for staff in higher education. Its wide-ranging report was published in June 1999 (IRHEPC, UCEA and DfEE, 1999).[19] The recommendations cover new negotiating machinery, changes in pay structures and levels, training, appraisal and equal opportunities.

b) Access to the profession, appointment

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

As autonomous institutions, each higher education institution decides which qualifications and skills it requires from a candidate to fill a particular post. There are no national arrangements or national listings of eligible candidates; each post is advertised and suitably qualified candidates are invited to apply. A good first degree in the subject to be taught is normally a requirement. A higher degree and publications may also be required and a department often specifies knowledge or experience in a particular area, within the broader field of the department's teaching, in order to complement the expertise of its current staff.

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) is not a requirement for employment as a teacher in a higher education institution, except for teacher trainers, who must have QTS as well as considerable recent teaching experience in schools. Teacher trainers are expected to undertake regular periods of teaching in schools to ensure they are familiar with current teaching issues. However, many universities provide training for their teaching staff, especially those new to the profession.

c) Professional status

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Higher education teachers are employees of the individual institution and are not civil servants. They are not guaranteed employment throughout their professional life.

d) Promotion, advancement

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Some form of staff appraisal has been introduced in all institutions. Appraisal normally takes into account the individual teacher's publications and involvement in administrative departmental work, as well as performance as a teacher.

The teaching staff at the 'old', pre-1992 universities are classified as professors, readers, senior lecturers, lecturers and, in a few cases, assistant lecturers. Some teaching may also be done by research assistants and research students. Science departments usually have technical demonstrators and others may also have technical staff such as language laboratory assistants in foreign language departments.

Although exact job titles may vary, teaching staff at the 'new', post-1992 universities and other higher education institutions are normally designated, in declining order of seniority: professors/heads of department, readers, principal lecturers, senior lecturers or lecturers. Professors are the most senior members of the teaching staff and are described as holders of a chair in their subject. A given department may have several professors or none at all and, although it is most common for the head of department to be a professor, this is not always the case. However, the head of department, if not also a professor, is normally a senior member of the department. Some departments rotate the headship among senior members of the staff and some such headships are filled following a ballot of the members of that department, although this last procedure is rare.

Staff achieve promotion by successfully applying for a vacant post at a higher grade. Vacancies are advertised and both internal and external candidates may apply. However, an institution may also promote a valued member of staff independently of any vacancies. For example, the title 'Reader' is awarded as a mark of respect for senior members of 'old' university staff. It has no hierarchical status, but it normally means that the person so designated passes on to the higher discretionary points on the senior lecturers' salary scale. Institutions may also, as a mark of honour, award the title of professor, along with the appropriate salary, to a senior member of staff who is then described as holder of a personal chair in the department. Equally, a lecturer may be promoted to the status of senior lecturer in recognition of his or her contribution to the institution and field of teaching and research.

e) Transfers, redundancy and dismissal

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

As all institutions are autonomous, a member of staff is appointed to the individual institution and there are no permanent arrangements for transfer of staff from one institution to another. Ad hoc arrangements may be made between institutions, where one institution or department is contracting and another expanding.

Until 1988, members of a university's academic staff were, by custom and practice, and in some cases by the terms of their contracts, considered to have the right to remain in post until retiring age ('tenure'), unless grounds for dismissal for misconduct were established. The Education Reform Act 1988 requires the statutes of each university to enable an appropriate body to dismiss any member of a university's academic staff 'by reason of redundancy' (see Section 203, clause 5, of the Act).

Individual institutions are responsible for internal discipline and may establish a code of conduct. If a teacher fails to carry out his/her duties satisfactorily, the employer is responsible for taking action in accordance with agreed disciplinary procedures. The Education Reform Act 1988 requires the statutes of each university to make provision to enable an appropriate body to dismiss any member of a university's academic staff 'for good cause'. Details of grounds for dismissal are given in Section 203, clause 6, of the Act.

f) Salary

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Teaching staff are paid on the scale appropriate for their post (for example, lecturer, reader, professor). The placement on the scale is determined in the light of the individual's qualifications, experience and years of service.

A senior member of staff who has been awarded the title of reader normally passes on to the higher discretionary points on the senior lecturers' salary scale. Where an institution honours a senior member of staff with the title of professor (who is then described as holder of a personal chair), a professorial salary becomes payable.

The National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) was set up by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland in 2000. The scheme is managed by the Institute for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (ILT) (see 9.3.3a). The NTFS is designed to recognise and reward individual academics who have demonstrated excellence in teaching and support for learning, and is open to nominees from all higher education institutions in England and Northern Ireland and to nominees from further education institutions in England that meet HEFCE-established criteria.

g) Working hours and leave

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Teachers/lecturers in the 'old', pre-1992 universities are not contractually required to be present at their place of work for a set number of hours. The details of staff contracts vary, but all state that staff must carry out a range of teaching and administrative duties and pursue research, as required by the head of the institution. Staff may undertake paid work outside the university with the agreement of their head of department; a head of department must secure the agreement of the head of the institute. This work must not interfere with, and should complement, the individual's normal duties. Such work may be for external bodies or, on rare occasions, for another department within the same institution.

There is a nationally agreed contract of employment for teachers in 'new', post-1992 universities which sets out conditions of employment for teachers in the 'new' universities and other higher education institutions. These include a maximum teaching load of 550 hours over the year and 18 hours during a week. This assumes 36 teaching weeks and 2 weeks to carry out administrative duties per year. Teachers are expected to engage in research and scholarly activity and to carry out the duties required of them by their heads of department or heads of institution. Teachers may be required to be present outside teaching hours, although permission may be given by the heads of department or the heads of institution for absences to pursue research and other scholarly activities. Like their 'old' university counterparts, teachers wishing to undertake paid work outside their contract must obtain the approval of their institution, and such work is normally expected to complement their teaching activities.

In the case of the 'old' universities, annual leave, other than statutory public holidays and other days when the institution is closed, is set by the individual institution. Leave must normally be taken outside term time and with the agreement of the head of department.

In addition to statutory public holidays and other days when the institution is closed, teachers in the 'new' universities are allowed 35 days' leave, which must normally be taken outside term time and with the agreement of the head of department.

The nationally agreed contract of employment for teachers in 'new' universities assumes 36 teaching weeks and two weeks to carry out administrative and other duties per year.

At both 'old' and 'new' universities, teachers are expected to pursue research and scholarly activity, in addition to other academic and administrative duties, during the non-teaching periods of the year. Sabbatical leave may be granted for staff to undertake approved activities.

h) Retirement and pensions

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The normal age of retirement is 65 years, but teachers may apply to retire at the age of 60 and permission may be granted if it is deemed to be in the interests of the service. A teacher who suffers from ill-health may be granted premature retirement on medical grounds.

Teachers in 'old', pre-1992 universities and their employers contribute to the Universities' Superannuation Scheme. These contributions are linked to the teacher's salary. The Scheme pays teachers a lump sum on retirement and a monthly pension which is adjusted annually to reflect inflation. The lump sum and monthly pension are calculated according to the number of years' service and the teachers' highest salary during the last three years of service.

Teachers in 'new' post-1992 universities may join the Teachers' Pensions Scheme administered on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) by Capita Business Services Ltd. See 9.2.1h for further details of the scheme.

9.3 Continuing professional development

All teachers have a professional duty to review their methods of teaching and programmes of work and to participate in arrangements for their continuing professional development (CPD) as teachers. Professional development can cover a broad variety of activities ranging from ad hoc working groups of teachers in schools to courses undertaken at higher education institutions, sometimes leading to academic awards.

9.3.1 Pre-school, primary and secondary education

England and Wales

The statutory conditions of service require teachers to be available for work under the direction of the headteacher for 195 days per year, of which 190 are teaching days. The five days when school sessions are not required were introduced to support a number of non-teaching activities, including in-service training (INSET).

When teachers undertake professional development during the school day, their classes are normally taught by teaching colleagues from within the school or by qualified replacement teachers (known as 'supply teachers'). The cost of employing replacement teachers are normally met by the individual school, but when the training qualifies for funding through the Standards Fund in England, or the Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST) programme in Wales, these costs may normally be reclaimed. A pilot scheme for **professional bursaries** is currently operating in a number of LEAs. Teachers may apply for a bursary to help them meet the cost of their development needs.

Since May 1998, all initial teacher training institutions have been required to provide every newly qualified teacher (NQT) with a career entry profile which summarises information about the new teacher's strengths and about priorities for their further professional development. Following consultation, the Government has published a new strategy for continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers in England (DfEE, 2001).[20] The strategy aims to give teachers increased opportunities for relevant, focused, effective professional development, and to give professional development a key role in school improvement. In this context, professional development is taken to mean any activity that increases the skills, knowledge or understanding of teachers, and their effectiveness in schools. A Code of Practice for providers of publicly funded professional development training for teachers has also been developed.

As part of the CPD strategy and following advice from the General Teaching Council for England, the Government is providing funding for a pilot programme of early professional development for teachers in England in their second and third years of teaching, building on the induction year.

Under the performance management arrangements (9.2.1d), every teacher now has the opportunity to discuss their learning and development needs annually with their line manager and to set one or more development objectives. These objectives may focus on strengthening their ability to do their current job, or on developing skills that will support future career moves.

Northern Ireland

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 places statutory responsibility on each of the five Education and Library Boards to secure the provision of training for all teachers in grant-aided schools in their area, to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills to implement education reform and the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

The Northern Ireland Teacher Education Committee (NITEC) has established a Committee for Early Professional Development (CEPD). The programme of continuing professional development in Northern Ireland provides for progression from induction training of newly qualified teachers to a programme of early professional development.

Following consultation, the Professional Qualification for Headship in Northern Ireland (PQH (NI)) was introduced in 1999. The qualification is based on the National Standards for Headteachers and on the NPQH model in place in England, but adapted to reflect circumstances in Northern Ireland. A range of other courses for existing and potential leaders is also available.

a) Decision-making bodies

England and Wales

There is no one body with overall responsibility for the continuing professional development of teachers (CPD); it is shared between:

- central government (the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)) and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), and in Wales, the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW);
- National College of School Leadership (NCSL);
- General Teaching Councils in England and Wales;
- local education authorities, where appropriate;
- school governing bodies;
- headteachers; and
- the individual teachers concerned.

The DfES (in England) and the National Assembly for Wales (in Wales) provide, separately, financial support for CPD through their respective programmes: the Standards Fund and Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST). This is normally paid to the LEA, but is increasingly devolved by them to schools. The structure, policy coverage and size of the respective programmes are determined annually to enable new priorities to be reflected and details are published in separate DfES and National Assembly for Wales Circulars. See section 2.1.1 for the current main priorities.

The timing and organisation of in-service training (INSET) days is for individual headteachers to determine, but it is recommended that they are sensitive to local circumstances in deciding which days to choose. Subject to the guidance in the Circulars, the content of INSET days is a decision that is made locally, by headteachers, governing bodies and LEAs.

The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) also administers a fund for the continuing professional development of school teachers . The current priorities are:

- school leadership and management;
- specialist teaching in primary schools, especially in numeracy and literacy;
- enhanced subject knowledge for primary teachers, particularly in literacy, mathematics, science and design and technology;
- the teaching of early years children;
- the teaching of 14- to 19-year-olds;
- information and communications technology training;
- special educational needs training;
- the management of pupil behaviour;
- long-term school improvement; and
- provision linked to the professional standards for teachers and headteachers.

Courses funded by the TTA are intended to complement the provision made under the Standards Fund and GEST and normally lead to a recognised professional or academic qualification – e.g. Master of Arts or PhD. A system of competitive bidding allows training providers to bid for funds to deliver accredited courses. Bidding rounds take place once every three years. Training providers may include higher education institutions (HEIs), LEAs, professional and subject associations, consortia of schools and partnerships between HEIs, LEAs and schools. Since April 2001, the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) has had responsibility for the administration of the national headship training programmes in England.

The General Teaching Councils in England and Wales will be responsible for upholding high standards in the classroom by developing a Code of Professional Practice with the full involvement of the teaching profession. The Councils will have a major role in shaping future policy on continuing professional development (CPD) for the teaching profession.

Northern Ireland

Under the provisions of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, the Education and Library Boards (Boards) have statutory functions and obligations to provide training for all persons involved in education in each Board area. Those entitled to this support include teachers, members and staff of the Boards, and members of governing bodies. The Boards, through their Curriculum Advisory and Support Services,

have the main responsibility for the continuing professional development of teachers (CPD). Each Board must submit an annual CPD programme for approval by the Department of Education (DE). In drawing up its programme, a Board is required to consult widely with school Boards of Governors and other appropriate bodies, including the Council for Catholic-Maintained Schools.

The Education and Library Boards' Regional Training Unit (RTU) is part of the Boards' service and provides a focus for the determination, planning and delivery of training which can best be undertaken at a regional level. It has a responsibility for the long-term management training needs of principals and senior staff in schools and Education and Library Boards' staff and members. It is also the lead and Awarding Body for the Professional Qualification for Headship in Northern Ireland.

b) Institutions responsible for continuing professional development

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Continuing professional development (CPD) may be provided within a school, at an LEA or Education and Library Board teachers' centre, at a higher education institution (HEI) or a further education institution, or at an independent training or conference centre in England, Wales, Northern Ireland or overseas. Trainers include a wide range of agencies and individuals: HEIs, school staff, LEA/Board advisory teachers, advisers and inspectors and independent consultants. In Northern Ireland, the Regional Training Unit, established by the Education and Library Boards, also provides continuing professional development for teachers and lecturers. The British Council Education and Training Group is the main government agency responsible for managing programmes of study visits and development courses in Europe and elsewhere.

Senior staff within a school provide ongoing professional guidance and development for their less experienced colleagues, either as part of their day-to-day oversight or as special, focused training. Although there is no set formula, such support normally begins with the induction which follows the teacher's initial appointment to the school and continues for as long as it is required.

CPD was one of the subjects considered in the Green Paper *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change* (DfEE, 1998b).[14] Following consultation, the Government has developed a Code of Practice for users and providers of publicly funded CPD (DfEE, 2001c).[21] The Code covers the principles of good-quality professional development provision, including:

- planning
- general provision
- delivery
- assessment and evaluation
- monitoring
- equal opportunities
- health and safety.

The Code provides a framework for improving quality standards to ensure that schools are getting good value for the time and money they invest in training their staff.

c) Admission requirements

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Teachers may take part in continuing professional development (CPD) at any time in their career. Access to CPD depends on the nature of the activities. For example, while all teachers may be involved in 'whole-school' professional development activities, some may require training in a specific discipline or aspect relative to their role or responsibility. At the other end of the continuum, teachers applying to undertake courses leading to a higher degree or academic diploma are subject to the admission criteria of the higher education institution (HEI) and the course concerned.

d) Courses, curriculum and duration of studies

England and Wales

There is no legal minimum requirement for continuing professional development (CPD). Participation depends on the professional needs of the teacher concerned and the availability of the resources in the school to meet them. It can range from a few hours to several days and sometimes full- or part-time studies over an extended period, in preparation for nationally recognised qualifications. Courses may be held during school hours, in 'twilight' sessions after school or at weekends.

Each school determines its own CPD needs, within the broad framework provided by the Government's specific grant provisions. These may range from support for individual members of staff arising from appraisal interviews, through training for groups of staff to deal with curricular or management changes, to whole-school development.
The term CPD covers a wide range of staff development activities. It may refer to a teachers' working group within a particular school, or a series of meetings or conferences which bring together teachers from a

number of schools. It can include activities such as team-teaching or industrial placement or work shadowing. Individual teachers may undertake professional development in the form of study for a higher qualification, such as an advanced diploma or a higher degree (such as a master's degree or a doctorate). It also includes the headship training programmes.

In order to support improvement in standards of teaching and learning, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has introduced, in England, a programme of 'Best Practice Research Scholarships'. The scholarships provide teachers with the opportunity to undertake development and classroom-based research work to extend and enhance their classroom performance. The programme is available to all teachers, supply teachers and headteachers in maintained schools.

Another recent development has been the introduction of sabbaticals of up to six weeks' duration for experienced teachers in challenging schools. The scheme is intended to create opportunities for experienced teachers to take on a significant period of development to enhance their own learning and effectiveness, and bring subsequent benefits to their pupils and their school.

Some CPD courses, traditionally those for teachers of foreign languages, may take place wholly or partly in another country. Some staff undertake study visits to other countries, whereby the examination of another education system provides alternative models of tackling issues of common concern. Such visits may be arranged bilaterally (for example, through the British Council Education and Training Group) or as part of European Community programmes such as ARION and LINGUA.

In 2000, the Government established the Teachers' International Professional Development Programme (TIPD) to give teachers the opportunity to enhance their skills through focussed study visits and exchanges with educational institutions overseas. Opportunities are linked to a list of key themes agreed by the DfES which focus on raising standards of teaching and learning. The Programme is managed by three providers:

- The British Council Education and Training Group;
- The League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers; and
- The Technology Colleges Trust.

LEAs also have a key role in the operation of the Programme.

In Wales, the consultation document *The Learning Country*, published by the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW, 2001)[22] recognises the important role of continuing professional development. A new programme for continuing professional development, run by the General Teaching Council for Wales, has also recently been introduced. The programme allows teachers the opportunity to develop professionally in the areas they themselves have identified.

(i) National standards

A framework of national standards has been developed which sets out the standards of practice that teachers should expect to demonstrate at particular points of their career and makes suggestions for supporting development activity. It is intended that the Framework will support career planning, performance management and enable development activity to be targeted in recognition of the individual teacher's needs and aspirations. The national standards set out the professional knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes necessary to carry out effectively the key tasks of that role. The standards emphasise national priorities, particularly in support of the Government's key educational targets in relation to literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology.

The framework currently includes national standards for:

- the Award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (DfES, 2002);
- induction (DfES Guidance 582/2001);
- subject Leaders (TTA, 1998b);[23]
- special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) (TTA, 1998c);[24]
- special Educational Needs Specialist Teachers (TTA, 1999).[25]

National standards for headteachers have also been published (TTA, 2000[26]). These set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes which relate to the key areas of headship. National standards for headteachers in Wales are published by the National Assembly for Wales.

(ii) School leaders

The National College of School Leadership (NCSL) is developing a framework for the development and support of school leaders in England. The framework is designed to ensure that all heads have access to high-quality training at every stage of their careers and will build on the initiatives and programmes already in place. These include:

- National standards for headteachers (see above);
- the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) designed to prepare experienced teachers for headship;
- the Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP), a range of development opportunities available to support the induction of newly appointed headteachers;
- the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH), based on a residential workshop exploring leadership style and its impact on the school; and
- a range of other leadership and management programmes offered by LEAs and Diocesan Boards; the professional associations; leadership centres; universities (including Master's and doctorate programmes) and private sector companies.

In Wales, the National Headship Development Programme (NHDP) is the National Assembly's overarching programme to support the professional development of headteachers in Wales. Launched in February 2000, the programme comprises three separate strands. It provides aspiring headteachers with training through the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH); support for newly appointed headteachers (from September 2001) through the Professional Headship Induction Programme (PHIP); and further professional development for those in post through the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) (from January 2001). All aspects of the NHDP are delivered bilingually across the whole of Wales.

Supply teachers

A consultation document *Supply Teachers – Meeting the Challenge* was issued by the Department for Education and Employment in 2000 (DfEE, 2000c)[27] which proposed a number of measures to raise the status and quality of supply teaching. Work is continuing to implement the main recommendations.

Northern Ireland

The programmes of the Education and Library Boards (Boards) for the continuing professional development of teachers (CPD) have their origins in the identified needs of individual schools. The requirements of the curriculum and other aspects of education reform have been the overriding priorities for the Board programmes since 1989–90. It is anticipated that Boards will continue to give priority to training linked to such requirements, as well as to the School Improvement Programme, and making provision for activities outside the statutory curriculum.

e) Evaluation, certification

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Continuing professional development of teachers (CPD) covers all professional development, from short courses to higher degrees. In some cases, certificates of attendance are awarded. Where teachers undertake studies leading to specific qualifications, e.g. an academic diploma or a higher degree, their performance is assessed by examination or coursework, as required by the accreditation body (usually a university).

There is no single national system for the evaluation of CPD. Provision may be evaluated by the individual, the school (which pays for CPD from its delegated budget), the LEA or, in some cases, by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in England, and in Wales by Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.
The Department of Education and Skills (DfES) has produced guidance for teachers on producing a record of professional development activities. (DfES, 2001d).[28]

The recently developed Code of Practice for CPD (see 9.3.1b) covers the principles of good-quality professional development provision, including evaluation, together with a programme of inspection of in-service training provision.

9.3.2 Further education

There is no legal requirement for teachers in further education colleges or tertiary colleges to undertake professional development courses. However, most employers would expect their staff to participate in courses and conferences as the need arises.
In sixth-form colleges, five days are designated for participation in professional development activities within the 195 days of directed duties.

a) Decision-making bodies

In England and Wales, responsibility for continuing professional development (CPD) currently lies with each individual further education institution, or with the LEA in the case of staff in adult education centres.

A key priority for the new Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in England, which came into operation in April 2001, is to raise standards in post-16 learning and to ensure excellence in teaching and training. In Wales, the National Council – ELWa has a similar role. New measures

to improve the professional development of teachers in further education have been announced by the Government. Colleges will be required to assess the development needs of their staff and produce college staff development plans agreed with the LSC. Matched funding from the FE Standards Fund will be made available for flexible, tailored professional development to support the delivery of the plans.

The Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) (see 9.1.2c) is responsible for the development, quality assurance and promotion of national standards for all aspects of further education staff training and development, including continuing professional development.

b) Institutions responsible for continuing professional development

England and Wales

The Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) (formerly the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA)) is concerned with the development of policy and practice in post-16 education and training. It offers a range of courses, including management development programmes for senior college staff. LSDA also organises conferences and provides consultancy services. Courses in Wales are organised by the LSDA's operation in Wales, Dysg.

Other organisations involved in aspects of professional development include the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO), the Association of Colleges (AoC) and the Association of Further Education Colleges in Wales (Fforwm).

Continuing professional development of teachers (CPD) may be provided within a further education (FE) institution, at a higher education institution (HEI) or at an independent training or conference centre in England and Wales or overseas. Senior staff in FE institutions in England and Wales may also provide induction and ongoing professional guidance and development for less experienced colleagues.

Northern Ireland

Further education teachers may attend courses and conferences organised by the Regional Training Unit, established by the Education and Library Boards to provide continuing professional development for teachers and lecturers. The Department of Education (DE) has a responsibility for supporting a limited number of FE lecturers who are undertaking the Postgraduate Certificate in Further and Higher Education in order to meet eligibility requirements. Further education teachers may also attend courses and conferences organised in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales).

c) Admission requirements

There are no general admission requirements for continuing professional development programmes in England and Wales. Courses leading to particular qualifications, for example, a higher degree may have specific requirements.

d) Courses, curriculum and duration of studies

There is no legal minimum requirement for the continuing professional development of teachers (CPD) in England and Wales. Participation by individual teachers varies considerably, ranging from a few hours to a few days and possibly over a long period on a full-time or part-time basis depending on the needs of the individual member of staff and of the institution.

Some courses, traditionally those for teachers of foreign languages, may take place wholly or partly in another country. Some senior staff undertake study visits to other countries, whereby the examination of another education system provides an alternative model of tackling issues of common concern. Such visits may be arranged bilaterally (for example, through the British Council Education and Training Group) or as part of European Community programmes such as ARION and LINGUA.

e) Evaluation, certification

Continuing professional development of teachers (CPD) in England and Wales covers all professional development, from short courses to higher degrees.

Where teachers undertake studies leading to specific qualifications, e.g. an academic diploma, a higher degree or a National Vocational Qualification, their performance is assessed by examination or coursework, as required by the accreditation body (a university or other awarding body). For example, one of the most common qualifications; the Further and Adult Education Teachers' Certificate is awarded by the City and Guilds of London Institute, and accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). This qualification is being integrated into the national framework of National Vocational Qualifications at levels 3 and 4.

9.3.3 Higher education

There is no legal requirement for teachers and lecturers in higher education to undertake professional development courses. However, most employers would expect their staff to participate in courses and conferences as the need arises.

a) Decision-making bodies

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The continuing professional development of teachers and lecturers is the responsibility of each individual higher education institution and there is no single decision-making body. Most universities have their own staff development officers or units.

The Dearing Report (Dearing Report, 1997)[29] recommended that all higher education institutions should develop or seek access to programmes of teacher training for their staff, and proposed the establishment of a body to provide a national system of accreditation for such programmes. Following consultation, the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILT) was established in June 1999.

The ILT is a membership organisation open to everyone engaged in teaching and learning support in higher education. Its activities focus on:

- accrediting programmes of training in higher education;
- providing support for those engaged in facilitating learning and teaching;
- commissioning research and development in learning and teaching practice; and
- stimulating innovation.

As part of its work, the ILT is developing a framework for continuing professional development for its members in higher education. The framework, which is being developed in consultation with members, higher education institutions and professional associations, is intended to assist members plan, record and comment on their continuing professional development. The draft document covers three main areas: professional activity, core knowledge, and professional values.

The UK higher education funding bodies have established the Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) to promote high-quality learning and teaching in all subject disciplines in higher education. The network supports the sharing of innovation and good practices in learning and teaching including the use, where appropriate, of information and communications technology. The ILT manages the network on behalf of the Funding Councils.

Other organisations involved in the promotion of the professional development of higher education staff include the following:

- The Higher Education Staff Development Agency (HESDA) was created in November 2000 to bring together the work of the Universities and Colleges Staff Development Agency (UCoSDA), with the statutory responsibilities associated with its work as the National Training Organisation (NTO) for higher education.
- The Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) is the professional association for staff and educational developers in the UK. It accredits programmes of continuous professional development for all staff within higher education, as well as programmes for new teachers.

b) Institutions responsible for continuing professional development

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Continuing professional development of teachers may be provided at a higher education institution (HEI) or at an independent training or conference centre in England, Wales, Northern Ireland or overseas. Trainers may include a wide range of agencies and individuals.

Senior staff within an HEI provide ongoing professional guidance and development for their less experienced colleagues, either as part of their day-to-day oversight or as special, focused training. Although there is no set formula, such support normally begins with the induction which follows the teacher's initial appointment to the institution and continues for as long as it is required.

c) Admission requirements

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

There are no formal admission requirements, except in the case of courses leading to specific qualifications – e.g. a higher degree.

d) Courses, curriculum and duration of studies

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

There is no legal minimum requirement for the continuing professional development of teachers (CPD). Participation by individual teachers varies considerably, ranging from a few hours to a few days and possibly over a long period on a full-time or part-time basis according to the needs of the individual staff member and the institution.

Higher education institutions also make provision for their staff to undertake studies leading to a higher degree. Some staff undertake study visits and establish joint projects with HEIs in other countries, whereby the examination of another education system provides

alternative models of tackling issues of common concern. Such visits may be arranged bilaterally or as part of European Community programmes such as ERASMUS and LINGUA.

d) Evaluation, certification

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Continuing professional development of teachers covers all professional development, from short courses to higher degrees.

Where teachers undertake studies leading to specific qualifications, e.g. an academic diploma or a higher degree, their performance is assessed by examination or coursework, as required by the accreditation body (usually a university). Some professional development programmes have now been accredited by the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILT), the membership organisation open to all those engaged in teaching and the support of learning in higher education.

9.4 Other staff

Educational institutions may employ a variety of staff other than teachers. Some of these require recognised qualifications as a condition of their employment; others may not need formal qualifications. Their conditions of employment vary according to the post held and to any national or regional conditions of employment which may apply.

9.4.1 Other staff in pre-school settings

Job titles of staff employed within pre-school settings may vary; for example, nursery assistant or supervisor, pre-school assistant or leader, playgroup assistant or leader. Since September 1999, there has been a requirement that a qualified teacher (specialising in early years education) should be involved in any setting providing early education in an Early Years Development and Childcare Plan (see 3.2.1). Such teachers may be involved in the planning of activities and assessment of children.

In the past, training courses and titles of the qualifications awarded have also varied greatly. National standards are now being introduced to ensure coherence and quality; the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and its partner regulatory authority in Wales are developing a national framework of qualifications in early years education, childcare and playwork, (QCA, 1999)[30] and the Early Years National Training Organisation is developing a training framework.

9.4.2 Other staff in primary and secondary schools

Job titles of staff other than teachers vary.

Schools may employ:

- teaching or classroom assistants who work under the supervision of teachers, for example, to enable pupils to work in smaller groups;
- nursery assistants in nursery schools or classes and reception classes; they are normally required to have a qualification in childcare and education; and
- special needs support staff, or learning support assistants, who are assigned to help one or more children with special educational needs (see 8.8.2).

Schools normally also employ:

- lunchtime supervisors;
- secretarial and clerical staff (which might include administration or finance officers); and
- cleaning, caretaking and catering staff.

In addition to the above, secondary schools may employ:

- librarians;
- media resources officers;
- laboratory and workshop technicians;
- modern foreign language assistants;
- premises managers; and
- designated school bursars or finance officers.

There are no national requirements for qualifications; however some local authorities do require them. Training courses and titles of the qualifications awarded can vary, although national standards are now being developed. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), and its partner regulatory authority in Wales, are developing a national framework of qualifications in early years education, childcare and playwork which includes qualifications for nursery assistants and will eventually incorporate qualifications in in-school/out-of-school learning and support.

National Occupational Standards for teaching/classroom assistants have been developed by the Local Government National Training Organisation (LGNTO). The standards are in line with Government policies for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which include plans to improve training and development opportunities and promote best practice. The standards are designed to be suitable for all staff in England, Wales and Northern Ireland who work with teachers supporting learning in primary, secondary and special schools. This includes those with a general support role or a specific responsibility for a pupil subject or age group.

Specialist teaching assistant courses are also available in some LEAs which are linked to courses at higher education establishments. These provide an advanced one-year course, which may help a teaching assistant who is planning to take on an advanced role within the school. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has made funding available to help with the recruitment and induction training of teaching assistants through the Standards Fund. Continuing and specialist training for teaching assistants is accessed through local arrangements. Recognised qualifications for administrative staff in school administration and financial management are also available, as are qualifications for librarians and media resources officers.

The LGNTO is the National Training Organisation (see 1.4.8) for local government in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland which provides local government employers with strategic information and advice on matters related to workforce training and development. The LGNTO aims to provide strategic leadership, practical guidance and advice on the careers, employment, skills and qualifications needs of the local government sector.

Like teachers, other staff are not civil servants, but employees of the LEA or the school governing body in the case of foundation schools and voluntary-aided schools. In England and Wales, there is a national pay structure for local government staff, but no national agreement on the grading which is appropriate to each post. However, most LEAs have established their own grading systems in order to maintain relativity between schools and posts. Voluntary-aided schools and most foundation schools also use the national pay structure.

9.4.3 Other staff in further education

Depending on the size of the institution and the range of courses offered, further education institutions may employ a range of staff in addition to teaching staff. These may include:

- bursars or finance officers;
- administrative, secretarial and clerical staff;
- learning support assistants;
- careers advisory staff;
- librarians;
- media resources officers;
- laboratory and workshop technicians;
- modern foreign language assistants; and
- cleaning, caretaking and catering staff

In further education colleges and tertiary colleges, the pay and conditions of these staff are determined by the governing body of the institution. National agreements are in force in sixth-form colleges.

9.4.4 Other staff in higher education

Higher education institutions may employ a range of other staff in addition to teaching staff which may include:

- registrars;
- bursars or finance officers;
- administrative, secretarial and clerical staff;
- careers advisory staff;
- librarians;
- media resources officers;
- laboratory and workshop technicians;
- modern foreign language assistants; and
- cleaning, caretaking and catering staff.

The pay and conditions of these staff are determined by the governing body of the institution.

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EVALUATION

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10. EVALUATION

10.1 Historical Overview

10.1.1 England and Wales – schools and nursery education

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) were first appointed in 1839 to report on the quality of education in schools. Their function was to inspect and report on education provision, including the financial aspects, in order to assist the government in the exercise of its responsibilities in relation to education and, in the process, to contribute to its improvement.

The Education Act 1944 required the Secretary of State to have inspections carried out in primary, secondary, special and independent schools, and in establishments of further and higher education and of teacher training and adult education. The Act also stipulated that the inspections should be carried out by inspectors appointed for this purpose by the monarch.

The Education (Schools) Act 1992 (now incorporated into the Education Act 1996 and the School Inspection Act 1996) changed the role of HM Inspectorate and introduced a new framework for school inspections. The arrangements introduced by the 1992 Act were also designed to ensure the independence of the Inspectorate from government, and created two completely separate non-ministerial departments which became known as the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) in England, and in Wales, the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales (OHMCI). In 1999, OHMCI changed its name to Estyn: Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. Following the passing of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in Wales became known as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales.

The Nursery Education and Grant Maintained Schools Act 1996 introduced grants for nursery education in the private, voluntary and independent sectors, together with the requirement for Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to arrange the inspection of all nursery settings receiving nursery education grant.

At a local level, local education authorities (LEAs) have provided inspection and advisory services to schools over many decades. However, their responsibilities for the quality of education provided in their schools was defined more precisely by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 which imposed a specific duty on every LEA to exercise their functions with a view to promoting high standards of education for pupils of school age in their area. This Act also introduced the requirement for LEAs to prepare an Education Development Plan, a strategic three-year plan which must set out the LEA's arrangements for monitoring its schools' performance.

School self-evaluation has taken on a higher profile over the past two decades, as legislative and policy changes have greatly increased the need for schools to take responsibility for their own improvement, and hence to assess for themselves how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. At the same time, there has been an increasing level of support for school self-evaluation from central government and from local education authorities.

10.1.2 England and Wales – further and adult education and training

New provisions for the inspection of further and adult education were introduced from April 2001 under the Learning and Skills Act 2000. Ofsted took over responsibility for inspecting further education provision of 16- to 19-year olds from the Further Education Funding Council for England.

Under the same Act, a new Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was created. The ALI is responsible for the inspection of provision for those aged 19 and over and also of work-based learning for those aged 16 and over, formerly within the remit of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) Inspectorate. Inspection of adult and community learning is now carried out by the ALI. Inspection of sixth-form colleges, further education colleges and tertiary colleges now falls within the remit of both inspectorates and is conducted jointly between Ofsted and the ALI.

Note: The Further Education Funding Councils for England was disbanded on 31 March 2001; see 6.1.

In April 2001, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the duty to inspect further education and training was transferred to Estyn, Her

Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, from the Further Education Funding Council for Wales.

Note: The Further Education Funding Council for Wales was disbanded on 31 March 2001; see 6.1.

10.1.3 Northern Ireland – schools, further education and training

In Northern Ireland, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) is a direct descendant of the schools inspectorate established in 1832 by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland. It is the sole body with responsibility to inspect and report on the quality of education and training. It inspects and reports on all grant-aided schools, independent schools, further education colleges, teacher training institutions, the youth service and on education provided in hospitals, prisons and youth custody centres. The power of inspection is contained in the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, as amended by the Education (NI) Order 1996. The power of inspection was extended in the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 to include a general duty to promote high educational standards. The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 introduced further amendments by involving lay persons in the inspection process. Since 1990, the ETI has also had responsibility for the inspection of Government-aided training organisations.

10.1.4 England, Wales and Northern Ireland – higher education

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 created a unified higher education sector in England and Wales and established the Higher Education Funding Councils for England and Wales to distribute funds to this sector. The funding councils were also required to assess the quality of provision. In Northern Ireland, this was the responsibility of the Department of Education, which had a service agreement with the Higher Education Funding Council for England. There was also an Academic Audit Unit set up by the UK universities to monitor quality. In 1996, a Joint Planning Group consisting of representatives of the funding councils and the higher education institutions recommended that a single agency should be established to rationalise quality assurance arrangements throughout the UK. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education was set up in the following year, funded by subscriptions from higher education institutions and through contracts with the main higher education funding bodies.

10.2 Institutional self-evaluation

Institutions at all levels of education have responsibilities for self-evaluation.

10.2.1 Pre-compulsory, primary and secondary education

There are differences in the responsibilities of individual institutions between England and Wales and Northern Ireland.

England and Wales

In England and Wales, school self-evaluation is seen as an essential part of the process of school improvement. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) summarises the essential steps of school evaluation and improvement (Ofsted, 1998a)[1] as:

- monitoring performance at all levels in the school;
- analysing whether standards are high enough throughout the school, with the help of comparative data from similar schools;
- evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, and other aspects of the school's provision, against national criteria, to diagnose strengths and weaknesses;
- planning what needs to be done to overcome weaknesses, and setting clear objectives and targets for improvement;
- acting on the findings of monitoring, evaluation and diagnosis to promote more effective teaching and learning through support and training.

The prime responsibility for institutional self-evaluation and school improvement lies with the school governing body and headteacher of each individual school. The professional staff of the school, in particular, the headteacher and senior management, need to know how well the school is performing in order to set objectives for improvement. They therefore need to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the work of the school. The school governing body also needs to have an overview of the performance and management of the school in order to perform its strategic role, and is expected to ensure that effective systems for monitoring and evaluation are in place. Therefore the governing body needs to be kept well-informed about school self-evaluation activities undertaken by the professional staff.

Headteachers are also responsible for monitoring and safeguarding proper standards of professional performance, including the management of teachers' performance (see 9.2.1d).

In England, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) recommends that school self-evaluation should be conducted annually in the interval between inspections. A guide for schools on self-evaluation, based on the inspection framework, has been published (Ofsted, 1998a)[1]. In Wales, Estyn: Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales has recently published proposals for consultation (Estyn, 2001)[2] which include a new emphasis on self-evaluation as the starting-point for external evaluation.

Performance indicators

Schools are expected to make use of the performance data made available to them. Each autumn, every school receives a package of centrally held information which is unique to the school. This package includes the Ofsted Performance and Assessment (PANDA) report. The data provided draws on inspection evidence, pupil performance information and contextual information. Estyn prepares similar sets of data for each school in Wales. Local education authorities also provide benchmark information for schools in their area. The combined information enables schools to understand what progress they are making, to compare the progress made by individual pupils with progress made by other pupils with similar prior attainment, and to compare their school's performance with that of schools in similar contexts (based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, an indicator which is used as a measure of disadvantage). In England, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is piloting the inclusion of measures of value added for schools, based on the progress made by individual pupils from one stage of their education to another.

Pupil performance targets

The Government sees the setting of clear objectives and targets for improvement as an important part of self-evaluation for all schools. Since September 1998, under the provisions of the Education Act 1997, schools have been required to set and publish pupil performance targets annually in the core subjects of the National Curriculum. The Government has published guidance to help schools set targets which are 'challenging yet realistic' (DfEE Circular 11/98; DfEE Guidance 0066/2001a.[3, 4]) The governing bodies of all maintained schools, including maintained special schools, with pupils at the appropriate ages, are required to set the following targets annually. They must publish the targets and the actual performance against those targets in their governors' annual report to parents. For England:

key stage 2:

- percentage of pupils attaining National Curriculum level 4 or above in English;
- percentage of pupils attaining level 4 or above in mathematics;

key stage 3:

- percentage of pupils attaining level 5 or above in English;
- percentage of pupils attaining level 5 or above in mathematics;
- percentage of pupils attaining level 5 or above in science;

key stage 4:

- percentage of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSE passes or equivalent at grades A*–C;
- percentage of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSE passes or equivalent at grades A*–G including English and mathematics; average GCSE passes (or equivalent) points score per pupil.

The statutory school target setting requirements now also apply to pupils with special educational needs. From December 2001, schools that set zero targets under the criteria specified (mainly special schools) have been required to set other measurable performance targets as appropriate. Guidance on target setting for pupils with special educational needs is available (DfEE, 2001b).[5] For Wales:

key stage 2:

- percentage of pupils attaining at least National Curriculum level 4 in the tests in each of English, Welsh (where it is the first language), mathematics and science;
- the difference in performance of boys and girls;

key stage 3:

- percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in the tests in English, Welsh (where it is the first language), mathematics and science;
- the difference in performance of boys and girls;

key stage 4:

- percentage of pupils gaining at least 5 GCSE passes grades A*–C, or the vocational equivalent;
- percentage of pupils gaining at least 5 GCSE passes grades A*–G, or the vocational equivalent;

- percentage of pupils achieving at least GCSE passes grade C in English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science in combination;
- percentage of pupils leaving school without a recognised qualification.

Targets cover a three-year period and are updated annually (NAfW, 2000).[6]

A range of information about individual institutions, including information on the performance of pupils and students in national assessments, is required by law to be made available to parents, prospective parents and the wider community; see 1.8.1b.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, school self-evaluation is seen as an essential part of the process of school improvement. The prime responsibility for institutional self-evaluation lies with the Board of Governors and headteacher of each individual school.

To support school self-evaluation, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has piloted quality assurance inspections in a small number of secondary schools. In the first instance, the school, as part of its normal work in self-evaluation, carries out an internal audit of a substantial part of its provision and produces a report containing recommendations and priorities for action. The school may then invite the Inspectorate to assess the efficacy of its internal quality assurance procedures and to comment on the validity of the outcomes. A published report on the Inspectorate's findings is distributed to parents.

The Education (Target-Setting in Schools) Regulations were introduced in September 1998 under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, and require schools to set targets for literacy and numeracy. Boards of Governors are currently required to set the following targets for the end of each key stage:

- Key stage 1: the proportion of pupils which should be achieving level 2 (or above) and level 3 (or above) of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, in English and mathematics (in the case of an Irish-speaking school, in Irish and mathematics).
- Key stage 2: the proportion of pupils which should be achieving level 4 (or above) and level 5 (or above) of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, in English and mathematics (in the case of an Irish-speaking school, in Irish, English and mathematics).

- Key stage 3: the proportion of pupils which should be achieving level 5 (or above) and level 6 (or above) of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, in English and mathematics.
- Key stage 4 (secondary schools which are not grammar schools): the proportion of Year 12 pupils which should be achieving one or more GCSEs, or an equivalent vocational qualification; five or more GCSEs at grades A*-G, or Foundation GNVQ or NVQ level 1; five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, or Intermediate GNVQ or NVQ level 2.
- Key stage 4 (grammar schools): the proportion of Year 12 pupils which should be achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, or Intermediate GNVQ or NVQ level 2.
- Post compulsory secondary education (secondary schools which are not grammar schools): the proportion of Year 14 pupils which should be achieving two or more GCE A-levels at grades A–E or equivalent, or Advanced GNVQ or NVQ level 3.
- Post compulsory secondary education (grammar schools): the proportion of Year 14 pupils which should be achieving two or more GCE A-levels at grades A–E or equivalent, or Advanced GNVQ or NVQ level 3 and three or more GCE A-levels at grades A–C.

As in England and Wales, benchmarking information is made available to schools to support development planning and target setting. Guidance on development planning (DENI, 1998)[7] and target setting for primary and post-primary schools has been issued (DE, Circular 2001/10).[8]

A range of information about individual schools is required by law to be made available to parents, prospective parents, and the wider community. Further information is provided in 1.8.1b.

10.2.2 Further education

England

The primary responsibility for improving the quality of provision lies with further education institutions which are autonomous, self-governing institutions. However, the Adult Learning Inspectorate and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) expect colleges to regularly evaluate all aspects of their provision and seek to improve its quality continuously. Self-assessment is seen as part of a process of continuous improvement:

- self-assessment;
- development-planning and target-setting;
- monitoring and reviewing the extent to which plans are achieved and targets are met;

- sharing good practice;
- external inspection.

Colleges are required to carry out an annual self-assessment report. The requirements for self-assessment are set out in *Raising Standards in Post 16 Learning: Self Assessment and Development Plans* (DfEE, 2001c).[9] There is no prescribed method for carrying out self-assessment, but institutions must produce a self-assessment report which meets LSC requirements, makes judgements against the quality statements in the *Common Inspection Framework* and identifies strengths and weaknesses. They must produce a development plan that shows how they will address the issues identified and build on strengths. They must also set realistic targets, such as those for learners' retention, achievement, etc., and monitor and review whether planned actions lead to the required improvements. The effectiveness of the provider's self-assessment process and development planning are taken into consideration by the LSC when making funding decisions.

The requirement to produce an annual self-assessment report applies also to all providers of adult and community learning (which may be provided directly by LEAs or secured by them under contract from further education colleges, community groups and voluntary organisations).

For information about the performance indicators which individual institutions are required by law to make available see section 1.8.2.

Wales

As in England, further education institutions are autonomous, self-governing institutions and the primary responsibility for improving the quality of provision lies with the institutions. However, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) expect the institutions which it funds to develop their own quality management systems to ensure continuous improvement and achieve and maintain high standards.

Also, as in England, a range of performance indicators are required by law to be made available; see section 1.8.2.

Northern Ireland

From 1999 onwards, evaluation of the effectiveness of a college's self-evaluation arrangements has formed an important part of external inspections. Colleges may devise their own arrangements in accordance with their own priorities, but are expected to work within a framework which supports external inspection. The expectations of the Education

and Training Inspectorate (ETI) with respect to self-evaluation are set out in more detail in a recent ETI publication (ETI, 2001). [10]

A range of information about individual colleges is required by law to be made available to students, prospective students and the wider community. Further information is provided in 1.8.2.

10.2.3 Higher education

Higher education institutions in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are autonomous self-governing institutions. Each is responsible for the quality and standards of its academic programmes and awards. Each has its own internal procedures for assuring and enhancing the quality of its provision, and for satisfying itself that appropriate standards are attained.

In particular, most institutions carry out both regular monitoring and periodic review of programmes.

Monitoring considers how effectively a programme achieves its stated aims, and the success of students in attaining the intended learning outcomes. It is usually undertaken by the department which provides the programme and often involves a programme team appraising its own performance, at the end of an academic year. The process may take into account reports from external examiners, staff and student feedback, reports from any professional body that accredits the programme and feedback from former students and their employers. It may result in adjustments to the curriculum or to assessment, to ensure continued effectiveness.

Review is normally an institutional process, carried out, typically, every five years, and often involving external experts. It looks at whether the aims and intended learning outcomes set for a programme are still valid. It is likely to take into account:

- the cumulative effect of changes made over time, as a result of regular monitoring, to the design and operation of the programme;
- current research, practice in the application of knowledge in the discipline and technological advances;
- changes to external points of reference, such as qualifications frameworks, subject benchmark statements or professional body requirements;
- changes in student demand, employer expectations and employment opportunities.

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) has produced a *Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education* (QAA, 1999)[11] which sets out system-wide expectations covering matters relating to the management of academic quality and standards in higher education. The QAA has also produced subject benchmark statements which represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in a particular subject area. Institutions are expected to use these subject statements to inform decisions about the intended outcomes of programmes and to evaluate the overall demands of the assessment framework (QAA, 2000).[12]

The outcomes of institutional self-evaluation form a central part of external evaluation procedures. Guidance on the preparation of self-evaluation documents is provided in the annexes to the *Handbook for Academic Review* (QAA, 2000).[12]

10.3 Evaluation at local level

Arrangements for evaluation at local level do not exist for all phases of education.

10.3.1 Pre-compulsory, primary and secondary education

This section focuses on the local education authorities in England and Wales, which have a responsibility for the quality of education provided in their establishments and an obligation to support educational improvement and high standards of achievement (see also 1.5.1d).

The Education and Library Boards (Boards) in Northern Ireland have a responsibility for the provision of primary and secondary education, and for the accountability of resources spent. However, they do not have the same obligations and powers with respect to quality as do LEAs in England and Wales.

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 placed a new duty on LEAs to promote high standards in schools. A key mechanism for LEAs to meet this requirement is through Education Development Plans (EDPs) in England, and Education Strategic Plans (ESP) in Wales.

As part of their responsibility to raise standards of achievement, LEAs provide inspection and advisory services. These services provide advice and consultancy to help schools to analyse their current standards

and the factors which influence them in order to identify effective ways of improving; to keep in touch with good and developing practice; and to set targets and to plan for development. The staff of LEA inspection and advisory services may specialise in a particular phase (such as pre-school education), a curricular area (such as modern languages) or service-wide policy (such as equal opportunities). In many LEAs, each school is allocated a particular adviser/inspector – often known as a link adviser – whose role is to develop a clear understanding of the performance of the school and to provide appropriate advice in respect of areas which need improvement.

LEAs are expected to monitor schools' performance through the analysis of information about standards and other aspects of school performance already available to LEAs, and through the examination of school development plans and post-inspection action plans. They also collect information through direct observation of schools' activity through visits by their own inspection and advisory services, and through judgements made by schools' own self-evaluation.

LEAs are expected to identify schools which are underachieving, low-attaining or otherwise giving cause for concern and to take a more active role in relation to these schools. LEAs are expected to work with schools causing concern to bring about the necessary improvements.

Where the LEA is concerned that a school is at risk of failing its pupils, it has certain powers of intervention. Under Section 25 of the School Inspections Act 1996, LEAs may carry out an inspection of any school it maintains in order to gather the information it requires to carry out its functions, provided that it is not practicable to obtain the information in any other manner. Where, as a result of such an inspection, or as a result of information from other sources, the LEA discovers that there are concerns about the conduct or organisation of a school, it can issue a warning notice to the governing body (Section 15, School Standards and Framework Act 1998). A warning notice can only be issued where: the LEA is satisfied that the standards of performance of pupils at the school are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so unless intervention occurs; there has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing, or likely to prejudice, standards of performance; or when the safety of staff of the school is threatened (whether by breakdown of discipline or otherwise). The LEA must have previously informed the governing body and the headteacher of the matters on which their conclusions are based and, subsequently, the matters have not been remedied to the LEA's satisfaction. The LEA's ability to use intervention powers also arises in two other situations, where, following an inspection by Ofsted or Estyn:

Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales under the Schools Inspection Act 1996, a school has been judged to have 'serious weaknesses' or requires 'special measures' (see 10.4.1a).

An LEA may suspend financial delegation at a school which has been identified by an inspection as requiring special measures, or having serious weaknesses, or to which a warning notice has been issued. It has the power to withdraw the school's delegated budget, where it appears that the governors have failed to comply with requirements of the funding scheme or have not managed the school's budget in a satisfactory manner.

Guidance on the role of LEAs in supporting school improvement and their powers of intervention, where necessary, is set out in the *Code of Practice on LEA-School Relations* (DfEE, 2001),[13] and the equivalent Welsh guidance (NAfW, 2001),[14] and in *Schools Causing Concern* (DfEE, 1999).[15]

LEA officers may also tender to conduct school inspections under the School Inspections Act 1996 (see 10.4.1a). LEA officers leading such an inspection must be registered inspectors. These services are expected to be self-financing.

10.3.2 Further education

England and Wales

Local education authorities provide adult and community learning (see 6.5.4). Therefore, in this area, LEAs are responsible for keeping under review the quality of education provided, the educational standards achieved and whether the financial resources made available are managed efficiently. In order to carry out this duty, LEAs have the power to conduct inspections either by their own staff or by qualified persons hired under contract.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 has brought about a measure of local level evaluation, as the new bodies created under the Act — the Learning and Skills Council for England and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (National Council – ELWa) — operate through local arms: local learning and skills councils in England and regional committees and community consortia for education and training (CCETs) in Wales (see 1.4.3a). These local arms and CCETs are expected to monitor the providers they fund directly to confirm that they are meeting the terms of their delivery agreements and that public money is spent only for the purposes intended.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the evaluation of further education institutions is the responsibility of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). There is no regional-level or local-level evaluation of these institutions.

10.3.3 Higher education

The evaluation of higher education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is undertaken at institutional and at national level. There is no regional, provincial or local authority with any responsibilities in this area.

10.4 Evaluation at national level

In addition to the arrangements which are outlined in the following paragraphs, *ad hoc* Parliamentary Committees, or Committees of Inquiry, may be set up from time to time to investigate, report and make recommendations on various aspects of education, which may be of particular interest or giving concern. These may be major inquiries involving a large committee for several years, or short-term inquiries, involving a small team of people for a shorter period.

10.4.1 Pre-compulsory, primary and secondary education

The principal bodies responsible for inspection are: Ofsted (England), Estyn: Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, and the Education and Training Inspectorate (Northern Ireland); see 1.4.6.

England and Wales

There are different inspection arrangements in operation for pre-primary education depending on the status and funding of the provider.

(i) Inspection of nursery education (England and Wales)

The inspection of maintained nursery schools and nursery classes within primary schools is covered by the arrangements for the inspection of schools (see below).

This section sets out the arrangements for the inspection of nursery education settings in the private, voluntary and independent sectors that receive Government funding though the Nursery Education Grant. The inspection of these settings is governed by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Act requires Her Majesty's Chief Inspectors to keep the Secretary of State in England and the National Assembly for Wales informed about:

- the quality and standards of nursery education; and
- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children for whom nursery education is provided.

The inspections programme is contracted out and undertaken by Registered Nursery Inspectors (RgNIs) trained and registered by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in England, and Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales.

Under the new inspection framework for nursery education settings in the private, voluntary and independent sectors in receipt of Nursery Education Grant (Ofsted, 2000),[16] inspectors must evaluate and report on:

- the effectiveness of the setting, how it has improved since the last inspection, what it does well and what it needs to improve;
- how well three- and four-year-olds are learning overall and in relation to the official early learning goals;
- how well the children are taught;
- the effectiveness of the partnership with parents and carers; and
- specific matters which the pre-school setting must include in its post-inspection plan.

In Wales, inspectors must evaluate and report on a similar range of issues (OHMCI, 1999a).[17]

Under the Care Standards Act 2000, from September 2001, Ofsted took over the responsibility for registering and inspecting all providers of early years care and education in England from local authorities. This change, from a local service to a national service, aims to improve the coherence and consistency within which childminders, playgroups and private nurseries work. From September 2002, in England, a new body of childcare inspectors will become responsible for inspecting both the childcare and education aspects of private, voluntary and independent pre-school provision.

In Wales, although Estyn continues to inspect the educational aspects of provision in pre-school institutions in receipt of Nursery Education Grant, following the passing of the Care Standards Act 2000, the National Assembly is reviewing the arrangements for the inspection of care and safety aspects.

(ii) School inspections (England and Wales)

The arrangements described in this section apply to all maintained schools (including maintained nursery schools, primary schools,

secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units), city technology colleges, city colleges for the technology of the arts, and non-maintained special schools. All provision in such schools is inspected, including any provision for pupils below compulsory school age and above compulsory school age.

The inspection cycle

The Education (Schools) Act 1992 and Part V of the Education Act 1993 (now consolidated into the School Inspections Act 1996) introduced the current system of school inspections. Under this system, schools are subject to a regular cycle of inspections, carried out by teams of independent inspectors under contract to the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in England and Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. This system of inspection was implemented in secondary schools with effect from September 1993, and in primary and special schools from September 1994. The first inspection cycle has been completed, and schools are now subject to full inspections at least once within a six-year period. In planning the inspection programme for each school year, Her Majesty's Chief Inspectors HMCI (see 1.4.6) aim to balance the sample of schools geographically, for size of school, and for performance (as judged by previous inspections).

From January 2000, a revised inspection regime came into effect in England. The key element of the new arrangements is the introduction of short inspections for the most effective schools, involving smaller inspection teams and shorter visits. To qualify for a short inspection, schools will need to satisfy the following criteria:

- very favourable findings from the previous inspection;
- data to show that results have improved at a better than average rate;
- high results in end of key stage tests, and/or GCSE results in English, mathematics and science.

The new arrangements will also reduce the notice given to schools prior to inspection visits from two terms to between six and ten weeks.

Inspection teams

In full inspections, the size of the inspection team varies from two in the smallest primary school to about 15 in large secondary schools. In short or 'light-touch' inspections (England only), all teams are small, ranging from two to five.

Regular school inspections are conducted not by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), but by independent inspection teams operating under contract to Ofsted and Estyn. Contracts for batches of school inspections are bid for competitively by inspection contractors, which may be either private companies or LEA divisions.

Inspection contractors are responsible for recruiting registered and team inspectors to undertake each school inspection. The registered inspector (RgI) is responsible under the law for conducting the inspection and for the report. He or she is responsible for selecting and leading a team of one or more enrolled inspectors. The inspection team must include at least one Lay Inspector, who must have no personal experience of any significance in the management of any school or the provision of education in any school, except as a governor or acting in any other voluntary capacity (School Inspection Act 1996, Schedule 3). Enrolled team inspectors (other than Lay Inspectors) must have at least five years' professional experience in schools and two years' experience of management. They then undergo a taught course provided by Ofsted or Estyn licensed training providers and must successfully complete Ofsted or Estyn's final assessment in order to become an enrolled inspector. In order to become a registered inspector, applicants must first gain experience as an enrolled inspector and then be nominated by the contractor for whom they work. After successfully completing a planned programme of preparation and training covering the prescribed syllabus, or otherwise having acquired equivalent experience, applicants are formally assessed by Ofsted or Estyn.

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) has the following responsibilities with regard to the members of school inspection teams:

- approving the training of registered inspectors, enrolled team inspectors and Lay Inspectors;
- establishing and maintaining a register of 'fit and proper persons' who may conduct inspections under the School Inspections Act 1996; HMCI can impose general or specific conditions on an inspector's registration;
- giving guidance to registered inspectors on inspection and reporting; this guidance focuses on the use of the Framework for Inspection, but also gives advice on a very wide range of technical and qualitative issues arising from inspection; and
- monitoring the way in which inspections are carried out to ensure that high standards are maintained.

Estyn has comparable responsibilities with respect to inspection teams in Wales.

Framework for inspection

The system of inspection complements institutional self-evaluation, by means of systematic inspections of each school's performance, individually, and in relation to other schools. Inspections also explore the factors influencing the school's performance and identify any action needed for improvement. Inspections are conducted in accordance with the statutory Frameworks for Inspection (Ofsted, 1999b; Estyn, 2000)[18, 19] which all inspectors must be trained to use. The purpose of the Frameworks is to secure consistency, comparability and a high standard of school inspections. They require inspectors to report on:

- the quality of education provided by the school;
- the educational standards achieved in the school;
- whether the financial resources made available to the school are managed efficiently; and
- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school.

Separate guidance is published on how to apply the framework to specific types of schools, including nursery schools, primary schools (Ofsted, 1999c),[20] secondary schools (Ofsted, 1999d),[21] school sixth forms (Ofsted, 2001),[22] and special schools and pupil referral units (Ofsted, 1999e).[23]

Prior to each inspection, the registered inspector meets parents of pupils registered at the school to brief them about the inspection and to listen to their views about the school. The inspection team spends a minimum number of inspection days in the school (based on the inspection specification).

Inspection outcomes

The registered inspector must produce a report of the inspection and a summary within six weeks of the inspection. In Wales, if a report has to be produced bilingually, seven weeks are allowed. The registered inspector must send copies of the report and the summary to:

- the school's governing body;
- Ofsted (in England) or Estyn (in Wales);
- the LEA; and
- those who appoint the Foundation Governors (if any).

Inspection reports are public documents and the governing body must make arrangements for the dissemination of the summary and of the full report to designated individuals and bodies. Copies of the full report must be made available on request. In England, inspection reports are also made available to the wider community via Ofsted's website (see list of useful websites).

The appropriate authority – usually the school governing body – must prepare an Action Plan within 40 working days of receipt of the inspection report. In Wales, if the Action Plan is to be produced in Welsh and English, 45 days are allowed. The Action Plan must set out what the authority proposes to do in the light of the report's findings, together with the time-scale and the person responsible for monitoring such action. The Action Plan must be sent, within five days of its completion, to parents and other bodies designated in the regulations.

Governing bodies must address any weaknesses identified in the inspection report in accordance with the Action Plan, and they must report on progress at their annual meeting with parents.

For some schools, the inspection judgement triggers additional procedures.

England

The school may be judged to fall into one of the following categories:

- The school is failing, or likely to fail, to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and thus to require special measures. If the independent inspection team reaches this judgement, then HMI may make a visit to the school in order that this judgement may be corroborated. If the judgement is corroborated, further legislation comes into operation. The LEA has to support the school and prepare its own commentary on the school's action plan and a statement of the action the LEA itself intends to take. The progress of the school will also be monitored by HMI. If sufficient progress is made, a further inspection by HMI will take the school out of special measures. If not, a failing school, which persistently demonstrates a lack of improvement, may be closed down. This may mean either outright closure, or a 'Fresh Start' in which a school is closed down and a new school with a new name and new management is opened on the same site.
- Since September 1997, inspectors have been required to judge whether a school has 'serious weaknesses', even though the standard of education provided by the school is still judged overall

to be acceptable. Ofsted assesses the school action plan and the LEA's statement of action in support of the school. HMI may visit to assess progress in the implementation of the school's action plan, and lack of progress may result in the school being put into special measures.

- A school may be judged to be underachieving, that is its performance is below that expected of schools in similar circumstances. Ofsted assesses the school action plan and continues to monitor the school's progress. An underachieving school can expect to have its next inspection about two years after the inspection that designated it as underachieving.

DfEE Circular 6/99[15] explains the procedures which must be followed in relation to schools causing concern.

Wales

In Wales, schools which, following an inspection, are judged to be failing, or likely to fail to give pupils an adequate standard of education, are closely monitored by a team of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). When the inspectors consider that sufficient progress has been made, the school is removed from the list of schools requiring special measures. The National Assembly for Wales reserves the right to close down failing schools in the event of persistent lack of improvement.

(iii) Future arrangements for inspection

England

Ofsted is currently reviewing arrangements for school inspections with a view to introducing new arrangements from September 2003. The proposed changes aim to develop the school inspection arrangements in England to be:

- more responsive to the different circumstances and priorities of schools, and the policies of government;
- more supportive of school improvement;
- better informed about the views of pupils, parents and the wider community; and
- better coordinated with other inspection and monitoring activity.

Wales

Arrangements for school inspections are also under review in Wales. Estyn has recently published proposals for consultation (Estyn, 2001a).[24] Proposals include: a new emphasis on self-evaluation as the starting-point for external evaluation; 'lighter-touch' inspection for more

successful schools; the possible introduction of a requirement to include serving practitioners (for example, headteachers) in the inspection team; a reduction in the notice period for schools (at present this can be up to a year); and building more opportunities for dialogue between the inspectors and the school, for example, by inviting schools to nominate a member of staff to be part of the inspection team. There are also proposals to introduce a common inspection framework for all phases of education (Estyn, 2001b).[25]

Northern Ireland

In contrast to England and Wales, where independent inspection teams tender for the inspection of individual schools, inspection remains within the Department of Education.

The individuals and agencies involved in the evaluation of education in schools in Northern Ireland are:

- the Chief Inspector of the Education and Training Inspectorate in Northern Ireland (see 1.4.6d);
- the Education and Training Inspectorate in Northern Ireland;
- the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Assessment and Examinations (CCEA) (see 1.4.4c); and
- *ad hoc* committees, which may be convened by the Department of Education from time to time.

(i) Inspection of nursery education (Northern Ireland)

The inspection of grant-aided (publicly funded) nursery schools and nursery units within primary schools is covered by the arrangements for the inspection of schools (see below).

There are different arrangements for the inspection of pre-school education funded through the 'Pre-school Education Development Plan' of an Education and Library Board; see 3.2.2. Inspection is organised by the Education and Training Inspectorate in collaboration with HSS (Health and Social Security) Trusts' Registration and Inspection Officers (RIOS). Providers are expected to follow the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) *Curricular Guidance for Pre-school Education* (CCEA, 1997);[26] see 3.7.2.

(ii) School inspections

Inspection in schools normally takes one of the following forms:

- a general inspection, which evaluates the main aspects of a school's work, taking account of its individual circumstances and conditions,

and establishing whether the quality of education and standards of achievement are as high as they should be;

- a focused inspection, which takes in one or more aspects of the school's work, for example, subjects or areas of study, or issues which have been identified as causing concern;
- a quality assurance inspection, which may be requested by the Board of Governors and is intended to support schools' self-evaluation and improvement;
- a district inspection, led by the district inspector who has special responsibility for the school; the inspection may concentrate on a particular theme;
- a two-part focused inspection, post-primary schools only; including some whole-school issues as well as an evaluation of the quality of provision within a sample of subjects;
- an unannounced inspection, which focuses on pastoral care;
- a joined-up inspection, in conjunction with the Health and Social Services Registration and Inspection Unit, evaluating the quality of the school's provision for pastoral care and including child protection.

Each school is normally inspected at least once every seven years.

The inspection team is led by the Reporting Inspector, and may include a lay person who represents the public, and receives no payment. The lay person brings an additional impartial view to aspects of a school's work such as the degree to which the views of parents are taken into account. Lay persons have no responsibility for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Inspection teams may also include serving headteachers or vice-principals as associate assessors.

Before any general inspection, the Reporting Inspector meets with parents to explain the purpose of the inspection and to listen to the parents' views about the school. The school is asked to provide some basic information on aspects of organisation and assessment outcomes.

The inspection of the school looks at specific indicators grouped under the following headings:

- the ethos of the school;
- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the quality of management.

In reflecting upon the quality of teaching and learning, the inspection team takes into account the context of the school, the development plan to which it is working – including the targets it has set for itself – and relevant factual information, for example, information on attendance and examination performance. After completion of the inspection, the Reporting Inspector meets the principal and the Board of Governors. The Reporting Inspector informs the Board of Governors of the nature of the follow-up action to be taken. As soon as possible after the spoken report to the Governors, the Reporting Inspector prepares a written report of the inspection which includes a summary of the main findings of the inspection. Within three months of receiving the report of a general inspection, the Board of Governors is required, if necessary, to submit to the Department of Education a written response outlining the action that has been taken – or planned – to address the issues in the report. About one year after the publication of a general inspection report on a school, the ETI conducts a follow-up inspection to assess the progress that has been made on the main issues identified in the report.

ETI reports on the education system, including reports of school inspections, are published. Inspection reports for general inspections, focused inspections and district inspections are also available at the Department of Education's website (see list of useful websites).

Further details of the school inspection process have been issued (DENI. ETI, 1998a, 1998b).[27, 28]

10.4.2 Further education

Arrangements for evaluation at national level vary between England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

England

a) Curriculum and assessment

The remit of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), to promote quality and coherence in both education and training, also covers the further education sector (see 1.4.4a).

b) Provision for 16- to 19-year-olds

In April 2001, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) took over responsibility for inspecting further education provision of 16- to 19-year-olds from the Further Education Funding Council for England. Inspections are conducted using the *Common Inspection Framework* (ALI. Ofsted, 2001).[29] (See below for further details of the inspection process.)

As well as inspecting individual institutions, Ofsted reviews the overall planning of education and training provision for post-16 learners through its area-wide inspection reports.

The arrangements for school sixth forms are unchanged; they continue to be inspected by Ofsted under the provisions of the School Inspections Act 1996; see 10.4.1a.

Note: The Further Education Funding Council for England was disbanded on 31 March 2001; see 6.1.

c) Adult education, training and guidance

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) now has responsibility for the inspection of:

- further education for people aged 19 or over, which is funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or an LEA;
- training provided wholly or partly on employers' premises for people aged over 16, which is wholly or partly funded by the LSC;
- training funded (through the Employment Service, an executive Agency of the Department for Work and Pensions) under the Employment and Training Act, including the New Deals;
- training offered and funded by employers, at the invitation and expense of the employer.

See 1.4.6b for other functions for the ALI in 2001–02:

Where the remits of the ALI and Ofsted overlap, a joint inspection is carried out. This is the case for many general further education and tertiary colleges and for some sixth form and specialist colleges. Joint inspections are under the direction of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, conducted by a single team agreed by the ALI and Ofsted. Most college inspections are led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted. An inspector from the ALI leads the inspection of those colleges with mainly adult learners, assisted by an HMI.

Inspections of further education institutions are planned to suit the circumstances and size of the providers. Most inspections involve teams of between two and 10 inspectors. Each inspection is led by a full-time inspector who is supported by an assistant lead inspector. Institutions are normally given between six to 12 weeks' notice of inspection. Most inspections take place over one week, but some may take longer in order to cover the provision satisfactorily. Inspectors' judgements are based on evidence. Types of evidence include observations of learning, interviews with learners and providers' staff, and documentary evidence, such as that relating to training, assessment, verification and awards.

Inspections are conducted using the *Common Inspection Framework* (ALI. Ofsted, 2001).[29] This *Framework* is designed be flexible enough to accommodate a diverse range of programmes and contexts. It aims to focus on the individual learner's experience and achievements rather than organisational aspects. It sets out the principles of inspection, which are concerned with what is evaluated and reported and how inspections are carried out. Inspectors should assess the following areas:

- achievement of learners;
- effectiveness of teaching, training and learning;
- how achievement and learning are affected by resources;
- effectiveness of the assessment and monitoring of learning;
- how well programmes and courses meet the needs and interests of learners;
- how well learners are guided and supported;
- effectiveness of leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners.

Inspection judgements lead to grades, which are assigned according to the grading scales published by the two inspectorates. Summary grades about the quality of provision in curriculum or occupational areas and about the quality of leadership and management are made using a five-point scale, where 1 is the highest grade and 5 is the poorest. Inspectors use a seven-point scale (where 1 is the highest grade and 7 is the poorest) to summarise their judgements about the quality of the learning sessions which they observe.

The inspection leads to a report which is published and available on the ALI or the Ofsted websites as appropriate (see list of useful websites).

Where inadequate or weak provision is identified, the inspectorates offer advice to the funding body on whether the provider's action plan adequately addresses the weaknesses identified during the inspection. Where an inspection results in a third or more of curriculum or occupational areas and/or leadership and management being graded 4 or 5, the entire provision will be deemed to be inadequate and will be reinspected. Where less than a third of the curriculum or occupational areas offered by a provider are graded 4 or 5, then only these areas will be reinspected. All reinspections are normally carried out within two years of the original inspection.

To complement the system of inspection described above, which focuses on the learner's experience and achievements, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) also reviews the performance of the further

education providers it funds. The purpose of these reviews is to assess provider performance as a whole, to establish progress against requirements of the funding agreements and to encourage continuous improvement in the quality of provision. The reviews, which are carried out by the LSC three times a year, take account of a wide range of evidence about providers, drawn from self-assessment reports, progress on development plans, performance data, reports from awarding bodies, the monitoring of financial management and inspection findings. The findings are used to identify those providers who need help and support and whose performance gives cause for concern and the use of special measures. The LSC also plans to take findings from the reviews into account when deciding on intervention to reward providers or to evoke sanctions against them.

d) Connexions strategy

The inspection of the Connexions Strategy (a guidance service for 13- to 19-year-olds; see 1.9.1a) is the responsibility of Ofsted.

e) Access courses

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) (see 1.4.6e) is responsible for the oversight of access courses (see 6.8.4).

Wales

The remit of the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) to ensure quality and standards in external general and vocational qualifications also covers further education; see 1.4.4b.

In April 2001, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the duty to inspect further education and training was transferred from the Further Education Funding Council for Wales to Estyn: Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. The role of the Chief Inspector in Wales is similar to that performed by both the Chief Inspector of Schools and the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning in England, but he or she reports to the National Assembly for Wales.

Estyn's remit includes the responsibility for inspecting Government-funded training, including the New Deals (see 6.8), careers companies (see 1.9.2) and adult education centres.

In Wales, arrangements are under review. Estyn has recently published proposals for consultation (Estyn, 2001a)[24], which include the introduction of a common inspection framework for all phases of education (Estyn, 2001b)[25].

The National Council – ELWA (see 1.4.3a) has responsibilities for the quality assurance of the provision and services it funds which complement Estyn's inspection responsibilities. The National Council – ELWa aims to assess colleges' effectiveness using a range of sources of evidence. It sets out its role in quality assurance in circular NC/C/01/09/Q1.[30]

As in England, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) (see 1.4.6e) is responsible for the oversight of access course (see 6.8.4).

Note: The Further Education Funding Council for Wales was disbanded on 31 March 2001; see 6.1.

Northern Ireland

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 defined the responsibilities of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) throughout the education service.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) assesses the vocational education and training of young people and adults in grant-aided training organisations, and reports on these to the Training and Employment Agency for Northern Ireland, now a business unit of the Department for Employment and Leaning (DEL); see 1.4.2c.

The ETI also inspects further education colleges. There are normally two types of inspection: extended and focused. An extended inspection covering all or the significant aspects of provision and management is carried out once every eight years. A focused inspection on an aspect of provision is carried out at least once every four years.

Inspection teams are led by a Reporting Inspector, and may include associate assessors drawn from other colleges working alongside ETI staff.

From 1999 onwards, colleges' self-evaluation arrangements have formed an important part of external inspections.

When making judgements about the quality of provision, inspectors look at quality indicators in the following areas:

- curriculum;
- quality of learning;
- standards and outcomes;

- student support;
- management;
- staffing; and
- physical resources.

Each aspect of the provision is graded on a four-point scale.

All ETI reports on the education system, including reports of institutional inspections, are published. Depending on the outcome of the inspection, the inspectorate may carry out a follow-up inspection within 12–24 months to assess the progress made in addressing the main issues identified in the report.

10.4.3 Higher education

There are different systems for evaluating the quality of education in higher education institutions, and for evaluating the quality of research. The evaluation of initial teacher training is subject to different requirements from the evaluation of other forms of higher education.

a) External review

The higher education funding bodies have a statutory responsibility to secure that provision is made for assessing the quality of education they fund. The main purposes of this statutory assessment are:

- to secure value from public investment, by ensuring that all education for which funding is provided is of approved quality, and by encouraging speedy rectification of major shortcomings in the quality of education, and to enable judgements to inform funding should the funding council so decide;
- to encourage improvements in the quality of education through the publication of subject review reports and subject overview reports, and through the sharing of best practice; and
- to provide, through the publication of reports, effective and accessible public information on the quality of higher education.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) acts on behalf of the UK higher education funding bodies in respect of the assessment of the quality of education. The QAA was set up in 1997 as an independent body funded by subscriptions from universities and colleges of higher education, as well as through contracts with the funding bodies. Its remit included the rationalisation of the existing systems of external scrutiny of higher education in the UK (which included institutional academic audit and subject review) and the establishment of an integrated quality assurance service.

In April 2000, the QAA reached agreement with the higher education funding bodies and the bodies representing higher education institutions on the introduction of a new, integrated system of academic review. The new method was introduced as planned in Scotland in October 2000, and implementation across the rest of the UK was planned for January 2002.

However, during 2001, the Secretary of State asked the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to discuss with the QAA and bodies representing higher education institutions ways to introduce lighter touch arrangements for external evaluation in England. As a result of this, a fundamental reassessment of the previously agreed system of academic review was begun, and a new process was designed. Details of the new system were published in March 2002.

The new system will use independent audits to ensure that higher education institutions are managing their own academic quality and standards properly, and are providing useful, reliable and up-to-date information to students and other key stakeholders. There will also be full reviews of any subjects where there is evidence of a cause for serious concern. The new system will be introduced in England from the end of 2002. The key features of the new system are:

- A six-year cycle of institutional audit visits undertaken by a QAA audit team made up of senior academics; during the six-year cycle, each higher education institution will make available a range of up-to-date information on quality and standards (the requirements set nationally) and will conduct internal monitoring involving external reviewers; at the three-year midpoint of the cycle, QAA will review progress in each institution.
- The visits will examine how effectively institutions are assuring their own quality and standards, through scrutiny of materials and discussions with staff and students; they will assess how quality assurance processes are working in practice by detailed examination of a sample of discipline areas; and they will review the information published by the institution on quality and standards.
- Students will contribute to the audit process at all stages; student surveys will be undertaken at institutional and at national level; a HEFCE-managed project will provide advice on both levels, reporting by the end of October 2002.

Where the auditors find matters which require urgent attention, an action plan will be required which will be closely monitored. In cases of particular concern, further detailed scrutiny will be undertaken – either at the discipline level by subject specialists, or by a further institutional audit visit by the QAA within a year.

- Audit reports will be made public; External Examiner summary reports, incorporating their key judgements, will also be published.

The new arrangements apply only in England: in **Wales** and **Northern Ireland**, the future form of external evaluation has not yet been decided.

Professional and statutory bodies continue to accredit academic programmes for the purpose of granting licences to practise in the fields for which they are responsible. For example, the British Psychological Society accredits programmes leading to an honours degree in psychology, and graduates of accredited programmes are eligible to become members of the society.

b) Inspection of teacher training

Initial teacher training in England is inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). Inspections are conducted in accordance with the *Framework for the Assessment of Quality and Standards in Initial Teacher Training* (Ofsted, 1998b).[31] This sets out the following three areas for the assessment of quality and standards:

- quality of trainees' teaching against national standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS);
- quality of training and assessment of trainees;
- selection and quality of trainee intake.

The different aspects of each of the three areas are graded on a four-point scale. The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) is required to have regard to this inspection evidence when allocating funds and student numbers to institutions providing initial teacher training.

A consultation paper issued in July 2001 by Ofsted and the TTA set out proposals designed to achieve a substantial reduction in the burden of inspection on initial teacher training providers from 2002/03. A report on the consultation is available (TTA. Ofsted, 2002).[32]

In Wales, Estyn has similar responsibilities with respect to providers of initial teacher training in Wales, as does the Education and Training Inspectorate in Northern Ireland.

c) Evaluation of research

The evaluation of research in higher education institutions is carried out by means of the research assessment exercise (RAE). The main purpose of the RAE is to enable the higher education funding bodies to distribute public funds for research selectively, on the basis of quality. As well as

informing the funding decisions of higher education funding councils, RAE results can guide funding decisions for industry and commerce, charities and other organisations that sponsor research. The process also aids universities and colleges when they develop and manage research strategies.

The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is carried out every four to five years and is administered by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) on behalf of all the UK funding bodies. In the context of the RAE, research is defined as 'original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding'. The RAE does not review the quality of taught programmes of study. Research assessments are made through peer review by panel members selected for their eminence and experience as practising researchers in their subject. Institutions may submit research outputs, which may be publications, products or even artistic performances. Quality ratings are judged against standards of national and international excellence. The panels rate each department's research on a seven-point scale: 5* at the top, then 5, 4, 3a, 3b, 2 and 1.

The results of the RAE are published to provide public information on the quality of research in higher education institutions throughout the UK. They are also available on the Internet, on the RAE website (see list of useful websites).

10.5 Educational research

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) funds educational research projects related to policy-making. The National Assembly for Wales and the Department of Education in Northern Ireland also fund educational research. Government agencies such as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) also commission research relating to their specific fields of interest. Local education authorities commission research both individually and as part of a common research programme under the auspices of the Local Government Association (LGA). The Economic and Social Research Council is a major sponsor of educational research carried out by universities.

Educational research is carried out by higher education institutions, research bodies such as the National Foundation for Educational Research (see 10.5.2), and in the case of research sponsored by the TTA, individual practising teachers.

A database of current educational research in the UK (CERUK) has recently been established. CERUK is sponsored by NFER, the DfES and the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information Coordinating Centre (EPPI Centre) (see list of useful websites).

In early 1998, the then Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) commissioned an analysis of the direction, organisation, funding, quality and impact of educational research, primarily in the schools field, in order to produce recommendations for the development and pursuit of excellence in research relating to schools (Hillage *et al.*, 1998).[33] Following on from the recommendations of this report, the DfEE established a National Education Research Forum. The Forum, an independent organisation, began its work in September 1999. Its remit is to provide strategic direction for educational research nationally and to raise the quality, profile and impact of educational research. Its key objective is to develop a national framework, within which a coherent and relevant research programme in education can develop. Members of the Forum include researchers and teachers, as well as representatives of research funding organisations, LEAs and the business and voluntary sectors. The forum provides an opportunity for the exchange of information and members are expected to communicate the work of the Forum to their representative communities. The Forum published a strategy document in September 2001 (NERF, 2001).[34]

10.5.1 The DfES research strategy

The objectives of the Department for Education and Skills' (DfES) research and evaluation effort are:

- to discover and evaluate the effects of current policies and programmes;
- to assess the likely impact of new and revised policies if they were introduced;
- to assist the Department in understanding and anticipating emerging issues and challenges and the future environment in which it will have to operate.

The DfES has identified ten major priorities for research:

1. Education and employability
2. Schooling and educational attainment
3. Teacher supply and training for effectiveness and leadership
4. ICT

5. Educational participation.
6. Skill needs and the curriculum
7. The effectiveness of further education and private trainers
8. The impact of employment policy and understanding people's work histories
9. Ageing, pensions and mobility
10. Equal opportunities and the reduction of social exclusion

For each of the ten priority topics, special attention should be paid to differences between people of different social background, gender, ethnicity, disability and age, and those with special needs, with a view to learning how to tackle social exclusion more effectively

New dedicated research centres are also being funded to undertake a programme of research on key policy topics for an initial period of three years, with a possible extension to five. These research centres include the Centre for the Economics of Education; the Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning (which investigates the non-economic benefits that learning brings to individuals and to society as a whole); and the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information Coordinating Centre (EPPI Centre).

10.5.2 The National Foundation for Educational Research

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), founded in 1946, is one of the UK's leading independent educational research bodies. It carries out commissioned research and related activities for central government, local authorities, government agencies and independent educational organisations. The NFER also provides a range of specialised national and international information services.

In recent years the major areas of activity have included research into:

- major evaluations of national programme initiatives in the secondary and post-school areas;
- cross-curricular and whole-school issues, including curriculum management and school improvement; citizenship education; health education; guidance and student support;
- arts education;
- National Curriculum assessment development in England and Wales;

- provision for special educational needs;
- literacy.

The NFER is also active in international research. Recent international research projects include curriculum evaluations and comparisons in connection with the International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks, sponsored by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

The NFER also participates in a wide range of international research partnerships and networks and was a founder member of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), which was set up in the 1960s. Recent IEA projects in which the NFER has participated include the:

- Third International Mathematics and Science Survey – Repeat (TIMSS-R);
- IEA Civic Education Project;
- IEA Reading Literacy Survey – International Test Development.

The Partnerships against Social Exclusion project is a network of representatives of six European countries, coordinated by the National Council of Education in Portugal, and including members from Belgium, France, Germany, Spain and the UK.

The Supporting Adult Learners to Achieve Success ATLASS project was sponsored by the SOCRATES Programme of the European Commission. It aimed to identify and disseminate across Europe the best ways of enabling adult learners, particularly those with no or few qualifications and poor educational backgrounds, to make good progress in, and remain motivated throughout and successfully complete, their learning programmes. The NFER worked collaboratively with institutions in France and Germany.

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GLOSSARY OF EDUCATIONAL TERMS USED IN ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Access course

Offered largely by further education institutions, access courses aim to prepare students without academic qualifications for higher education. These courses are aimed mainly at mature students and are designed and taught to meet their needs. Some provide access to a particular institution of higher education, which may thus be involved in designing the course, but most are designed to offer access to higher education in general.

Adult education centre

Institution in England and Wales offering part-time education and training, as well as leisure courses, to adults over compulsory school age. Courses lead to a range of qualifications similar to those available at a *further education college*. These institutions are largely owned and managed by local education authorities but may obtain funding through the Learning and Skills Council in England or the Council for Education and Training in Wales. Tuition fees are payable by most adults unless they are in receipt of certain state benefits.
Synonyms: *adult education institute, community college*

Advanced skills teacher

A new grade of teacher introduced in England and Wales, to provide career advancement for excellent *classroom teachers* who prefer to remain classroom practitioners rather than progress to management posts. Their main responsibility is class teaching, but they also have additional responsibilities which involve sharing good practice with other teachers and supporting wider professional development.

Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education

Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) (the new name of the advanced General National Vocational Qualification) is normally studied in school by students aged 16–18, further education institutions or other centres. These qualifications are awarded by the *awarding bodies* and regulated by the qualifications and curriculum authorities. Assessment is by coursework. Also known as Vocational A-level.

Areas of study

Term used to describe the compulsory subjects prescribed by the standard curriculum introduced for pupils in Northern Ireland under the provisions of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

Articles of Government

A legal document which sets out the powers and duties of governing bodies.

Attainment target

Defines the expected standards of pupil performance in terms of level descriptions at the end of key stage descriptions. They provide the basis for making judgements on pupils' attainment in particular aspects of a subject at the end of each *key stage*.

Awarding body

An organisation which awards qualifications, including, for example, the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA). Professional bodies which award their own qualifications are also awarding bodies, as are National Training Organisations which award their own National Vocational Qualifications.

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Usually a *first degree* awarded after three or four years' undergraduate study. Exceptionally, certain Bachelor's degrees – in particular, the Bachelor of Philosophy (BPhil) and the Bachelor of Letters (BLitt) – are in fact *higher degrees*.

Bachelor of Science (BSc)

A *first degree* usually specialising in one area in the field of science, e.g. chemistry, mathematics or combinations of these.

Baseline assessment

The statutory assessment of children on entry to *primary school*, at age four or five. Baseline assessment takes place within the first seven weeks of a pupil entering primary education in England, and must take place before the end of the pupil's first year in primary education in Northern Ireland.

Block-release course

Courses for which employers release their employees for blocks of time for the purpose of training, usually in a *further education institution*.

Board of Governors

The legally required governing body of *grant-aided* schools in Northern Ireland, that is those which receive financial support from the Department of Education (DE). The Board of Governors comprises elected parents and teachers and there is provision for members of the local and business community to be co-opted.

Certificate of Achievement

Aimed at low-attaining pupils aged 16 who are unlikely to achieve grade G in the *GCSE* examinations. It is offered by various external qualification *awarding bodies* in a range of subjects and assessed through school-based continuous assessment and externally set tasks and tests. Categorised as an entry level qualification within the *national framework of qualifications*, there are three grades which are aligned with levels 1-3 of the National Curriculum, i.e. the levels expected of typical 5, 7 and 9 year-olds.

Certificate of Higher Education

A sub-degree level higher education qualification usually in a specialised or vocational subject. Courses are offered by *universities* and other *higher education institutions* and *colleges of further education*, and normally take 1 year full-time or 2 years' part-time study, depending on the institution. Some institutions use different terms for the qualification such as 'University Certificate' or 'College Certificate'. Courses are of a standard equivalent to the first year of a degree programme and may allow progression to this type of further study.

Chief Education Officer (CEO)

The senior appointed official with overall administrative responsibility for education in a *local education authority* (*LEA*) in England or Wales. Required in every *LEA* and sometimes known as the Director of Education, the Chief Education Officer is responsible to the elected councillors of the local authority.

City academy

A new category of publicly funded, independent *secondary school* with sponsors from the private or voluntary sectors or from churches or other faith groups. Each academy will have a special focus on a particular area of the curriculum like *specialist schools*. It is envisaged that the first will become operational in September 2001, with the majority starting in August 2002.

City college for the technology of the arts (CCTA)

Institution in England which offers secondary education and operates in the same way as a *city technology college* but provides a general education for pupils with an emphasis on the technology of the arts.

City technology college (CTC)

A *secondary school* in England which offers 7 years of full-time education for pupils aged 11 – 18. Admission is determined by each institution, but all institutions must admit pupils spanning the full range

of ability. They provide general education with an emphasis on technology. *CTCs* are classified as independent (private) schools and are managed by sponsors or promoters (e.g. private companies, charitable foundations), which operate under contract to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The DfES provides an annual grant. These institutions are non-denominational and coeducational. No fees are payable.

Classroom teacher

Teacher at a nursery, primary or secondary school in England and Wales. Nursery and primary classroom teachers are trained as generalists and normally follow a 3- or 4-year undergraduate course combining initial teacher training with degree studies leading to *first degree* usually a *Bachelor of Education (B.Ed)* and *Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)*. Secondary classroom teachers are subject specialists, most of whom have completed a 3- or 4-year degree in a specific discipline, leading to first degree (usually *BA* or *BSc.*), followed by a 1-year postgraduate ITT course leading to a *post-graduate certificate of education* (*PGCE*) (consecutive model) and QTS. Postgraduate trainee teachers are eligible for a training salary, and further support may be available depending on financial need.

College of higher education

Higher education institution offering short and medium courses for students usually from age 18. Admission is subject to institutional or course requirements but students must normally hold upper secondary qualifications (*GCE A-levels*, Scottish Highers or recognised equivalent). Courses are offered in a range of disciplines and lead to sub-degree level qualifications, degree level and, in some cases, post-graduate level qualifications. Unlike a *university*, qualifications offered by most colleges of higher education are validated by external bodies such as a local university or the Open University. They are autonomous institutions but receive a large proportion of their funding from government.
Synonym: *higher education college*

Community schools

A legal category of *maintained school* in England and Wales, which superseded the category of county school in 1999. The *local education authority* owns the school's land and buildings, employs the school staff, has primary responsibility for deciding the arrangements for admitting pupils and fully funds the school for both revenue and capital expenditure.

Comprehensive school

A *secondary school* which admits pupils of all academic abilities. Most secondary schools in England and all those in Wales are comprehensive schools.

Contributory subject

Areas of study in the curriculum in Northern Ireland comprise contributory subjects, some of which are compulsory.

Controlled integrated school

A legal category of *grant-aided school* in Northern Ireland which may be primary or post-primary (secondary) level. These schools are owned, managed and fully funded for revenue and capital expenditure by *Education and Library Boards*. This category of school is non-denominational and was introduced to provide integrated education for Catholic and Protestant pupils.

Controlled school

A legal category of *grant-aided school* in Northern Ireland which may be pre-primary, primary or post-primary (secondary) level. These schools are owned, managed and fully funded by *Education and Library Boards* for both revenue and capital expenditure. They are non-denominational, but educate mainly Protestant pupils.

Core subject

A core subject is a compulsory subject under the *National Curriculum* (*NC*) in England and Wales and defined by the NC as 'one without which other learning cannot take place effectively'. The three core subjects in England are English, mathematics and science, because competence in language, numeracy and scientific method is considered a necessary basis for the remainder of the curriculum and for all aspects of adult life. In Wales, Welsh is also a core subject in Welsh-medium schools.

Cross-curricular theme

Strands of provision which run through the *National Curriculum* in England and Wales and may also extend into religious education and provision outside the basic curriculum. These include, at appropriate stages, such aspects as careers education, health education, political and international understanding. Cross-curricular themes are also a feature of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

Day nursery

A *pre-school setting* which provides day care for children under 5 years and may be public or private in England and Wales (private only, in Northern Ireland). Education is often provided for children from age 3. Private bodies may receive Government funding for the education of children for three terms prior to the child reaching statutory school age. If receiving Government funding, *pre-school setting*s are inspected by the relevant education inspection body. They must work towards the *early learning goals* (England) or *desirable learning outcomes* (Wales) for pre-primary children (or in Northern Ireland the curricular guidance for pre-primary education) which are centred on six main areas of learning. They are normally coeducational and non-denominational.

Day-release course

Course for which employees may be released by their employer for one or two days per week.

Desirable learning outcomes

This term is used in Wales for the official goals for learning for children by the time they reach compulsory school age. The equivalent term in England is *early learning goals.*

Diploma of higher education

A sub-degree level higher education qualification usually in a specialised or vocational subject, for example, Nursing or Industrial Minerals Technology. Courses are offered by *universities* and other *higher education institutions* and normally take 2 years' full-time study, although some institutions offer 1-year courses. Some institutions use different terms for the qualification such as University Diploma in a particular specialisation or College Diploma in a particular specialisation. Courses are of a standard equivalent to the first 2 years of a degree programme and normally allow progression to further study for a full first degree.

Directed duties

In England and Wales, full-time *classroom teachers* in schools and *sixth-form colleges* must perform duties as directed by the headteacher (or employer) for 1,265 hours in any school year. The headteacher may also specify the times and places the duties must be performed, provided they are allocated reasonably throughout those days (195) in the school year on which the teachers are required to work. Any additional time (beyond the 1,265 hours) required for a teacher to effectively discharge his/her professional duties, such as the marking of

pupils' work, the writing of pupils' reports and the preparation of lessons, teaching materials and teaching programmes, is dependent on the work needed to discharge the teachers' duties and cannot be defined by the employer.

Disability statement

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires *further* and *higher education institutions* to publish a statement containing information on the provision of facilities for education made with respect to disabled persons. Schools must provide similar information in their annual report.

Doctorate

Higher degree normally awarded to students after 3 years of full-time individual research, on the basis of a thesis, which must be based on original research and thought, clearly presented and 'add to mankind's pool of knowledge'. The thesis is usually examined by a panel of examiners and the student subsequently undergoes an oral examination conducted by the examiners. The title awarded is normally Doctor of Philosophy (Abbreviation PhD or DPhil) regardless of the field of study of the research, except for a few specialised fields, e.g. the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts (AMusD) and the Doctor of Medicine (MD).

Early learning goals

Early learning goals were introduced in September 2000 and set out what children are expected to achieve by the end of the reception year and not when children reach statutory school age. This new guidance is an integral part of the *foundation stage* and includes goals which are in line with the national strategies numeracy and literacy. The equivalent term in Wales is *desirable learning outcomes*.

Education and Library Board

The regional bodies in Northern Ireland which are responsible for the local administration of primary and secondary education. The equivalent in England and Wales is *local education authority*.

Education welfare officer

Also sometimes known as 'social workers in education', education welfare officers are employed by the *local education authority* to monitor school attendance and combat persistent pupil absence.

Fast track teacher

Prospective teacher or a *classroom teacher* in a *nursery*, *primary* or *secondary school* in England, who has been recruited to the fast track programme. This programme aims to recruit and develop top-quality graduates and highly talented serving teachers with the highest potential for excellence in teaching. Fast track trainees receive a training salary and a bonus. At the end of initial teacher training, they receive an academic qualification and *QTS* (*classroom teacher*), and are also assessed against the fast track teacher criteria.

First degree

A first degree is awarded to students who successfully complete an undergraduate degree course at a *university* or other higher education institution normally lasting for 3 years (4 years in Scotland) although longer in some subjects, such as medicine. The most common first degrees are *Bachelor of Arts (BA)* and *Bachelor of Science (BSc)*. However, *universities* are free to decide on the designation of their degrees, and study of the same subject can lead to different degrees in different institutions. First degrees may be taken in, one or more than one, subject at ordinary (general or pass) or at honours level, the latter demanding more specialised study at a higher level. Ordinary (general or pass) degrees are not graded. Honours degrees are normally classified as first, second and third class; students who do not achieve a high enough standard for an honours degree may be awarded a pass degree. Second-class degrees are further subdivided into two divisions, upper and lower, also known as 2i and 2ii.

First school

A type of primary school. In some areas of England, where a three-tier system is in operation, first schools cater for children up to the age of 8 or 9, after which they transfer to a *middle school*.

Foundation schools

A legal category of *maintained school* in England and Wales, which in 1999 superseded the category of *grant-maintained school* (originally introduced in 1988). The governing body employs the school staff and has primary responsibility for admission arrangements. The school's land and buildings are owned by trustees or by a charitable foundation. Foundation schools are fully funded by *local education authorities* for both revenue and capital expenditure.

Foundation stage

Introduced from September 2000 as a new stage of education for children aged three years until the end of the reception year. Many children will attend some form of pre-school or nursery education,

either full or part time during the foundation stage; some will attend a number of different settings. A few children will remain at home during the foundation stage, only attending school at the beginning of year 1 (age 5 +).

Foundation subject

The remaining compulsory subjects which combine with the *core subjects* and religious education, to form the compulsory subjects of the National Curriculum at the various levels of education in England and Wales.

Further education

Full- and part-time education, outside the higher education sector, for persons over compulsory school age (16 years), including vocational, academic, social, physical and recreational courses. However, the education of people over compulsory school age is not considered to be *further education* when provided in schools.

Further education college

A *further education institution* which traditionally offered full- and part-time technical and vocational courses for students over compulsory school age (16), including adults. Although many further education colleges still place a greater emphasis on vocational and technical courses, they mostly now also offer general courses.

Further education corporation

This term describes the autonomous status granted under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to *further education colleges*, *tertiary colleges* and *sixth-form colleges* under *local education authority* control in England and Wales, which had at least 15 per cent of their students attending full-time.

Further education institution

Institutions which provide full- and part-time education, outside the higher education sector, for persons over compulsory school age (16 years), including vocational, academic, social, physical and recreational courses, including, *further education colleges* and, in England and Wales only, *sixth-form colleges* and *tertiary colleges*. They are funded by the Learning and Skills Council in England, the National Council for Education and Training in Wales (ELWa), and the Department of Education (DE) in Northern Ireland. Admission criteria depend on the course. In many cases, specified externally accredited qualifications are required. A range of vocational (*AVCE* and *NVQ*) and general qualifications (*GCSE*, *GCE Advanced Subsidiary level* and *A-level*) can be obtained. Some institutions offer higher education courses under

arrangement with external *awarding bodies,* including *universities.* Further education institutions are autonomous bodies which are publicly funded. Subject to residency criteria, fees are not payable for full-time participants under age 19 and for other participants in receipt of certain state benefits.

General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced-level (A-level)

Qualification normally awarded at the end of 2 years' post-compulsory general education. The qualifications are awarded on a single subject basis, and are set, organised and certificated by external *awarding bodies*, all of which offer syllabuses for a range of subjects, approved by the qualifications and curriculum authorities. Most pupils study 3 subjects, choosing from a wide range of general and some vocational subjects. The certificate indicates the name(s) of the individual subject(s), and grade(s) obtained (passes are graded on a descending scale from A to E, and grades N and U are regarded as fails). The qualification is categorised as an advanced-level qualification within the *national framework of qualifications*.

General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Qualification

Replaced *GCE Advanced Supplementary examinations* in September 2000, introduced with the aim of broadening the subjects studied by pupils in the first year of a *GCE A-level* course, they are three-unit qualifications covering half the content of a full (six unit) GCE A-level.

General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

Qualification awarded at the end of the first two years of upper secondary education, i.e. the last year of compulsory education, to pupils (age 15-16). Under *National Curriculum assessment* arrangements, this qualification is the main method of pupil assessment at age 16, although it can be taken at any age. The qualifications are single subject based and, are set, organised and certificated by the external *awarding bodies.* They are regulated by the qualifications and curriculum authorities. Most pupils take GCSEs in English, mathematics and science and a range of other subjects. The certificate indicates the name(s) of the individual subject(s) sat and the grade(s) obtained by the pupil on a descending scale A*,B,C,D,E,F,G and U. Grades A*-C are regarded as higher-grade passes, and as intermediate level qualifications within the *national framework of qualifications.* Grades D-G are regarded as lower-grade passes, and as foundation-level qualifications within the *national framework of qualifications.*

General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ)

GNVQs were broad vocational qualifications related to a particular industry or sector of the economy. They were originally intended for young people over compulsory school age who remain in full-time education. The advanced GNVQ has now been revised and is now known as the *Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education* (*AVCE*), and also as the vocational A-level. Foundation and intermediate level GNVQs are to be replaced by vocational *GCSEs*.

Graduate teacher

Generalist or specialist teacher in a nursery school, primary school or secondary school, in England and Wales, who is following an employment-based route to *Qualified Teacher Status* (QTS) via the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP). Graduate teachers must be over 24 years of age and have successfully completed a *first degree*. Trainees must first find employment in a school and are paid as an *unqualified teacher*. The school (or school partnership) is responsible for assessing training needs and devising and supervising the training plan, which is approved by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in England or the National Assembly for Wales and may include off-site training.

Grammar school

A *secondary school* for which admission is based on ability. See also: *voluntary grammar school*.

Grant-aided school

In Northern Ireland, publicly funded *primary* or *secondary schools* which include: *controlled schools*, *controlled integrated schools*, *grant-maintained integrated schools*, *maintained schools* and *voluntary grammar schools*. The equivalent term in England and Wales is *maintained school*.

Grant-maintained integrated school

A legal category of *grant-aided school* at primary or post-primary (secondary) education level in Northern Ireland, are owned and managed by charitable trusts and fully funded by the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) for both capital and revenue expenditure. This category of school is non-denominational and was introduced to provide integrated education for Catholic and Protestant pupils.

Higher degree

A degree above *first degree* level, such as a *master's degree* or a *doctorate*.

Higher education institution

The collective term used for *universities*, *university colleges* and *colleges* of *higher education.*

Higher National Certificate (HNC)

A sub-degree level, higher education qualification awarded by the Edexcel Foundation (formerly Business and Technology Education Council) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) in Scotland, to students who successfully complete vocational courses normally over 2 years, part-time, in any of a wide range of subjects such as business studies, management, engineering and design. HNC courses are unit-based and provided in *universities* and other *higher education institutions*. Assessment of students is decided by individual institutions in accordance with assessment and quality criteria laid down by Edexcel (in Scotland, the SQA). Successful students receive a Higher National Certificate which mentions the area of study, e.g. business administration. The Certificate is accompanied by a Certificate of Achievement which mentions each unit of study taken and whether a 'pass', 'merit' or 'distinction' has been given.

Higher National Diploma (HND)

A sub-degree level, higher education qualification awarded by the Edexcel Foundation (formerly Business and Technology Education Council) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) in Scotland, to students who successfully complete vocational courses of 2 years' full-time study in any of a wide range of subjects such as business studies, management, engineering and design. Courses are unit-based and are provided in *universities* and other *higher education institutions*. An HND qualification requires more units of study than *Higher National Certificate*. Successful students receive the Higher National Diploma which mentions the area of study, e.g. business administration. This Diploma is accompanied by a Certificate of Achievement which mentions each unit of study taken and whether a 'pass', 'merit' or 'distinction' was gained.

Independent school

In England, any school at which full-time education is provided for 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age (whether or not such education is already provided for pupils over or under that age). The term does not include a school maintained by an LEA, a self-governing grant-maintained (GM) school or a special school not maintained by an LEA. A similar definition applies to independent schools in Northern Ireland, but does not specify a minimum number of pupils.

Infant school

Type of *primary school* which caters only for pupils up to age 7.

Instructor

Instructors support student learning, usually in workshop-based situations in further education institutions offering vocational and/or general education for students (including adults) over compulsory school age. While there are no statutory requirements for initial qualifications, most further education institutions require a professional qualification, such as a *National Vocational Qualification* (*NVQ*) or a City & Guilds award. Instructors are recruited through open procedures, normally by senior managers of the institution. Their main responsibilities vary but may include instructing individual students or small groups in the use of workshop machinery, or supervising an open learning information technology workshop. They are not expected to teach whole classes or assess student performance. Promotion opportunities for instructors depend on their institution but, with the necessary qualifications and experience, many progress to the main grade *lecturer* scale. For employer, types of contract and appraisal, see: *lecturer* (further education).

Note: Instructor is also a term used in schools for staff who possess appropriate skills who may be appointed as an *unqualified teacher* when no qualified teacher with the same skills is available.

Instrument of Government

A legal document which sets out the composition of governing bodies and their working rules.

Junior school

Type of *primary school* which caters only for pupils aged 7-11.

Key stage

The periods in each pupil's education to which the elements of the National Curriculum apply. There are four key stages, normally related to the age of the majority of the pupils in a teaching group. In England and Wales these are: beginning of compulsory education (age 5) to 7, 7-11, 11-14 and 14 to the end of compulsory education at 16. In Northern Ireland they are: the beginning of compulsory education (age 4) to 8, 8-11, 11-14 and 14 to the end of compulsory education at 16.

Language assistant

Assistant in a *secondary school*, *further education institution* or *higher education institution*. These staff help in teaching foreign languages and may be recruited through the Education and Training Group of the

British Council. Usually aged between 20 and 30, they are prospective teachers of English or students of other subjects who are highly proficient in English. They are employed, normally for a single academic year, by the institution concerned or, in the case of some categories of school, the *local education authority* or *Education and Library Board* (in Northern Ireland).

Lay Inspector

Member of a team of inspectors led by a Registered Inspector to inspect schools under the School Inspections Act 1996. Lay Inspectors do not have professional experience of the management or the provision of education in any school, other than as a governor or in another voluntary capacity, and may be drawn from the community or from industry and commerce.

Leadership group

Term used in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* to describe headteachers, deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers. A separate pay spine, distinct from *classroom* and other qualified teachers exists for this group.

Learning support assistant

Assistant in a *pre-primary setting*, *primary* or *secondary school*, or a *further education institution*. Staff in this category provide the extra help often needed for pupils/students with special educational needs (including those with physical disabilities) to be educated in mainstream institutions. There are no national requirements for training or qualifications, although some *local education authorities* (*LEAs*) or *Education and Library Boards* (*Boards*) in Northern Ireland, and schools/institutions may stipulate their own requirements.
Synonym: *Special needs assistant* but other terms, including *teaching assistant*, may also be used depending on the institution concerned; in *higher education institutions* a similar post exists which is more generally referred to as a 'non-medical helper'.

Lecturer (further education)

Specialist teacher in a further education institution. *Lecturers* are encouraged to undertake initial training but this has not been a statutory requirement. From September 2001, all new full-time further education teachers in England have to obtain a *higher education certificate* in teaching, while part-time teachers have to obtain a Further and Adult Education Teacher's Certificate (FAETC) awarded by the City & Guilds of London Institute. The duration of these courses depends on the mode of study. In Northern Ireland, *lecturers* without an initial teacher training qualification must normally hold an approved university

or vocational qualification in their subject and, in the case of the latter, must also have a good grade in the *General Certificate of Secondary Education* (GCSE) in English and mathematics, and have 3 years of industrial or business experience.

Lecturer (higher education)

Specialist teacher in *higher education institutions* (including *universities*). Institutions are encouraged to provide initial training for their staff and are free to decide on their own arrangements, although training programmes may be externally accredited. A good *first degree* (usually a *bachelor's degree*) in the subject to be taught is normally required, but a *master's degree* or *doctorate* and publications may also be required qualifications.

Level descriptor

Level descriptions in the National Curriculum are the basis for judging children's levels of attainment at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3. Level descriptors indicate the type and range of performance which children working at a certain level should characteristically demonstrate. There are 8 level descriptors in the scale, with children at the end of key stage 1 typically expected to reach level 2, and those at the end of key stage 2, level 4. By the end of key stage 3, pupils are expected to be performing within the range 3-7 with level 8 being for very able pupils. (A description above level 8 is provided to differentiate exceptional performances.)

Local education authority (LEA)

Local education authorities are locally elected county, metropolitan district or borough councils in England and Wales, which have a statutory duty for the provision and organisation of public education services in their area. The equivalent term in Northern Ireland is *Education and Library Board.*

Local management of schools (LMS)

The Education Reform Act 1988 in England and Wales established that individual schools, with a few exceptions, should assume more responsibility for their own management. As a result of this policy of local management of schools (LMS), responsibility for the financial and general management of the school, including many of the responsibilities relating to the recruitment, deployment and remuneration of teaching and non-teaching staff have been delegated from the *LEAs* to *school governing bodies*. Reforms to LMS were introduced by the 'Fair Funding' policy introduced in 1999 in England and Wales. LMS is currently under review in Northern Ireland.

Maintained school

A term used to define a publicly funded *primary school* or *secondary school* in England and Wales. It includes: *community schools*, *foundation schools*, *voluntary aided schools* and *voluntary controlled schools*. These schools are funded by *local education authorities*. In Northern Ireland, this term describes a legal category of *grant-aided school* which are mostly owned by trustees, usually representatives of Roman Catholic churches, and fully funded by the *Education and Library Boards* for revenue expenditure and mainly funded by the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) for capital expenditure. These institutions are normally coeducational, but can be single sex. No fees are payable.

Master's degree

Usually a *higher degree*, taken generally in 1 year full-time or 2 years part-time, awarded to graduates who successfully complete specialised postgraduate study, either taught courses or individual research or a combination of both. A taught master's degree is awarded on the basis of either written examinations or continuous assessment and requires a dissertation or short thesis, while a research master's degree requires research and the presentation of a thesis. The thesis is usually examined by a panel of examiners and the student may subsequently undergo an oral examination conducted by the examiners. Master's degrees may be graded, according to the institution concerned. Degrees are designated Master of Arts, Laws, Science, etc. according to the field of study.

Note: In the ancient Scottish universities, the MA is a *first degree* comparable to the BA awarded elsewhere. In other institutions and elsewhere in the UK, the *master's degree* is awarded for other types of programme, such as the fourth year (or, in Scotland, the fifth year) of a *first degree* programme which covers advanced undergraduate work, and for postgraduate conversion courses (programmes which allow graduates in one discipline to gain a qualification in a different field and where the standard may not necessarily be higher than that of an undergraduate programme in the same subject).

Middle school

In some areas of England, where a three-tier system is in operation, pupils progress from a *first school* to a middle school at the age of 8 or 9, from which they transfer to a *secondary school* at the age of 12/13. A middle school is legally a *primary school* or a *secondary school* depending on the age of the majority of its pupils. For details of the curriculum, management and funding arrangements, see: *primary school* or *secondary school.*

Minister of State (for Education)

Second-in-command to the *Secretary of State for Education*, who is the Government Minister responsible for the Department for Education and Skills in England.

National Curriculum

Requirements for the curriculum for all pupils of compulsory school age (5-16) in England and Wales were introduced under the Education Reform Act 1988, and are now governed by the Education Act 1996. Pupils are required to follow a basic curriculum comprising the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. National Curriculum subjects include: English, Welsh (in Wales), mathematics, science, design and technology, information technology, history, geography, art, music, physical education and a modern foreign language from *key stage* 3.

National Curriculum Assessment

Statutory assessment which all pupils in publicly funded schools must undergo at the end of *key stages* 1 (age 7), 2 (age 11) and 3 (age 14). These assessments consist of: teacher assessment of all pupils using nationally set criteria; nationally set tasks and written tests for most pupils (the lowest attaining pupils are subject to teacher assessment only) in English, Welsh (in Welsh-speaking schools in Wales), mathematics and, at the end of key stages 2 and 3, science. The results of the teacher assessment and the tests and tasks are expressed in terms of the *National Curriculum* 1-8 level scale. No certificate is awarded, but the results of individual pupils must be reported to parents, and school-level results must be published in the school's prospectus.

National framework of qualifications

The qualifications and curriculum authorities are in the process of implementing a framework of national awards. The new framework embraces general/academic and vocational qualifications at various levels: Entry Level (*National Curriculum* levels 3, 2 and 1);

- Foundation Level 1 (*GCSE* grades D–G, *GNVQ* foundation level and *NVQ* level 1);
- Intermediate Level 2 (*GCSE* grades A*– C, *GNVQ* intermediate level and *NVQ* level 2);
- Advanced-level 3 (*GCE A-level*) and *GCE AS qualification*, *AVCE* and *NVQ* level 3);
- Higher level 4 (sub-first degree level) and *NVQ* level 4; and higher level 5 (equivalent to *first degree* level) and *NVQ* level 5.

Note: *GNVQ* foundation and intermediate levels are to be remodelled as vocational *GCSEs* from September 2002.

National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)

Job-specific vocational qualifications aimed largely at people who have already left full-time education. NVQs are available at 5 levels and may be undertaken in the workplace, further education institutions or training centres. However, if they are not undertaken in the workplace, students must acquire the necessary skills through, for example, work placements. NVQs are awarded to people who can provide evidence of competence in an occupational area. The qualification is unit based, the number and size of units varying between vocational areas. A unit is achieved when a candidate is assessed as competent in applying the skills and knowledge specified in that unit. There are no formal examinations for these qualifications. Assessment normally takes place in the workplace. NVQs are awarded by *awarding bodies* and regulated by the qualifications and curriculum authorities.

Newly qualified teacher

A *classroom teacher* in England and Wales who has recently completed initial teacher training and who, in England, must undertake an induction year. The equivalent in Northern Ireland is a *beginning teacher*.

Nursery Centre

A *pre-school setting* in England and Wales which combines educational and day-care facilities and is managed and funded jointly by *local education authorities* and social services departments. They normally cater for children aged from 18 months to five and may offer a range of support services to parents. Nursery centres must work towards the official goals for pre-primary which are centred on six main areas of learning. They are coeducational and non-denominational.

Nursery school

Institution offering up to 2 years', mainly part-time, but also full-time pre-primary education for children aged 3 to 4 (Northern Ireland) and 3 to 4/5 (England and Wales). Nursery schools must work towards the *early learning goals* (England) or *desirable learning outcomes* for pre-primary education (in Northern Ireland, they must follow curricular guidance for pre-primary education) which are centred on six main areas of learning. In England and Wales, the *local education authority* owns the land and buildings of maintained nursery schools and employs the staff. Nursery schools are generally coeducational and non-denominational. In Northern Ireland, *grant-aided* nursery schools may be *controlled schools* or *maintained schools*. No fees are payable in maintained nursery schools in England and Wales or *grant-aided* nursery schools in Northern Ireland.

Overseas teacher

Teacher with a recognised teaching qualification from outside the European Union, who undertakes the duties of a generalist or specialist *classroom teacher* in a *nursery*, *primary* or *secondary school*. In England and Wales, these teachers can only be employed in maintained (publicly funded) schools in three circumstances: as trainees on an employment-based route to *Qualified Teacher Status* (see: *graduate teacher* and *registered teacher*); as temporary teachers when their appointment is for no more than 4 years from the date of first employment as a teacher in the United Kingdom; and as an *instructor*. In Northern Ireland, they may be granted eligibility to teach by the Department of Education, subject to the provision of evidence that their initial training course was comparable to initial teacher training courses in Northern Ireland. Overseas teachers are selected through open recruitment procedures by the *school governing body/Board of Governors* and are employed by it or by the *local education authority* or (in Northern Ireland) the *Education and Library Board*, depending on the category of school.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary

Members of Parliament who support and assist the *Secretary of State* (for Education and Skills in England) and, where applicable, their Ministers of State.

Pastoral care

The guidance given to pupils by school staff relating to their academic, personal and social development, attendance and behaviour.

Permanent Secretary

Chief civil servant in a government department who is responsible directly to the *Secretary of State*.

Permanent Under-Secretary

Civil servant who assists the *Permanent Secretary*, who is the senior civil servant in a government department.

Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma of Higher Education

A postgraduate course of higher education, usually in a specialised or vocational subject. Courses are offered by *universities* and other *higher education institutions* and normally take 1 year full-time or 2 years' part-time study depending on the institution. Diploma courses are usually of a higher level than courses leading to a Certificate.

Post-primary

The collective term used in Northern Ireland to describe both voluntary grammar schools and other secondary schools.

Pre-school assistant

Assistant in a *pre-primary setting* for children aged 2_/3 to 4/5. There are no national requirements for training or qualifications, although some local authorities and schools set their own requirements. The range of recognised qualifications awarded includes the Level 2 Certificate in Child Care and Education or Level 2 Certificate in Pre-school Practice which normally involve 2 years of part-time study. Pre-school assistants are selected through open recruitment procedures by the *school governing body/Board of Governors*, the *local education authority* or *Education and Library Board* (Northern Ireland) or, in the case of private and voluntary schools and groups, by the management. Synonym: nursery assistant (which is the term in common use in Northern Ireland)

Pre-school setting

Collective term used to describe the range of public, private and voluntary provision of pre-primary education, for children aged 2_/3 to 4/5 years. Private and voluntary providers may receive Government funding for the education of children for 3 terms before they reach statutory school age. If receiving Government funding, pre-school settings are inspected by the relevant education inspection body. They must work towards the *early learning goals* (England) or *desirable learning outcomes* (Wales) for pre-primary children (or, in Northern Ireland, the curricular guidance for pre-primary education) which are centred on six main areas of learning. They are generally coeducational and non-denominational.

Synonyms: pre-school groups, playgroups, day nurseries, nursery centres, nursery schools

Primary school

Institution providing full-time general education for children normally aged between 4/5 and 11. Some primary schools may have *nursery classes* for 3-4 year-olds which provide full or part-time education at pre-primary level. There are two cycles of primary education: *key stage* 1 (5-7 year-olds in England and Wales and 4-8 year-olds in Northern Ireland) and *key stage* 2 (7-11 years in England and Wales and 8-11 years in Northern Ireland). All pupils follow a common core curriculum (statutory curriculum) which varies in some respects between countries. They are normally coeducational and can be non-denominational or denominational. Ownership, management and funding arrangements

depend on the legal category: see for England and Wales *community school, foundation school, voluntary-aided school, voluntary-controlled school*; and for Northern Ireland *controlled school, controlled integrated school, grant-maintained integrated school, maintained school.* No tuition fees may be charged.

Principal lecturer

Promotion title for staff (traditionally in the 'new' universities – established since 1992) working as *senior lecturer*. Principal lecturers generally undertake higher-level administrative, management and research activities, in addition to teaching duties. Although *universities* and colleges decide their own recruitment and promotion procedures, posts designated as *senior lecturer* would, in general, be subject to open recruitment. For initial training, recruitment, appraisal and employer, see: *lecturer (higher education).*

Programme of study

The knowledge, skills and processes which must be taught to pupils in each subject area during each *key stage* of the *National Curriculum*, in order for them to meet the objectives set out in *attainment targets.*

Pupil referral unit

Local education authorities in England and Wales must establish pupil referral units (PRUs) for the education of those pupils who, for reasons of disability, truancy or prolonged illness, are not attending mainstream schools.

Qualified Teacher Status

In England and Wales, all teachers who teach in *maintained schools* for pupils of compulsory school (ages 5-16) and those appointed since 1 September 1989 to teach in nursery schools (ages 2-5) are required to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). QTS is awarded on satisfactory completion of an approved course of initial teacher education.

Reception class

The initial class in most *primary schools* in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which provides education for children from the age of 4 or 5 years.

Registered Inspector

Trained team leaders contracted to conduct school inspections in England and Wales. Registered Inspectors (RgIs) establish and lead teams of trained and approved inspectors, are responsible for all aspects of the inspection entrusted to them and must take part in each inspection.

Registered teacher

Generalist or specialist teacher in a *nursery school* (for children aged 3-4/5), *primary* or *secondary school*, in England and Wales, who is undergoing an employment-based route to *Qualified Teacher Status* (*QTS*) via the Registered Teacher Programme. These teachers must be aged over 24 and have successfully completed 2 years of full-time higher education (or its part-time equivalent). They spend up to 2 years working and training while completing a degree and securing *QTS*. The minimum period of training is 1 year. Trainees must first find employment in a school and are paid as *unqualified teachers*. The school (or school partnership) is responsible for assessing training needs and devising and supervising the training plan, which is approved by the Teacher Training Agency or the National Assembly for Wales and may include off-site training.

Sandwich course

Courses, usually at undergraduate level, in which periods of study in a university/college alternate with periods of training and experience in industry, commerce or the professions.

School governing body

All *maintained schools* in England and Wales must have a school governing body, comprising representatives of the *local education authority*, representatives of the foundation body (*voluntary schools*), the community, parents and the teaching staff of the school. The body is responsible for making decisions on the general direction of the school and its curriculum, subject to the requirements of the *National Curriculum*. The equivalent in Northern Ireland is the *Board of Governors*.

Secondary modern school

A *secondary school*, which admits pupils regardless of ability, in areas where there are also *grammar schools*.

Secondary school

Institution providing 5 to 7 years of general full-time education for pupils aged 11 (or 12/13 where three-tier system applies) to 16 or 18. Admission does not generally depend on academic ability in England and Wales. However, in England there are some schools which are fully or partially selective: see also: *specialist school*, *city technology college*, *comprehensive school* and *grammar school*. In Northern Ireland, the term *post-primary* is used to describe collectively *grammar schools* (to which admission depends on academic ability) and other secondary schools. There are three main cycles: *key stage* 3 (ages 11-14), *key stage* 4 (ages 14-16) and post-16. All pupils follow a common core curriculum

(statutory curriculum) up to the end of *key stage* 4, which varies in some respects between countries. Pupils take general and/or vocational examinations at age 16 (e.g. *GCSE*) and at age 18 (e.g. *GCE A-level* or *AVCE*). Most secondary schools are coeducational and may be denominational or non-denominational. Ownership, management and funding arrangements depend on the legal category; see, for England and Wales, *community school*, *foundation school*, *voluntary-aided school*, and *voluntary-controlled school*; for Northern Ireland, *controlled school*, *controlled integrated school*, *grant maintained integrated school*, *maintained school*, and *voluntary grammar school.* Synonym: (England and Wales) high school

Secretary of State

A government Minister (appointed by the Prime Minister) who is responsible for a government department. The Secretary of State is a member of the Cabinet and is assisted by Ministers of State and Parliamentary Under-Secretaries. The Secretary of State for Education and Skills is accountable to Parliament for giving direction to and controlling the public education system in England.

Senior lecturer

Promotion title for staff working as *lecturer* (*higher education*) who undertake teaching duties, as well as higher-level administrative, management and research activities. Although universities and colleges decide their own recruitment and promotion procedures, posts designated as senior lecturer would, in general, be subject to open recruitment. For further information on initial training, recruitment, appraisal and employer: see: *lecturer* (*higher education*).

Sixth-form college

A type of *further education institution*, in England and Wales, which offers full-time, largely general education courses, for students aged 16-18. Until 1992, these institutions were part of the school sector and were governed by schools regulations.

Special educational needs (SEN)

Term used to describe the requirements of children with difficulties in one of the following areas: learning, behaviour or emotional, social or physical development, which either affect their educational progress or require provision other than that normally made. In England and Wales, if a child is considered to need additional provision to that which is made generally available, the *local education authority* is obliged to consider the issue of a formal *statement* of the child's identified needs with proposals to meet them. The child is described as 'statemented'.

Special educational needs coordinator

Teacher responsible for coordinating educational provision for pupils with *special educational needs* at schools offering mainstream provision. A teacher in this category is normally a *classroom teacher* in a *primary school*. In *secondary schools*, one or more teachers, including a head of department or other senior manager, may perform the duties of a special educational needs coordinator (SENCO). Specific in-service training courses are normally provided but external qualifications such as the *Postgraduate Certificate in the Coordination of Special Education* are available at *higher education institutions*. The usual entry requirement is a *first degree* (normally a *bachelor's degree*), although other applicants who have substantial relevant professional experience may also be admitted. Besides teaching, the main responsibilities of a SENCO include: daily management of the school's *special educational needs* (*SEN*) policy; coordinating provision for children with *SEN*; maintaining the school's *SEN* register and overseeing the records on all pupils with *SEN*; liaising with and advising fellow teachers and parents of children with *SEN*; contributing to the continuing professional development of teaching staff; and liaising with external support agencies.

Special school

Special schools provide education for children whose 'special educational needs' cannot be met in an ordinary school. Special schools are generally much smaller than mainstream schools and have a lower pupil-teacher ratio.

Specialist school

A type of *secondary school*, in England, that has applied to specialise in a certain subject area while still delivering the full statutory curriculum to all pupils. In addition to standard funding arrangements, these institutions are required to attract sponsorship from private sources and are then eligible for central government grants. Following the specialisation of the institution a specialist school can carry different names: arts college, language college, sports college, and technology college.

Specialist teacher

Normally a *classroom teacher* in a mainstream secondary, or a special school with *special educational needs* (*SEN*). Staff in this category teach either a specific subject (as subject specialists) or focus on specific groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs (in which case they are known as *SEN* specialists). *SEN* teachers who teach children with a hearing impairment, visual impairment or multi-sensory impairment are required to obtain an additional, approved

qualification within 3 years of appointment. Courses are provided by *higher education institutions* and may be studied full-time (1 year) or part-time (2-5 years) and normally lead to a diploma of higher education.

Specialist teaching assistant

A *teaching assistant* usually in a *primary school* in England and Wales, who assists teachers and pupils with literacy and numeracy work. Although there are no statutory requirements, these assistants are now encouraged to undertake specialist teaching assistant courses (usually 1 year part-time) provided by some *higher education institutions*.

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

Under the Education Act 1996, every local education authority in England and Wales must establish a Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). Its function is to regulate religious education in the authority's schools.

Statement of special educational needs

A statement of special educational needs is a formal statement which a *local education authority* (*LEA*) may issue to identify the specific educational needs of a child. The document also lists the special educational provision required and various other proposals to meet these needs.

Statutory Instrument

Acts of Parliament often give Government Ministers or other authorities the power to regulate administrative details by means of 'delegated' or secondary legislation. This mostly takes the form of Orders and Regulations.

Subject leader

Normally a *classroom teacher* in a *primary school*. In a secondary school, the duties of a subject leader may be undertaken by one or more senior teachers, including heads of department. A subject leader provides leadership and direction for the teaching of a subject within a school, ensuring that it is managed and organised to meet the aims of both the school and subject concerned. Initial training is the same as for a *classroom teacher*, with possible provision of internal or external professional development courses. The main responsibilities include teaching, supporting, guiding and motivating teachers of the subject concerned; evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning; and informing future priorities and targets.

Synonym: subject coordinator

Supply teacher

Normally a *classroom teacher* or, in a *nursery*, *primary* or *secondary school*, who is employed by a school, a *local education authority* or (in Northern Ireland) an *Education and Library Board*. These staff provide temporary cover for absent teachers, and may be generalists or specialists depending on the age of the pupils taught. Supply teachers may be self-employed or recruited by a teacher supply agency.

Teaching assistant

Staff member employed to assist teachers in the classroom mainly in primary schools. However, the term teaching assistant is sometimes used to cover all assistants in a school, including *specialist teaching assistant*, *pre-school assistant* and *learning support assistant*. There are no national requirements for training or qualifications, although some *local education authorities* and schools stipulate their own requirements. However, national occupational standards are currently undergoing development to form the basis of a specialist *National Vocational Qualification* (*NVQ*). The main responsibilities of a teaching assistant include help with classroom resources and records, assistance with the care and support of pupils, support for learning activities and for literacy, numeracy and the use of information and communications technology in the classroom, and contributing to the health and well-being of pupils.

Synonyms: *classroom assistant*; other terms are also in use to denote teaching assistants depending on the *LEA* or *Board* concerned.

Tertiary college

A type of *further education institution*, in England and Wales, which combines the functions of a *further education college* and a *sixth-form college*, and which offers the full range of courses, both including basic education and general and vocational education and training, to students over compulsory school age (16), including adults. For organisation and funding see: *further education college*.

Transfer procedure tests

Tests in English, mathematics and science used to select pupils for selective (grammar) schools. Set by the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). The results are expressed on a six-point scale, and *grammar schools* are required to admit pupils strictly in order of test grades.

Tutor

Term used at all levels of education from lower secondary level upwards to denote *classroom teachers* or *lecturers* who, besides their teaching duties, have pastoral (welfare) responsibilities for groups of pupils/ students as, for example, class tutors or personal tutors. In higher education, further education and, in particular, *adult education institutions* where teaching is carried out in relatively small groups, the term is often used as a synonym for *lecturer*.

Unattached teacher

Teacher who is not attached to a particular school, but deployed by the *local education authority* (LEA), or (in Northern Ireland) the *Education and Library Board (Board)*. Initial training is the same as for a *classroom teacher* and recruitment is by open procedures by senior staff of the *LEA/Board*. The main responsibilities of teachers in this category vary, and it may include peripatetic teachers such as music teachers, *supply teachers* and teachers employed to provide education at home (home tutors) for certain pupils. Unattached teachers are employed by the *LEA/Board* and considered to be public employees but they are not civil servants.

University

Institution offering courses for students usually from age 18. Admission is subject to institutional or course requirements but students must normally hold upper secondary qualifications (*GCE A-levels*, Scottish Highers or recognised equivalent). Courses are offered in a range of disciplines and lead to sub-degree level qualifications, degree level and postgraduate level qualifications, including doctorates. *Universities* have the power to award their own degrees (both taught and research degrees); they are autonomous institutions but receive a large proportion of their funding from central government through the Higher Education Funding Councils (England and Wales), the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment (Northern Ireland) and the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (Scotland). Most students are expected to contribute towards tuition fees. Scottish students do not pay tuition fees.

University college

Institution offering courses for students usually from age 18. Admission is subject to institutional or course requirements but students must normally hold upper secondary qualifications (*GCE A-levels*, Scottish Highers or recognised equivalent). Courses are offered in a range of disciplines and lead to sub-degree level qualifications, degree level and postgraduate level qualifications. University colleges have the power

to award their own taught degrees (but not research degrees); they are autonomous institutions but receive a large proportion of their funding from central government through the Higher Education Funding Councils (England and Wales) the Department of Employment and Training Northern Ireland and the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (Scotland). Most students are expected to contribute towards tuition fees. Scottish students do not pay tuition fees.

Note: These institutions are not to be confused with the colleges that make up federal universities such as London University.

Unqualified teacher

Teacher without *Qualified Teacher Status* (*QTS*) in England and Wales, who may be employed by schools if he/she has special qualifications or experience in a particular field which are needed for the post and where no suitable qualified teacher, *graduate teacher* or *registered teacher* is available. Normally, the school governing body, with the consent of the *local education authority* (*LEA*), must be satisfied as to the candidate's qualifications or experience. These staff are employed by the school governing body or the *LEA*, and appraisal procedures also depend on the *LEA* or school. Promotion opportunities would depend on the instructor gaining *QTS*.

Voluntary-aided school

A legal category of *maintained school* at *primary* and *secondary education* level in England and Wales. They were originally established by voluntary bodies (mainly the Catholic Church and the Church of England) and the school's land and buildings are normally owned by trustees or a charitable foundation. They receive their revenue funding from the *local education authority*, and the majority of their capital funding from central government, but must contribute 15 per cent to capital costs. The school governing body employs the school staff and has primary responsibility for admission arrangements.

Voluntary-controlled schools

A legal category of *maintained school* at primary and secondary education level in England and Wales. They were originally established by voluntary bodies (mainly the Church of England) and the school's land and buildings are normally owned by trustees or a charitable foundation. They are fully funded for both revenue and capital costs by local education authorities. The *LEA* employs the school staff and has primary responsibility for admission arrangements.

Voluntary grammar school

A legal category of *secondary school* in Northern Ireland. Owned by trustees and fully funded for revenue costs by the Department of Education, although some may contribute an element towards capital costs depending on their agreement with the Department of Education. Minimal fees may be charged in some schools. These institutions are selective, may be single-sex or coeducational and may be denominational or non-denominational.

Voluntary school

Voluntary schools are *maintained schools* which were originally established by a foundation body (usually religious or charitable) and were subdivided into three categories by the Education Act 1944: *voluntary-aided schools*, *voluntary-controlled schools* and special agreement schools. The category of special agreement school no longer exists.

USEFUL WEBSITES

Adult Learning Inspectorate
http://www.ali.gov.uk

Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB)
http://www.ahrb.ac.uk

Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)
http://www.aqa.org.uk

Audit Commission
http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk

Basic Skills Agency
http://www.basic-skills.co.uk

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk

British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education (BAC)
http://www.the-bac.org

British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTa)
http://www.becta.org.uk

British Council Education and Training Group
http://www.britcoun.org.uk/education/index.htm

Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT)
http://www.cilt.org.uk

Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning
http://www.learningbenefits.net/

Centre for the Economics of Education
http://cee.lse.ac.uk/relatedlinks.htm

City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI)
http://www.city-and-guilds.co.uk

Current Educational Research in the UK (CERUK)
http://www.nfer.ac.uk/infoservices/ceruk.asp

Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
http://www.dfes.gov.uk

Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI)
http://www.delni.gov.uk

Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)
http://www.dtlr.gov.uk

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
http://www.dwp.gov.uk

Department of Education (DE) (Northern Ireland)
http://www.deni.gov.uk

Department of Health
http://www.doh.gov.uk

Department of Trade and Industry
http://www.dti.gov.uk

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
http://www.esrc.ac.uk

Edexcel Foundation
http://www.edexcel.org.uk

Education and Training Inspectorate (Northern Ireland)
http://www.deni.gov.uk/inspection_services/welcome/index.htm

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
http://www.epsrc.ac.uk

Estyn
http://www.estyn.gov.uk

EURYDICE Unit for England, Wales and Northern Ireland
http://www.nfer.ac.uk/eurydice

Examinations Appeals Board
http://www.theeab.org.uk

General Teaching Council for England
http://www.gtce.org.uk

General Teaching Council Wales
http://www.gtcw.org.uk

Government Information Service
http://www.open.gov.uk

Graduate Teacher Training Registry
http://www.gttr.ac.uk

Higher Education Staff Development Agency (HESDA)
http://www.hesda.org.uk

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
http://www.hefce.ac.uk

Higher Education Council – ELWa
http:/www.elwa.org.uk

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)
http:/www.hesa.ac.uk

Home Office
http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk

House of Commons
http://www.Parliament.uk/commons/HSECOM.HTM

Independent Schools' Council (ISC)
http://www.iscis.uk.net/

Joint Council for General Qualifications (JCGQ)
http://www.jcgq.org.uk

Learndirect
http://www.learndirect.co.uk

Learning and Skills Council (LSC)
http://www.lsc.gov.uk

Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA)
http://www.lsda.org.uk

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board
http://www.lccieb.org.uk

Local Government Association
http://www.lga.org.uk

Medical Research Council
http://www.mrc.ac.uk

Midland Examining Group (MEG)
http://www.meg.org.uk

National Assembly for Wales (NAfW)
http://www.wales.gov.uk

National Assembly Training and Education Department
http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk

National College for School Leadership
http://www.ncsl.org.uk

National Council — ELWa
http:/www.elwa.org.uk

National Educational Research Forum
http://www.nerf-uk.org

National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)
http://www.nfer.ac.uk

Natural Environment Research Council
http://www.nerc.ac.uk

National Organisation for Adult Learning (NIACE)
http://www.niace.org.uk

Northern Ireland Assembly
http://www.ni-assembly.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
http://www.ccea.org.uk

Northern Ireland Higher Education Council
http://www.nics.gov.uk/denihome.htm

Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk

Open University
http://www.open.ac.uk

Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
http://www.ocr.org.uk

Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council
http://www.pparc.ac.uk

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
http://www.qca.org.uk

Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC)
http://www.accac.org.uk

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
http://www.qaa.ac.uk

Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)
http://www.rae.ac.uk

Sector Skills Development Agency
http://www.ssda.org.uk

SKILL: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
http://www.skill.org.uk

Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)
http://www.scop.ac.uk

Teacher Training Agency (TTA)
http://www.teach-tta.gov.uk

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)
http://www.ucas.ac.uk

Universities UK
http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk

University for Industry
www.ufiltd.co.uk

Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)
http://www.wjec.co.uk

Welsh Language Board
http://www.bwrdd-yr-iaith.org.uk/html/index-e.html

Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)
http://www.wlga.gov.uk

Workers' Educational Association
http://www.wea.org.uk

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