



# INCA Comparative Tables

*International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Internet Archive*

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## Introduction

During the period 1996 to 2013, the International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Internet Archive, known as INCA, provided descriptions of government policy on education in 21 countries worldwide. The project was originally commissioned by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) and funded and supported by its successors - the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). Following the closure of QCDA in 2011, the INCA website was supported by the Department for Education. Content has always been managed and updated by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER).

INCA provided regularly updated descriptions of government policy on education in Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the USA and Wales. The INCA website made particular reference to the curriculum, assessment and initial teacher training frameworks in place, and focused on education provided in schools and to the 3-19 age range. The sections on initial teacher training, which were funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) (now the Teaching Agency), were added to all the country descriptions in 2004 and 2005. Funding for these sections was discontinued in 2009 and they were consequently not updated from March 2009.

The aims of the INCA project were to:

- Build, maintain, update and develop an accurately researched and ready-to-use resource of 'country archives', comprising descriptions of government policy on the aims, organisation and control, and structure of the education system, on the curriculum and assessment frameworks, and on the initial teacher training systems in mainstream and special education across all 21 countries of the Archive.
- Provide comparative tables, thematic probes and thematic studies in specific areas of interest.
- Provide detailed information on specific areas to enable the DfE to evaluate the English National Curriculum and assessment frameworks.
- Help the DfE and policy colleagues analyse the outcomes of international comparisons.

These comparative tables were updated on a regular basis and aimed to provide a readily comparable overview of the detailed descriptions of national education policy in the country archives. Whilst more manageable than the complete Archive, the comparative table format inevitably entails simplification of complex data, with the risk of distortion. The following therefore outlines the caveats which apply and the strategies adopted to minimise any negative effects:

- The concepts and categories are distinctively related to the curriculum and assessment framework in England and may not apply to other countries.
- The terminology used is that used in England. Explanatory notes are provided and the annotations respect, as far as possible, national terminology.
- In some cases, the Archive or the international comparisons used as sources (e.g. OECD) do not include information for all the countries in the study. Where comparable data are not available this is indicated in the tables.

For those countries with devolved structures (Australia, Canada, Germany, South Africa, Switzerland, and the USA) it is not always possible to provide 'national' data. Readers should therefore recognise that the data may refer to specific states or provinces, as examples, and cannot necessarily be taken to reflect a national position. Such countries are identified with a dot in the left hand margin of a table.

The comparative tables list countries in 'country blocks'; UK and Ireland, Europe, and 'the rest of the world'. These groupings were chosen to allow for easy comparisons between countries, especially the home countries<sup>1</sup> and Ireland, and to ensure consistent groupings where it was considered necessary to split tables.

United Kingdom and Ireland	Mainland Europe		Rest of the world	
England	France	Netherlands	Australia	New Zealand
Ireland	Germany	Spain	Canada	Singapore
Northern Ireland	Hungary	Sweden	Japan	South Africa
Scotland	Italy	Switzerland	Korea	USA
Wales				

<sup>1</sup> England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland

The term 'student' is used for pupils at all stages in the education system.

The principal source of information for the tables was the Archive (formerly at [www.inca.org.uk](http://www.inca.org.uk)). All sources in the Archive were referenced so that users could evaluate the content and locate sources, where needed. A full list of sources for each country was available in the online Archive. A snapshot of the website was taken in February 2013 by the National Archives. It is available at:

[http://ia201114.eu.archive.org/qa\\_tna\\_february/20130220111732/http://www.inca.org.uk/](http://ia201114.eu.archive.org/qa_tna_february/20130220111732/http://www.inca.org.uk/)

Table 1  
General characteristics

	Population (thousands) 2011	Population density (per km <sup>2</sup> ) 2007	% of population aged under 15, 1960	% of population aged under 15 2010	Young people who are not in education or employment as a % of persons in that age group, 2010		% of total labour force unemployed 2011	% of total labour force unemployed 1997	% GDP on primary, secondary and post-secondary non tertiary education, 2009 or latest available	
					15-19 years old	20-24 years old			Public	Private
United Kingdom	61,761	249	23.3	17.7	9.9	19.34	8.0	6.8	4.5	(:)
Ireland	4,486	62	30.5	21.6	10.45	26.44	14.4	9.9	4.6	0.1
France	63,294	113	26.4	18.4	7.93	20.65	9.7	11.4	3.8	0.2
• Germany	81,755	230	21.3	13.4	3.68	13.67	5.9	9.7	2.9	0.4
Hungary	9,974	108	25.3	14.7	4.64	21.51	10.9	9.0	3.0	(:)
Italy	60,328	195	23.4	14.0	12.47	27.1	8.4	11.2	3.3	0.1
Netherlands	16,693	402	30.0	17.5	3.77	7.79	4.5	5.4	3.7	0.4
Spain	46,125	89	27.3	15.0	12.84	27.4	21.6	16.7	3.1	0.2
Sweden	9,449	20	22.4	16.6	5.39	14.32	7.5	9.9	4.2	(:)
• Switzerland	7,912	183	23.2	14.6	4.77	11.06	4.1	3.9	3.8	0.6
• Australia	22,621	3	30.2	18.9	8.06	11.21	5.1	8.5	3.6	0.6
• Canada	34,483	3	33.7	16.5	8.23	15.32	7.5	9.1	3.2	0.4
Japan	127,799	338	30.2	13.2	9.87	9.87	4.6	3.4	2.7	0.3
Korea	49,779	486	42.3	16.1	8.47	23.51	3.4	2.6	3.6	1.1
New Zealand	4,405	16	32.9	20.5	10.44	18.43	6.5	6.8	4.5	0.7
Singapore	5,312 <sup>2</sup>	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	2.0	(:)	(:)	(:)
• South Africa	51,771 <sup>3</sup>	(:)	(:)	30.1	31.6 (for ages 15-24) <sup>4</sup>	31.6 (for ages 15-24)	24.9	(:)	3.9	(:)
• USA	311,591	32	31.0	19.8	7.65	19.4	9.0	4.9	3.9	0.3

(:) Not available

<sup>2</sup>Department of Statistics, Singapore (2013). Key Annual Indicators: Population, Singstat. [http://www.singstat.gov.sg/statistics/browse\\_by\\_theme/population.html](http://www.singstat.gov.sg/statistics/browse_by_theme/population.html)

<sup>3</sup>Statistics South Africa (2012), *Census 2011*, StatsOnline. [http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Census%202011\\_data\\_supplied\\_to\\_National\\_Treasury.asp](http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Census%202011_data_supplied_to_National_Treasury.asp)

<sup>4</sup>Statistics South Africa (2013) *Quarterly Labour Force Survey*. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02114thQuarter2012.pdf>

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Table 2

**Levels of control and administrative organisation**

	National level	Second level	Third level	Institutional level	Notes
<b>England</b>	Ministry	152 local authorities (LAs)		School governing bodies	Devolved responsibility to schools/school governing bodies. Legislation allows for the creation of integrated children services departments, at local (second) level, responsible for education, children and young people's health and social services.
<b>Ireland</b>	Ministry			Boards of management	Ministry formulates policy, monitors quality, allocates resources and is responsible for some organisational and administrative functions. Boards of management are an initiative to devolve more responsibility to schools.
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	Ministry	5 Education and Library Boards (ELBs)		School governing bodies	It is intended to establish a single Education and Skills Authority (ESA) which will replace the five ELBs.
<b>Scotland</b>	Ministry	32 local authorities		School boards	Devolved responsibility to local authorities/schools.
<b>Wales</b>	Ministry	22 local education authorities (LEAs)		School governing bodies	Devolved responsibility to schools/school governing bodies.

*Continued*



	National level	Second level	Third level	Institutional level	Notes
<b>France</b>	Ministry	<i>Académies</i>	<i>Régions, départements or communes</i>		Ministry defines national policies, guidelines and curricula. Devolved responsibility (via <i>académies</i> ) to <i>régions</i> for upper secondary education, <i>départements</i> (lower secondary) and <i>communes</i> (pre-primary/primary).
• <b>Germany</b>	(National) federal government	16 <i>Länder</i>	Local school districts		<i>Länder</i> set guidelines; local school districts recruit staff, determine curricular content, choose texts etc. Standing Conference of Ministers of Education & Cultural Affairs of the 16 <i>Länder</i> is main instrument of cooperation at national level. In January 2013, three <i>Länder</i> (Bavaria, Saxony and Lower Saxony) committed to an education treaty to ensure greater cohesion and comparability across the <i>Länder</i> .
<b>Hungary</b>	Ministry	3000+ municipalities or counties (local authorities)		Schools	Policy determined at national level; organisational decisions at local and school level.
<b>Italy</b>	Ministry	20 regions	Provinces and municipalities/communes	School councils	Centralised policy making. Increasing delegation of administrative powers from central government via regions, provinces and municipalities/communes to schools.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Ministry	Provinces	Municipalities (local authorities)	c. 6300 competent authorities (school boards)	The Dutch education system combines a centralised education policy with the decentralised administration and management of schools.
<b>Spain</b>	Ministry	17 Autonomous Communities	Local (municipal) authorities, e.g. Municipal School Councils	Governing/educational coordination bodies, e.g. school councils of individual schools	Ministry responsible for general regulation of system, policies and guidance. Autonomous Communities oversee implementation of nationally defined standards, adapt these to local situation, set up teaching establishments, administer personnel etc. Schools are autonomous in organisational, educational and financial affairs.
<b>Sweden</b>	Ministry	3 national agencies, plus county administrations	290 municipalities	School principals	Municipalities decide how schools are run, following national Ministry guidelines.
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Confederation	26 cantons	c. 2600 municipalities	School board/teachers	The first national goals for education were agreed in June 2011, previously goals had been defined by individual cantons. The national goals are a result of recent increased movement towards 'harmonisation' of the education system. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) is the main instrument of cooperation between cantons. Most cantons mandate municipalities to set up schools.
					<i>Continued</i>

	National level	Second level	Third level	Institutional level	Notes
• <b>Australia</b>	National (commonwealth) government	6 states and 2 territories	Districts	School councils	Responsibility for education rests with the states and territories. However, national tests have been introduced and a national curriculum is being developed and implemented. The commonwealth (federal) Government promotes national consistency and coherence. Collaboration takes place through the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC).
• <b>Canada</b>	Confederation	10 provinces and 3 territories	Local school boards/districts		Responsibility for education rests with the provinces and territories. The Council of Ministers of Education Canada, CMEC, ensures national-level communication, but has no direct control.
<b>Japan</b>	Ministry	47 prefectures	3400+ municipal/local boards of education	School principals	Ministry oversees; prefectures operationally responsible for upper secondary, municipalities for compulsory education.
<b>Korea</b>	Ministry	7 Municipal and 9 Provincial Education Authorities (MPEAs) or Metropolitan Offices of Education (MPOEs)	Around 180 local offices of education (LOEs) (school district offices of education)	'School management committees'	Gradually increasing budgetary, administrative and curricular powers delegated to MPEAs and MPOEs.
<b>New Zealand</b>	Ministry			Boards of Trustees	Ministry provides policy advice, allocates resources, develops curriculum and monitors effectiveness. Boards of Trustees (elected by parents) develop school charter including aims/objectives.
<b>Singapore</b>	Ministry			School principal or, increasingly, superintendent in charge of 'cluster' of 13/14 schools.	School principal determines institutional programme/structure, based on national Ministry guidelines. Development of school clusters aims to confer greater authority to school superintendents.
• <b>South Africa</b>	National ministry	9 provinces		School governing bodies	The National Ministry has exclusive responsibility for tertiary education and shares responsibility with the provinces for all other levels of education. The nine provinces implement education policy devised nationally and make funding decisions. Significant responsibility is devolved to school governing bodies.
• <b>USA</b>	Federal government	50 states	Local district school boards	School	Individual states provide policy guidelines; local districts operate schools within these guidelines. Some national (federal) initiatives influence state policy guidelines.

## Notes

<b>England</b>	Following the formation of a Conservative and Liberal Democrat Coalition Government in May 2010, the local authority's role in education is changing significantly. The Government White Paper, <i>The Importance of Teaching</i> (DfE, 2010), stated that the role of the local authority will increasingly move towards strategic commissioning and overseeing rather than providing education services.
<b>Sweden</b>	There are three national agencies concerned with the phases and types of education covered by the INCA website: the Swedish National Agency for Education ( <i>Skolverket</i> ), the Swedish Schools Inspectorate ( <i>Skolinspektionen</i> ), and the National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools ( <i>Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten</i> ). In addition, the International Programme Office for Education and Training ( <i>Internationella programkontoret</i> ) is the central authority supporting schools' international activities. There are two further agencies (the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education – <i>Högskoleverket</i> and the National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges) which are concerned with higher education.
<b>Hungary</b>	From 2013, a central school maintenance institute with 198 local units will provide and manage education provision (including vocational education and training and pedagogical services) for children and young people aged 6 to 19. The designation of school catchment areas, the employment of teachers and administrative personnel, and the regulation of the curriculum will be taken over by the state. Only kindergartens will continue to be fully maintained by municipalities.

Table 3  
National education aims

Table 3 summarises the general aims, purposes, goals and principles of education, as stated in the documents consulted for the INCA Archive. It does not reflect the emphasis placed on each area by the individual country.

	Excellence/raising standards	Individual development	Values/ethics/morals	Emotional/spiritual development	Social development	Personal qualities	Equal opportunity/multi-culturalism	National economy	Preparation for work	Basic skills – literacy/numeracy	Scientific/technological skills	Foundation for future education	Knowledge/skills/understanding	Citizenship/community/democracy	Cultural (heritage literacy)	Creativity	Non-mother tongue language	Environment/sustainable development	Health/physical/leisure	Lifelong learning	Parental participation	Special learning needs (including gifted)
England	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Ireland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
N. Ireland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Wales	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Scotland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
France	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•
• Germany	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hungary	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Italy		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•	•
Netherlands	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Spain	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sweden	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Switzerland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Australia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• Canada	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Japan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Korea	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
New Zealand	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Singapore	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
• South Africa		•	•	•	•		•	•		•		•		•			•		•	•		•
• USA	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•

Table 4

**Recent education reforms**

Table 4 provides an overview of the timing of the introduction and review of legislation and key initiatives in six key areas. Dates in blue indicate the current key legislation or initiative. Dates in a normal font imply that the major legislation has been amended without changing the major direction of the legislation/initiative. Dates included in the table only cover legislation/initiatives which are already in force. Pending legislation or initiatives awaiting implementation are covered in footnotes.

	<b>Length of compulsory education</b>	<b>Promote pre-school education</b>	<b>Primary curriculum</b>	<b>Secondary curriculum</b>	<b>Standardised national assessment</b>	<b>Examinations</b>
<b>England</b>	1973 <b>2008</b>	1998, <b>2006</b>	1988 1995, 96, 97, 98 <b>2000</b>	1988 1995, 96, 97 2000, 02, <b>2006</b> , 08	1988 1996, 97 2002, <b>2004</b> , <b>2008</b>	1988 <b>2000</b> , <b>2008</b>
<b>Ireland</b>	1937, 1998 <b>2000</b>	1994, 1999 2009	1971 <b>1999</b>	1989 1994 <b>1995</b>	1989 1999 <b>2007</b>	<b>1989</b> <b>1995</b>
<b>N. Ireland</b>	1973 <b>1989</b>	1998	1989 2004 <b>2006</b>	1989 <b>2006</b>	1989 1996, 98 <b>2006</b>	1989, 1998 2000, 02, 04, 05 <b>2006</b> , <b>2008</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	1947 1980	1947 1968	1989 2000 <b>2004</b>	1977, 1987 1999, 2000 <b>2004</b>	1991 2003 <b>2004</b> , <b>2005</b>	1980, 1992, 99 2002, 04, 05
<b>Wales</b>	1973	1998 2001 <b>2008</b>	1988 1995, 96, 97 2000, 01, 03 <b>2008</b> 2009 2013	1988 1995, 96, 97 2000, 01, 03, 04 <b>2008</b> 2009 2013	1988 1996, 97, 99 2001 <b>2004</b> , <b>06</b> 2013	1988 1996, 97 2000, 01, <b>2007</b> , <b>2008</b>
<i>Continued</i>						

	Length of compulsory education	Promote pre-school education	Primary curriculum	Secondary curriculum	Standardised national assessment	Examinations
<b>France</b>	1936 1959	1989	1991, 95 2002, <b>05</b> , 06, <b>2008</b>	1995, 99 2001, <b>05</b> , 06, 09, 10	1985, <b>89</b>	1985, 87 1999 2001, <b>05</b>
• <b>Germany</b>	n/a	1993, <b>96</b>	1994	1993, <b>96</b>	<b>2002</b> . 08	1971 1994, 97, 99 <b>2005</b> , 08
<b>Hungary</b>	1993, <b>96</b> , <b>2013</b>		1993, 95, <b>99</b> <b>2007</b>	1993, 95, 99 2000, <b>2007</b>	1993, 95, 96, <b>99</b> <b>2004</b>	1993, 96 <b>2002</b>
<b>Italy</b>	1999 2006	1968 <b>1991</b>	1985 <b>1991</b> <b>2004</b> , <b>07</b> 2012	1979 <b>2001</b> , 04, 07 2012	1977 1996, <b>97</b> <b>2007</b>	1979 1992, <b>97</b> <b>2004</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	1981	1981	1993, 95, 98 2003, <b>06</b>	1993, 98, 99 2003, <b>06</b>	<b>2006</b>	1998, <b>99</b> 2011
<b>Spain</b>	1990	1990 <b>2006</b>	1990 <b>2006</b>	1990, 92, 93 <b>2006</b>	1990 <b>2006</b>	1990 <b>2006</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	1985	1991, <b>98</b>	1965 1994, <b>98</b>	1965 1994, 98 2000	1995 2000, 09	1969 <b>1995</b> 2000
• <b>Switzerland</b>	1970	n/a	n/a	n/a	1968 1994 <b>2002</b>	1968 <b>1994</b>
• <b>Australia</b>	n/a	n/a	<b>1991</b> <b>2011</b>	<b>1991</b> <b>2011</b>	1991, <b>97</b> <b>2008</b>	n/a
• <b>Canada</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1989 2003, <b>07</b>	n/a
<b>Japan</b>	1947 <b>2006</b>	1947 <b>2006</b>	1989 <b>1998</b>	1989 <b>1998</b>	1964 <b>2007</b>	1994
<b>Korea</b>	1949 <b>1997</b>	1969 1982 1999 2007	1992 1997 <b>2007</b>	1992 1997 <b>2007</b>	1987 1995, <b>99</b> 2000	1974 1991, 95, 97, <b>98</b>
<b>New Zealand</b>	1993	1989 1996 <b>2002</b>	1991, <b>93</b> <b>2007</b>	1991, <b>93</b> <b>2007</b>	1995, 97 2012	<b>2002</b> , 07
<b>Singapore</b>	2000	2000, <b>2012</b>	1997 <b>2001</b> , 08	1997 <b>2001</b> , <b>02</b> , <b>10</b>	1997 <b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b> , 03
• <b>South Africa</b>	1996	2002	1998 2002, <b>2010</b>	1998 2002, <b>2010</b>	1998 2005 2011	1995 2001, 08
• <b>USA</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1969 <b>2002</b>	n/a

## Notes

<b>England</b>	The Education and Skills Act 2008 introduced a requirement for all young people to participate in (at least part-time) education and training until their 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday. The first cohort to be affected by the changes began secondary education (Year 7, age 11) in September 2008. The minimum age at which young people can leave learning will be raised in two stages – to 17 from 2013 and to 18 from 2015. In 2006, the weekly free entitlement of 12.5 hours of early education and childcare for three- and four-year-olds was extended from 33 weeks per year to 38 weeks. Since 2010, all three- and four-year-olds have been entitled to 15 hours of free early education and childcare provision. A review of the National Curriculum for primary and secondary education began in January 2011; it is expected that the new curriculum will be taught from September 2014.
<b>Ireland</b>	The Education (Welfare) Act of 2000 raised the school leaving age from 15 to 16 or the completion of three full years of second level education. This was implemented in the 2002/03 school year. In 2007, all children at the end of Year 1 or the beginning of Year 2, and at the end of Year 4 or the beginning of Year 5 of primary education began to take standardised tests in reading (English) and maths. Since 2012, all primary schools have been required to administer standardised tests in English reading (in English-medium and Irish-medium schools), in mathematics (in English-medium and Irish-medium schools) and in Irish reading (in Irish-medium schools) for all children in Years 2, 4 and 6 (aged around 8, 10 and 12 years). A framework for early learning ( <i>Aistear</i> ) was launched in 2009. The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 established a single qualifications authority for compulsory, further and higher education. A new framework for junior cycle education (students aged 12 to 15) will be introduced from September 2014 and two new linked qualifications will be completed for the first time in 2017.
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	Under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, revised statutory curriculum and assessment arrangements for compulsory primary and secondary education were implemented gradually from September 2007. Revised GCE A Levels were introduced in September 2008.
<b>Scotland</b>	The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 empowered local authority social work departments to set up day nurseries to care for children across the whole pre-school age group and to provide pre-school education for the older child. A new curriculum for three- to 18-year-olds was proposed in the 2004 document 'A Curriculum for Excellence'. Schools began to adopt this new curriculum from August 2009. The curriculum phase of the Curriculum for Excellence Programme has now been implemented. The Programme will continue until 2016, when the implementation of the new qualifications which are being developed by the Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA) is completed.
<b>Wales</b>	A 'foundation phase' of education for 3- to 7-year-olds began to be introduced in September 2008. At that time, a revised curriculum for 3- to 19-year-olds also began to be introduced. Changes to the national assessment system in Wales mean that statutory assessment at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3 (ages 7, 11 and 14 respectively) is by teacher assessment only. The Welsh Baccalaureate (16+) qualification was also introduced in a staged roll-out from September 2007. Revised GCE A Levels were introduced in September 2008. The Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 introduced 'learning pathways' for all 14- to 19-year-old learners which focus on the needs of individual learners, providing wider choice and flexibility of courses and a 'Learning Core' including skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and experiences. A new Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) which sets out expectations for learning in literacy and numeracy was introduced in September 2012. Linked to this all students in Years 2 to 9 (age 7 to 14 years) will take national reading and procedural elements of the numeracy tests from May 2013.
<b>France</b>	Compulsory education was extended to age 14 in 1936 and to 16 in 1959. Following extensive revisions, and the development of the <i>socle commun</i> (the common basis of knowledge and skills), a new primary programme of study was introduced from the beginning of the 2008 school year. Similar new programmes of study were introduced to lower secondary education at the start of the 2009 school year. Phased introduction of the new upper secondary curriculum started in August 2010.
• <b>Germany</b>	National tests to assess performance against common standards in primary and lower secondary education are being introduced. The results of the first standardised tests were published in 2010. The process began in the 2004/05 school year, based on an agreement of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the 16 German <i>Länder</i> first signed in 2002. A common catalogue of objectives and measures was agreed in the Dresden Declaration of 2008.
<b>Hungary</b>	The school leaving age was raised to 16, as a result of 1993 legislation, and to 18 in 1996. In January 2013 it was reduced back to 16 as a result of 2011 changes to the Public Education Act. In addition, participation in kindergarten education will be compulsory from the age of 3 as of 2014.

<b>Italy</b>	Legislation makes provision for compulsory education to last 10 years, from age six to 16; this came into effect from the 2009/10 academic year. In 2004, the <i>primo ciclo</i> (first cycle of education), consisting of five years of primary education and three years of lower secondary was introduced. New curriculum guidelines for primary and secondary education were delivered to schools at the beginning of the 2012/13 school year.
<b>Netherlands</b>	The Primary Education Act 1981, which lowered the starting age of compulsory education from six to five years, abolished separate nursery schools and brought provision for four- and five-year-olds into primary education, came into effect in 1985. In the 2011/12 academic year, stricter requirements for the school leaving examinations will be introduced.
<b>Sweden</b>	Compulsory education normally begins at age seven and lasts nine years. However, since 1991, six-year-olds have been able to enrol in Year 1 of compulsory education if places are available. Since 1998 it has also been possible to postpone a child's entry to Year 1 of compulsory education until the age of eight. There are national tests for students in Year 3 (aged nine-10), Year 6 (aged 12/13) and Year 9 (aged 15/16); they were introduced from the spring term of 2009. New syllabuses for all subjects in compulsory education and a new grading system were introduced in July 2011.
• <b>Switzerland</b>	A national agreement on the objectives and content of education, including the introduction of curricular standards during compulsory education, is in the process of deliberation and ratification by the cantons.
• <b>Australia</b>	Education is the responsibility of individual States and Territories. There is collaboration through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). In May 2008, students in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9 (ages 8/9, 10/11, 12/13 and 14/15 respectively) took the first (NAPLAN) national tests in literacy and numeracy. NAPLAN is the National Assessment Programme in Literacy and Numeracy. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority has been charged with developing a national curriculum. Introduction began in 2011 in some States and Territories and in 2012/2013 in others. Aligned to the new national curriculum is a national assessment and reporting programme.
• <b>Canada</b>	Provinces and territories control education; there is some national influence through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) which is responsible for national-level communication. The CMEC-developed national School Achievement Indicators Programme (SAIP) (standardised lower secondary tests) was replaced by the Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme (PCAP) in spring 2007.
<b>Japan</b>	In 2006, the Fundamental Law of Education was revised for the first time in 60 years. Following a review in 1998, revised courses of study were introduced at primary and lower secondary level in 2002. In 2009, these were reviewed again and, as a result, new curriculum guidelines were introduced in elementary schools (six- to 12-year-olds) in the 2011 school year, in junior high schools (12- to 15-year-olds) in 2012, and will be introduced in high schools (15- to 18-year-olds) in 2013. In March 2010, the Japanese Government also passed legislation to abolish tuition fees for public high schools (students aged 15 to 18+). New national standardised tests in Japanese and mathematics took place for all students in Year 6 (ages 11 to 12) and Year 9 (ages 14 to 15) in April 2007.
<b>Korea</b>	The curriculum was last revised in 2007.
<b>New Zealand</b>	A new curriculum was released in November 2007 and was introduced in schools between 2007 and 2010. The National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) was replaced by the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement in 2012. Voluntary assessment on school entry was initiated nationally in 1997. A National Assessment Strategy (for compulsory education) was introduced in 1999. A modular/cumulative National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) (15+) began to be introduced in 2002/3 although it was launched initially in 1998. National standards, which set out descriptions of what students should know and be able to do in reading, writing and mathematics at different points in their schooling from Years 1 to 8 (aged five/six to 13) were introduced in 2010.



- Singapore**

Following legislation passed in 2000, six years of primary education became compulsory for children starting primary school in the 2003/4 school year. A pre-school curriculum framework was drawn up for the first time and launched in 2003. This was refreshed in 2012. Following a review of upper secondary education in 2002, a revised curriculum and more flexible educational pathways began to be introduced in junior colleges (ages 16 to 18) from 2006. In 2008, the Ministry of Education conducted a review of primary education, followed by a review of secondary education in 2010. Changes arising from these reviews have since been implemented.
- South Africa**

Following a review of the implementation of the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) in 2009, a revised curriculum for all learners began to be introduced in 2011. Annual National Assessments (ANAs) which are standardised national assessments for languages and mathematics taken by students in Grades 2 to 7 (aged 7/8 to 12/13). Grade 9 (students aged 14/15) literacy and numeracy ANA tests were first taken in 2012 academic year. The class of 2008 were the first to take the National Senior Certificate (NSC) in Grade 12 (aged 18). NSC is based on the National Curriculum Statement
- USA**

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has been assessing students' knowledge nationally in reading, writing, mathematics, science and other subjects since its introduction in 1969. President Bush's 2002 national education reform strategy - 'No Child Left Behind' (NCLB) - signed into law statutory testing in reading, maths and science throughout the USA. Work is underway on the Obama Administration's reauthorisation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which focuses on preparing students for college and the workplace. Common Core Standards for all States in the USA, in English language and mathematics, were developed and implemented in 2012. Assessment for the Common Core Standards is currently being developed, with implementation expected in the 2014/15 school year.

Table 5

**Schooling: duration, phases****Table 5.1 Compulsory education**

	Starting age	Minimum school leaving age	Duration in years
England	5	16	11
Ireland	6	16	10
Northern Ireland	4	16	12
Scotland	4/5	16	11
Wales	5	16	11
France	6	16	10
• Germany	6	15/16+	9/10 Full time + 3 Part time
Hungary	6	18	12
Italy	6	16	10
Netherlands	4/5	18	13
Spain	6	16	10
Sweden	7	16	9
• Switzerland	4/5/6	15	9 – 11
• Australia	5/6	15/16/17	9-11
• Canada	6/7	16/18	10-12
Japan	6	15	9
Korea	6	15	9
New Zealand	6	16	10
Singapore	6/7	16/17	10
• South Africa	7	15	8
• USA	6	16	10

## Notes

<b>England</b>	Although children must start school the term after they reach the age of five, many children start school at age four. The Education and Skills Act 2008 introduced a requirement for all young people to participate in (at least part-time) education and training until their 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday. The first cohort to be affected by the changes began secondary education (Year 7, age 11) in September 2008. The minimum age at which young people can leave learning will be raised in two stages – to 17 from 2013 and to 18 from 2015.
<b>Ireland</b>	Although compulsory education does not begin until age six, more than 40 per cent of four-year-olds and almost all five-year-olds are in publicly-funded provision in the infant classes of primary schools.
<b>Scotland</b>	A child is of school age between five and 16; depending on when they are born in the school year they may start at age four.
<b>Wales</b>	Although children must start school the term after they reach the age of five, many children start school at age four.
• <b>Germany</b>	Students must complete at least nine or 10 years of full-time education, followed by three years of part-time education (dependent on the jurisdiction), with nine years' full-time education being the norm.
<b>Hungary</b>	All five-year-olds must also attend kindergarten for up to four hours each school day to prepare for compulsory school. Since 1998, all students commencing compulsory education have had to remain in education until the age of 18. Previously the upper limit was 16. In principle, there are eight years of basic education, plus four years of upper secondary education. From January 2013, the upper limit for school will be reduced from 18 to 16 years of age. Participation in kindergarten will also become compulsory from age 3 from 2014.
<b>Italy</b>	Legislation passed in late 2006 made provision for compulsory education to last 10 years from age six to 16. This legislation was introduced in the 2009/10 school year.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Most children (99 per cent) start school at age four although it is not compulsory until the age of five. Children must attend school full-time until age 16 and must continue learning until they have obtained a basic qualification up to age 18.
<b>Sweden</b>	Although compulsory education begins at age seven, municipalities must allow six-year-olds to commence compulsory education. Entry may also be deferred to age eight. Children who commence compulsory education at age six complete the nine years of compulsory education at age 15; entry at age eight means completion of compulsory education at age 17.
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Currently, starting and leaving ages and the duration of compulsory education vary from canton to canton, with nine years being the norm. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education has approved an agreement to standardise the length of compulsory education. From 2015/16, it will last 11 years (two years of pre-school, six years of primary education and three years of lower secondary school education).

- **Australia** Although six is the usual compulsory starting age, most children start school at age five. In Tasmania, every child who is at least five years old on 1 January must be enrolled in the Preparatory Year in a school or be provided with home education. The minimum school leaving age is 15 in most States/Territories, 16 in Tasmania. In Queensland, since January 2006, it has been compulsory for young people to remain in school until they finish Year 10 or reach age 16. Unless in full time work, they must then stay in education or training for a further two years or until they have a senior certificate, vocational certificate or have reached the age of 17. Similar arrangements were introduced in Tasmania in January 2008, where, after leaving Year 10, young people must now continue in education or training for two years or until they turn 17. School education is compulsory for all children aged six to 17 years of age in Victoria.
- **Canada** Although, in most Canadian provinces, education is compulsory to around age 16, in three provinces – Ontario, New Brunswick and Manitoba it is compulsory to age 18.
- New Zealand** Although education does not become compulsory until age six, children almost universally start school at age five.
- Singapore** Six years' primary education is compulsory. The remaining four years' formal general education is universal, not compulsory. Children start primary school in January of the year in which they become seven.
- **South Africa** Children normally begin school at age five, turning six, for admission into Grade R (reception), or six turning seven, for admission into Grade 1. Education is compulsory from age seven (Grade 1), however, it is intended that all children will attend Grade R.
- **USA** The figures/ages in the table are generalisations. In some states, the kindergarten year (children aged five-six) is compulsory; in others, students may be expected to stay in compulsory education until the age of 18.

**Table 5.2 Educational phases (not necessarily involving transfer from one school to another)**

	Pre-school	Primary/basic	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
England	0-5	5-11	11-16	16-18
Ireland	3-6	6-12	12-15	15-16/17/18
Northern Ireland	2-4	4-11	11-16	16-18
Scotland	3-5	5-12	12-16	16-18
Wales	3-5	5-11	11-16	16-18
France	2-6	6-11	11-15	15-18
• Germany	3-6	6-10/12	10/12-15/16	15/16-18/19
Hungary	3-6 (compulsory at age 5)	6-10/12/14	6-10/12/14	10/12/14-18/19/20
Italy	2½-6	6-11	11-14	14-18/19
Netherlands	0-5	5-12	12-15	15-18
Spain	0-6	6-12	12-16	16-18
Sweden	0-7	7-16	7-16	16-19
• Switzerland	4/5-6/7	6/7-10,11,12	10,11,12-15/16	17/15/16-18/19
• Australia	3-5/6	5/6-12/13	12/13-15/16	15/16-18+
• Canada	4/5-6/7	6/7-11,12,13	11/12/13-15/16	15/16-17/18+
Japan	3-6	6-12	12-15	15-18
Korea	3-6	6-12	12-15	15-18
New Zealand	3-5/6	5/6-12/13	12/13-16	16-18+
Singapore	3/4-6	6/7-12	12-16/17	16/17-18/19+
• South Africa	0 to 4/5	5/6-12	12-15	15-18
• USA	3-5/6	5/6-13/14	5/6-13/14	13/14-17/18

## Notes

<b>England</b>	The period of education from birth to the end of the academic year in which a child has his/her fifth birthday is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Compulsory education begins the term after a child reaches the age of five. However, many children begin school at four+. The compulsory age of leaving education and training will be raised to 17 by 2013 and 18 by 2015. Those children entering secondary education (Year 7, age 11) in September 2008 were the first cohort to be expected to remain in (at least part-time) education and training until the age of 17.
<b>Ireland</b>	Although compulsory education does not formally begin until age six, the majority of four- and five-year-old children are in publicly-funded provision in primary school education. At age 15+, students follow either a one-year Transition Year course; three types of two-year Leaving Certificate course; or a three-year course (Transition Year followed by a two-year Leaving Certificate course).
<b>Wales</b>	The foundation phase covers children aged three to seven years. Compulsory education begins the term after a child reaches the age of five. However, many children begin school at four+.
<b>France</b>	Compulsory education ends at age 16. Students must therefore spend at least one year in the upper secondary phase.
• <b>Germany</b>	Primary education ends at age 10 in 14 of the 16 <i>Länder</i> , and at age 12 in the remaining two (Berlin and Brandenburg).
<b>Hungary</b>	Attendance in the kindergarten year, age five-six, is compulsory. From 2014, participation in kindergarten will be compulsory from age 3. Traditionally, Hungarian secondary education admitted general school leavers aged 14+. It is now increasingly common for secondary schools to admit students aged 10+ or 12+. The compulsory school leaving age is being lowered from 18 to 16 with effect from 1 January 2013.
<b>Italy</b>	Primary and lower secondary education forms the first cycle of education in Italy (six- to 14-year-olds). Compulsory education ends at 16; students must spend at least two years in the upper secondary phase. Since September 2009, it has been possible for children to enrol in pre-school from the age of two-and-a-half.
<b>Sweden</b>	Compulsory phase education is provided in the all-through compulsory school ( <i>grundskola</i> ) and usually begins at age seven. Children who start earlier (age six) may finish earlier (age 15) after nine years' compulsory education.
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Starting and leaving ages and the duration of compulsory education vary from <i>canton</i> to <i>canton</i> . The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education has, however, approved an agreement to make these the same across Switzerland. This agreement to 'harmonise' education systems is currently being implemented in 15 <i>cantons</i> (seven <i>cantons</i> have rejected the agreement and the remaining four have not yet reached a decision). This agreement makes pre-school education compulsory for two years (ages four to six) rather than one (five-six). In addition, from 2015/16, compulsory education will last 11 years (two years of pre-school, six years of primary education and three years of lower secondary school education).
• <b>South Africa</b>	The Reception Year (Grade R) (age five-six) is not compulsory but is available to all children. Upper secondary provision (15- to 18-year-olds) is not compulsory.
• <b>USA</b>	Phases vary dependent on the individual state. The INCA Archive reflects the system of eight-year elementary school, followed by four-year high school. Other jurisdictions have a three-year primary school (includes a kindergarten year), four-year intermediate school, three-year junior high school and three-year senior high; others a five-year elementary school, three-year middle school and four-year high school.

Table 6

**School structures, access, internal grouping and progression****Table 6.1 School structures**

This table indicates whether:

- there is a unitary system of schools catering for all students (comp)
- distinct school types for students of different educational aptitudes (select)
- or a mixed system offering both types of schools (mixed).

Even where the structure may be common for all, differentiated courses are usually offered, at least at upper secondary level to suit students' abilities and preferences.

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
England	comp	mixed	mixed
Ireland	comp	comp	comp
Northern Ireland	comp	mixed	mixed
Scotland	comp	comp	comp
Wales	comp	comp	comp
France	comp	comp	select
• Germany	comp	select	select
Hungary	comp	select	select
Italy	comp	comp	select
Netherlands	comp	mixed	mixed
Spain	comp	comp	mixed
Sweden	comp	comp	comp
• Switzerland	comp	mixed	select
• Australia	comp	comp	comp
• Canada	comp	comp	comp
Japan	comp	comp	select
Korea	comp	comp	mixed
New Zealand	comp	comp	comp
Singapore	comp	comp	select
• South Africa	comp	comp	comp
• USA	comp	comp	comp

## Notes

<b>Northern Ireland</b>	There has, until recently, been a selective system of secondary education, with children taking tests in the final year of primary education to determine selection for the post-primary phase. The last 'transfer tests' were taken in autumn 2008 for entry to post-primary education in September 2009. Annually the Government publishes a circular containing recommended criteria that schools can use to select students. Schools must have regard to these. Schools are recommended not to use academic criteria but are not precluded from doing so.
<b>Wales</b>	The overwhelming majority of secondary schools in Wales are comprehensive schools. There are no grammar schools, that is, schools which are wholly selective by academic ability or aptitude.
<b>Canada</b>	At one time, secondary schools were primarily academic and prepared students for university. Vocational and technical schools were often separate institutions. Although some of these still exist, most secondary schools are now composite and offer both academic and vocational courses.



## Table 6.2 Access

This table indicates whether access to educational phases:

- is automatic (open)
- or subject to performance in school leaving certificates or other evidence of performance (cert).

In the case of higher education, this indicates whether holders of relevant upper secondary school certificates (e.g. *Baccalauréat* in France, *Abitur* in Germany, *VWO* in the Netherlands) have automatic right of access to higher education (open) or whether they have to meet additional selection criteria operated by higher education institutions (select).

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Higher education
England	open	open	cert	select
Ireland	open	open	open	select
Northern Ireland	open	open (cert)	cert	select
Scotland	open	open	cert	select
Wales	open	open	cert	select
France	open	open	open	open
• Germany	open	cert	cert	open
Hungary	cert	cert	cert	select
Italy	open	open	cert, age 14	open
Netherlands	open	cert	cert	open
Spain	open	open	cert, age 16	select
Sweden	open	n/a	cert, age 15/16	select
• Switzerland	open	cert	cert	open
• Australia	open	open	open	select
• Canada	open	open	cert	select
Japan	open	open	cert, age 15	select
Korea	open	open	cert, age 15 (open)	select
New Zealand	open	open	open	select
Singapore	open	cert	cert	select
• South Africa	open	open	cert, age 15	select
• USA	open	open	open	select

## Notes

<b>Ireland</b>	Although admission to higher education is 'open' students need high scores in the Leaving Certificate examinations to access places on the most sought after programmes.
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	There has, until recently, been a selective system of secondary education, with children taking tests in the final year of primary education to determine selection for the post-primary phase. The last 'transfer tests' were taken in autumn 2008 for entry to post-primary education in September 2009. Annually the Government publishes a circular containing recommended criteria that schools can use to select students.
<b>France</b>	The first year of upper secondary education is the final year of compulsory education. Students therefore progress automatically from the lower secondary <i>collège</i> to upper secondary education.
• <b>Germany</b>	In cases where children, aged six, are not thought ready to enter primary education, they may be obliged to spend some time in special preparatory classes.
<b>Hungary</b>	A certificate confirming a child's attendance in kindergarten education is a pre-requisite for entry to compulsory education.
<b>Italy</b>	Until the 2004/05 academic year, students took the primary school leaving examination at age 11. This was required for entry to lower secondary education. The examination has been discontinued as primary and lower secondary now form 'sub-divisions' of the first cycle of education in Italy. A first cycle leaving certificate (age 14) is required for entry to the <i>liceo</i> .
<b>Sweden</b>	Primary and lower secondary compulsory phase education is provided in one 'all-through' school ( <i>grundskola</i> ).
• <b>Switzerland</b>	As in many countries, there are additional higher education entry requirements in certain subject areas, such as medical science, where there is a shortage of places for students.
<b>Japan</b>	Students receive an elementary school leaving certificate, but progress automatically from their local elementary school to their local junior high school (at age 12).
<b>Korea</b>	Graduates of middle schools or the equivalent may enter high schools. Admission into high school used to be based on the grades of a selection examination, but there is increasing variance in the admissions process.
• <b>South Africa</b>	Access to post-compulsory education (age 15+) is dependent on successful completion of lower secondary education and achievement of the General Education and Training (GET) certificate.

## Table 6.3 Internal grouping

This table indicates whether classes are generally defined by age or by ability in different subjects (set). In some cases, grouping by ability applies in some subjects only (age/set), or is introduced from a given class onwards (e.g. age/set Year [Yr] 4). In others, students are grouped both by age and the ability based pathway they have taken (age and set). Beyond the compulsory phase, there is considerable variation and students are most commonly grouped according to the courses they take.

	Primary	Lower secondary
<b>England</b>	age/set	age/set
<b>Ireland</b>	age	age/set
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	age/set	age/set
<b>Scotland</b>	age	age/set
<b>Wales</b>	age/set	age/set
<b>France</b>	age	age
• <b>Germany</b>	age	age and set
<b>Hungary</b>	age/set	age/set
<b>Italy</b>	age	age
<b>Netherlands</b>	age	age and set
<b>Spain</b>	age	age
<b>Sweden</b>	age	age, set at 12+
• <b>Switzerland</b>	age	set
• <b>Australia</b>	age	age/set
• <b>Canada</b>	age	age/set
<b>Japan</b>	age	age
<b>Korea</b>	age/set	age/set
<b>New Zealand</b>	age	age/set
<b>Singapore</b>	age, set at age 10	age and set
• <b>South Africa</b>	age	age
• <b>USA</b>	age/set	age/set

## Notes

<b>Hungary</b>	Classes are generally organised by age regardless of ability but, during lower secondary education, they may be organised by ability in different subjects. Decisions on class grouping are made by the school administration.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Students in primary education may be grouped by ability in some schools; this procedure is quite rare, however, and students are usually grouped by age.
• <b>Australia</b>	Teaching groups are generally organised by age. Setting may be practised in some subjects, such as mathematics, from year 7/8 (students age 12/13).
<b>Japan</b>	During the period 2014 to 2019, the Japanese Ministry of Education intends to move away from the policy of teaching in age groups in public elementary and junior high schools (age six to 15) towards teaching groups by ability.
<b>Korea</b>	Classes are generally organised by age regardless of ability but, since the introduction of the Seventh National Curriculum, some grouping by ability has been introduced.
<b>New Zealand</b>	Classes are generally grouped by age, but variations do occur with setting by ability for some subjects, such as mathematics and English, or grouping by band.
• <b>South Africa</b>	Primary level teaching groups are normally organised by age. However, multi-grade classes do exist in areas with low population densities, especially in rural areas. Similar arrangements are also made during secondary education.
• <b>USA</b>	In elementary schools, children are generally grouped by age with some banding within a class for certain subjects. Grouping by ability may take place in some schools.

## Table 6.4 Progression within phases

This table indicates whether students automatically move to the next class (**open**) or whether this is subject to their achieving certain minimum standards (**perf**). In most countries where performance governs progression, the decision is made by all the teachers of the relevant class/year group and includes consultation with parents.

	Primary	Lower secondary
England	open	open
Ireland	open	open
Northern Ireland	open	open
Scotland	open	open
Wales	open	open
France	perf	perf
• Germany	perf	perf
Hungary	perf	perf
Italy	open	perf
Netherlands	perf	perf
Spain	open	open
Sweden	open	perf
• Switzerland	perf	perf
• Australia	open	open
• Canada	open	open/perf
Japan	open	open
Korea	open	open
New Zealand	open	open
Singapore	open	perf
• South Africa	perf	perf
• USA	open/perf	open/perf

## Notes

<b>France</b>	Although automatic promotion is becoming the norm.
<b>Italy</b>	Progression within primary education is generally open although there are some very rare exceptions.
<b>Singapore</b>	Generally open in primary education, although some students may be asked to repeat the final year of primary education.
<b>Sweden</b>	Students normally progress to a higher class. However, after consulting a child's parent, the headteacher may decide not to move a student up (or to transfer a child earlier than would be the norm).
<b>Spain</b>	Although most students generally progress automatically from one school year to the next, children who do not meet the objectives for a given year do not automatically progress to the next year. Instead, they receive additional support to achieve the objectives before being allowed to move on. Generally, however, no child is held back for more than one year.
• <b>South Africa</b>	Students in South Africa are expected to meet expected levels of performance to progress from one Grade to the next. To reduce the number of students repeating, a new assessment policy, moving the emphasis from year-end exams to continuous performance appraisals has been introduced. This provides struggling students with greater assistance. It is intended that students should not spend more than four years in each phase and should, as a rule, progress with their age group.

Table 7

## Subjects in the compulsory phase curriculum

This table aims to map the subjects studied in the compulsory curriculum mapped against the English National Curriculum.

	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
<b>England</b>	5-16	5-16	5-16 <sup>5</sup>	5-14	5-14	11-14	5-14	5-16	5-14 <sup>6</sup>	5-14	5-16	11-16 <sup>7</sup>	Religious education, 5-16 Careers education and guidance, 11-16 Sex education 11-16 Work-related learning, 14-16
<b>Ireland</b>	4/5-15 <sup>8</sup>	4/5-15	4/5-12 <sup>9</sup>	4/5-15	4/5-15	4/5-15		4/5-15	4/5-12 <sup>10</sup>	4/5-12		4/5-15 <sup>11</sup>	Social, Personal and Health Education 4/5-15 Religious education 4/5-15 Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) 12-15
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	4-14	4-14	4-14 <sup>12</sup>	4-14	4-14	11-14	4-14 <sup>13</sup>	4-16	4-14	4-14		4-16	Religious education 4-16 Personal Development and Mutual Understanding 4-16 Learning for Life and Work 11-16 Skills and capabilities Language entitlement
<b>Scotland</b>	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16 <sup>14</sup>	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16 <sup>15</sup>	4/5-16 <sup>16</sup>	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16 <sup>17</sup>	Health and wellbeing 4/5-16 Religious and moral education 4/5-16
<b>Wales</b> <sup>18</sup>	7-16 <sup>19</sup>	7-19	7-16	7-14	7-14	7-14	7-14 <sup>20</sup>	7-16	7-14	7-14	7-14	7-16	Personal and social education (PSE) 7-16 Religious education 7-16 Welsh as a second language 7-16

<sup>5</sup> England: At age 14-16, science may be taught as combined science or as individual subjects: physics, chemistry and biology

<sup>6</sup> England: Art and design

<sup>7</sup> England: Citizenship and personal, social and health education

<sup>8</sup> Ireland: Sub-divided into Gaeilge and English

<sup>9</sup> Ireland: As social, environmental and scientific education (SESE) for four/five- to 12-year-olds. Science is an optional subject for 12- to 15-year-olds but is studied by the vast majority of junior cycle students (92% in 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Ireland: Taught as 'Arts education' which comprises visual arts, music and drama for four/five- to 12-year-olds.

<sup>11</sup> Ireland: Part of social, personal and health education for four/five- to 15-year-olds. In addition, the compulsory subject 'Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)' is taught to 12- to 15-year-olds.

<sup>12</sup> Northern Ireland: Taught as the 'World Around Us' for four- to 11-year-olds and 'Environment and Society' for 11 to 14-year-olds.

<sup>13</sup> Northern Ireland: Taught as art, design and music

<sup>14</sup> Scotland: Taught as part of social studies

<sup>15</sup> Scotland: Taught as part of technology

<sup>16</sup> Scotland: Taught as 'Health and Wellbeing'

<sup>17</sup> Scotland: Taught as part of religious and moral education

	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
<b>France</b>	6-16	6-16	8-16 <sup>21</sup>	8-16 <sup>22</sup>	8-16 <sup>23</sup>	7-16	8-14 <sup>24</sup>	6-16	6-14 <sup>25</sup>	6-14	8-15	8-16 <sup>26</sup>	'Discovering the world', 6-8 Individual support, 15-16
• <b>Germany</b> <sup>27</sup>	Varies												
<b>Hungary</b>	6-18	6-18	6-18 <sup>28</sup>		10-18 <sup>29</sup>	9-18 14-18 <sup>30</sup>	6-14 <sup>31</sup>	6-18	6-16/18	6-16	12-15/18	10-14 <sup>32</sup> 12-13 <sup>33</sup> 16-17 <sup>34</sup>	Environment, 6-10 Nature, 10-12 Our earth and environment, 12-16 Class session, 10-18 Dance and drama, 10-12 Ethnography, 10-12 Cinema and media, 13-14 Introduction to philosophy, 17-18 Health, 13-14 Careers/work-related education 14-18
<b>Italy</b> <sup>35</sup>	6-14	6-14	6-14	6-14	6-14	6-14 <sup>36</sup>	6-14 <sup>37</sup>	6-14	6-14	6-14	11-14	6-14 <sup>38</sup>	

<sup>18</sup> Wales: The foundation phase (children aged three-seven) is based on seven statutory 'areas of learning': personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity; language, literacy and communication skills; mathematical development; welsh language development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. This table therefore starts at age seven for Wales, although education is compulsory from age five.

<sup>19</sup> Wales: English or Welsh

<sup>20</sup> Wales: Technology comprising design and technology and information technology

<sup>21</sup> France: Experimental science and technology for eight- to 11-year-olds, life and earth science for 11 to 12-year-olds, life and earth science and physics/chemistry for 12- to 16-year-olds

<sup>22</sup> France: Geography is part of humanities for eight- to 11-year-olds, history/geography/civics for 11- to 12-year-olds, and history/geography for 12- to 16-year-olds

<sup>23</sup> France: History is part of humanities for eight- to 11-year-olds, history/geography/civics for 11- to 12-year-olds, and history/geography for 12- to 16-year-olds

<sup>24</sup> France: As part of experimental science and technology for eight- to 11-year-olds, and technology thereafter

<sup>25</sup> France: Art and music are combined as 'the arts'

<sup>26</sup> France: Civics is part of humanities for eight- to 11-year-olds, history/geography/civics for 11- to 14-year-olds, and civics, legal and social education for 14- to 16-year-olds

<sup>27</sup> Germany: Curriculum content varies from *Land* to *Land* in Germany. As a rule, subjects at primary level include German, mathematics, *Sachunterricht* (general studies), art, music, sport and, in most *Länder*, religious instruction. At lower secondary level, the Standing Conference of Ministers lays down a framework schedule for Grades 5-9/10, requiring certain core subjects in every type of school and course of education: German, mathematics, the first foreign language, natural sciences and social sciences.

<sup>28</sup> Hungary: Environment taught from age six-10, nature from 10-12, physics from 12-17, biology from 12-14 and from 15-18, chemistry from 12-16, and 'Our Earth and Environment' from 12-14

<sup>29</sup> Hungary: History and citizenship ages 10-14

<sup>30</sup> Hungary: Second foreign language

<sup>31</sup> Hungary: Technology and lifestyle

<sup>32</sup> Hungary: Sometime taught as history and citizenship

<sup>33</sup> Hungary: Anthropology and social studies, ethics

<sup>34</sup> Hungary: Social science and ethics

<sup>35</sup> Italy: Subjects taken in the compulsory years of upper secondary education depend on the choice of upper secondary school (*liceo*); this table therefore stops at the end of lower secondary education, age 14.

<sup>36</sup> Italy: English is taught from age six, a second modern foreign language is added at age 11.

<sup>37</sup> Italy: Taught as 'technology' and 'art and design'

<sup>38</sup> Italy: In the 2009/10 school year, the teaching of 'Citizenship and Constitution' began on an experimental basis. It is not a separate subject and its contents are developed by each school through pedagogical projects included in the history-social area of study



	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
<b>The Netherlands</b>	4/5-15 <sup>39</sup>	4/5-15				4/5-15		4/5-15	4/5-15 <sup>40</sup>	4/5-15			Social and environmental studies <sup>41</sup> Healthy living; social structures <sup>42</sup> Man and society, 12-15 <sup>43</sup> Man and nature, 12-15 <sup>44</sup>
<b>Spain</b>	6-16	6-16	6-16 <sup>45</sup>	6-16	6-16	8-16	12-16 <sup>46</sup>	6-16	6-16	6-16		10-16	
<b>Sweden</b> <sup>47</sup>	6-16	6-16	6-16	6-16 <sup>48</sup>	6-16	6-16	6-16 <sup>49</sup>	6-16	6-16	6-16			Craft 6-16 Home and Consumer studies 6-16
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Varies <sup>50</sup>												
• <b>Australia</b> <sup>51</sup>	6-16	6-16	6-16	6-16 <sup>52</sup>	6-16	6-16	6-16 <sup>53</sup>	6-16	6-16	6-16	6-16	6-16	Economics, 6-16 Business 6-16
• <b>Canada</b>	Varies <sup>54</sup>												
<b>Japan</b>	6-15	6-15	6-15 <sup>55</sup>			10/12-15 <sup>56</sup>		6-15	6-15	6-15			Social studies, 8-15 Moral education, 6- Class/homeroom activities, 6- Integrated study, 8- Homemaking/industrial art, 12-15 Dance or martial arts 12-15

<sup>39</sup> The Netherlands: Dutch and Frisian – in Frisian speaking areas

<sup>40</sup> The Netherlands: Combined to form 'art education' for five- to 11-year-olds, and 'art and culture' for 11- to 15-year-olds

<sup>41</sup> The Netherlands: 'social and environmental studies' includes geography, history, science (including biology), citizenship, social and life skills (including road safety)

<sup>42</sup> The Netherlands: 'healthy living/social structure' includes geography, history, science (including biology), citizenship, social and life skills (including road safety)

<sup>43</sup> The Netherlands: 'man and society' consists of 12 core objectives covering asking questions and doing research, placing phenomena in time and space, using sources, the organisation of themes and the ideas of citizenship

<sup>44</sup> The Netherlands: 'man and nature' consists of eight core objectives covering physical, technological and care-related subjects, including living and non-living nature, humans, animals and plants and their relationship to the environment, physical and chemical phenomena, the build and function of the human body, research skills and learning to question, and caring for oneself, others, and the environment

<sup>45</sup> Spain: Taught as 'knowledge of the natural, social and cultural environment for children aged six to 12. Science may be taught separately for 12- to 16-year-olds.

<sup>46</sup> Spain: Taught as technology

<sup>47</sup> Sweden: The time allocation for all subjects during the nine years of compulsory education is set centrally. Schools decide how this time is allocated and when subjects are introduced.

<sup>48</sup> Sweden: 885 hours are allocated to the teaching of geography, history, social studies and religion

<sup>49</sup> Sweden: Science includes technology

<sup>50</sup> Switzerland: There is considerable freedom regarding the content of the primary curriculum, except in mathematics, foreign languages and some aspects of the mother tongue, where there is some national agreement/guidance on standards. The HarmoS agreement, which has come into force in some cantons, harmonises arrangements for introducing the teaching of foreign languages - the first language from Year 5 (age 10) and the second from Year 7 (age 12). In all lower secondary school types, students are usually taught the mother tongue language (German, French, Italian, Rhaeto-Romanic), mathematics, a second national language (French in the German-speaking cantons and the Italian-speaking cantons of Ticino, German in the French-speaking cantons), natural science, geography, history, civics, music, art, physical education.

<sup>51</sup> Australia: Based on the National Curriculum Framework. State and Territory curriculum organisation may differ.

<sup>52</sup> Australia: Geography, languages and the arts will be covered by the second phase of development of the Australian national curriculum framework. Expected in 2012/13. Implementation from 2014.

<sup>53</sup> Australia: Economics, business, civics and citizenship, health and physical education, information and communication technology and design and technology will be covered by the third phase of development of the Australian national curriculum framework. Expected in 2013. Implementation from 2014.

<sup>54</sup> Canada: There is no national level curriculum in Canada

<sup>55</sup> Japan: Life environment studies, ages six-eight

	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
<b>Korea</b>	6-15	6-15	8-15			8-15		8-15	8-15	8-15		8-15 <sup>57</sup>	Disciplined life, 6-8 Intelligent life, 6-8 Pleasant life, 6-8 Orientation programme, 6-8 Practical arts/home economics, 10-15 Social studies, 8-15
<b>New Zealand</b>	5/6-16	5/6-16	5/6-16			5/6-16		5/6-16 <sup>58</sup>	5/6-16				Social science, 5/6-16 Technology, 5/6-16
• <b>South Africa</b>	6-15 <sup>59</sup>	6-15	9-15 <sup>60</sup>				9-15 <sup>61</sup>			12-15 <sup>62</sup>			Life skills <sup>63</sup> 6-15 Social science 9-15 Life Orientation 12-15 Economic management science 12-15
<b>Singapore</b>	6-16/17 <sup>64</sup>	6-16/17	8-16/17 <sup>65</sup>	12-14 <sup>66</sup>	12-14	6-16/17 <sup>67</sup>	12-14	6-16/17	6-14 <sup>68</sup>	6-16/17		6-16/17 <sup>69</sup>	Humanities Other options: <sup>70</sup> Social studies, 6-14 Health education, 10-12
• <b>USA</b>	Varies <sup>71</sup>												

<sup>56</sup> Japan: In the 2011-12 academic year, English was introduced as a first foreign language for elementary school students in Years 5 and 6, ages 10-12

<sup>57</sup> Korea: Moral education/ethics

<sup>58</sup> New Zealand: Health and physical education

<sup>59</sup> South Africa: Children choose a first and second official language

<sup>60</sup> South Africa: Taught as 'natural science and technology'

<sup>61</sup> South Africa: Technology is taught from age 12 to 15

<sup>62</sup> South Africa: Taught as 'art and culture'

<sup>63</sup> South Africa: 'Life skills' comprises 'beginning knowledge, creative arts, personal and social well-being'

<sup>64</sup> Singapore: A choice of Chinese, Malay or Tamil. For six- to 10-year-olds this includes health education and information literacy

<sup>65</sup> Singapore: At age 14, students choose at least one of: biology or human and social biology; physics; chemistry; science/integrated science

<sup>66</sup> Singapore: At age 14, students choose at least one of the humanities; literature; geography; history

<sup>67</sup> Singapore: English is taught as a foreign language from age six; another language is an option at age 14

<sup>68</sup> Singapore: Art and craft; it is an option from age 14

<sup>69</sup> Singapore: Civic and moral education

<sup>70</sup> Singapore: Other subjects available at age 14 include a third language (French, Japanese, German or Malay language elective); art and crafts; music; fashion and fabrics; food and nutrition; commerce; principles of accounts; design and technology; and religious knowledge.

<sup>71</sup> There is no national curriculum for compulsory phase education. Individual states have the right to establish curriculum guidelines. Education programmes throughout the 50 states generally include English grammar, reading and writing; mathematics; science and the scientific method; United States' history and government; art; music; health and nutrition; practical arts; physical education; geography; and foreign languages. Many schools are also beginning to teach the history, culture, and traditions of other nations and peoples.

## Sources/Further information

<b>England</b>	Primary	<a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary">http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary</a>
	Secondary	<a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary">http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary</a>
<b>Ireland</b>		<a href="http://www.curriculumonline.ie">www.curriculumonline.ie</a>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>		<a href="http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/">http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/</a>
<b>Scotland</b>		<a href="http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/">http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/</a>
<b>Wales</b>		<a href="http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculuminwales/arevisedcurriculumforwales/?lang=en">http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/curriculuminwales/arevisedcurriculumforwales/?lang=en</a>
<b>France</b>	Les programmes de l'école élémentaire	<a href="http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid24307/les-programmes-de-l-ecole-elementaire.html">http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid24307/les-programmes-de-l-ecole-elementaire.html</a>
	Les programmes du collège	<a href="http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid24207/les-programmes-du-college.html">http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid24207/les-programmes-du-college.html</a>
	Les programmes du lycée	<a href="http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid24239/les-programmes-du-lycee.html">http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid24239/les-programmes-du-lycee.html</a>
• <b>Germany</b>	Link to a database of curriculum documentation in the <i>Länder</i> on the Stating Konferenz website.	<a href="http://www.kmk.org/dokumentation/lehrplaene.html">http://www.kmk.org/dokumentation/lehrplaene.html</a>
<b>Hungary</b>		<a href="http://www.nefmi.gov.hu/english/hungarian-national-core">http://www.nefmi.gov.hu/english/hungarian-national-core</a>
<b>Italy</b>		<a href="http://www.fidai.it/AreaLibera/Riforma/Profumo/MIUR-Indicazioni-nazionali-definitive-scuola-infanzia-e-primo-ciclo.pdf">http://www.fidai.it/AreaLibera/Riforma/Profumo/MIUR-Indicazioni-nazionali-definitive-scuola-infanzia-e-primo-ciclo.pdf</a>
<b>Netherlands</b>	Primary and lower secondary	<a href="http://www.slo.nl/primair/kerndoelen/">http://www.slo.nl/primair/kerndoelen/</a>
<b>Spain</b>	Primary	<a href="http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2006/12/08/pdfs/A43053-43102.pdf">http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2006/12/08/pdfs/A43053-43102.pdf</a>
	Secondary	<a href="http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2007/01/05/pdfs/A00677-00773.pdf">http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2007/01/05/pdfs/A00677-00773.pdf</a>
<b>Sweden</b>		<a href="http://www.skolverket.se/forskola-och-skola/grundskoleutbildning/laroplaner">http://www.skolverket.se/forskola-och-skola/grundskoleutbildning/laroplaner</a>
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Project HarmoS	<a href="http://www.edk.ch/dyn/11737.php">http://www.edk.ch/dyn/11737.php</a>
• <b>Australia</b>	National	<a href="http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/curriculum_design_and_development.html">http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/curriculum_design_and_development.html</a>
	Tasmania	<a href="https://www.education.tas.gov.au/Students/schools-colleges/curriculum/Pages/Tasmanian-Curriculum.aspx">https://www.education.tas.gov.au/Students/schools-colleges/curriculum/Pages/Tasmanian-Curriculum.aspx</a>
	Queensland	<a href="http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/index.html">http://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/index.html</a>
	Victoria	<a href="http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/">http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/</a>
• <b>Canada</b>	Alberta	<a href="http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx">http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx</a>
	British Columbia	<a href="https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/by_grade.php?lang=en&amp;gradelevel=K-12">https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/by_grade.php?lang=en&amp;gradelevel=K-12</a>
	Ontario	<a href="http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum">http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum</a>
	Saskatchewan	<a href="http://www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca">http://www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca</a>
<b>Japan</b>		<a href="http://www.mext.go.jp/english/a05.htm">http://www.mext.go.jp/english/a05.htm</a>
<b>Korea</b>		<a href="http://english.mest.go.kr/web/1692/site/contents/en/en_0203.jsp">http://english.mest.go.kr/web/1692/site/contents/en/en_0203.jsp</a>
		<a href="http://ncic.kice.re.kr/english.index.do">http://ncic.kice.re.kr/english.index.do</a>
<b>New Zealand</b>		<a href="http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum">http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-documents/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum</a>
<b>Singapore</b>		<a href="http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/syllabuses/">http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/syllabuses/</a>
• <b>South Africa</b>		<a href="http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/CurriculumAssessmentPolicyStatements/tabid/419/Default.aspx">http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/CurriculumAssessmentPolicyStatements/tabid/419/Default.aspx</a>
• <b>USA</b>	Kentucky	<a href="http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/Pages/default.aspx">http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/Pages/default.aspx</a>
	Massachusetts	<a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks">http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks</a>
	Maryland	<a href="http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/index.html">http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/index.html</a>
	Wisconsin	<a href="http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/">http://standards.dpi.wi.gov/</a>

Table 8

## Curriculum structure and organisation

	Status of Curriculum	Curriculum specification	Time allocation	Age at which elective subjects are selected	End of lower secondary qualification
<b>England</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	Statutory programmes of study and attainment targets for local adaptation	Local time allocation	14+	Evaluation of students at the end of compulsory education (age 16) is normally by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination.
<b>Ireland</b>	Statutory curriculum framework (non-statutory pre-school curriculum framework)	National Core Curriculum framework for local adaptation	Recommended minimum weekly time allocation by subject and phase of education	12	<i>Junior Certificate</i>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	Curriculum expressed through six 'areas of learning', cross-curricular themes and other skills (thinking skills and personal capabilities)	Local time allocation	14 for choices with the 'learning entitlement'. Schools may offer electives from age 11.	Evaluation of students at the end of compulsory education (age 16) is normally by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination.
<b>Scotland</b>	Non-statutory national guidance	The 'experiences and outcomes' for learning organised across eight curriculum areas	Local time allocation	Age 12 or 14	Standard Grade
<b>Wales</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	National curriculum and religious education	Local time allocation	14+	Evaluation of students at the end of compulsory education (age 16) is normally by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination.
<b>France</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	Statutory common core of knowledge and skills expressed as national programmes (of study)	Statutory minimum weekly time allocation by subject and phase/section of education. Local flexibility in allocation for some subjects	12	<i>Diplôme national du brevet</i> at age 15
• <b>Germany</b>	No national curriculum. Responsibility lies with the individual federal states ( <i>Länder</i> )	Common national educational standards have begun to be developed for specific stages in primary and secondary education. Each <i>Land</i> produces curriculum guidelines on the goals, subject matter and methods involved in learning.	Statutory weekly time allocation by phase of education (and, at secondary level, by the distinction of whether a subject is compulsory or optional).	12/13	A 'Leaving Certificate' on completion of Year 9 ( <i>Hauptschulabschluss</i> ) or Year 10 ( <i>mittlerer Schulabschluss</i> ) of compulsory education.

	Status of Curriculum	Curriculum specification	Time allocation	Age at which elective subjects are selected	End of lower secondary qualification
<b>Hungary</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	National Core Curriculum framework for local adaptation	Annual statutory time allocation by subject and year level	6	Optional national basic examination (age 16) ( <i>alapvizsga</i> ) (Upper secondary qualification at age 18 – education compulsory to age 18)
<b>Italy</b>	Statutory national curriculum defined through national guidelines	National guidelines establish general objectives of education process and specific learning objectives. The guidelines comprise three disciplines divided into subjects.	Local time allocation with specification for English and Catholic religion.	RE is optional throughout compulsory education. No other options are offered.	<i>Licenza media</i> at age 14
<b>Netherlands</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	Statutory attainment targets which schools use to devise their curricular plan	Minimum time allocation by phase of education. Local flexibility in allocation	12	Three pathways through upper secondary education lead to school leaving qualifications
<b>Spain</b>	Statutory curriculum	Teaching is organised around the minimum core curriculum requirements of the official curriculum ( <i>enseñanzas mínimas</i> ) over six 'areas of knowledge'	An example school timetable has been established by the national Ministry. It reflects the minimum core curriculum requirements ( <i>enseñanzas mínimas</i> ). The core curriculum requirements account for 65 per cent of the school curriculum (55 per cent in those Autonomous Communities where the regional language is also taught). The remainder is determined locally.	12	<i>Graduado en educación obligatoria</i> at age 16
<b>Sweden</b>	Statutory curriculum	The curriculum is set out in a syllabus for each subject.	Yes: minimum teaching times for basic education are set out	In the nine years of basic education, 13 per cent of time is set aside for student and school options	Final school leaving certificate ( <i>grundskolabetyg</i> ) at age 16
• <b>Switzerland</b>	No national curriculum. Responsibility lies with the individual cantons.	Cantonal education authorities draw up the curriculum for lower secondary education. There is ongoing work to 'harmonise' some aspects of compulsory phase education, including some which relate to the curriculum. Organisations such as the CIIP, which brings together the French-speaking <i>cantons</i> , and the D-EDK, which brings together the German-speaking <i>cantons</i> , are also working on producing regional curricula.	Varies – but increasing standardisation	Varies	A 'Leaving Certificate' on completion of Year 9 (age 15) ( <i>Hauptschulabschluss</i> ) or Year 10 (age 16) ( <i>mittlerer Schulabschluss</i> ) of compulsory education.

	Status of Curriculum	Curriculum specification	Time allocation	Age at which elective subjects are selected	End of lower secondary qualification
• <b>Australia</b>	Statutory national curriculum framework (in development)	Learning entitlement expressed in terms of learning areas with general capabilities and cross-curricular perspectives. Content descriptions specify what teachers are expected to teach	Local time allocation	N/A Framework in development	State and territory external examination system at age 18/19
• <b>Canada</b>	No national curriculum. Responsibility lies with the individual provinces and territories. A National Secretariat (CMEC) ensures communication on curricula issues.	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies – the Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme (PCAP) is a series of cyclical tests of the achievement of 13-year-old students in mathematics, reading, and science involving all provinces and territories.
<b>Japan</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	Courses of study provide guidelines for the objectives and standard content of each curriculum subject. Adaptation by local boards of education encouraged	Annual statutory minimum time allocation by subject and year level	12	Local end of lower secondary/upper secondary high school entry examinations (age 15)
<b>Korea</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	National common core curriculum; local adaptation/additional local content encouraged	Annual statutory minimum time allocation by subject and year level	6	Some local upper secondary high school entry examinations at age 15. On completion of upper secondary high school education, successful students receive the diploma of high school education.
<b>New Zealand</b>	Statutory curriculum framework	Framework expressed in strands including 'principles', 'values', 'key competencies', 'learning area statements' and 'achievement objectives'.	Local time allocation	Can be offered by schools from school entry, age 5/6	Level 1 National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is usually taken at this stage (age 16)
<b>Singapore</b>	Statutory national curriculum	Statutory statement of content and subject syllabuses	Statutory weekly time allocation by subject and phase/section of education	14 +	Singapore (Cambridge) International GCE 'N' and 'O' level at age 16

	Status of Curriculum	Curriculum specification	Time allocation	Age at which elective subjects are selected	End of lower secondary qualification
• <b>South Africa</b>	National curriculum	Curriculum and assessment policy statement (CAPS) that provides details of what students should be taught grade by grade, subject by subject.	Statutory percentage of time set by subject	Age 15 when students choose options for further education and training certificate.	Successful completion/ passing of Grade 9 (age 15) results in the award of a compulsory secondary leaving certificate qualification which registers at grade 1 on the National Qualifications Framework. This is a requirement for further study. (National Senior Certificate at age 18)
• <b>USA</b>	No national curriculum. Responsibility lies with the individual states	Varies	Varies	Varies	State and territory external examination system at age 18/19

## Notes

### England

A new national curriculum will be introduced from September 2014.

### Ireland

A new framework for junior cycle education (students aged 12 to 15) will be introduced in Ireland from September 2014 and two new linked qualifications will be completed for the first time in 2017.

### Hungary

Learning a foreign language is first introduced in Grade 4 (age 9/10), however, an increasing number of schools have introduced an optional lesson from Grade 1 (age 6).

### New Zealand

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is a composite qualification made up of credits gained from a wide range of subjects including traditional school curriculum areas and alternative programmes that are listed on the National Qualifications Framework. The NCEA is available at levels 1, 2 and 3. Level 1 units are generally taken in the first year of upper secondary education.

### • USA

The Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI) – is a state-led (non-statutory) attempt to craft common academic content standards co-ordinated by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Standards for English/language arts and mathematics were launched in 2009 with implementation in autumn 2012. Assessment tools for the Common Core State Standards are being developed by two different consortia - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. Implementation is planned for the 2014/15 school year.

Table 9

## National assessment and public examination arrangements

Table 9.1 National standardised assessment system

All systems feature ongoing teacher assessment, which sometimes determines student progression between classes. This is NOT shown in the table below. Figures indicate the ages at which standardised national assessment takes place. An additional column, indicating whether standardised assessment is full cohort assessment or by sample was added in November 2010. In the federal states, a 'yes' is only included where there is standardised national testing, for example, the Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme (PCAP). See the notes for details of federal/state assessments.

**Bold** figures indicate that assessments are compulsory or essential for admission to the next phase.

	National standardised assessment system	Cohort or sample	At school entry	During compulsory primary education	During compulsory secondary education
England	yes	cohort	<b>5</b>	<b>6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</b>	<b>14</b>
Ireland	yes	cohort	no	<b>8, 10, 12</b>	
Northern Ireland	yes	cohort	no	<b>4-11</b>	<b>11-14</b>
Scotland	yes	sample	varies	8/9, 11/12	13/14
Wales	yes	cohort	<b>4/5</b>	<b>7 - 11</b>	<b>11 - 14</b>
France	yes	sample	no	<b>7/8, 10/11</b>	<b>14/15</b>
• Germany	yes	cohort	<b>6</b>	8/9	13/14
Hungary	yes	cohort	<b>6</b>	10	12/14/16
Italy	yes	sample	no	<b>7/8, 10/11</b>	<b>11/12, 13/14, 15/16</b>
Netherlands	yes	cohort	no	12 for most	<b>14/15</b>
Spain	yes	sample/cohort	no	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>
Sweden	yes	cohort	no	<b>9</b>	<b>12, 14, 16</b>
• Switzerland	no	n/a	no	no	no
• Australia	yes	cohort	no	<b>8/9 10/11</b>	<b>12/13 14/15</b>
• Canada	yes	varies	no	varies	varies
Japan	yes	sample	no	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>
Korea	yes	cohort	no	12	15, 16
New Zealand	yes	sample	5/6	<b>8/9</b>	<b>12/13</b>
Singapore	yes	cohort	no	<b>10, 12</b>	
• South Africa	yes	cohort	no	<b>6-12</b>	<b>14-15</b>
• USA	yes	varies	varies	varies	varies



## Notes

<b>England</b>	Children must attend school from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday; most receive some form of early years education prior to this date in the pre-compulsory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (birth to five years old). At the end of the EYFS, the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile' – practitioners' observations of children's achievements across six areas of learning – sums up each child's development and learning achievements. Since June 2012, all children approaching the end of Year 1 (age 6) have had to take a phonics screening test. Statutory assessment at ages seven and 11 involves teacher assessment and/or externally set national tests. At age 14, there is only teacher assessment.
<b>Ireland</b>	Standardised tests were introduced in primary education during the 2007 calendar year. Schools were free to decide when children should take the tests – either at the end of Year 1 or at the start of Year 2 (aged seven), and at age the end of Year 4 or the beginning of Year 5 (aged 10). Since 2012, all primary schools have been required to administer standardised tests in English reading (in English-medium and Irish-medium schools), in mathematics (in English-medium and Irish-medium schools) and in Irish reading (in Irish-medium schools) for all children in Years 2, 4 and 6 (aged around 8, 10 and 12 years). From 2014, secondary students in Year 8 (ages 13-14) will sit standardised tests in English reading and mathematics, and in Irish reading in Irish-medium schools. From 2016, standardised testing in science will also be included.
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	Statutory assessment arrangements for children at the end of key stages 1-3 have recently been replaced by annual teacher assessment. InCAS (Interactive Computerised Assessment System) are used during key stages 1 and 2 (ages four to 11) for diagnostic assessment.
<b>Scotland</b>	The Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy is an annual sample survey which monitors national performance in literacy and numeracy in alternate years, for school children at P4, P7 and S2 (age 8/9, 11/12 and 13/14). It replaced the Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA).
<b>Wales</b>	There is statutory teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 (children aged 7), Key Stage 2 (age 11) and at the end of Key Stage 3, age 14. From September 2013, with the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) all students in Years 2 to 9 (age 7 to 14 years) will have to take the new National Reading and Numeracy Tests.
<b>France</b>	<p>A nursery school "record of achievement" is kept and passed on to a child's first compulsory level school. Progressive assessment of the knowledge and skills of the <i>socle commun</i> (the common core of knowledge) takes place via national standardised assessment, organised in three stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first assesses acquisition of reading and writing, as well as initial mathematical elements. The test is taken by children in the second year of elementary school, aged seven to eight.</li> <li>• The second stage is an appraisal of the acquisitions of students in the final year of elementary school, ages 10-11 in the seven major skill areas.</li> <li>• The third stage concerns students in the final year of <i>collège</i> (lower secondary school, aged 14-15). It assesses the seven skill areas of the <i>socle commun</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Germany</b>	There is a national, standardised marking system across all <i>Länder</i> and for all levels of schooling, and an agreement on recognition/standardisation of the <i>Abitur</i> (upper secondary leaving certificate/higher education access certificate). Common standards for assessment in primary and lower secondary education in a range of subjects have begun to be introduced. National tests to assess performance against the standards take place in Grades 3 and 8 (ages 8/9 and 13/14 respectively). Until 2012, the <i>Länder</i> could adapt the tests but they are now administered according to standard criteria. All <i>Länder</i> participate with the exception of Baden-Württemberg which uses its own tests at age 13/14. Children are evaluated, usually by the school doctor, to judge their maturity/readiness for school. In some cases, alternative provision is recommended.
<b>Hungary</b>	Centralised tests, the National Assessment of Basic Competencies (NABC), comprising tests in mathematics and reading/literacy are taken by students in Grades 4, 6, 8 and 10 (aged 10, 12, 14, and 16 respectively).
<b>Italy</b>	Until the 2004/05 academic year, students took the primary school leaving examination at age 11 which was required to gain access to lower secondary school. This has now been discontinued as primary and secondary education form 'sub-divisions' of the first cycle of education in Italy. INVALSI, the National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education and Training System, has developed new standardised tests to assess students' skills and knowledge at specific points in the education system. The tests, in Italian, mathematics and science, which began to be formally introduced in the 2007/08 school year, are administered to a sample of schools and to students in Years 2 and 5 of primary education (aged seven/eight and 10/11 respectively); in Years 1 and 3 of lower secondary education (ages 11/12 and 13/14); and in Years 2 and 5 of upper secondary

education (aged 15/16 and 18/19).

<b>Netherlands</b>	Tests are supplied by the National Institute of Educational Measurement (CITO) to evaluate whether students have achieved the attainment targets of the compulsory core curriculum for lower secondary education. These tests may be taken after two years of the course (age 14) or at the end of the three-year period of lower secondary education, age 15. CITO also produces the national tests taken at the end of primary education (age 12). Although not compulsory, these are used by the majority of primary schools.
<b>Spain</b>	General diagnostic evaluations are taken by students in a sample of schools in Years 4 and 8 (age 10 and 14). In addition, all of the Autonomous Communities carry out their own annual diagnostic evaluation which assesses the basic skills achieved by students at ages 10 and 14. These tests are taken by the full cohort.
<b>Sweden</b>	Since the 2009/10 academic year, there have been statutory national tests in Year 3 (aged 9/10) in mathematics and Swedish, in Year 6 (ages 12/13) in English, Swedish, and mathematics, and in Year 9 (ages 15/16) in English, mathematics, Swedish and a science.
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Although there is no system of standardised national assessment in Switzerland, new national standards in a range of subjects are under development.
• <b>Australia</b>	In Victoria, school entry assessment is compulsory. In May 2008, the first national tests in literacy and numeracy were taken by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 (ages eight/nine, 10/11, 12/13, and 14/15) as part of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The national curriculum, being introduced from 2011, will have aligned assessment and reporting arrangements.
• <b>Canada</b>	There is periodic national assessment via the Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme (PCAP) which is coordinated by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). In addition, several provinces implement provincial testing/assessment programmes for specific subjects (literacy and numeracy, in particular), and specific age groups, during primary and secondary education.
<b>Japan</b>	New national standardised tests in Japanese and mathematics were introduced for all 12- and 15-year-olds in April 2007. Following elections in August 2009, the Government scaled back the tests, selecting a sample of around 30 per cent of students to take part. However, many schools voluntarily take part boosting the participation rate to just over 70 per cent. From 2012, a sample of students will take an English test in Years 7-9 (age 12 to 15) and 10-12 (age 15 to 18).
<b>Korea</b>	National assessment of educational achievement via scholastic achievement tests (SATs) for small samples of students in some year groups.
<b>New Zealand</b>	Until 2010, a sample of students at ages eight/nine and 12/13 were assessed via the National Educational Monitoring Project (NEMP). In 2012, NEMP is being replaced by the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement which will assess a sample of students at these ages. In addition, national standards, which set out descriptions of what students should know and be able to do in reading, writing and mathematics at different points in their schooling from Years 1 to 8 (aged five to 13) were introduced in 2010.
<b>Singapore</b>	Children take school-based examinations in English, the mother tongue, mathematics and science at the end of Primary 4 (age 10). On the basis of their performance in these examinations, they may go on to study these subjects at 'Standard' or 'Foundation' level (or 'Higher Level' in the case of the mother tongue). At age 12, the end of primary education, the school decides at which level to enter the child in each subject in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE).
• <b>South Africa</b>	There is currently no formal policy on assessment during pre-school education. This is proposed, however, in a draft curriculum for children from birth to age four/five. Systematic evaluation was previously conducted on a nationally representative sample of learners and learning sites. Annual National Assessments - standardised national assessments for languages and mathematics for students in the intermediate phase (Grades 4 – 6) (aged nine-12) and in literacy and numeracy for the foundation phase (Grades 1 – 3) (aged six-nine) were introduced in 2011.
• <b>USA</b>	The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as 'the Nation's Report Card', is a regularly administered, congressionally mandated assessment programme, which assesses representative national samples of students attending public and private elementary (primary) schools, junior high (lower secondary) schools and high schools (upper secondary schools). The Obama Administration's blueprint for the renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) continues to require some form of state assessment. Such testing at the individual state level involves the whole cohort. An increasing number of states are also introducing <i>Kindergarten</i> screening checks.

**Table 9.2 National examination or certification framework to mark the end of an educational phase**

All systems feature ongoing teacher assessment, which frequently determines student progression between classes. This is NOT shown in the table below. Figures indicate the ages at which national certification/public examinations take place.

Bold figures indicate that examinations/certification are compulsory **or** essential for admission to the next phase.

	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
England	no	<b>16</b>	<b>17/18</b>
Ireland	no	<b>15/16</b>	<b>17/18</b>
Northern Ireland	no	<b>16</b>	<b>17/18</b>
Scotland	no	<b>16</b>	<b>17/18</b>
Wales	no	<b>16</b>	<b>17/18</b>
France	no	<b>15</b>	<b>16+/18</b>
• Germany	no	<b>15/16</b>	<b>18/19</b>
Hungary	no	no	<b>18+</b>
Italy	no	<b>14</b>	<b>18/19</b>
Netherlands	12	14/15	<b>16, 17, 18</b>
Spain	no	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>
Sweden	n/a	<b>16</b>	<b>18/19</b>
• Switzerland	no	no	<b>18+</b>
• Australia	no	no	<b>18+</b>
• Canada	no	no	<b>18/19</b>
Japan	no	<b>14+/15</b>	<b>18</b>
Korea	no	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>
New Zealand	no	16	<b>17/18</b>
Singapore	<b>12</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>18+</b>
• South Africa	no	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>
• USA	no	varies	<b>18</b>

## Notes

<b>England</b>	<p>At the upper secondary level, students in schools generally study for General Certificate of Education Advanced-level examinations (GCE A-levels). These 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. Since September 2000, GCE A-levels have been structured as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AS – During the first year of post-compulsory education in the sixth form (Year 12, age 16 to 17), students typically take four or five subjects leading to the GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification (AS) (GCE AS qualification).</li> <li>A2 – Taken in the second year of sixth form (Year 13, students aged 17 to 18), this is the second half of the full A-level qualification. Students typically pursue three of their four or five AS qualification subjects to A2.</li> </ul> <p>Revised GCSEs and A-levels will be introduced in September 2015.</p>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<p>At the upper secondary level, students in schools generally study for General Certificate of Education Advanced-level examinations (GCE A-levels). These 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. Since September 2000, GCE A-levels have been structured as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AS – During the first year of post-compulsory education in the sixth form (Year 12, age 16 to 17), students typically take four or five subjects leading to the GCE Advanced Subsidiary qualification (AS) (GCE AS qualification).</li> <li>A2 – Taken in the second year of sixth form (Year 13, students aged 17 to 18), this is the second half of the full A-level qualification. Students typically pursue three of their four or five AS qualification subjects to A2.</li> </ul>
<b>Wales</b>	In Wales, the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification was introduced in 2007. It combines personal development skills with existing qualifications to produce one wider award.
<b>France</b>	All students take the lower secondary leaving examination ( <i>diplôme national du brevet</i> ) at age 15. Various vocational qualifications are available at age 16+; the <i>Baccalauréat</i> at age 18.
• <b>Germany</b>	In each federal state ( <i>Land</i> ), there are secondary school leaving examinations of various types at age 15/16. There is national agreement on the general content of the <i>Abitur</i> examination (the upper secondary leaving examination which is required for university entry, taken at around age 18). A national pool of questions is being developed for possible use in the <i>Abitur</i> from 2016/17.
<b>Ireland</b>	The Junior Certificate Examinations currently taken at age 15/16 are planned to be replaced on a phased basis with a school-based model of assessment, starting with English in 2014.
<b>Italy</b>	Until the 2004/05 academic year, students took the primary school leaving examination at age 11 which was required to gain access to lower secondary school. This has now been discontinued as primary and secondary education form 'sub-divisions' of the first cycle of education in Italy.
<b>Sweden</b>	Primary and lower secondary compulsory phase education is provided in one 'all-through' school ( <i>grundskola</i> ).
• <b>Switzerland</b>	In some cantons, there is an examination during the final year of primary education (age 10, 11 or 12 depending on the canton) which may, in combination with other factors, influence lower secondary entry. Again, in some cantons, at the end of lower secondary education (age 15/16), students can take a written and oral examination in their main subjects to obtain a leaving certificate.
<b>Korea</b>	Entrance tests, combined with continuous assessment results and lottery allocation, govern access to high school, age 15+. The College Scholastic Achievement Test, taken at age 18 (on completion of high school), governs entry to higher education.

Table 10

## Control and supply of school textbooks

This table outlines:

- who produces textbooks (state or commercial bodies)
- whether the State (or devolved authority) prescribes content etc. of textbooks
- whether the State (or devolved authority) draws up a list of authorised textbooks
- who selects textbooks for use in class
- whether textbooks are provided free by the State (or devolved authority), or whether parents are required to buy them.

	Textbook production	State provides list of approved textbooks	Choice of books for use in class	Textbook provision
<b>England</b>	Commercial	No	Teachers – free choice	School provides/lends
<b>Ireland</b>	Commercial. Ministry provides guidelines and may produce/commission materials for distribution.	No	Teachers – free choice	Parents usually buy or rent from schools. Some state subsidies available.
<b>N. Ireland</b>	Commercial	No	Teachers – free choice	School provides
<b>Scotland</b>	Commercial	No	Teachers – with consultation of school board	School provides
<b>Wales</b>	Commercial	No	Teachers – free choice	School provides (on loan)
<b>France</b>	Commercial – state approved. Local/regional associations and documentation centres may produce teaching materials to supplement those published for national use.	State prescribes content and format, approves all textbooks for use in schools, and provides list of approved texts.	Teachers – from list of approved textbooks	Compulsory education - school provides. Post-compulsory, parents usually buy.
• <b>Germany</b>	Commercial – <i>Länder</i> approved	Each federal state (Land) prescribes cost, content, format and quality and provides list of approved textbooks. RE textbooks are approved with the agreement of the church authorities.	Teachers – from approved textbooks list. Sometimes subject to Schools' Inspectorate approval or consultation with representatives of parents and children.	School provides (on loan)
<b>Hungary</b>	Commercial (state approval). The State underwrites bank loans to publishing companies.	State generally prescribes content, approves and provides recommended list. Teachers are free to select other material, in addition.	Teachers – generally from recommended list, but can select additional material.	Parents buy (subsidised prices) (assistance for needy). Textbooks for minority language education must be provided by the State.
<b>Italy</b>	Commercial	State issues guidance on cost and frequency of updates, but does not prescribe or approve.	Council of teachers – free choice	Provided free at primary level. Parents usually buy thereafter; increasing financial assistance available to low income families.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Commercial	No (Ministry prescribes educational attainment targets but does not prescribe or produce specific teaching materials.)	Teachers – free choice	School provides at primary level (on loan). At secondary level, parents often buy books. Many schools may have book funds and provide loan books.

*continued*

	Textbook production	State provides list of approved textbooks	Choice of books for use in class	Textbook provision
<b>Spain</b>	Commercial under state supervision. Centre for Educational Research and Documentation (CIDE) assists in development/ dissemination of curriculum materials and teacher guides.	No general prescription, but the Autonomous Community (via the regional/local education authority) usually provides a recommended list.	Schools/teachers – usually from recommended list.	Parents usually buy. Increasing financial aid available for low income families.
<b>Sweden</b>	Commercial	No	Teachers - free choice	School provides.
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Cantons (compulsory phase)	Cantons usually prescribe content and provide recommended lists for compulsory phase.	Teachers – usually from recommended list; free choice for upper secondary.	School provides. Upper secondary (post-compulsory) parents buy.
• <b>Australia</b>	Mostly commercial. Boards of Studies may publish support materials.	No	Teachers – free choice	Parents generally buy (or pay a levy to schools for book hire).
• <b>Canada</b>	Commercial (by approval). Provinces produce and pilot books.	Province or territory usually provides recommended list of approved titles.	District or school usually from recommended list.	School usually provides free of charge
<b>Japan</b>	Commercial with state approval, or state-produced.	State-approved, commercially produced. (Some state-approved and state-produced textbooks with prescribed content.)	Local boards of education or headteachers determine which books will be used from prescribed list.	In compulsory education, all students receive new books, free, each year. Post-compulsory, parents/students buy.
<b>Korea</b>	State, or commercial with state authorisation or approval.	Ministry compiles some and authorises or approves other textbooks.	Single textbook replaced by range of government-copyrighted and approved textbooks for individual subjects, enabling teachers to choose.	Provided free at primary level (6-12) (and students may keep, as in Japan). Thereafter, parents buy but costs are kept low.
<b>New Zealand</b>	State and commercial. (Learning Media, a crown-owned company, publishes a range of resources free to schools. Use is not mandatory.)	No	Teachers - free choice	School provides (loaned, parents contribute for damage or loss). Parents buy supplementary materials, particularly at post-compulsory upper secondary level.
<b>Singapore</b>	State and commercial with state approval	State prescribes content and produces an annual approved Textbook List (ATL) for primary and secondary education.	Teachers - from ATL	Parents buy, free for needy
• <b>South Africa</b>	Commercial	Textbooks must be aligned to the national curriculum.	Procurement and delivery of textbooks is a provincial responsibility. In upper secondary, schools chose from a national catalogue.	School provides
• <b>USA</b>	Commercial (dominated by about ten main corporations).	About half of the States recommend textbooks after some process of review against State curriculum guidelines.	Teacher (or school committee) choice; in about half of the States from approved list. (In California, for example, schools may only opt out of the state-recommended textbook system with an official waiver.)	In most States, schools provide books to students free of charge. Some States charge all but the most needy. Others may request a contribution from students in high school (age 14+) in particular.

## Notes

<b>England</b>	There are, however, set texts for certain examination syllabuses. In addition, the current programmes of study for English at Key Stages 1-4 contain criteria and categories from which to select the range of reading.
<b>Wales</b>	There are, however, set texts for certain examination syllabuses. In addition, the programmes of study for English at Key Stages 1-4 contain criteria and categories from which to select the range of reading.
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	There are, however, set texts for certain examination syllabuses.
<b>Italy</b>	Since the 2011/12 school year, schools have been able to adopt textbooks which are available in digital and/or mixed media format.
<b>Sweden</b>	Occasionally some post-compulsory schools (students aged 16+) may request a parental contribution for certain items.
<b>Korea</b>	The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) is converting all paper textbooks to new digital versions which schools will be able to download from a central repository. It is expected that all schools will be using the digital editions by 2015.
• <b>South Africa</b>	All learners in Grades 1 to 6 (six to 12 years of age) are supplied with workbooks containing teaching materials to ensure that all teachers have access to materials which support the new curriculum.

Table 11

## Steps to becoming a teacher

**NB. This table is no longer being updated.**

Table 11.1 Steps to becoming a primary school teacher

- The **consecutive** model: a programme of professional education training is undertaken once an undergraduate degree has been obtained.
- The **concurrent** model: teacher training is combined with a degree which results in the award of a Bachelor of Education degree or similar.
- The **combined** model: a joint degree in education and a specific subject.
- **Length of training** for the consecutive route includes the time taken to obtain a first degree. On-the-job training tends to last one to two years.

	Length of training	Type of training available			On-the-job training	Probationary period	Registration necessary
		Concurrent	Combined	Consecutive			
England	Between 3 and 5 years	•		•	•	1 year	•
Ireland	3/4 years	•		•		1 year	•
N. Ireland	Between 3 and 5 years	•		•		1 year	•
Scotland	4 years	•		•		1 year	•
Wales	Between 3 and 5 years	•		•	•	1 year	•
France	5 years			•		1 year	•
• Germany	5 years	•				2.5 years	•
Hungary	4 years	•	•				
Italy	4 years	•				1 year	•
Netherlands	4 years	•				Discretionary	
Spain	3/4 years	•				3 months to 1 year	•
Sweden	3 to 5.5 years	•				1 year	
• Switzerland	3 years	•					
• Australia	Between 4 and 5 years	•	•	•		Three months to 1 year	•
• Canada	4/5 years	•	•	•		In some provinces	•
Japan	4 years	•				1 year	•
Korea	4 years	•					
New Zealand	Between 3 and 4 years	•		•		2 years	•
Singapore	2 to 4 years	•		•		1 year	
• South Africa	4 years	•		•			•
• USA	4/5 years	•	•	•	•	1 to 3 years	•



## Notes

<b>England</b>	Traditionally the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
<b>Ireland</b>	Generally the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
<b>N. Ireland</b>	Traditionally the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
<b>Wales</b>	Traditionally the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
• <b>Germany</b>	Training consists of two phases: 3 to 4 years of university studies followed by 1.5 to 2 years of preparatory 'on-the-job' training.
• <b>Spain</b>	New arrangements for teacher training were announced following the Organic Law of Education (LOE). This will increase the length of training from 3 to 4 years.
<b>Singapore</b>	A two-year qualification only entitles the holder to teach in a primary school. Although there is no formal registration process, teachers are appointed by the state or its local arm and thus are informally registered. They must also serve a three-year teaching bond.
• <b>South Africa</b>	Although the concurrent and consecutive training models exist, the concurrent is preferred. Teachers must register with the South African Council for Educators (SACE).
• <b>USA</b>	The concurrent programme usually lasts for 4 years. The probationary period may last between 1 to 3 years depending on the State.

**Table 11.2 Steps to becoming a lower secondary school teacher**

**NB. This table is no longer being updated.**

- The consecutive model: a programme of professional education training is undertaken once an undergraduate degree has been obtained.
- The concurrent model: teacher training is combined with a degree which results in the award of a Bachelor of Education degree or similar.
- The combined model: a joint degree in education and a specific subject .
- Length of training for the consecutive route includes the time taken to obtain a first degree. On-the-job training tends to last one to two years.

	Length of training	Type of training available				Probationary period	Registration necessary
		Concurrent	Combined	Consecutive	On-the-job training		
<b>England</b>	Between 3 and 5 years	•		•	•	1 year	•
<b>Ireland</b>	4 /5 years	•		•		1 year	•
<b>N. Ireland</b>	Between 3 and 5 years	•		•		1 year	•
<b>Scotland</b>	4/5 years	•	•	•		1 year	•
<b>Wales</b>	Between 3 and 5 years	•		•	•	1 year	•
<b>France</b>	Between 5 and 6 years			•			•
• <b>Germany</b>	6+ years	•				2.5 years	•
<b>Hungary</b>	4/5 years	•	•				
<b>Italy</b>	5 years			•		1 year	•
<b>Netherlands</b>	4 years	•	•	•		Discretionary	
<b>Spain</b>	Between 5 and 7 years		•	•		1 year	•
<b>Sweden</b>	Between 4.5 and 5.5 years	•				1 year	
• <b>Switzerland</b>	4 years	•					
• <b>Australia</b>	4 5 years	•	•	•		Three months to 1 year	•
• <b>Canada</b>	4/5 years	•	•	•		In some provinces	•
<b>Japan</b>	4 years	•				1 year	•
<b>Korea</b>	4 years	•		•			
<b>New Zealand</b>	Between 4 and 6 years	•	•	•		2 years	•
<b>Singapore</b>	4/5 years	•		•		1 year	•
• <b>South Africa</b>	4 years	•		•			•
• <b>USA</b>	4/5 years	•	•	•	•	1 to 3 years	•

## Notes

<b>England</b>	Traditionally the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
<b>Ireland</b>	Generally, the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
<b>N. Ireland</b>	Traditionally the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
<b>Wales</b>	Traditionally the concurrent route has been chosen by those intending to be primary school teachers and the consecutive by those intending to teach in secondary schools.
<b>France</b>	Six years of training generally leads to an Agrégation, with which teachers work in lycée. Only a handful of 'professeurs agrégés' teach in lower secondary schools.
• <b>Germany</b>	Training consists of two phases: 3 to 4 years of university studies followed by 1.5 to 2 years of preparatory 'on-the-job' training.
• <b>Spain</b>	Following the introduction of the LOE (legislation passed in 2006), some changes may be made to the organisation of teacher training for this phase.
• <b>South Africa</b>	Although the concurrent and consecutive training models exist, the concurrent is preferred. Teachers must register with the South African Council for Educators (SACE).
• <b>USA</b>	The probationary period may last between 1 to 3 years depending on the State.

Table 12

**Special educational needs teacher training**

**NB. This table is no longer being updated.**

	Specialist initial teacher training	Post qualification specialisation	Special needs education part of initial teacher training
England		•	•
Ireland		•	•
Northern Ireland		•	•
Scotland		•	•
Wales		•	•
France		•	
• Germany	•	•	
Hungary	•		•
Italy		•	•
Netherlands		•	•
Spain	•		•
Sweden		•	•
• Switzerland		•	•
• Australia	•	•	•
• Canada	•	•	•
Japan	•	•	
Korea	•	•	
New Zealand		•	
Singapore	•	•	
• South Africa		•	
• USA	•	•	•

Table 13

## Recruitment incentives to encourage individuals to train as teachers

**NB. This table is no longer being updated.**

Recruitment incentives include the payment of course tuition fees by the Government.

Where no recruitment incentives are highlighted we have not found evidence that any exist.

	Primary education		Compulsory secondary education	
	All subjects	Shortage subjects	All subjects	Shortage subjects
England	•		•	•
Ireland				
Northern Ireland				
Scotland				
Wales	•		•	•
France				
• Germany				
Hungary				
Italy				
Netherlands	•		•	•
Spain	•		•	•
Sweden				•
• Switzerland				
• Australia	•		•	•
• Canada	•		•	
Japan				
Korea				
New Zealand	•			•
Singapore	•		•	•
• South Africa				
• USA	•	•		•

## Notes

- **South Africa** Proposals exist to establish a national bursary scheme for those entering initial teacher training.

Table 14

## Organising bodies responsible for initial teacher training

**NB. This table is no longer being updated.**

- **National Ministry:** The Ministry of Education in each country which determines and funds broad policies dealing with the 'national interest'.
- **Federal Ministry:** State Ministry of Education, responsible for education in the specific state/province.
- **Statutory body:** Body independent from government which was established by legislation.
- **Non-departmental public body:** Body set up, sometimes under statute, to carry out specific functions on behalf of government. However, although non-departmental public bodies are government funded, they are not government departments or part of government departments.
- **Local authority:** Regional education headquarters; the local arm of the Ministry of Education.

	Standards for teaching qualification	Responsibilities of organising bodies	
		Teacher training curriculum guidance/standards	Registration agency
England	National Ministry	Non-departmental public body	Statutory body
Ireland	National Ministry/Statutory body	Statutory body/individual universities	Statutory body
Northern Ireland	National Ministry	National Ministry	Statutory body
Scotland	National Ministry	National Ministry	Statutory body
Wales	Non-departmental public body	Non-departmental public body	Statutory body
France	National Ministry	National Ministry	Local authority
• Germany	Federal Ministry	Federal Ministry	Federal Ministry
Hungary	National Ministry	National Ministry/individual universities	n/a
Italy	National Ministry	National Ministry	Local authority
Netherlands	National Ministry	National Ministry/individual universities	n/a
Spain	National Ministry	National Ministry	Local authority
Sweden	National Ministry	National Ministry/individual universities	n/a
• Switzerland	National Ministry	National Ministry	National Ministry
• Australia	National Ministry or statutory body and federal ministry	Federal Ministry or statutory body	Statutory body
• Canada	Federal Ministry or statutory body	Federal Ministry or statutory body	Federal Ministry or statutory body
Japan	National Ministry	National Ministry	Local authority
Korea	National Ministry	Teacher training institutions	Local authority
New Zealand	Statutory body	Statutory body	Statutory body
Singapore	National Ministry	National Ministry	National Ministry
• South Africa	National Ministry	National Ministry	Statutory body
• USA	Federal Ministry	Federal Ministry	Federal Ministry

## Notes

- England** The coalition elected in May 2010 plans to close the General Teaching Council for England which is the regulatory body for the teaching profession.
- Ireland** The Ministry is responsible for the standards for obtaining a teaching qualification for primary education, while a Statutory Body (The Registration Council for Secondary Teachers) is responsible for the standards for secondary education. Individual universities are responsible for the content of the teacher training curriculum for primary education, while a Statutory Body (The Registration Council for Secondary Teachers) has overall responsibility for the secondary teacher training curriculum. In 2006, a Teaching Council was established in Ireland. Its role includes promoting teaching as profession, the continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers and the regulation of standards in the profession.
- **Australia** While the States and Territories retain control of their own education systems, a national education and training framework is emerging through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), including the 2003 National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching.
- USA** Although, most responsibility lies with the federal ministries in the individual states, to qualify for certain funding strands, states must meet certain national requirements.

Table 15

## Organisation of school year and school day

### Table 15.1 Organisation of the school year

This table aims to show, at a glance, the organisation of the school year, which includes when the school year starts, the number of terms and the length of the main holiday. It is not an exact representation – for example the break in March/April in England and the other 'home countries' is not generally a month long but may take place at any between mid-March and April depending on the timing of Easter. This situation may be present in other countries. There may be mid-term breaks of up to a week which are not included in this table.

The table presents the length of the school year, in days or weeks as expressed in the policy documents of the country concerned. Level of responsibility refers to the body responsible for organising the school year within the statutory number of day/weeks for the school year.

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	School year	Level of responsibility
England							6 weeks						190 days	Local/school
Ireland							10 or 12 weeks						167 or 183 days	National/school
Northern Ireland							8 weeks						200 days	Local/school
Scotland							6 weeks						190 days (min)	Local
Wales							6 weeks						190 days	Local/school
France							7-8 weeks						180 days	National
• Germany							6 weeks						188-208 days	Federal
Hungary							10 - 11 weeks						185 days	State
Italy							12 -13 weeks						200 days	State
Netherlands							6 – 7 weeks						200 days	State
Spain							11 weeks						175-180 days	Federal
Sweden							10 weeks						40 weeks	Local
• Switzerland							5-10 weeks						38 weeks	Federal
• Australia													200 days	State
• Canada							5-6 weeks						180-200 days	School
Japan													35 weeks	Local
Korea							45 days						220 days	State
New Zealand													190-197 days	State
Singapore												6 weeks	40 weeks	State
South Africa													195-200 days	Province
• USA							10-11 weeks						180 days	School

Key	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Main holiday	Other holiday
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## Notes

<b>England</b>	<p>In England, schools must be open for at least 380 half day sessions each school year. The dates of school terms are not fixed nationally; they are set, depending on the legal category of the school, by the local authority (LA) or school governing body. Although school holidays generally cover the same core periods, exact dates may vary between schools and LAs.</p> <p>There is currently some movement towards the adoption of a standard school year, which would be consistent year on year. A number of LAs have begun to introduce this model.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	183 days in primary education, six- to 12-year-olds; 167 days in secondary education 12-to-15-year-olds. The dates for the Christmas, Easter and mid-term breaks are standardised, but schools have some discretion about the start and end of the school year.
<b>Wales</b>	In Wales, schools must be open for at least 380 half day sessions each school year. The dates of school terms are not fixed nationally; they are set, depending on the legal category of the school, by the local authority (LA) or school governing body. Although school holidays generally cover the same core periods, exact dates may vary between schools and LAs.
<b>France</b>	The school year in France is a minimum of 36 weeks, distributed into five work periods of about the same length, separated by four holiday periods. The school calendar is fixed by the Minister for National Education, who also determines the dates of school holidays in each of the three zones in metropolitan France. There are three distinct zones (A, B and C) to ensure staggered holidays.
• <b>Germany</b>	Teaching may be organised on the basis of a five- or six-day week. Following the five-day week model, teaching usually takes place on 188 days a year on average; it is 208 days for the six-day week model. The six-week summer holiday is staggered between June and September across the federal states ( <i>Länder</i> ) and varies from year to year.
<b>Hungary</b>	There are three, one-week holidays during the autumn, winter and spring, and a long summer break.
<b>Italy</b>	The Ministry of Public Education sets guidelines for terms and holiday periods, the dates of public holidays and final examinations. Since 1999, headteachers have had some flexibility in implementing these.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Dates for the summer holidays are decided by the Ministry; the main holiday period is staggered over the three regions (northern, central and southern) into which the country is divided for this purpose (compulsory dates for all schools); all other holidays are recommended by the Ministry. The Minister recommends a period of one week's holiday after every seven to eight weeks of school.
<b>Spain</b>	175 days at secondary level (12+), 180 days for six-to 12-year-olds in primary education.
<b>Sweden</b>	The teaching year comprises 40 weeks which should not be less than 178 working days and not more than 190. There should be a minimum of 12 days of holidays.
• <b>Australia</b>	In Tasmania, exceptionally, there are 3 terms.
• <b>Canada</b>	The school year averages 180 to 200 teaching days over the period from September to late June.
<b>Japan</b>	The statutory minimum length of the elementary school year (minimum number of teaching weeks per year) is 35 weeks. For children in Year 1, however, it is 34 weeks.
<b>New Zealand</b>	197 days in primary phase education (five- to-12-year olds); 190 days for 12/13- to 16-year-olds (expressed as half day sessions). The Ministry of Education sets term dates but schools have limited flexibility in implementing them.
• <b>USA</b>	This is a common standard but it varies by state. Local school boards must comply with State school year requirements.

**Table 15.2 Organisation of the school week and day**

This table looks in more detail at how the teaching week is organised. Teaching time is per week unless otherwise stated; some systems specify teaching time per year.

Level of responsibility refers to the body responsible for organising the school day within the statutory teaching time per week.

	Teaching time per week	School day	School week							Teaching periods	Level of responsibility
			M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	S		
<b>England</b>	Varies	9am-3.30pm	•	•	•	•	•			Varies	School
<b>Ireland</b>	Min 915 hours/year, age 6-12 Average 40 period week, at age 12-15	9am-4pm	•	•	•	•	•			30 minutes 35-45 minutes	School
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	Min 3 hours/day to age 8 Min 4.5 hours/day, age 8+	9am-3.30pm	•	•	•	•	•			Varies	School
<b>Scotland</b>	Average 25 hours/week at primary Average 27.5 hours/week at secondary	9am-3.30pm	•	•	•	•	•			Varies	School
<b>Wales</b>	Min 21 hours, age 5-7 Min 23.5 hours, age 7-11 Min 25 hours, age 11-16	9am-3:30pm	•	•	•	•	•			Varies	School
<b>France</b>	26 hours/week, age 6 to 11 26 to 30 hrs/week, age 11 to 15 30 to 40 hrs/week, age 15 to 18	8/9am – 4/5pm	•	•	•	•	•	•		55 minutes/1 hour	Local
• <b>Germany</b>	20 to 29 periods/ week primary 28 to 30 periods/week, age 10 to 12 30 to 32 periods/week, age 12 to 16	7:30am-1:30pm	•	•	•	•	•	•		45 minutes	School
<b>Hungary</b>	Max 20 hrs/week, age 6 to 9 Max 22.5 hrs/week, age 9 to 12 Max 25 hrs/week, age 12 to 14 Max 27.5 hrs/week, age 14 to 16 Max 30 hrs/week, age 16 +	8am-2pm	•	•	•	•	•			45 minutes	State
<b>Italy</b>	Min 27 hrs/week primary education Min 29 hrs/week lower secondary Min 29 hrs/week upper secondary	Varies	•	•	•	•	•	•		1 hour	School
<b>Netherlands</b>	Min 3520 hrs/year, ages 4-8 Min 3760 hrs/year, ages 8-12	9am-3:30pm	•	•	•	•	•			50-60 minutes	School
<b>Spain</b>	Average 25 hrs/week at primary level Average 30 hrs/week at secondary	9am-4:30/5pm	•	•	•	•	•			55 minutes 60 minutes	School
<b>Sweden</b>	Max 6 hrs/day up to age 9 Max 8 hrs/day aged 9+	Varies	•	•	•	•	•			Varies	School
• <b>Switzerland</b>	Varies	Varies	•	•	•	•	•	•		Varies	School

*Continued*

• <b>Australia</b>	Average 25 hrs/week at primary level Average 27.5 hrs/week at second level	9am -3pm	•	•	•	•	•	Varies	School
• <b>Canada</b>	950 hrs/year (Alberta)	9am-3:30pm	•	•	•	•	•		School
<b>Japan</b>	Min 17 to 20 hours/week		•	•	•	•	•	45 minutes	Local
<b>Korea</b>	830 to 1156 hours/year	8am-4:00pm	•	•	•	•	•	40-45 minutes	State
<b>New Zealand</b>	Average 25 hrs/week	9am-3/3:30pm	•	•	•	•	•	50 -60 minutes	School
<b>Singapore</b>	No stipulation for schools. Guidelines: - 48 x 30 min periods/week (age 6-8) - 49 x 30 min periods/week (age 8-12) - 40 x 40 min periods/week (secondary)	7:30am-1pm 1pm-6:30pm	•	•	•	•	•	30-40 minutes	State
• <b>South Africa</b>	22.5 hrs/week, age 5-8 25 hrs/week, age 8-9 26.5hrs/week, age 9-12 26 hrs/week, age 12-13 27.5 hrs/week, age 13-15 27.5 hrs/week, age 15-18	Varies	•	•	•	•	•	Varies	School
• <b>USA</b>	Varies	Varies	•	•	•	•	•	Varies	School

## Notes

<b>England</b>	Government Circular 7/90 which recommended minimum teaching hours per week for students in each key stage has been revoked. This Circular previously recommended a minimum of 21 hours in key stage 1 (ages five-seven), a minimum of 23 and half hours in key stage 2 (ages seven-11), a minimum of 24 hours in key stage 3 (ages 11-14) and a minimum of 25 hours in key stage 4 (ages 14-16).
<b>Ireland</b>	Children in junior infants and senior infants classes in primary school (aged four-six) normally have a shorter school day, ending between 1.30 and 2.30 p.m. Teaching periods last for 30 minutes at primary level and 35-45 minutes at secondary.
<b>France</b>	Schools are usually open six days a week (Monday-Saturday), but no classes are held on Wednesdays or on Saturday afternoons. Some schools have moved to a four-day week, with teaching on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The 'missing' hours are usually made up by shortening the school holidays. In the 2008/09 school year, the primary school week was reduced by two hours (from 26 to 24 hours) and , at that time, Saturday teaching in primary schools was also discontinued. There is a current consultation on the organisation of the school week; further changes may result.
<b>Germany</b>	The half-day school (mornings only, five or six days a week) was the traditional form of teaching in Germany, with all-day schools ( <i>Ganztagsschulen</i> ) being the exception. However, in a bid to raise standards nationwide, government funding has been provided to set up more all-day schools.
<b>Hungary</b>	The daily timetable must be based on the statutory average lesson time of 45 minutes. However schools may organise longer or shorter lessons. The school day generally runs between 8am and 2 pm but there may also be non-compulsory afternoon sessions. There are some all-day schools in which lessons finish around 4pm.
<b>Italy</b>	The school day varies dependent on whether the school has a five- or six-day week; schools with a six-day week are open from 8:30am to 1:30pm; those operating a five-day week have timetables running from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Teaching periods are an hour long for students at the lower secondary level, age 11-14. Individual schools may organise optional teaching activities and other optional activities which may raise the school week to 40 hours.
<b>Spain</b>	At primary level (six- to 12-year-olds), the sessions are usually three hours in the morning, two hours in the afternoon, with a two-hour break for lunch. In secondary education, days generally end earlier as there is a single session running throughout the morning and early afternoon, with two short breaks.
<b>Switzerland</b>	In some cantons, children have all day Saturday free, whilst in others they have lessons on Saturday mornings, but one afternoon in the week free, or lessons on Saturday mornings and one full day in the week free.
<b>Japan</b>	The school week has been reduced from six to five days.
<b>Korea</b>	The school week coincides with the six-day week in the business and government sectors; five full days Monday - Friday and Saturday morning. However, if the latter sectors adopt a five-working-day policy, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) may then consider reducing school days from six to five per week.
<b>Singapore</b>	Most schools run double sessions, with different groups of students attending school either from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or from 1:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. from Monday to Friday. There are plans for all primary schools to become single session schools by 2016.