

**South Midlands  
Growth Hub**

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CAREERS HUB

THE **CAREERS &  
ENTERPRISE**  
COMPANY

# Education

South Midlands Skills Hub

[www.southmidlands.org.uk](http://www.southmidlands.org.uk)

Some of the barriers to employer engagement with education and training relate to not understanding the stakeholder structure, the education systems and the language used within both the skills development and education.

This section provides an overview of the structure, terminology and acronyms used within the employment, education and skills sectors.

- **Key Stages and Year Groups**
- **Qualifications and Levels**
- **Terminology and Acronyms in Education, Employment and Skills**
- **National Curriculum**

# Key Stages and Year Groups

The national curriculum is organised into phases of education called 'key stages' (KS). Within each key stage are year groups based on ages. At the end of each key stage, there is an assessment of a child's/student's performance.

Age	Year	Key stage
3 to 4	-	Early Years
4 to 5	Reception	
5 to 6	Year 1	Key Stage 1
6 to 7	Year 2	
7 to 8	Year 3	Key Stage 2
8 to 9	Year 4	
9 to 10	Year 5	
10 to 11	Year 6	
11 to 12	Year 7	Key Stage 3
12 to 13	Year 8	
13 to 14	Year 9	
14 to 15	Year 10	Key Stage 4
15 to 16	Year 11	
16 to 17	Year 12	Key Stage 5
17 to 18	Year 13	

# Qualifications and Levels

Qualifications are categorised into different levels based on their difficulty and type:

Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) – The RQF includes nine levels:

- Entry Level: Basic knowledge and skills, divided into three sub-levels (Entry 1, 2, 3).
- Level 1: Foundation knowledge, such as GCSE grades D-G.
- Level 2: Intermediate knowledge, such as GCSE grades A\*-C.
- Level 3: Advanced knowledge, such as A-levels.
- Level 4: Higher education certificates, such as Higher National Certificates (HNC).
- Level 5: Higher education diplomas, such as Higher National Diplomas (HND).
- Level 6: Bachelor's degrees.
- Level 7: Master's degrees.
- Level 8: Doctoral degrees.

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) – The FHEQ aligns with levels 4 to 8 of the RQF and includes:

- Level 4: Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE).
- Level 5: Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) and Foundation Degrees.
- Level 6: Bachelor's degrees with or without honours.
- Level 7: Master's degrees and Postgraduate Certificates/Diplomas.
- Level 8: Doctorates.

More information can be found at [What qualification levels mean: England, Wales and Northern Ireland – GOV.UK](#) and [Qualification Comparisons – NVQ Level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 | City & Guilds](#).

Technical qualifications are designed to provide practical skills and knowledge for specific careers. Here are the main types:

## **Vocational Technical Qualifications (VTQs)**

VTQs are practical qualifications aimed at preparing students for specific jobs or industries. They include:

- BTEC Diplomas: Available from Level 1 to Level 7, covering a wide range of subjects.
- Cambridge Nationals: Level 1 and 2 qualifications focused on practical skills.
- Cambridge Technicals: Level 2 and 3 qualifications designed for post-16 students.
- T Levels: Level 3 qualifications equivalent to three A-levels, focusing on technical skills and industry placements. More information at [Find training and employment schemes for your business - T Levels: industry placements](#).

## **Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships combine work and study, allowing individuals to gain practical experience while earning a qualification. There are a number of options:

- **Intermediate Apprenticeships (Level 2)**
  - Equivalent to GCSEs.
  - Provide foundational skills and knowledge in a specific job role.
  - Typically last around 12 to 18 months.
- **Advanced Apprenticeships (Level 3)**
  - Equivalent to A-levels.
  - Offer more in-depth training and knowledge.
  - Usually take 18 to 24 months to complete.
- **Higher Apprenticeships (Levels 4-5)**
  - Equivalent to foundation degrees and above.
  - Include Levels 4 and 5 (equivalent to HNCs and HNDs)
  - Duration can vary from 18 months to several years.
- **Degree Apprenticeships (Levels 6 and 7)**
  - Equivalent to bachelor's or master's degrees.
  - Combine full-time work with part-time university study.
  - Typically take three to six years to complete.

More information at [Find training and employment schemes for your business - Apprenticeships](#)

## NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications)

NVQs are work-based qualifications that assess the skills and knowledge required to perform a job effectively. They range from Level 1 to Level 5.

More information at [Qualification Comparisons - NVQ Level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 | City & Guilds](#).

## Higher Technical Qualifications

Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) are level 4 and level 5 qualifications, such as Foundation Degrees, Higher National Certificates (HNC), Higher National Diplomas (HND) and others, that have been approved against employer developed standards.

HNCs (Level 4) and HNDs (Level 5) are higher education qualifications that focus on practical skills and can lead to further study or employment.

[Find training and employment schemes for your business - Higher Technical Qualifications \(HTQs\)](#).

## Higher Education

An academic degree is a qualification awarded upon successful completion of a course/study in higher education, usually at a college or university. These institutions often offer degrees at various levels, usually divided into:

- Undergraduate degrees are a first degree at a college or university.
  - The most common undergraduate degree is the bachelor's degree. Usually classed as Level 6.
  - A foundation degree is a combined academic and vocational qualification in higher education, equivalent to two-thirds of an honours bachelor's degree. Usually classed as Level 4/5.
- Postgraduate degrees are qualifications studied for after completing an undergraduate degree. Types of postgraduate degrees include:
  - Master's degrees are the most common type of postgraduate degree, which can be taught or research-based. Examples include a Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc), Master of Education (MEd), Master of Business Administration (MBA), and Master of Philosophy (MPhil). Usually classed as Level 7.
  - Doctorate, also known as a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy). Usually classed as Level 8.
  - Postgraduate certificate can be an academic or vocational qualification. A certificate program represents a focused collection of courses that, when completed, affords the student a record of accomplishment in a given discipline or set of related disciplines. For example, a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) is a qualification for students who want to teach.
  - Postgraduate diploma is an academic or vocational qualification that can be completed in nine to 12 months. Postgraduate diplomas allow a graduate student to study a more advanced programme than at the bachelor's level. This could be a vocational course studied after an academic degree, such as the Legal Practice Course or the Bar Vocational Course; the resulting diplomas allow the student to enter legal training, relevant to either the solicitor or barrister professions, respectively.



## Older Qualifications and Equivalents

The Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) was a qualification offered in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland from 1965 to 1987. In terms of modern equivalents:

- CSE Grade 1 is equivalent to GCSE grades 4-9.
- CSE Grades 2-3 are equivalent to GCSE grades 3-1.
- CSE Grades 4-5 are equivalent to a GCSE grade U (ungraded)

The General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level, commonly known as O Level, was a subject-based academic qualification. It was replaced by the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in 1988.

O Levels are generally considered equivalent to:

- GCSEs (grades 4-9)
- Other Level 2 qualifications, such as:
  - Level 2 BTECs/CTECs
  - Level 2 NVQs/SVQs
  - Intermediate Apprenticeships/Modern Apprenticeships



# **Terminology and Acronyms in Education, Employment and Skills**

Common acronyms and terminology used include:

Acronym/Terminology	Description
Academy	State funded schools that are independent of local authorities. Academies are primarily all-ability schools and benefit from greater freedoms and flexibilities which help them to innovate and raise standards. (Source: DfE)
Academy: Converter	Schools that have chosen through Governing Body Resolution and application to the Secretary of State to become an Academy under the Academies Act 2010.
Academy: Sponsor-Led	All-ability, state-funded schools established and managed by sponsors from a wide range of backgrounds, including high performing schools and colleges, universities, individual philanthropists, businesses, the voluntary sector, and the faith communities.
Access to Work	A specialist disability service from Jobcentre Plus that gives practical advice and support for disabled people, needing support or adaptations beyond the reasonable adjustments which an employer is legally obliged to provide under the Equality Act. <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/support-with-employee-health-and-disability">Support with employee health and disability – GOV.UK</a>
Adult Community Learning (ACL)	A range of courses for adults to learn new skills, improve their job prospects, and develop their confidence.
Adult Skills Fund (ASF)	A fund that provides education and training for adults in the UK. The ASF's goal is to help adults develop skills that will lead to employment or further learning. Usually held by local authorities.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
A-Level - Advanced Level	A-levels are subject-based qualifications that students in the UK take to prepare for university, further study, or work, usually aged 16-18.
Alternative Provision	Education for pupils of compulsory school age who cannot attend a mainstream or special school, who are disengaged from education or at risk of exclusion.
APS - Average Points Score	For KS2 and KS3, the APS is the average of the school's pupils' overall score in the tests for that age for maths, English and science. For KS4 (GCSE), the APS is the average score for all the GCSEs (or equivalent) exams the pupils take.
B.A. - Bachelor of Arts	A degree qualification that covers a broad range of subjects in the arts and social sciences. It is usually the first degree earned at university after secondary education.
B.Ed. - Bachelor of Education	Degree qualification that prepares students to become teachers.
B.Eng. - Bachelor of Engineering	Degree that prepares students for a career in engineering.
B.Sc. - Bachelor of Science	Degree that typically focuses on the sciences, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).
BTEC - Business and Technology Education Council	Qualification equivalent to two A level courses. Subjects include Nursery Nursing, Business Studies and Art and Design. There are considerable practical elements to the courses with work placements offered.



Acronym/Terminology	Description
The Careers and Enterprise Company	National body for careers education in England, supporting schools and colleges to deliver careers education. The work is delivered through a network of Careers Hubs that bring together schools, colleges, employers, and apprenticeship providers in local areas across England, working in partnership with Local Authorities to connect with local skills needs. <u>South Midlands Careers Hub</u>
CEIAG – Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance	Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance. Also known as 'IAG'.
Co-educational	The system of education in which both males and females attend the same institution or classes.
Community School	Schools that are maintained by the local authority (LA). The LA is the admissions authority – it has main responsibility for deciding arrangements for admitting pupils.
Community Special School	Schools that are maintained by the LA, which are organised to make special educational provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
CPD – Continuing Professional Development	Learning activities to develop and enhance the abilities of an individual, including upskilling and reskilling.
D&T – Design and Technology	Students learn how to design and make products. It is a practical subject that encourages creativity and problem-solving.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
Day Nurseries	These take children under five for the whole working day. Children can attend on a part-time or full-time basis according to their parents' needs. They may be run by local authorities, voluntary organisations, private companies, individuals or employers. There must be at least one adult for every eight children and at least half of the staff must have a qualification recognised by the local authority.
DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service	DBS maintains the Adults' and Children's Barred Lists, and makes considered decisions as to whether an individual should be included on one or both of these lists and barred from engaging in regulated activity.
DfE – Department for Education	The current Government department that oversees the education portfolio in England & Wales.
DWP – Department of Work and Pensions	Responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. Includes Job Centre Plus.
Dyslexia	Pupils with dyslexia have a marked and persistent difficulty in learning to read, write and spell, despite progress in other areas.
Dyspraxia	Pupils with dyspraxia are affected by an impairment or immaturity of the organisation of movement, often appearing clumsy.



Acronym/Terminology	Description
EAL – English as an Additional Language	A term used to describe children who are learning English as a second language.
Early Years	Children aged 3 to the end of the school reception year.
Ebacc – English Baccalaureate	A set of GCSE subjects that measures how well pupils perform in English, math, science, history or geography, and a language.
ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages	Programs that help people who do not speak English as their first language improve their English skills. ESOL courses can help people develop their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.
Extended Schools	A school that provides a range of services and activities often beyond the school day to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community.
Extra-curricular	Activities that are not part of timetabled lessons, but that enhance learning; e.g. musical instrument tuition, sports teams and so on.
FE – Further Education	Traditionally, post-16 education, though some vocational courses may start at age 14 with secondary school children attending specific courses at FE Colleges. Qualifications include HNDs and Foundation Degrees. <u>Colleges of the South East Midlands – Delivering Skills, Boosting Business</u>
Foundation Degree	A qualification that combines academic and vocational skills. It is a level 5 qualification in the UK, and is equivalent to the first two years of a bachelor's degree.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
Foundation School	Schools maintained by the LA. May have a foundation (generally religious) that appoints some – but not most – of the governing body. The governing body is the admissions authority. (Source: DfE)
Foundation Special School	Schools maintained by the LA, which are specifically organised to make special educational provision for pupils with SEN.
Free School	All-ability state-funded schools set up in response to what local people say they want and need in order to improve education for children in their community. They have the same legal requirements as academies and enjoy the same freedoms and flexibilities. (Source: DfE)
FSM – Free School Meal	A pupil’s entitlement to receive a paid for meal in the middle of the school day.
FTE – Full-time equivalent	The headcount of full-time staff plus the proportion of the full-time hours worked by part-time teachers.
G&T – Gifted and Talented	DfE defined G&T as children whose attainments put them in the top 10% of their year group. This descriptor is no longer used and many
GCSE – General Certificate of Secondary Education	Examinations taken by pupils in England, usually aged 14-16.
GNVQ – General National Vocational Qualification	Similar to a BTEC and the equivalent of 2 A levels. The subjects offered have a vocational element, such as childhood studies.





Acronym/Terminology	Description
HE - Higher Education	Traditionally, post-16 education undertaken at HE Colleges, Universities and Institutes of Technology. Qualifications include undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.
Higher Level Teaching Assistant	The role of HLTA was created under the 2003 National Workforce Agreement to establish advanced LSAs that may lead lessons and work closer with pupils on their learning requirements.
Higher National	A qualification in Scotland awarded by the SQA and considered equivalent to the first or second year of a university degree course.
HNC - Higher National Certificate	A vocational qualification that teaches practical skills for a specific job or industry. HNCs are Level 4 qualifications in the UK qualifications framework.
HND - Higher National Diploma	A BTEC qualification in England awarded by Edexcel and considered equivalent to the first or second year of a university degree course.
IAG - Individual Advice and Guidance	A service that provides information and recommendations based on an individual's circumstances and goals.
IB - International Baccalaureate	A program that offers challenging courses and assessments for students from age 3-19. The IB's aims are to develop students who are knowledgeable, caring, and inquiring.
ICT - Information and Communications Technology	Education for hardware, software, and communication networks.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
IIP – Investors in People	A business development tool that helps organisations improve their performance by investing in people. It is a nationally recognised quality standard that encourages organisations to follow best practices.
Independent School	A school that is neither maintained by an LA nor grants and which is registered under section 70 of the Education Act 1944.
Independent Special School	An independently-run special school.
IoT – Institute of Technology	A higher education institution that offers technical education and training. IoTs are a collaboration between universities, colleges, and local employers to provide technical skills for the workforce.
IT – Information Technology	Study or use of systems (especially computers and telecommunications) for storing, retrieving, and sending information.
JCP – Jobcentre Plus	Jobcentre Plus has a range of recruitment services that can help employers such as recruitment advice, setting up work trials to try out potential recruits, advice about offering work experience and apprenticeships, support if you employ someone with a disability, advice and guidance on employing someone with a disability or health condition and also advertise a job. <a href="#">Jobcentre Plus help for recruiters: Overview – GOV.UK</a>



Acronym/Terminology	Description
KS1 - Key Stage 1	Ages 4 to 7 (school years 1 & 2).
KS2 - Key Stage 2	Ages 7 to 11 (school years 3 to 6).
KS3 - Key Stage 3	Ages 11 to 14 (traditionally school years 7 to 9).
KS4 - Key Stage 4	Ages 14 to 16 (traditionally school years 10 & 11).
KS5 - Key Stage 5	Ages 16 to 18 (traditionally school years 12 & 13 – also known as Post-16).
LA - Local Authority	England is governed by LAs, which may be county councils, metropolitan districts, metropolitan boroughs, unitary authorities,
LAC - Looked-after children	A child who is in the care of the local authority and is under the age of 18.
LEA - Local Education Authority	Established by the 1902 Education Act, LEAs replaced school boards and technical instruction committees in being responsible for education in areas of at least 10,000 people. The 2004 Children's Act expanded their remit to include social services responsibilities for children.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
LAC – Looked-after children	A child who is in the care of the local authority and is under the age of 18.
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LLDD – Learner with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities	A learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability and challenges with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money. There are many different types of learning difficulty, some of the more well known are dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia.
LSA – Learning Support Assistant	A classroom assistant.
LSIP – Local Skills Improvement Plan	A plan that helps employers, educators, and other stakeholders work together to improve skills training in a local area. The goal of an LSIP is to ensure that people and businesses have the skills they need to succeed.
LSIF – Local Skills Improvement Fund	A government program that invests in facilities, teaching, and new courses to address local skills shortages based on the findings with the LSIP.



Acronym/Terminology	Description
M.Ed. – Master of Education	A postgraduate degree that builds on a bachelor's degree and prepares students for careers in education.
MA – Master of Arts	A second or further degree in an arts subject.
MAT – Multi-Academy Trust	A formal collaborative structure for convertor academies governed by a single board of governors/directors.
MFL – Modern Foreign Languages	MFL typically includes French, German and Spanish. There is currently no statutory requirement to teach MFL in KS1, KS2 or KS4 in England.
Middle Schools	State schools that teach pupils aged 8/9 to 12/13.
MLD – Moderate Learning Difficulty	Pupils with MLDs will have attainments significantly below expected levels in most areas of the curriculum despite appropriate interventions. Their needs will not be able to be met by normal differentiation and the flexibilities of the National Curriculum. (Source: DfE)
M.Sc. – Master of Science	A second or further degree in a science subject
MSI – Multi-Sensory Impairment	Pupils with MSI have a combination of visual and hearing difficulties. They are sometimes referred to as deafblind but may have some residual sight and/or hearing.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
National College (for School Leadership)	An organisation that develops and supports school leaders.
National Curriculum	The basic framework setting out what children aged 5 to 16 should learn in state schools.
NEET – Not in Education, Employment or Training	This refers to young people who are not in education or employment.
NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher	A term used to describe teachers who have completed their initial teacher training and gained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
Nursery School	These take children from the age of three or four and are open during school term time and normally offer five half-day sessions a week. There must be at least one adult for every 13 children. Staff are qualified teachers and assistants.
NVQ – National Vocational Qualifications	A work-based qualification that assesses a person's skills and knowledge in a specific occupation. NVQs are based on national occupational standards and can be taken by anyone, regardless of age.
OCR – Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations	One of the examination boards in the United Kingdom that sets qualifications and awards them to students.



Acronym/Terminology	Description
Ofsted	The Office for Standards in Education.
Post-16	Ages 16 to 18 (also known as Key Stage 5).
PPF – Per Pupil Funding	The amount of funding received by a school for each pupil they have on their roll.
Pre-School	These generally take children between the ages of three and five and most offer half-day sessions. Usually non-profit making and managed by volunteers and parents. There must be at least one adult for every eight children and at least half of the adults must be qualified leaders or assistants
Primary Schools	State schools that teach pupils aged 4 to 11. Primary Schools are typically co-educational.
Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties have complex learning needs. In addition to very severe learning difficulties, pupils have other significant difficulties such as physical disabilities, sensory impairment or a severe medical condition. (Source: DfE)
PRU – Pupil Referral Unit	Facilities for children who are not able to attend school and may not otherwise receive suitable education. This could be because they have a short- or long-term illness, have been excluded or are a new starter waiting for a mainstream school place.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
PSHE – Personal, Social and Health Education	Personal, Social and Health Education
PSHCE – Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education	Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education
Pupil Premium	Funding for pupils in reception through to Year 11, based on Free School Meals.
PGCE – Postgraduate Certificate of Education	An academic qualification that prepares students to teach in schools.
QTS – Qualified Teacher Status	The professional status you need to obtain to teach in state maintained schools in England and Wales. QTS is normally awarded after successful completion of an Initial Teacher Training course.
RSA – Royal Society of Arts Examination Board	One of the examination boards in the United Kingdom that sets qualifications and awards them to students.
SAR – Self Assessment Review	A process where a school or college assesses their own performance, abilities, and areas for improvement
SAT – Single Academy Trust	Single school academy trust
SATs – Standard Assessment Tests	Standardised tests that assess a child's academic progress in English and maths in primary school.





Acronym/Terminology	Description
SEN – Special Educational Needs	A child is defined as having Special Educational Needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which needs special teaching. A learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age.
SENCo – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator	A qualified teacher who manages the day-to-day support for children with special educational needs (SEN).
SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	Describes children and young people who have learning difficulties or disabilities that require special support.
SIP – School Improvement Plan	A document that outlines a school's goals and plans for improvement. It's used by senior leadership teams to guide the development of a school over a set period of time.
SLD – Severe Learning Difficulty	Pupils with SLDs have significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. (Source: DfE)
SLT – Senior Leadership Team	A school's decision-making body. This would normally consist of the headteacher, any assistant and/or deputy heads, SBM and other appropriate and experienced members of teaching staff.
SMT – Senior Management Team	See Senior Leadership Team.
Special Academy	Academies specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). (Source: DfE)

Acronym/Terminology	Description
Special School	A school that caters for pupils with SEN.
Specialist Schools & Academies Trust	The SSAT is an independent, not-for-profit membership organisation dedicated to raising levels of achievement in secondary education.
State Schools	The majority of pupils in the UK go to publicly-funded schools, usually known as state schools. These make no charge to parents.
STEAM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics.
STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
Studio Schools	An innovative new model of 14 to 19 year-old educational provision. They are small schools – typically with around 300 pupils – delivering mainstream qualifications through project based learning. (Source: BESA)
Sure Start	A Government-funded programme introduced in 1998 to provide childcare support with an emphasis on community development.
SWAP – Sector-based Work Academy Programme	Available through Jobcentre Plus, the SWAP is designed to help meet employers immediate and future recruitment needs as well as to recruit a workforce with the right skills to sustain and grow their business. The SWAP can last up to 6 weeks and comprises pre-employment training, a work experience placement and a guaranteed job interview.



Acronym/Terminology	Description
TA - Teacher Assessments	Tests marked internally by teachers. The results, together with other information, are used by teachers to produce teacher assessments in each subject.
TA - Teaching/Tutorial Assistants	The role of a teaching assistant (TA) varies from school to school. TAs may work supporting an individual or a group of pupils, or they may support the teacher in the classroom. Some schools employ TAs with a specialism, such as literacy, numeracy, English as an additional language, the creative arts or special education needs. TAs work under the guidance/supervision of the classroom teacher.
Teacher Centres	Educational resource and training centres providing teaching aids and professional development courses. In recent years, virtual teacher centres have been established to offer downloadable resources and online training.
Teacher Training Colleges	Colleges providing dedicated teaching qualifications. These colleges may be affiliated to universities or other Higher Education establishments.
Teaching Schools	Outstanding schools that will take a leading role in the training and professional development of teachers, support staff and headteachers, as well as contributing to the raising of standards through school-to-school support. Teaching Schools can work alone or in partnership with another school.
Tutorial College	Independent teaching establishments that provide additional tuition to students preparing for examinations. These are usually attended by students in KS4 and KS5.

Acronym/Terminology	Description
UCAS – Universities & Colleges Admissions Service	Central agency for processing applications for undergraduate courses including degree level initial teacher training courses (BEd, BA/BSc with qualified teacher status).
Umbrella Trust	A group of academies (and, occasionally, non-academies) overseen by a charitable trust in which each school is run autonomously.
Upper Schools	State schools that teach pupils aged 14 to 18.
URN – Unique Reference Number	The Unique Reference Number assigned to the school by the national education department (state & independent schools).
UTC – University Technical Colleges	UTCs are academies for 14-19-year-olds. They provide technical education that meets the needs of modern employers. They offer technical courses and work-related learning, combined with academic studies. (Source: BESA)
VAM – Value Added Measures	VAMs are intended to allow comparisons between schools with different student intakes. It may be, for example, that they have significant special educational needs. All students are capable of making progress and it is important that schools are given recognition for the work that they do with these students.



Acronym/Terminology	Description
Virtual School	The virtual school approach [undertaken by a VSH and, in some cases, a supporting team] is to work with looked after children as if they were in a single school, liaising with the schools they attend, tracking the progress they make and supporting them to achieve as well as possible.
Voluntary Aided School	Maintained by the LA, with a foundation (generally religious) that appoints most of the governing body. The governing body is the admissions authority.
Voluntary Controlled School	Maintained by the LA, with a foundation (generally religious) which appoints some, but not most, of the governing body. The LA is the admissions authority.
UKSPF – UK Shared Prosperity Fund	A government program that provides funding for local investment. The fund's goal is to improve life chances and pride in place across the UK. The fund is managed by the Local Authority.

# National Curriculum



The 'basic' school curriculum includes the 'national curriculum', as well as relationships, sex and health education, and religious education.

The national curriculum is a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject.

Other types of school like academies and private schools do not have to follow the national curriculum. Academies must teach a broad and balanced curriculum including English, maths and science. They must also teach relationships and sex education, and religious education.

More information at [The national curriculum: Overview - GOV.UK.](#)