

BRITISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

How schools work in the UK

EDUCATION ACROSS THE UNITED KINGDOM

FOCUS OF THIS PRESENTATION

England

Follows the National Curriculum (Key Stages 1–4, GCSEs, and A-Levels).

Scotland

Uses the "Curriculum for Excellence" with Highers & Advanced Highers qualifications.

Wales

Follows the Curriculum for Wales with bilingual education options (Welsh / English).

Northern Ireland

Uses the Northern Ireland Curriculum with Transfer Tests (AQE/GL) at age 11.



FOUR MAIN STAGES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS

Age 5

Starting School

Children begin attending elementary school at five years old.

Age 18

Finishing School

Students stay in education or job training until 18.

3 Terms

School Year

Autumn, spring, and summer terms with short breaks.

4 Stages

Key Stages

School years are divided into Key Stages 1 to 4.

THE STEPS OF BRITISH EDUCATION

Ages 5–11

Primary

Years 1 to 6 with reading and maths tests.

Ages 11–16

Secondary

Big school ending with GCSE exams at 16.

Ages 16–18

Sixth Form

A-Level exams or practical job training.

Ages 18+

University

Three years to get a bachelor degree.

PRIMARY SCHOOL (AGES 5 TO 11)



Key Stage 1 (Ages 5–7)

Kids learn to read, write, and do simple maths.

Key Stage 2 (Ages 7–11)

More subjects like science, history, and art.

SATs (Standard Assessment Tests)

National tests in Year 6 before moving to secondary school.

Big Exams at Age 16

SECONDARY SCHOOL & GCSEs



What is a GCSE?

General Certificate of Secondary Education.



Grades 9 to 1

9 is the highest grade; 4 is a standard pass.



Number of Subjects

Students usually pass exams in 8 to 10 subjects.

Ages 16 to 18

SIXTH FORM: TWO DIFFERENT WAYS

A-Levels (Advanced Level)

Few Subjects: Students pick only 3 or 4 subjects.

Letter Grades: Marked from A* (best) down to E.

University Path: Needed to enter British universities.

Vocational (Job Training)

Hands-On Skills: Learning a job like IT, cooking, or building.

Work Placement: Spending real time at companies.

Direct Career: Start working right after finishing school.

BRITISH SCHOOL EXAMS EXPLAINED

Exam Name & Meaning	Age	Grades	How Many Subjects?	Why Take It?
SATs (Standard Assessment Tests)	11	Score (80–120)	English & Maths	Check student progress
GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education)	16	Numbers 9 to 1	8–10 subjects	Get into Sixth Form college
A-Levels (Advanced Level Qualifications)	18	Letters A* to E	3–4 subjects	Get into University

THREE TYPES OF BRITISH SCHOOLS



State Schools

Free schools paid by the government.
Over 90% attend here.



Grammar Schools

Free state schools, but kids take an
entrance test at 11.



Private Schools

Expensive fee-paying schools like
Eton and Harrow.

After High School

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES

Only 3 Years Long

Bachelor degrees take 3 years instead of 4 or 5.

UCAS (Universities Admissions System)

One online form to apply for up to 5 universities.

Oxbridge

Oxford and Cambridge: the oldest and most famous.



Comparison

UNITED KINGDOM VS POLAND

United Kingdom

Starts Early: School starts at age 5.

Few Subjects: Only 3 or 4 subjects at ages 16–18.

Uniforms: Almost all schools enforce strict uniform rules.

3 Terms: Autumn, spring, and summer terms.

Poland

Starts Later: School starts at age 7 in Year 1.

Many Subjects: High school students study 10–14 subjects.

Everyday Clothes: Normal clothes, no school uniforms.

2 Semesters: Standard winter and summer semesters.



THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

