

Universal Periodic Review
(27th session, April-May 2017)

Contribution of UNESCO to Compilation of UN information
(to Part I. A. and to Part III - F, J, K, and P)

UNITED KINGDOM

I. BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

Scope of international obligations: Human rights treaties which fall within the competence of UNESCO and international instruments adopted by UNESCO

I.1. Table:

Title	Date of ratification, accession or succession	Declarations /reservations	Recognition of specific competences of treaty bodies	Reference to the rights within UNESCO's fields of competence
Convention against Discrimination in Education 1960	Acceptance 14/03/1962	<i>Reservations to this Convention are not permitted</i>		Right to education
Convention on Technical and Vocational Education 1989	Not Ratified			Right to education
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972	29/05/1984 Ratification			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003	Not ratified			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the	07/12/2007 Ratification	<i>Declaration of the European Community in</i>		Right to take part in cultural life

Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005		<i>application of Article 27(3) (c) of the Convention indicating the competences transferred to the Community by the Member States under the Treaties, in the areas covered by the Convention.</i>		
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II. Input to Part III. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law to items F, J, K, and P

Right to education

1. NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

1.1. Constitutional Framework

1. Although the United Kingdom has no written national constitution setting out the fundamental principles from which the rights and responsibilities of citizens are derived, the **Human Rights Act 1998**¹ incorporated into UK law nearly all the rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights, and gave citizens a clear legal statement of their basic rights and fundamental freedoms².
2. **Article 2 of the First Protocol to the Human Rights Act** states that “No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.”
3. The Act also enshrines freedom from discrimination (article 14) and the prohibition of torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 3).

Under the Act, all public bodies and other bodies carrying out public functions have to comply with the European Council’s Convention rights. An individual who believes their rights under the Act have been infringed can bring a case in the courts against a public authority. If their

¹ Accessible at: <http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/e25aa4bc217eb36d75471f751fb531874ce1fe8d.pdf>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42>.

² United Kingdom Legislation, accessible at: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Legislation>, <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-Northern-Ireland:Legislation>, <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-Wales:Legislation>.

claim fails, the person could bring a human rights claim against the UK in the European Court of Human Rights.³

1.2. Legislative Framework

4. The framework for the education system in England is set out in a number of Acts of Parliament. For the school system, the framework Acts are the **Education Act 1996** which defines primary, secondary and further education and outlines the principles underlying compulsory education, and the **School Standards and Framework Act 1998** (as amended and supplemented by the Education Acts of 2002, 2005 and 2011) which established a new legal framework for maintained primary and secondary schools.⁴
5. Under **the Education Act of 2002**, the basic principle underlying school education is that it should provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum which is suitable to a child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have.⁵
6. **The Education Act of 2005** aims to raise standards for all children by promoting greater autonomy and diversity in the education system. Reforms included three-year budgets for all schools based around the academic year and changes to the school inspection system⁶, strengthening the accountability framework for schools.
7. **The Education Act of 2011**, founded on the principles and proposals enshrined in the 2010 White Paper, introduces a wide range of measures including increased authority of teachers to discipline pupils, changes to the school inspection regime and the extension of the Academies programme.⁷ It is viewed as an important step in implementing the Government's education reform programme and helping to create an education system that delivers ever higher standards for all children.⁸
8. The **Education and Skills Act 2008** introduced a requirement for all young people to participate in education or training until their 18th birthday.⁹
9. The **Childcare Act 2006** expands and clarifies in legislations the vital role local authorities play as strategic leaders in the provision of childcare locally. It introduces a range of provision including: improved access to free, quality early learning and care and early childhood services for all children under 5; a new quality framework for the early years, the Early Years Foundation Stage.¹⁰ It was completed by the **Childcare Act of 2016** which makes provision about free childcare for young children of working parents and about the publication of information about childcare and related matters by local authorities in England.¹¹

³ Equality and Human Rights Commission, *Is Britain Fairer? Evidence Paper Series*, October 2015, p. 40. Available at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/file/12681/download?token=VE-01lf8>.

⁴ UNESCO-IBE, *World Data on Education*, 7th edition, 2010/11, p. 2-3. Available at: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/document/world-data-education-seventh-edition-2010-11>.

⁵ UNESCO-IBE, *World Data on Education*, 7th edition, 2010/11, p. 3.

⁶ European Commission, EURYDICE, United Kingdom Legislation, Available at: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Legislation>

⁷ European Commission, EURYDICE, United Kingdom Legislation.

⁸ UNESCO-IBE, *World Data on Education*, 7th edition, 2010/11, p. 3.

⁹ European Commission, EURYDICE, United Kingdom Legislation.

¹⁰ UNESCO-IBE, *World Data on Education*, 7th edition, 2010/11, p. 4.

¹¹ Accessible at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/5/enacted>.

10. **The Education and Adoption Bill 2016** makes provision about schools in England that are causing concern, notably on their conversion to academies; it shall remove bureaucracy and delaying tactics that have made it difficult for successful, expert sponsors to offer support to underperforming schools. The Bill gives power and responsibility to teachers in the front line.¹²
11. **The Equality Act 2010** brought together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act which provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. Under the Act, children, young people and adults are protected against discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to education. Among other provisions, this includes a duty not to discriminate against an individual due to their disability and a duty to make reasonable adjustments for persons with disabilities, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services where these enable a disabled child or young person to overcome any disadvantage caused by their disability.¹³
12. Higher education is defined by the **Education Reform Act 1998**, but higher education institutions are diverse and there is no single legal framework setting out the legal basis on which they run their affairs. The principal pieces of legislation governing further and higher education in both England and Wales are the **Further and Higher Education Act 1992**, which took further education institutions out of the local authorities' control, and the **Learning and Skills Act 2000** which set out the framework for further education. The **Higher Education Act 2004** introduced changes in the student finance system, introducing variable tuition fees.¹⁴

1.3. Institutional Framework

13. Across the United Kingdom, there are five stages of education: early years, primary, secondary, Further Education and Higher Education. Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 (4 in Northern Ireland) and 16. Further Education is not compulsory and covers non-advanced education which can be taken at further (including tertiary) education colleges and Higher education institutions.¹⁵

1.4. Policy Framework

i. General information

➤ Non-discrimination

¹² Education and Adoption Act 2016, available at: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/educationandadoption.html>. See also: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-education-bill-completes-passage-through-parliament>.

¹³ Equality and Human Rights Commission, *Is Britain Fairer? Evidence Paper Series*, October 2015, p. 41.

¹⁴ UNESCO-IBE, *World Data on Education*, 7th edition, 2010/11, p. 6.

¹⁵ Department for Education, *Education System in the UK*. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219167/v01-2012ukes.pdf.

14. In England, the Government's approach is to move away from treating people as groups or "equality strands" who get special treatment. Instead they have developed frameworks that should help create fairness and opportunities for everyone. This includes measures to improve literacy, numeracy and the quality of teaching; overhauling the Special Educational Needs Programme so that children's needs are identified and addressed early and targeting resource (now some £2.5 billion a year) through the pupil premium to help break the link between socio-economic background and educational achievement. According to the State's report, the programme disproportionately benefits pupils from black and minority ethnic communities.¹⁶

15. Under the Equality Act, schools must not discriminate against a pupil by treating them less favourably on the basis of race, and must also have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunity and foster good relations between children. The Government published non-statutory advice to help schools to understand how the Equality Act 2010 affects them, and how to fulfil their duties under the Act.¹⁷

ii. Education levels

➤ Early childhood care and education

16. In England, since September 2010, all three and four year olds are entitled to 15 hours of free nursery education for 38 weeks of the year. Early Years education takes place in a variety of settings including state nursery schools, nursery classes and reception classes within primary schools, as well as settings outside the state sector such as voluntary pre-schools, privately run nurseries or childminders. In recent years there has been a major expansion of Early Years education and childcare. The Education Act 2002 extended the National Curriculum for England to include the Foundation Stage which was first introduced in September 2000, and covered children's education from the age of 3 to the end of the reception year, when children are aged 5. The Early Years Foundation Stage came into force in September 2008, and is a single regulatory and quality framework for the provision of learning, development and care for children in all registered early years settings between birth and the academic year in which they turn 5.

17. In Wales, children are entitled to a free part-time place the term following a child's third birthday until they enter statutory education. These places can be in a maintained school or a non-maintained setting such as a voluntary playgroup, private nursery or childminder which is approved to provide education. The Foundation Phase is a holistic developmental curriculum for 3 to 7-year-olds based on the needs of the individual child to meet their stage of development.

¹⁶ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland State report, CERD/C/GBR/21-23, July 2015, p. 34. Available at: <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=CERD/C/GBR/21-23&Lang=E>.

¹⁷ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland State report, CERD/C/GBR/21-23, July 2015, p. 37. See also: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>.

18. In Scotland, education typically starts with pre-school. Local authorities have a duty to secure a part-time funded place for every child starting from the beginning of the school term after the child's third birthday. Pre-school education can be provided by local authority centres, or private and voluntary providers under a partnership arrangement. In Scotland, early years education is called ante-pre-school education for those who start receiving their pre-school education in the academic year after their 3rd birthday until the end of that academic year. All children are entitled to receive a full academic year's worth of pre-school education in the academic year before they are eligible to, and expected to, start primary school.¹⁸

19. There is strong evidence of the impact of high quality early education on children's development and future attainment. The Government extended funded early education for all 3–4 year olds to 570 hours a year in September 2010. Children from disadvantaged families are less likely than their peers to access early education. Improving outcomes for these children is the focus of the Government's early learning for two-year-olds programme. Since September 2013, approximately 20% of all two-year-olds (primarily those from families that meet the criteria used for the provision of free school meals) have been entitled to a funded early-learning place. From September 2014, the programme was extended to include low income working families to reach around 40% of two-year-olds. To support this programme the Government provided local authorities with £755 million in 2014–15.¹⁹

➤ **Primary education**

20. The primary stage covers three age ranges: nursery (under 5), infant (5 to 7 or 8) (Key Stage 1) and junior (up to 11 or 12) (Key Stage 2) but in Scotland and Northern Ireland there is generally no distinction between infant and junior schools. In Wales, although the types of school are the same, the Foundation Phase has brought together what was previously known as the Early Years (from 3 to 5-year-olds) and Key Stage 1 (from 5 to 7-year-olds) of the National Curriculum to create one phase of education for children aged between three and seven.

21. The major goals of primary education are achieving basic literacy and numeracy amongst all pupils, as well as establishing foundations in science, mathematics and other subjects. Children in England and Northern Ireland are assessed at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In Wales, all learners in their final year of Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 must be assessed through teacher assessments.²⁰

➤ **Secondary education**

22. At the end of this stage of education, pupils are normally entered for a range of external examinations. Most frequently, these are GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Standard Grades in Scotland, although a range of other qualifications are available.

➤ **Technical and vocational education**

¹⁸ Department for Education, *Education System in the UK*.

¹⁹ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland State report, CERD/C/GBR/21-23, July 2015, p. 35.

²⁰ Department for Education, *Education System in the UK*.

23. The system of vocational education in the UK initially developed independently of the state, with bodies such as the RSA and City & Guilds setting examinations for technical subjects. The Education Act 1944 made provision for a Tripartite System of grammar schools, secondary technical schools and secondary modern schools, but by 1975 only 0.5% of British senior pupils were in technical schools. Successive recent British Governments have made attempts to promote and expand vocational education. In the 1970s, the Business and Technology Education Council was founded to confer further and higher education awards, particularly to polytechnics. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Conservative Government promoted the Youth Training Scheme, National Vocational Qualifications and General National Vocational Qualifications. However, youth training was marginalised as the proportion of young people staying on in full-time education increased.

24. In 1994, publicly-funded Modern Apprenticeships were introduced to provide "quality training on a work-based (educational) route". Numbers of apprentices have grown in recent years and the Department for Children, Schools and Families has stated its intention to make apprenticeships a "mainstream" part of England's education system.²¹

25. The 2010 to 2015 government policy on further education and training²² aimed at improving their quality and efficiency by introducing study programmes which reflect students' prior attainment, education and career goals and should include substantial academic or applied and technical qualification as well as non-qualification activities²³. The policy also introduced the "Technical Baccalaureate" measure, reformed the vocational qualifications system, made adult skills provision responsive to the needs of local economies by devolving skills capital funding to Local Enterprise Partnerships - and doing deals with Greater Manchester, Sheffield City Region, West Yorkshire and London to give them the lead in local skills provision.²⁴

26. The Post-16 Skills Plan goes further in that direction, presenting students aged 16 with a technical option which will prepare individuals for skilled employment and cover college-based and employment-based education, building on apprenticeship reforms.²⁵

➤ Higher education

27. To adapt to the increase of students attending university, steps were taken to enable England's higher education system to adjust to new demands. In 2012, 13 years after tuition fees were first introduced, the government took the decision to put higher education funding onto a more sustainable footing by moving away from reliance on grants from the state while

²¹ UNESCO, International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and training, Information on TVET in the United Kingdom. Available at: <http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=United%20Kingdom#ref3>.

²² Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-further-education-and-training/2010-to-2015-government-policy-further-education-and-training>.

²³ Department for Education, *16 to 19 study programmes*, January 2016. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/493452/16_to_19_study_programmes_departmental_advice_Jan_2016_update.pdf. The study programmes shall apply to the academic years 2016 to 2017.

²⁴ Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-further-education-and-training/2010-to-2015-government-policy-further-education-and-training>.

²⁵ Department for Business Innovation & Skills, Department for Education, *Post-16 Skills Plan*, July 2016. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/536043/Post-16_Skills_Plan.pdf.

maintaining funding levels for universities themselves. The majority of funding for tuition now comes from those who benefit the most from it, through income-contingent loans repaid by graduates and backed by the taxpayer. In 2015, the government removed the artificial cap on student numbers to allow greater choice and to help competition to flourish.

28. Nonetheless, the white paper on higher education agree that there is more to be done as access remains uneven. It lays out the decisions taken to curtail the issues, which include enhancing teaching in universities by implementing the Teaching Excellence Framework; promoting transparency by opening up data held by the sector, informing choice and promoting social mobility, by putting a duty on institutions to publish application, offer, acceptance and progression rates broken down by gender, ethnicity and disadvantage; establishing a single market regulator, the Office for Students and a single research and innovation funding body, UK Research and Innovation; which will help ensure teaching and research remain coherent and coordinated at the national as well as the institutional level.²⁶

29. In the United Kingdom, tertiary education is mainly privately funded, and individual households, through the tuition fees paid by students, account for the largest share of that funding. Between 2005 and 2011, tuition fees in the United Kingdom rose from USD 4 496 to USD 4 980. These relatively high fees are somewhat offset by financial support offered to tertiary students. The system of public loans is also particularly well - developed in the United Kingdom, as it is in Australia, Norway and the United States: at least 70% of students benefit from a public loan during their university studies.²⁷

30. However, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights expressed its concern regarding the increase of university fees, which affects equal access to higher education and recommended the United Kingdom to take all necessary steps to reduce said fees in view of making higher education accessible to all in accordance with capacity.²⁸

➤ Literacy

31. A literacy campaign was launched in August 2015 by the Education Secretary, Nicky Morgan, following England's poor ranking in international surveys. Publishers have been encouraged to give secondary schools access to classic novels by great English authors at low cost.

The campaign also includes partnering with the Reading Agency to extend its popular Chatterbooks model by creating at least 200 new book clubs across the country and a shared ambition to see every 8-year-old enrolled at their local library.

²⁶ Department for Business Innovation & Skills, *Success as a knowledge economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, May 2016, p. 18-20 for summary. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-success-as-a-knowledge-economy-white-paper>.

²⁷ OECD, *Education at a glance 2014*.

²⁸ Economic and Social Council, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, June 2016, E/C.12/GBR/CO/6. Available at : http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fGBR%2fCO%2f6&Lang=en.

32. To improve collaboration between schools, the Department for Education will also identify top primary schools with effective strategies for getting young people reading so that every school can learn from their success. This will ensure literacy teaching across all schools is built on the best evidence from organisations such as the Education Endowment Foundation. The literacy campaign is part of the government's one nation approach to social justice which will ensure every child is able to reach their potential, regardless of birth or background. Other measures have been taken to tackle illiteracy, such as high-quality phonics teaching which has enabled more children to master the essentials of reading quickly.²⁹

iii. Education Content and quality

➤ Curriculum

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

34. 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.³⁰ It is organised on the basis of four key stages determined by age, and twelve subjects, classified in legal terms as 'core'³¹ and 'other foundation' subjects.³² All schools are also required to teach religious education at all key stages, and secondary schools must provide sex and relationship education.³³

35. Other types of school like academies and private schools don't have to follow the national curriculum. Academies must teach a broad and balanced curriculum including English, maths and science. They must also teach religious education.³⁴

36. In Scotland, Curriculum for Excellence aims to provide the right environment to enable young people to develop as informed and responsible global citizens with knowledge of Scotland and its place in the world and an understanding of different beliefs and cultures. It addresses the exercising of rights and responsibilities within communities at local, national and global levels, encompassing the development of informed decision making and the ability to take thoughtful and responsible action, locally and globally. Curriculum for Excellence also seeks to provide flexibility so that teachers, schools and local authorities can identify and

²⁹ Department for Education, Press release, *Nicky Morgan and David Williams launch literacy drive*, September 2015. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nicky-morgan-and-david-walliams-launch-literacy-drive>.

³⁰ Information available at: <https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum>.

³¹ The core subjects, which are taught throughout Key stage 1 to 4, include English, Mathematics and Science. The foundation subjects, mostly taught up to stage 3, notably include History, Languages, Computing, etc.

³² Department of Education, *The national curriculum in England*, December 2014, p. 6. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/381344/Master_final_national_curriculum_28_Nov.pdf.

³³ Department of Education, *The national curriculum in England*, December 2014, p. 7.

³⁴ Information available at: <https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum>.

creatively pursue their own approaches. Within that context, it would not be appropriate for the Scottish Government to prescribe any one programme for any specific issue.³⁵

➤ **Learning outcomes**

37. An OECD report stresses that differences in earnings related to educational attainment and skills proficiency are large as an individual without upper secondary education in the United Kingdom earns 70% of what someone with upper secondary education does – one of the largest differences in earnings between these two levels of education across OECD countries. In England and Northern Ireland, there are large variations in the wages of tertiary-educated adults, and these appear to be closely linked to variations in skills proficiency. Tertiary-educated adults with low levels of proficiency in literacy earn 50% less, on average, than tertiary-educated adults with the highest levels of literacy proficiency.³⁶

➤ **Quality**

38. The department for education's single departmental plan for 2015-2020³⁷ plans on giving access to high-quality provision to all children and young person, achieving to the best of his or her ability regardless of location, attainment and background. To do so, the government says it will ensure that all schools are fairly funded and where they are failing or coasting and not pushing every child to reach their potential, it will step in to turn the school around. 500 more free schools should be opened, allowing parents who aren't happy with the quality of education on offer to set up their own schools. The government shall ensure that the curriculum and qualifications are regarded as the gold standard internationally and properly prepare young people to succeed in life. At the same time they promise to deliver the biggest expansion of childcare for working parents in this country's history, meaning that no mother or father has to choose between caring for their children or their career.³⁸

iv. Education management

➤ **Financing education**

39. Public expenditure on education as a percentage of total public expenditure increased by about 10% in the United Kingdom between 2008 and 2011, representing 6.4% of GDP in 2011.³⁹

³⁵ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland State report, CERD/C/GBR/21-23, July 2015, p. 37.

³⁶ OECD, *Education at a glance 2014*. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/unitedkingdom/United%20Kingdom-EAG2014-Country-Note.pdf>.

³⁷ Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>.

³⁸ Department for Education, Single departmental plan 2015-2020, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>.

³⁹ OECD, *Education at a glance 2014*. See also: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Educational_expenditure_statistics.

40. The Education Funding Agency manages £54 billion of funding a year to support all state-provided educations for 8 million children aged 3 to 16, and 1.6 million young people aged 16 to 19.⁴⁰

41. The government has revealed a “fairer school funding plan” in March 2016, the plan should curtail inequalities created by the current system that distributes the funding by introducing a national funding formula from 2017 to 2018. As part of this, local authorities will receive funding to help with their responsibilities towards young people with high-level special educational needs on a fair and formulaic basis, so that no pupil is disadvantaged simply by where they live.⁴¹

➤ **Teachers**

42. In the United Kingdom, just over 83% of spending on primary education is allocated to staff compensation (the OECD average is about 80%), while nearly 82% of spending on secondary education is devoted to staff compensation (the OECD average is 78%). Compared with other OECD countries, the United Kingdom has high student - teacher ratios in primary and secondary education.⁴²

43. The Department for Education’s strategy for 2015-2020 outlines priorities, among which figures the recruitment, development, support and retainment of great teachers. One of the vital components of this plan is to reform initial teacher training content and the accreditation requirements set for new teachers, to ensure that they’re trained to a sufficient standard. This strand will particularly focus on helping new teachers enter the classroom with sufficient subject knowledge, practical behaviour-management skills and armed with the most up-to-date research into how pupils learn, and we will ensure discredited ideas unsupported by firm evidence are not promoted to new teachers.⁴³

➤ **Private education**

44. The United Kingdom saw the most dramatic increase in private provision: six-fold growth over the period, to 37% of all enrolment in 2012. The cost to parents could be substantial, though free, government funded places in early education were available to poor families.⁴⁴

45. In the United Kingdom, many poor children are being failed by low quality, lower cost private pre-primary facilities that tend to cluster in areas of deprivation. Such centres were found to employ many fewer graduate and upper secondary-educated staff, resulting in poorer learning outcomes, while centres serving more affluent areas were generally of better quality.⁴⁵

46. The Committee on the Rights of the Child was also critical of the United Kingdom’s funding of low-fee, private and informal schools run by for-profit business enterprises in recipient States as rapid increase in the number of such schools may contribute to substandard

⁴⁰ Education Funding Agency website, <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-funding-agency>.

⁴¹ Department for Education, Press release, *Fairer school funding plan revealed*, March 2016. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fairer-school-funding-plan-revealed>.

⁴² OECD, *Education at a glance 2014*.

⁴³ Department for Education, *Strategy for 2015-2020: School workforce in England*, November 2014, p. 16.

⁴⁴ Global Monitoring Report, *Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges*, 2015, p. 65.

⁴⁵ Global Monitoring Report, *Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges*, 2015, p. 65.

education, less investment in free and quality public schools and deepened inequalities in the recipient countries, leaving behind children who cannot afford even low-fee schools. It recommended the State party to prioritise free and quality primary education in public schools, and to refrain from funding for-profit private schools and facilitating registration and regulation of private schools.⁴⁶

v. Inclusive education

47. The department for education's single departmental plan for 2015-2020⁴⁷ will work to transform the life chances of vulnerable young people by insisting on the same high expectations for young people inside the care system as outside it.

➤ Gender equality

48. In the United Kingdom, there is a persistent gap between the achievement of boys and girls in English, particularly in reading skills. In England, several school-based programmes have been implemented since 2000 to address this. The Raising Boys' Achievements project ran from 2000 to 2004 in primary and secondary schools. Building on its results, the Gender Agenda project aimed to improve performance among groups of underperforming boys and girls.⁴⁸

➤ Immigrants

49. The national curriculum asks for teachers to take into account the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages. Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects.⁴⁹

➤ Students from lower income families

50. Disadvantaged pupils are defined as pupils who are currently registered for free school meals or have been at any point in the last six years; have been looked after by the local authority for a day or more; have been adopted from care or who left care under a Special Guardianship, Residence or Child Arrangements Order. There is no adjustment for ethnicity. The pupil premium is additional funding granted to schools to raise the attainment of children from low income families, irrespective of their background or their current level of

⁴⁶ Convention on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, June 2016, CRC/C/GBR/CO/5. Available at: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGBR%2fCO%2f5&Lang=en.

⁴⁷ Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020>.

⁴⁸ Global Monitoring Report, *Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges*, 2015, p. 184.

⁴⁹ Department of Education, *The national curriculum in England*, December 2014, p. 8.

achievement. The criterion used for allocating the pupil premium includes the number of pupils eligible for free school meals during the past six years.⁵⁰

51. The British Excellence in Cities programme, for students living in disadvantaged urban areas where many migrants reside, provides support for teaching and learning, mentors, and information and communication technology (ICT), with some positive results.⁵¹

➤ **Students with special needs**

52. Measures have complemented the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that schools comply with their legal requirements. For example, the Department for Education has issued guidance to schools on their obligations and has published the Special educational needs and disability code of practice in 2014.⁵²

53. Special educational needs and disability code of practice, last revised in January 2015, lays out the duties of local authorities, health bodies, schools and colleges to provide for those with special educational needs under part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The code is based on principles aiming to include disabled children by making them and their families participate in decision making and involving them in planning, commissioning and reviewing services; responding to their specific needs is central.⁵³

2. COOPERATION

54. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is **party** to the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 14/03/1962.

55. On the measures taken for the implementation of the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education:

- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland **reported** to UNESCO within the framework of the Sixth (covering the period 1994-1999) and Seventh Consultation of Member States (covering the period 2000-2005);
- However, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland **did not report** within the framework of the Eighth Consultation of Member States (covering the period 2006-2011).

56. On the measures taken for the implementation of the 1974 UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms :

⁵⁰ International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland State report, CERD/C/GBR/21-23, July 2015, p. 34.

⁵¹ Global Monitoring Report, *Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges*, 2015, p. 120.

⁵² Government Equalities Office, *Government Response to the House of Lords Select Committee Report on the Equality Act 2010: The impact on disabled people*, July 2016, p.6. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535441/Government_response_to_the_LSC_report_on_disability.pdf.

⁵³ Department of Education, *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years*, January 2015, p. 20, s. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf.

- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland **did not report** to UNESCO within the framework of the Fourth (covering the period 2005-2008) and Fifth Consultation of Member States (covering the period 2009-2012).

57. On the measures taken for the implementation of the 1976 UNESCO Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education:

- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland **did not report** to UNESCO within the framework of the First Consultation of Member States (1993).
- However, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland **reported** to UNESCO within the framework of the Second Consultation of Member States (2011).

58. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is **not party** to the 1989 UNESCO Convention on Technical and Vocational Education.

Freedom of opinion and expression

1. Constitutional and Legislative Framework:

59. Article 10 of the Human Rights Act guarantees the right to freedom of opinion and belief⁵⁴, and explicitly prohibits all forms of censorship or other similar limitations to freedom of expression. However, restrictions can be made in case of publications in which the interests of public order or the security of the State are at stake, according to the same article.

60. Broadcast media is further regulated through several acts, such as the Communication Act 2003⁵⁵, which set up the Office of Communication (Ofcom)⁵⁶. Ofcom controls the statutory regulation of commercial television and radio stations in the UK. It regulates issues related to ownership, programme transmission and content⁵⁷.

61. The Freedom of Information Act⁵⁸ in the UK guarantees transparency within the government administration and the right of access to public information. The Act covers any recorded information that is held by a public authority in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and by UK-wide public authorities based in Scotland. Anyone can make a freedom of information request. The public authority that receives the request is responsible for responding.

62. The Data Protection Act 1998⁵⁹ gives rules for handling information about people. It includes the right for people to access their personal data. The Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act come under the heading of information rights and are regulated by the Information Commissioner's Office.

⁵⁴ https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/United_Kingdom_2013?lang=en

⁵⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/21/contents>

⁵⁶ <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/>

⁵⁷ http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/broadcast/code-may16/Ofcom_Broadcast_Code_May_2016.pdf

⁵⁸ <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/what-is-the-foi-act/>

⁵⁹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents>

63. The Official Secrets Act outlines the exceptions, making it an offence to disclose information in relation to six specified categories and only if the disclosure is damaging to the national interest.

64. A new defamation Act was introduced in 2013⁶⁰ which states that claimants of defamation must provide actual or probable serious harm before they can be granted the ability to sue for defamation⁶¹. However, it should be noted that this act has only been implemented in England and Wales, meaning that cases pertaining to defamation can be tried in Northern Ireland under the former law of 1955. Scotland currently has a law similar to England and Wales on defamation.

65. The current law guarantees legal protection for journalists' sources under Section 10 of the Contempt of Court Act of 1981⁶².

66. Information held by Scottish public authorities is covered by Scotland's own Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002⁶³.

2. Media Self-Regulation:

67. The UK's Press Council – the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO), was created in 2014 to replace the Press Complaints Commission. It is independent from the government and is operated by the Regulatory Funding Company, which is funded by member publishing bodies.

68. The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) is the union for the UK and Ireland and all professionals in the state are encouraged to join. There is also an editor's Code of Practice which establishes the rules that print media regulated by IPSO have agreed to follow⁶⁴.

3. Safety of journalists:

69. UNESCO has recorded no killings of journalists since 2008.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

70. Recommendations made within the framework of the second cycle of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, considered in July 2012⁶⁵.

110. The following recommendations will be examined by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

⁶⁰ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/26/contents>

⁶¹ <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/defamation.html>

⁶² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/49>

⁶³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2002/13/contents>

⁶⁴ <https://www.ipso.co.uk/editors-code-of-practice/>

⁶⁵ United Kingdom, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, A/HRC/21/9, accessible at: <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/HRC/21/9&Lang=E>.

110.66. Consider strengthening policies to combat discrimination in all areas, notably in employment and education;

110.102. Strengthen measures aimed at reducing serious inequalities in access to health, education and employment, which still exist despite the adoption of the Equality Act;

110.103. Guarantee the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, particularly health, education and adequate housing

110.106. Adopt a strategy so that children of vulnerable groups are not excluded from the education system

71. Analysis:

The United Kingdom has, to the extent of our knowledge, strengthened students with special needs access to education by adopting the Special educational needs and disability code of practice which completes the Equality Act. More globally, the United Kingdom has adopted commendable measures towards more inclusive education, notably disadvantaged students. Nevertheless, as far as we know, the United Kingdom still has efforts to do regarding the financing of education, which burdens families and students, especially in higher education. This seems to be aggravated by the increase of private schools across the country, which in turn may affect the quality of public education.

72. Specific Recommendations:

1. The United Kingdom should be encouraged to further submit state reports for the periodic consultations of UNESCO's education related standard-setting instruments.
2. The United Kingdom should pursue its reforms towards effective tertiary education.
3. The United Kingdom should be encouraged to continue measures towards inclusive education.
4. The United Kingdom should be encouraged to prioritise free quality education.

Cultural Rights

73. As a State Party to the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)⁶⁶, and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)⁶⁷, the United Kingdom is encouraged to fully implement the relevant provisions that promote access to and participation in cultural heritage and creative expressions and, as such, are conducive to implementing the right to take part in cultural life as defined in article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In doing so, The United Kingdom is encouraged to give due consideration to the participation of communities, practitioners, cultural actors and NGOs from the civil society as well as vulnerable groups (minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees, young peoples and peoples with

⁶⁶ Periodic Report available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/136521>

⁶⁷ Periodic Report available at: <http://en.unesco.org/creativity/monitoring-report/quadrennial-reports/available-reports/periodic-report-united-kingdom>

disabilities), and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to women and girls to address gender disparities.

74. The United Kingdom is encouraged to ratify the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) so as to complete its policy and legislative frameworks to enhance support to the implementation of the right to take part in cultural life.

Freedom of scientific research and the right to benefit from scientific progress and its applications

75. United Kingdom, in the framework of the 2015-2017 consultations related to the revision of the Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers, as well as to its 2013-2016 monitoring exercise (November 2016 - April 2017) is encouraged to report to UNESCO on any legislative or other steps undertaken by it with the aim to implement this international standard-setting instrument, adopted by UNESCO in 1974. United Kingdom is kindly invited to pay a particular attention to the legal provisions and regulatory frameworks which ensure that scientific researchers have the responsibility and the right to work in the spirit of the principles enshrined in the 1974 Recommendation. United Kingdom is invited to complete the online questionnaire which has been prepared by UNESCO to guide and assist Member States with their reporting. It aims to collect, in a simplified manner, information on the extent to which Member States have mainstreamed the principles of the 1974 Recommendation in their STI and other relevant systems, focusing on issues of the promotion of respect for autonomy and independence of scientific researchers and respect for their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Responses to this questionnaire will be considered as the official national report for each Member State. The questionnaire can be completed and submitted online through the link which will be indicated in due course on the web page: <http://en.unesco.org/themes/ethics-science-and-technology>.