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# Advancing Talent with UK Education

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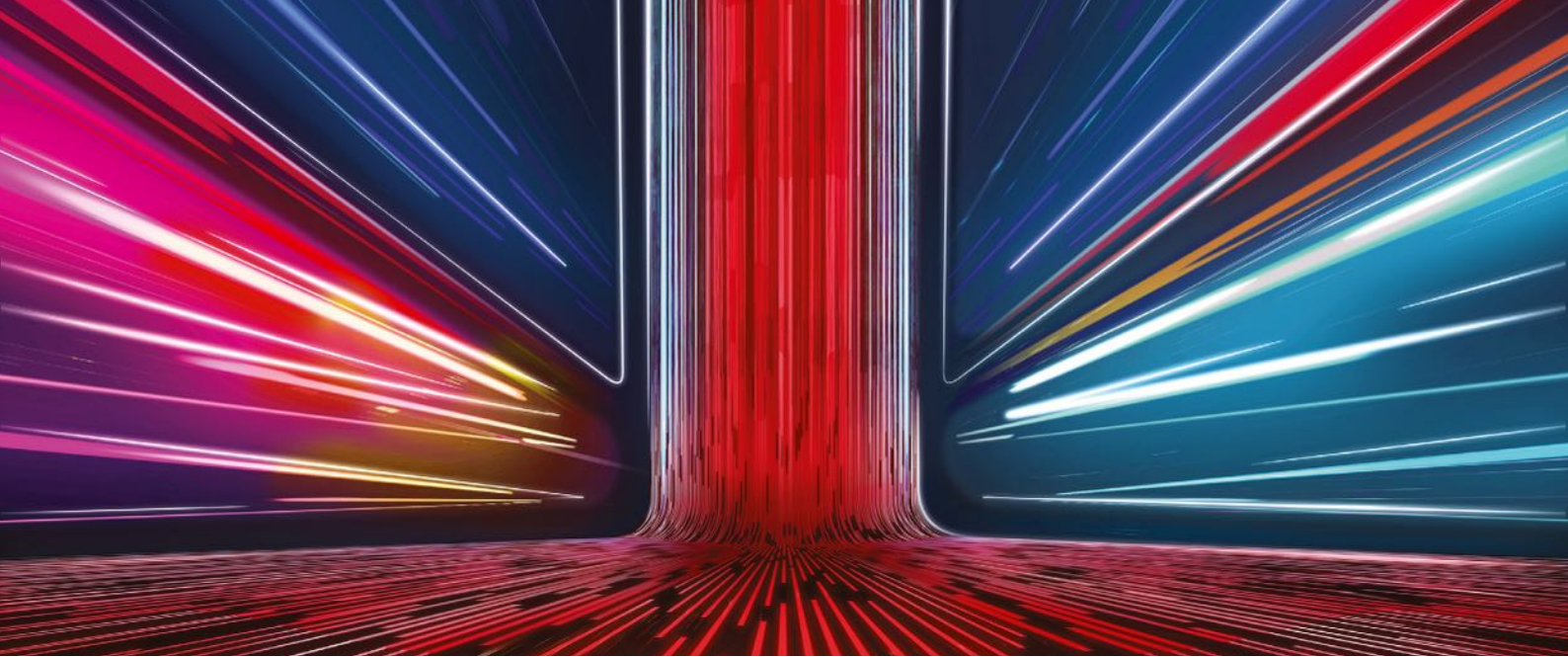
Building Global Partnerships



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# Foreword



**Sir Steve Smith**  
International  
Education Champion

**The UK government launched the new International Education Strategy (IES)<sup>1</sup> in January 2026. Its ambitions are clear. The strategy will harness the UK's renowned strengths in education to foster strong, reciprocal global partnerships that promote shared prosperity, innovation and opportunity, whilst continuing to welcome high quality international students to study in the UK.**

We want to make the UK the global partner of choice at every stage of learning.

To do so, the UK Government is backing education providers, at all levels, to deliver British education overseas in new and expanding markets. From early years, through schools and universities; skills and training; edtech and other products and services, English language teaching, special educational needs, and more, the UK's world-class education offer is open to learners and partners around the world. Pathway providers also offer a critical bridge between international students and education institutions.

As the IES<sup>1</sup> International Education Champion, I have seen first-hand how ambitious, collaborative, and mutually beneficial educational partnerships transform lives and strengthen societies.

# Acknowledgements

This brochure showcases the exceptional standards, quality and cutting edge thinking that underpin the UK's education offer. It has been developed by the Education Sector Action Group (ESAG) and the sectors they represent, whose expertise and continued dedication are deeply appreciated.

This brochure underscores the excellence of UK education providers on the international stage. Its development was guided by senior representatives of education sector organisations, whose dedication is sincerely appreciated.

We extend our gratitude to them and the members they represent for their invaluable contributions shaping this brochure. The Education Sector Advisory Group (ESAG), representing voices from diverse corners of the UK education landscape, ensures that all perspectives are considered. Their work, together with that of the UK's International Education Champion, Sir Steve Smith has been critical to driving forward international education partnerships and supports the government's international engagement.

The UK is dedicated to creating sustainable and impactful change and by working together with governments, partners and other stakeholders, we can implement meaningful solutions that address the specific needs and challenges of each country. We invite our global partners to collaborate with us to unlock a better future for our individuals and societies.



**INDEPENDENT  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION**





# Context

**Education and skills play a pivotal role in shaping the economic, social and cultural fabric of the UK. In a rapidly evolving global landscape, nations worldwide also recognise the importance of education in driving their progress and development. With the power to combat discrimination and social inequality, education helps to foster innovation, boost productivity and promote economic growth and social stability.**

Across different nations and cultures, there is a common interest in promoting and investing in education and skills development to address the ever-evolving job market, technological advancements and global competition.

In the UK we recognise the need for high quality, sustainable education and skills systems that foster competent, productive and inclusive workforces. We take pride in being able to share our knowledge and

expertise with international partners to build mutually beneficial partnerships that help raise education and skills standards.

The education sector works with the UK Government and British Council to create collaborations between educational and skills organisations, that develops and delivers a comprehensive range of solutions to support international partners.

## Strong heritage

The UK boasts centuries of experience in academic excellence alongside a robust skills system that prioritises innovation, research, and inclusivity. With a strong emphasis on both academic and vocational education, the UK continues to produce one of the most skilled workforces in the world.

UK assessment providers deliver secure **English language** tests in 144 countries around the world, helping millions of students to demonstrate their proficiency for study or work.

**Early years** education is renowned for its high quality and emphasis on child development. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum framework sets standards for learning, development and care for young children. EYFS is used by all early years settings in the UK.

Our primary and secondary **schools** offer a well-rounded curriculum, combining core subjects with a range of options to cater to diverse interests and abilities.

The UK's emphasises practical learning through **technical and vocational** pathways, internships and apprenticeships. Our strong industrial collaboration provides theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience that gives graduates an edge in the job market.

Our **higher education** is renowned for its rigorous academic quality, standards and innovative pedagogy. UK HE offers diverse range of inclusive and accessible courses delivered through diverse range of providers with specialist expertise.

Our reputation for providing high-quality education extends to our **transnational education** programmes which enables learners to study for a UK qualification in another country and is an area of provision where the UK is a global leader.

## International presence

The UK's world-class education, global reputation and strong international presence make it an attractive partner for nations seeking to develop their human capital. The UK system is renowned for its seamless integration of different levels of education, creating a cohesive learning journey from early years through to tertiary education. The strategic partners surrounding the educational institutions add significant strength that creates a robust and yet flexible skills eco-system. Alongside the core education and skills bodies, there are many micro, small and medium enterprises that provide skills training innovation and expertise.

Education plays a crucial role in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to end poverty, promote economic growth and protect the environment by 2030. As a strong advocate for international development, the UK has leveraged its expertise and resources to support other countries in meeting these goals through education. The UK has collaborated with international partners to strengthen education systems, provide quality education for all and promote lifelong learning opportunities.

## Unique offer presented by the UK education and skills sector

A cross-section of organisations from the UK education sector has united to showcase how the UK can support governments, institutions and communities worldwide in enhancing their education and skills systems. As a collaboration of education and skills specialists we can identify collaborative solutions to meet the specific needs of international partners.

The information presented within this document provides UK and international stakeholders with:

- An overview of the work that each level of the UK education and skills system engages in internationally.
- A comprehensive outline of the specific services and support the UK can offer to international partners at each level of education.
- Clear signposts to the organisations that can help international partners connect with the UK education and skills sector.

By increasing awareness of the education and skills landscape globally, along with the opportunities and strengths of each level within it, we aim to increase the scale and scope of our mutually beneficial collaborations with international partners across the spectrum.





# England

## Excellence, Skills and Global Partnership

**England offers one of the world's most comprehensive and internationally respected education systems, delivering quality, innovation and choice at every stage of learning. From early years and schools through further education, skills and technical training, higher education and lifelong learning. England's education offer supports learners, employers, and societies to thrive in a rapidly changing global economy.**

England's schools are recognised internationally for strong standards, curriculum design, assessment and teacher development. Its further education colleges and training providers play a central role in delivering skills aligned to labour market needs. These institutions work closely with employers to support workforce development, productivity and inclusive growth, offering practical, flexible pathways into employment and progression.

Alongside this, England is home to some of the world's leading universities and research institutions, as well as a diverse range of modern and specialist providers. Research-led teaching and innovation strengthen education at all levels, with global recognition reflected in international rankings and strong performance for research quality, impact and collaboration.

Quality and standards are central to England's education offer across all sectors. Robust regulatory and quality assurance frameworks underpin schools, FE, skills, English language teaching, and higher education, supporting learner confidence and continuous improvement. England is also a global leader in education exports and transnational education, delivering schools partnerships, skills programmes, English language teaching, edtech, special educational needs provision, and professional development worldwide.

## **Economic and social impact**

England's international education offer is a powerful mechanism for global collaboration and opportunity. Through partnerships with governments, institutions, and employers worldwide, England works with international partners to develop skills, build capacity and support shared economic growth. Education exports, transnational provision and joint research and innovation strengthen people to people links and support the development of global talent. In partnership with countries and institutions around the world, England helps strengthen education systems, enabling sustainable development and inclusive prosperity across diverse regions and markets.





# Northern Ireland

## Excellence in Education, Connected Globally

**Northern Ireland offers a dynamic and globally engaged education landscape that plays a vital role in supporting international collaboration, research excellence, and student mobility. With a strong academic tradition and a welcoming environment, the region is increasingly recognised as a destination of choice for learners and researchers worldwide.**

### Quality and excellence

Northern Ireland's education system is renowned for high standards, strong outcomes and inclusivity. Schools offer a broad curriculum supporting academic

achievement and personal development. The region is home to two leading universities - Queen's University Belfast (Russell Group, Top 200 globally) and Ulster University (Times Higher Education University of the Year 2024) - alongside The Open University, which provides flexible learning opportunities. Complementing these are two specialist education focussed university colleges with international links are Stranmillis University College, St Mary's University College, and six regional Further Education colleges, all located across 29 campuses and CAFRE who expertise in agri-food and land-based education. Together, these institutions are committed to excellence, innovation and high-quality teaching and learning.

## Case study: Ulster University

Ulster hosts over 2,000 international students from 100+ countries and leads in student support through its comprehensive International Orientation Programme, covering immigration, housing, health, and wellbeing. The university promotes integration via cultural events, volunteering, and employer partnerships, aligning graduate outcomes with regional skills needs.

**Read more:** <https://www.ulster.ac.uk/>

## Case study: Queen's University Belfast

Since 2019, Queen's has built a strong presence in India, tripling its Indian student numbers to nearly 800 by 2024/25. It established an in-market graduate employment service connecting alumni to 500+ Indian employers and has opened a branch campus in Gujarat's GIFT City in January 2026 - the first UK university and only Russell Group member to do so.

**Read more:** <https://www.qub.ac.uk/india/>

## Strategic initiatives and partnerships

Northern Ireland's institutions foster strong global connections through student exchanges, research collaborations, and partnerships. The flagship Study USA programme offers around 60 scholarships annually, enabling students to spend a year at a U.S. college, gaining international experience and employability skills. Since 1994, over 2,500 students have benefited from this initiative. Students benefit from affordable living costs, safe communities, vibrant cultural experiences and extensive support services.

International education contributes significantly to Northern Ireland's economy and skills pipeline. International students enrich campus life and local communities helping to bring a global perspective and international alumni act as ambassadors for Northern Ireland worldwide.

## Key contact:

W: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/universities-and-colleges-northern-ireland>



# Scotland

## Come to Study. Find Scotland

**The Scottish education system has a legacy of changing the world through innovation, invention and social change. Home to 4 of the 6 oldest universities in the UK, Scotland now boasts 19 universities and 24 colleges that range from globally ranked universities to innovative modern institutions. Education in Scotland is distinct from the rest of the UK and this is captured in Scotland's International Education Strategy (IES).<sup>2</sup> This strategy compliments the work of Scotland's Trade & Investment Envoy for International Education who works alongside the UK Education Champion, to advance Scotland's global education ambitions.**

Scotland prides itself in the quality of its education system whilst also promoting innovation and continuous improvement through its distinctive Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework.<sup>3</sup> Our focus on quality, coupled with an international reputation for welcoming students, staff and researchers from across the globe mean that Scotland has long been a destination of choice for the intellectually curious and those looking to develop new skills and expertise.

Our colleges and universities have been the training ground for generations of impactful alumni, including several Nobel Prize winners. With over 4,500 courses in more than 150 subject groupings in campuses that range from the heart of inner cities to remote islands, Scottish colleges and universities can cater to personal and academic needs of any student.

**Employability, entrepreneurship and industry engagement** are embedded through the curricula of our colleges and universities and our four-year undergraduate degree, distinct in the UK, offers greater flexibility and personal development opportunities. We welcome over 70,000 international students annually from over 150 countries meaning that 1 in 4 of our college and university students come from outside the UK.

After graduation, Scotland's Migration Service offers free advice to international students to help them stay in Scotland to gain valuable work experience. Those who choose to stay in Scotland to work are welcomed and valued across all sectors of our economy; those who return home or move elsewhere in the world remain valuable friends and ambassadors for Scotland.

Collaboration is the hallmark of our tertiary education sector, and this **'Team Scotland' approach** is epitomised by Connected Scotland, a unique partnership model that brings together organisations to support internationalisation at our universities and colleges. Our colleges and universities international partnerships that span the public and private sectors, academia, industry and everything in between.

**Partnering with Scottish colleges and universities is an opportunity to join this rich international network, opening doors for additional collaboration and becoming part of the extended "family" of Scottish Tertiary Education.**

## **Key contact:**

W: <https://www.scotland.org/study>



# Wales

## A Globally Connected Nation

**Wales is an outward-looking nation, committed to building trusted international partnerships that attract learners, researchers, and investment worldwide. We embrace opportunities for collaboration, grounded in mutual cooperation to address shared global challenges.**

A top-choice destination for international students, Wales welcomes over 25,000 learners from 130+ countries each year. Consistently ranked highly for safety, student satisfaction, support, retention and employability, Wales offers an exceptional environment for study and personal growth.

Wales punches above its weight, with three universities ranked in the QS Top 500 World University Rankings 2026. It leads the UK in graduate entrepreneurship, boasting the highest number of start-ups per capita. Transnational Education (TNE) is central to Wales's global engagement, driving educational access, capacity building, and knowledge exchange across borders. At the heart of Wales's TNE offer is a robust quality assurance framework aligned with European Quality Standards, ensuring excellence and integrity.

## **Strategic initiatives and partnerships**

The Welsh Government's innovative mobility programme, Taith, extended until 2028, continues to build on strong relationships across all education and youth sectors in Wales. Since its launch, Taith has funded over 12,000 mobilities, building strong reciprocal relationships across all education and youth sectors. Its commitment to inclusivity ensures opportunities for underrepresented groups and small organisations, earning recognition from the European Parliament for its inclusive approach.

Our international education ambitions will be delivered through collaboration with the sector and Medr, the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research<sup>4</sup> in Wales. Medr plays a pivotal role in raising Wales's global profile, growing the economy and embedding international engagement in the sector's strategic direction through its statutory duty to promote a global outlook. The Curriculum for Wales<sup>5</sup>, developed in partnership with the teaching profession is designed to ensure that every learner aged 3 -16 makes meaningful progress. This includes those with additional learning needs and those affected by poverty.

## **Economic and social impact**

International education is a significant export for Wales, with higher education generating over £1 billion annually. Welsh universities contribute £10.97 billion<sup>6</sup> to the economy, including £1.98 billion from research and knowledge exchange. Through the Global Wales programme, the Welsh Government funded 95 scholarships over three years, partnering with leading international scholarship organisations and launching its own flagship Global Wales Scholarship. This initiative has created a strong alumni ambassador network for Wales.

## **Key contact**

W: <https://www.studyinwales.ac.uk/>

W: <https://www.taith.wales/>



# Early years

**Early years provision helps support children under the age of five, through nursery schools, preschools and other early learning environments. Effective, high-quality provision has a significant impact on a child's overall development and growth, laying a strong foundation for further learning. The UK's early years provision stands out for its staunch commitment to safeguarding and its discovery-based approach to learning.**

## **The work of the early years sector internationally**

The international work of early years providers is led by the Early Years Alliance which supports policy and provision development in a range of countries, informed by its experiences of operating high quality early childhood education and care in mixed-economy environments.

It takes a 360° approach to policy formulation, implementation and quality improvement, involving all stakeholders, government ministries, providers and parents in the process.

The Early Years Alliance helped the UK government develop and implement the English Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) regulatory framework<sup>7</sup>. The EYFS' focus on meeting the unique learning and development needs of each child, through a balanced curriculum of play-based, child-led and adult-led activities can be aligned effectively with many countries' cultural, economic and regulatory environments.

## Case Study: Switzerland

The Early Years Alliance provides teaching and assessment to a range of nursery chains across Switzerland. Teaching is delivered online and observation of practice assessment undertaken in person. Below is a testimonial from one of the nursery chain's directors.

*“Partnering with the Early Years Alliance has been an incredibly positive experience for our training endeavours and has allowed us to offer an amazing learning experience to staff. Their unwavering commitment to providing exceptional support and encouragement to our learners is truly commendable. We wholeheartedly endorse the Early Years Alliance for their exemplary dedication and expertise in training and mentorship. We are grateful for their ongoing support and commend their commitment to excellence in every aspect of their service.”*

**Read more:** <https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/partnerships/international-partnerships/>

## Support available to international partners

### International membership

All-staff access to a one-stop location for all aspects of early childhood education and support resources. Qualification courses allow for career progression,

and free, on-line Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes support workforce development, strengthen leadership and management and drive quality improvement. Periodicals and resources are provided, supporting effective delivery of early childhood education and care (ECEC) based on the principles of the EYFS.

### Policy, regulatory and quality assurance framework formulation, implementation, and oversight

Supporting national and regional governments to develop high quality early years systems informed by the principles of the EYFS. The Alliance offers advice to education policy makers and finance ministries to develop and implement effective early years provision at scale. It also supports the creation of socially and culturally appropriate regulatory and inspection frameworks. This 360° approach to policy development implementation, and quality improvement ensures that provision for children effectively promotes their learning and development.

### Increasing public understanding of the vital role of the first 5 years of life

Information, training and promotional support to help increase parents' understanding of the vital role the first 5 years of life play in shaping their children's future. This helps parents understand their essential role in supporting their child's early learning and development and increases the status and professionalism of the early childhood education and care workforce.

## Workforce development

Workforce development strategies at individual, provider, regional and national levels, working with local partners to identify qualification and professional development training needs. The creation of tailored programmes to meet demands and quality assurance frameworks to ensure increased skill levels make a real impact on the quality of young children's experiences. An increasing focus of this provision is work-based training, allowing educators to remain employed whilst developing their skills and knowledge via on-line and blended provision.

## Observation and inspection of practice

Provision of quality assurance frameworks and services tailored to the needs of the partner country. These assess the quality of local teaching and assessment, providing independent evaluation which reassures funders, providers and parents that high quality training is improving the quality of provision. In all aspects of this work the Alliance acts as a 'critical friend', supporting local training agencies to assess their own practice and improve provision.

## Case study: Early Years Alliance in China

The Alliance partnered with China National Society of Early Childhood Education and Glory Nurseries, Beijing to deliver a programme of in-person conferences and live online taught sessions. Delivered over six months, the programme covered all aspects of early years play-based provision informed by the principles of the EYFS and how these could be delivered successfully in the Chinese context.

Read more: <https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/partnerships/international-partnerships/>

## Key contact

**The Early Years Alliance** is the largest non-governmental ECEC organisation in the UK with over 60 years' experience of influencing policy and regulatory frameworks, providing dedicated financial expertise and supporting workforce development. It is a membership organisation, supporting 14,000 nurseries and childminders in England with all aspects of ECEC policy and practice. It manages 27 nurseries in areas of social and economic disadvantage, ensuring children and families have access to high quality provision in areas where for-profit organisations chose not to operate.

W: <https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/>



# Schools

**Primary and secondary education, with its transformative power, plays a crucial role in shaping students for their future. It provides them with a robust foundation for their academic and professional journey, equipping them with the essential knowledge and skills to excel in their chosen fields later in life.**

## The work of the schools sector internationally

A British international school is a school that teaches the one of UK National Curriculums or has a British orientation outside of the UK. There are around 8,351 schools globally that follow a UK orientated curriculum, which represent almost 46% (8,351/18,204) of the international school sector. As of 2026,

there are 82 UK independent school brands operating overseas, with 248 campuses and with c.130,000 students.<sup>8</sup>

There are multiple associations representing British schools internationally and in the UK. These offer a wide range of solutions which aim to:

- **Strengthen the reputation of high-quality British education and to foster exchange:** to help education networks to learn with and from each other on the leading practices to support schools.
- **Drive structured learning & innovation:** to advance schools' knowledge by identifying grassroots innovations and facilitating co-creation and evidence generation on common challenges.
- **Inform practice and policy reform:** to leverage schools' innovations and expertise to better inform education policy.

Overseas schools can apply for voluntary British Schools Overseas (BSO)<sup>9</sup> accreditation from the UK Department for Education. BSO accreditation inspections are quality assured by Ofsted and the scheme provides international schools with the opportunity to demonstrate how they meet standards very closely aligned to those used to regulate independent schools in England.

## Support available to international partners

**Establishment and growth of new British international schools:** Guidance and support for UK independent schools that are planning to set up overseas, and for established schools worldwide that are planning to expand.

**Accreditation:** External quality assurance by recognised bodies. Support with the formulation of school development plans which contribute to long term-school improvement and attainment of high standards. The BSO accreditation scheme allows schools to directly compare themselves to independent schools in England.

**Professional learning for teachers, teaching assistants, governors, and leaders:** Training on topics including initial teacher training in the form of [International Qualified Teacher Status \(iQTS\)](#) and [International Postgraduate Certificate of Education \(iPGCE\)](#) training and programmes for middle leaders and aspiring school leaders.

**Upskilling support staff:** Professional learning for the wider school workforce, including bursars, business managers, HR staff, executive assistants, marketing and admissions staff.

**Good governance and safeguarding:** Training connected to effective and accountable school governance models and practice. Child protection and safer recruitment training, including advanced safeguarding training. Safeguarding support through the [British International Schools Safeguarding Coalition](#) (BISSC).

**University, apprenticeship, vocational training and careers guidance:** Access to high-quality training, guidance and support for student guidance counsellors, students and their families. Delivered in partnership with organisations including Universities and Colleges, Admissions Service (UCAS), British Universities' International Liaison Association (BUILA), UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA), Universities UK International (UUKi) and Times Higher Education (THE).

**Student competitions and events:** Global opportunities for students to compete and interconnect in a range of inspirational and challenging competitions and events.

## Key contacts

The international associations support international accreditation for British schools overseas. These high-quality associations work collaboratively in promoting the UK's International Education Strategy in conjunction with the Department for Business & Trade, the Department for Education, Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office and the Independent Schools Council.

- **Association of British Schools Overseas** (AoBSO): <https://www.aobso.uk/>
- **British Schools Middle East** (BSME): <https://www.bsme.org.uk/>
- **Council of British International Schools** (COBIS): <https://www.cobis.org.uk/>
- **Federation of British International Schools in Asia** (FOBISIA): <https://www.fobisia.org/>
- **Independent Schools Council** (ISC): <https://www.isc.co.uk/>
- **Latin American Heads Conference** (LAHC): <https://www.lahc.net/>
- **National Association of British Schools in Spain** (NABSS): <https://nabss.org/>





# Technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and skills

Technical, vocational education and skills training, play a crucial role in bridging the gap between education and employment. It offers a focus on practical skills and industry-specific training, helping to prepare students for the workforce. It also provides skilled workers to meet the demands of businesses which drives growth and competitiveness.

## The work of the TVET sector internationally

A wide range of organisations within the UK's TVET sector have an international presence, playing a vital role in promoting and delivering high-quality industry-driven vocational training, skills development, and education. This includes:

- **Training provision:** Further education colleges, Institutes of Technology, national colleges, University Technical Colleges, independent training providers and skills consultants work internationally in various capacities, including transnational education partnerships, TVET capacity building projects, curriculum development, bespoke training programmes and consultancy projects.
- **Sectoral skills:** Sector skills councils and National Skills Academies work with international partners to support developing a sectoral approach to skills, labour market intelligence, standards and curriculum development, train the trainer programmes and quality assurance.
- **Qualifications and courses:** Awarding organisations offer qualifications, training accreditation, custom programme development, consultancy and credentialing.
- **Inspiring young people:** WorldSkills raises the profile and recognition of skilled people, through competitions, projects, frameworks and international partnerships.

- **Professional standards:** Chartered and professional bodies develop, promote and regulate professional standards within a specific industry to ensure competence and enhance the knowledge and skills of individuals.

## International Skills Partnerships

British Council's recent publication [Strengthening TVET systems globally: A showcase of our International Skills Partnerships](#) celebrates the impact of institutional peer exchanges in ten countries across Africa and Asia. Funded by the British Council, these institutional partnerships work to address national priorities around skills development and employment, whilst contributing to longer-term Sustainable Development Goals.

## Support available to international partners

- **Workforce intelligence/research:** Labour market insight to identify skills priorities and inform the development of skills strategies and policies that support social and economic growth.
- **TVET policy & strategy:** Policy development and strategic planning of skills at a sectoral, regional or national level, technical qualification reform and provider implementation, building effective TVET systems that align to industry needs and promote growth.

- **Standards & curriculum development:** Development of nation-specific occupational standards to define the skills, knowledge and behaviours for job roles, underpinning industry relevant curriculum. Curriculum development, mapping and internationalisation to incorporate global dimensions into the content of the curriculum, assessment, and teaching.
- **Qualifications, assessment & certification:** Qualifications that meet local needs while maintaining an international standard, helping individuals upskill, reskill and embrace lifelong learning. Certification/ recognition capability through internationally recognised awarding organisations.
- **Quality assurance & accreditation:** Development of quality assurance systems and recognition of existing curriculum or training through assessment against national and international standards, ensuring quality remains high.
- **Capacity and capability building:** Enhancing local capability in developing and delivering industry-led TVET curriculum through train the trainer programmes and professional development opportunities for teachers and instructors, helping to deliver a dynamic and relevant curriculum.

## Case study: Green Transition Training in Mauritius

In partnership with the Mauritius Qualifications Authority and British Council, Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC) led a programme to develop green-technology curricula, micro-credentials, and ‘train-the-trainer’ courses in Wales. The project benchmarked UK short programmes in EV charging, renewable energy, and sustainability awareness to create locally relevant qualifications. This partnership introduced green micro-credentials to Mauritius, built institutional capability, and expanded access to training for future green careers.

**Read more:** <https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/case-studies/cavc-green-transition-training-in-mauritius>

- **Local ownership and sustainability:** Strengthening institutional and system capacities through co-delivery, mentoring, and knowledge transfer to ensure reforms are locally owned, contextually relevant, and sustainable beyond project duration.
- **Gender equality and inclusion mainstreaming:** Embedding women’s participation and inclusion of marginalised groups as core principles across all interventions.

- **Workforce development programmes:** Apprenticeships, work-based programmes and micro-credentials to enhance the skills and competencies of individuals, aligned with industry needs, ensuring a more skilled and adaptable talent pool.
- **Policy dialogue:** Facilitating exchange between UK and overseas policymakers to influence reforms. British Council's annual UK TVET Policy Seminar brings together cohorts of international policymakers to the UK, to showcase UK expertise and strengthen international peer networks. Its webinar series engages leading thinkers and practitioners and creates a space for reflection on the pertinent themes within the sector. British Council also engage decision-makers through regional and in-country policy discussions focused on key learnings and insights from our projects.
- **Institutional partnerships:** Connecting UK colleges and training providers with their global counterparts to jointly address system improvements and national priorities through innovative, jointly designed projects.
- **Research and tools:** Generating evidence and resources that support effective skills programming. Shared at global events and forums, our research and tools support sector-wide dialogue and underpin future policy discussions.

## Case study: VET Toolbox I & II (EU and German government co-funded, 2017–2024)

Delivered in 15 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, short-term technical assistance and peer partnerships supported systemic change and strengthened provider capacity. A key feature was one-year peer exchanges between UK and partner-country TVET colleges, enabling mutual learning and fostering international collaboration. The second phase of the VET Toolbox project enhanced the delivery of demand-driven skills in 11 selected countries in Sub-Saharan Africa supporting human capital needs by addressing critical skills gaps in the agriculture sector.

**Read more:** A selection of case studies about the first VET Toolbox programme is presented here: [https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc\\_vet\\_toolbox\\_5\\_year\\_report\\_artwork\\_13.04.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc_vet_toolbox_5_year_report_artwork_13.04.pdf)



## Case Study: Vietnam Green Finance Skills

A consortium of UK Skills Partnership Associate Members have developed new Green Finance micro-credentials skills training modules to support the International Finance Centre in Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang. This co-creation collaboration addresses critical workforce gaps in green finance, ESG implementation, and sustainable investment.

**Read more:** [https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/case\\_studies/vietnam\\_green\\_finance\\_skills/](https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/case_studies/vietnam_green_finance_skills/)

## Key contact

The **UK Skills Partnership (UKSP)**, with UK Government and British Council as partners, is a collective representing the technical and vocational education and training sector of the United Kingdom. Members of UK Skills Partnership represent UK colleges, independent training providers, Chartered and professional bodies, awarding organisations, WorldSkills UK, and sector skills organisations working in international settings.

W: <https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/>



# Higher Education

**Higher education equips individuals not only with the knowledge and expertise needed for their chosen career paths, but also fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and the cultural competencies which are essential for success in a globalised world.**

## **The work of the higher education sector internationally**

UK universities are recognised the world over for their excellence and are highly international in outlook and composition. Higher education providers in the UK play a crucial role in helping international partners by offering high quality educational programmes with internationally recognised qualifications, as well as partnerships and research collaborations across a wide range of subjects and disciplines.

Universities host international students and are partners in national scholarship programmes that help train the next generation of leaders. They have a highly international workforce and academic community. They provide consultancy services on various matters such as policy development, governance structures, and strategic planning, helping international governments to make informed decisions based on best practices in the field of higher education. UK Universities world leading research and innovation helps tackle shared global challenges and drive innovation, prosperity and growth.

Pathways providers play an important role in supporting the International Education Strategy as well, acting as a critical bridge between international students and higher education institutions.

## Support available to international partners

- **A supportive environment for international students:** International students are welcome in the UK, and our universities are amongst the most popular in the world. Strategic partnerships with governments and scholarship programmes are available to help educate and train the next generation of leaders.
- **Study abroad partnerships:** Providing opportunities for mobility and exchange for students in the UK and overseas partners is a high priority that delivers mutual benefits.
- **World class research and innovation:** The UK's world-leading R&I is based in our universities, which are open to collaboration with international partners across all disciplines and challenges.
- **Global expertise:** The UK host academics and researchers from around the world who collaborate internationally and help give the UK global expertise.
- **Transnational Education partnerships:** Specialist courses delivered independently or in partnership with other higher education providers, including UK qualifications delivered via transnational education arrangements, opening opportunities for students worldwide, widening participation for underrepresented groups.
- **Subject diversity:** The UK is home to a wide range of universities – from small and specialist providers to large research intensives – covering a broad range of subject areas. This diversity is one of its greatest strengths and reflects the diverse needs of our international partners.
- **Development of higher education provision:** Support for overseas education providers to deliver and partner in the UK, as well as help for partner institutions to develop their own academic programmes and policies through building long-term educational partnerships.
- **Consultancy and support for international partners:** Development of tailored education models, materials and technology, working with government, industry and educators – and developing training opportunities for international academics and administrative staff to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- **Support for business and industry:** Development of short courses, training, CPD, and professional qualifications for staff, working closely with industry – through bespoke programmes, in-person training or online and remote delivery.
- **Policy dialogue:** The British Council's work in higher education and science aims to strengthen and extend international connections between the UK and other countries, by building relationships and enabling collaboration through student mobility, partnerships and joint research. Its [Going Global](https://www.britishcouncil.org/going-global/about-going-global) is a conference for leaders in international education to debate the future of further and higher education.

W: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/going-global/about-going-global>

## Case study: Nursing and Clinical Education - Uzbekistan

The Meros Pharm Nursing and Clinical Education Programme is an ambitious initiative to establish a British-standard university and nursing college in Uzbekistan, addressing the country's growing demand for skilled healthcare professionals. The University of Huddersfield, supported by the University of Bristol in partnership with the University of the West of England, Oxford Brookes University and the University of Greater Manchester, and People 1st International created a consortium that is shaping a high-quality, UK-aligned model for nursing and clinical education designed to meet domestic needs and support a globally mobile healthcare workforce.

### Read more:

<https://www.people1st.co.uk/news/a-new-vision-in-healthcare-education-for-uzbekistan/>

## Key contacts

- **Universities UK International (UUKi)** - the collective voice of the UK's universities, bringing institutions together across all four nations of the UK to foster collaboration and exchange, to offer insight into UK and global higher education, and influence policy and practice.  
W: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/universities-uk-international>
- **Independent Higher Education (IHE)** - the representative body for independent providers of higher education, professional training, and pathways.  
W: <https://ihe.ac.uk/>
- **The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)** - an independent charity working to benefit students and higher education, and one of the world's experts in quality assurance.  
W: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/>
- **Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)** - the UK's shared admissions service for higher education that annually manages applications from over 150,000 international applicants based in over 190 countries and territories.  
W: <https://www.ucas.com/>
- **Advance HE** - a member-led charity of and for the sector that works with partners across the globe to improve higher education for staff, students and society.  
W: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/>
- **GuildHE** - Formed in 1967, it champions around 70 specialist, and diverse universities and colleges. GuildHE provides a unique, alternative voice to traditional research-intensive universities, emphasising the importance of diverse, locally relevant, and globally engaged education.  
W: <https://guildhe.ac.uk/>



- **JISC** - Jisc is a UK not-for-profit organisation that provides digital infrastructure, technology solutions, and resources for education and research. It manages the Janet network, a secure, high-speed network connecting UK universities and colleges. Jisc supports the sector by providing services like cyber security, data analytics, and licensing digital content. W: <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/>
- **UKENIC** - (United Kingdom European Network of Information Centres) is the designated national agency responsible for evaluating and comparing international qualifications and skills against UK education standards. It helps individuals, employers, and academic institutions verify the equivalence of overseas qualifications for study, work, or professional registration in the UK. W: <https://www.enic.org.uk/>



# Transnational education

**Transnational education (TNE) is an umbrella term used to describe arrangements in which courses or programmes offered by an educational institution based in one country are delivered to students located in another country. It allows learners to access high-quality education from renowned institutions and provides a diverse and inclusive learning environment.**

## **The benefits of transnational education**

The UK is a global leader in TNE, delivering high-quality, internationally recognised qualifications to students worldwide. UK higher education providers alone had more than 660,000 students<sup>10</sup> enrolled on their

programmes overseas during the 2024-25 academic year, reflecting the growing global demand for internationalised education options.

Universities, schools and colleges, and other education providers offer a comprehensive range of programmes through TNE arrangements, including diplomas, top-up programmes, undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research degrees, and professional qualifications.

Beyond academic excellence, the UK's TNE offer delivers diverse benefits to students, partners, and global communities. Strong TNE partnerships foster cultural exchange, capacity building, and help address priority skills gaps in local economies. These collaborations are underpinned by robust quality assurance

frameworks, ensuring that students and partners benefit from programmes that meet the highest international standards, preparing graduates to thrive in an interconnected, knowledge-driven world.

## **Case Study: Lincoln College Group – Transnational TVET Delivery in Saudi Arabia**

Lincoln College Group (LCG) has delivered one of the UK's most established transnational vocational education models through Lincoln College International in Saudi Arabia. Since 2014, LCG has operated industry-focused technical colleges, including the ITQAN Institute for energy-sector inspection training and the Qatif Female International Technical College, providing business and vocational programmes for over 2,000 women annually. LCG also secured a contract to run an applied engineering college delivering degree-level teacher training. This model demonstrates how UK colleges can export high-quality, employer-aligned TVET provision overseas while building local capability in priority economic sectors.

**Read more:** <https://lincolnksa.com/our-colleges>

## **Flexible models for global TNE engagement**

UK TNE offers a wide range of models to suit the needs of international partners and learners. These approaches facilitate knowledge transfer, skills development, and sustainable collaboration between countries. Students can access UK programmes through several pathways.

UK providers of TNE are renowned for offering high-quality, internationally recognised qualifications to students around the world. Universities, colleges and institutes offer a wide range of programmes, including undergraduate, postgraduate and research degrees, professional qualifications, and short courses.

In addition to academic excellence, UK providers also focus on cultural exchange and personal development. They have strong partnerships with institutions in other countries, helping to bridge geographical barriers and promote collaboration on a global scale.

## Support available to international partners

Organisations offering TNE provide valuable support to international partners in a variety of ways to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills between countries.

- **Students study at a UK provider's overseas campus:** Overseas campuses of UK universities provide students with the opportunity to study at a renowned institution while experiencing a new culture. Campuses are designed to replicate the UK campus experience, offering high-quality education through the same curriculum and teaching methods.
- **Students study at a jointly established branch campus:** UK universities develop a collaboration with an overseas partner institution to setup a branch campus. The campus offers the same courses and degrees as their parent university and adheres to the standards and regulations. This ensures consistency in teaching methods, curriculum and academic integrity.
- **Student study of UK programmes in home countries through collaborative provision:** UK providers partner with institutes abroad to offer globally recognised programmes and courses, giving students the chance to study for UK programmes in their home countries. Programmes are delivered through a mix of face-to-face and online learning.

- **Student study of UK programmes through distance, flexible or distributed learning:** Students access high quality education from UK providers through online learning platforms. This can give students the flexibility to study at their own pace, plus benefit from access to numerous resources such as virtual libraries and interactive lessons.

### University of Exeter campus in New Cairo, Egypt

The University of Exeter will open its first International Branch Campus in Africa, in New Cairo, Egypt in partnership with Ain Shams University. British Council Egypt facilitated the Exeter campus as part of our Higher Education Transnational Education (TNE) programme, through strategic stakeholder engagement and sector facilitation, including three senior higher education missions in 2018, 2023, and 2024, and providing insights through research reports on Egypt's higher education landscape and sustainability.

**Read more:** <https://news.exeter.ac.uk/staff-news/university-of-exeter-to-establish-pioneering-branch-campus-in-egypt-a-russell-group-first-in-africa/>

- **Policy dialogue:**  
British Council facilitates dialogue between UK and overseas leaders leading to positive policy reform and new TNE partnerships. Its [Deep Dialogues](#) series of events gather mid to senior level policymakers and institutional leaders from a range of countries to achieve system-to-system dialogue that facilitates TNE partnerships.
- **Institutional partnerships:**  
In 2023-24, British Council created 106 TNE-focused institutional partnerships between 190 further and higher education institutions and other organisations from 125 different cities globally. It also provides seed funding for starting, developing, strengthening and de-risking TNE partnerships between providers in the UK and in over 14 countries worldwide through its TNE Exploratory Grants.
- **Capacity building:**  
British Council's Internationalisation Learning Cohorts build capacity to manage TNE partnerships among overseas stakeholders through a combination of learning sessions, group discussions, independent guided learning and networking.
- **Research and tools:**  
British Council's market briefs, reports and insights provide the UK TNE sector with information and insights necessary to develop and manage TNE partnerships globally. Its 'TNE Student Data Tool' and 'TNE: What we know' are two key examples of available tools that allow for assessment of TNE market opportunities.
- **Supporting quality:**  
The QAA's UK TNE Quality Scheme provides the UK HE sector with dedicated TNE insights, training and tools, supporting the development of high-quality, well governed and sustainable TNE partnerships worldwide.

### **Case study: Nigeria: 2025, eight UK–Nigeria partnerships.**

Projects included Brunel University and Ahmadu Bello University co-developing a Master's in Sustainable Post-Harvest Management, and Nottingham Trent University partnering with Covenant University to advance AI-driven learning. These initiatives aim to expand access to UK programmes, strengthen academic capacity, and align with Nigeria's National Policy on Education.

**Read more:** <https://www.britishcouncil.org.ng/about/press/british-council-awards-grants-tne-exploratory-projects-strengthening-uk%E2%80%93nigeria-higher>



## Key contacts

The **British Council** works with governments and partners on transnational education, in the UK and globally.

W: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/he-science/our-work/higher-education-partnerships/transnational-education-strategy>

**Independent Higher Education (IHE)** is the UK membership organisation and national representative body for independent providers of higher education, professional training, and pathways.

W: <https://ihe.ac.uk/>

**Universities UK International** is the collective voice of the UK's universities and has over 140 member universities. They bring universities together in all four nations of the UK to foster collaboration, exchange insight and influence policy.

W: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/>



# English language

**English is a global language for communication. It is the principal language for business, technology, and international relations.**

## **The work of the English language sector internationally**

There are around 2.3 billion people learning English globally. Governments worldwide are looking for support to improve English in their education systems. Drawing upon the combined skills and experience of UK English language training (ELT) organisations, from specialist language training providers to globally recognised institutions such as the British Council, Cambridge English, Oxford University Press and Pearson, the UK can provide research, consultancy, technical assistance, professional development resources and bespoke training at all levels to improve standards of English.

English also plays an increasingly important role in the growth of transnational education (TNE).

Alongside English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), the demand for high-quality English for Academic Purposes (EAP) provision is expanding rapidly, as universities recognise that students need strong academic English skills to succeed in English-medium programmes. Academic learners now represent nearly half of global English-learning participation, illustrating the centrality of English to educational mobility and university preparedness.

As TNE models continue to grow and diversify, UK expertise in EMI and EAP offers partners internationally recognised quality assurance and pedagogical credibility, strengthening student outcomes and enhancing the global reputation of host institutions.

## **Case Study: UK Expertise Supporting English Language Development in Africa**

Efekta, an Education First (EF) initiative, has launched a one-year English language programme across Somaliland, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Kenya to strengthen teacher capability and student outcomes. Partnering with the Pharo Foundation, the initiative uses an AI-driven platform to upskill thousands of teachers and learners, building English proficiency essential for global opportunities. The model mirrors EF's proven success in Latin America, demonstrating the impact and international relevance of UK-linked English language expertise.

**Read more:** <https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/case-studies/africa-efekta-launches-english-language-programme/>

## **Support available to international partners**

### **Developing English systems:**

Systems to improve standards of English teaching, learning and assessment and the teaching of other subjects. Using technology to break down barriers to inclusion through research and projects.

### **Training teachers of English:**

Professional development of individual teachers and teacher educators to equip them with the skills they need to effectively teach in English.

### **Teaching English to all ages:**

Courses, lessons and activities for children and adults which lead to internationally recognised qualifications.

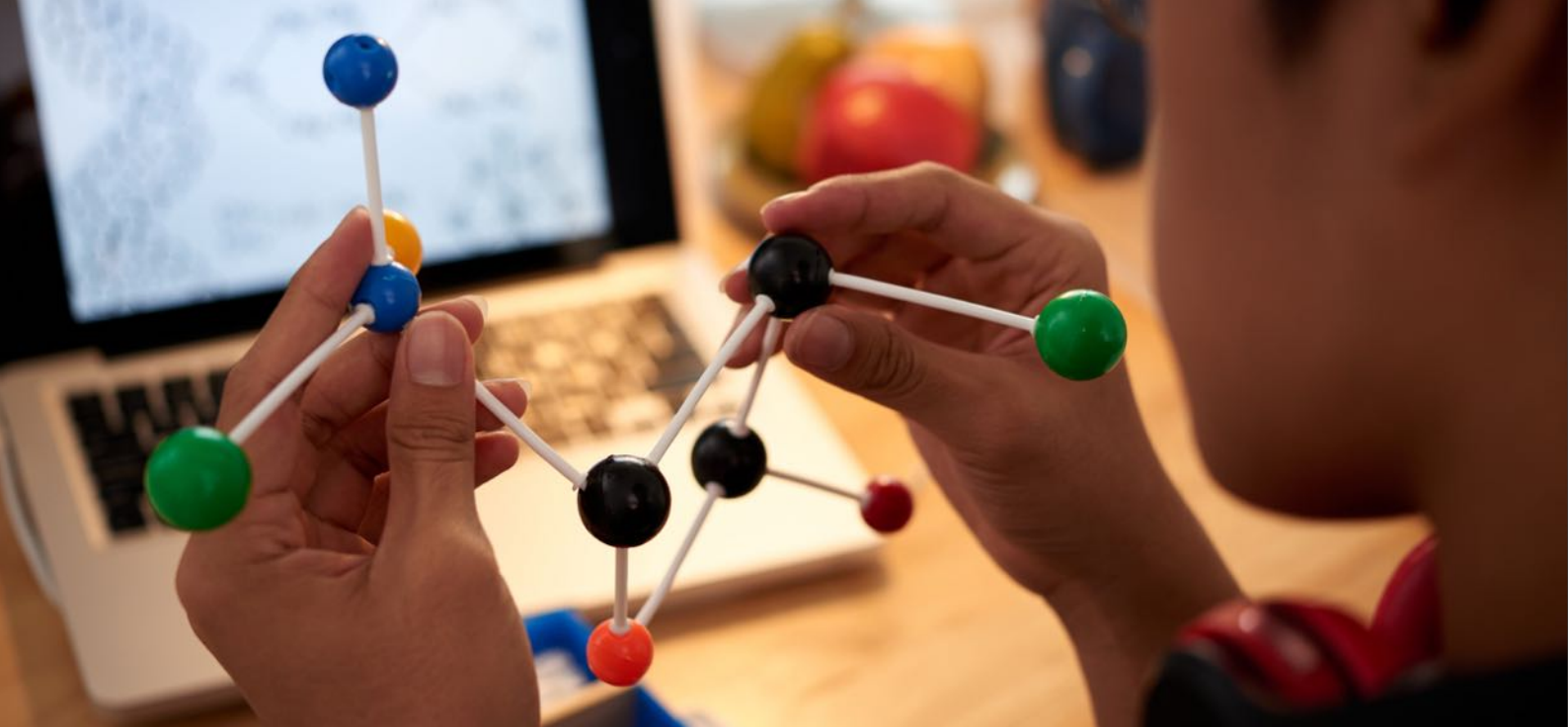
### **Corporate training for businesses:**

Practical and engaging training and development solutions to empower workforces with English language skills.

## **Key contact**

**English UK** is the UK membership organisation and national representative body for English language training providers.

W: <https://www.englishuk.com/>



# Teacher training

**Children learn best with brilliant teachers at the front of the classroom. That's why teacher training is so important.**

## The UK's teacher training expertise

UK teacher training providers are experienced in creating excellent teacher development systems and transforming the support teachers receive at every stage of their career – all the way from initial teacher training and early career support to specialisations and school leadership.

The ongoing professional development of teachers is fundamentally important for education quality and has been shown to improve teacher satisfaction and retention. Teaching practice based on an up-to-date, and deep understanding of relevant

evidence is a hallmark of a high-quality education system, and crucial for pupils' learning outcomes.

## Support available to international partners

**Developing initial teacher training systems:** Systems to improve recruitment, retention and standards of teaching, learning and assessment.

**Teacher qualifications:** International qualified teacher status (iQTS)<sup>11</sup> is a teaching qualification backed by the Department for Education (DfE) and the UK government. iQTS meets the same high standards as English qualified teacher status (QTS) and leads to the automatic award of QTS. Applicants for iQTS train where they live and work, with no need to visit the UK.



**Training teachers in English as a Medium of Education (EME):** Professional development of individual teachers and teacher educators to equip them with the skills they need to effectively teach in English.

**Professional development:**

Delivering micro-qualifications and training for teachers throughout their professional journey, developing their confidence in pedagogical and methodological approaches.

**School leadership:** Training to bridge the gap between teaching and managing and develop the leadership skills to take departments and organisations forward is critical to institutional success.

## **Case study: International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS), delivered by Tes Institute**

The International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS) programme shows its global value through teachers like Clydeen, who chose to train with Tes Institute after teaching across the Caribbean, Ecuador and Vietnam. Seeking to refine his practice while remaining in the classroom, he was drawn to Tes's flexible, UK-government-backed blend of in-school training, online study and expert support.

The programme had immediate impact: improving his curriculum design, deepening support for English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners and validating his use of culture and storytelling as meaningful learning tools. It also clarified his pathway to postgraduate study and future leadership. For Clydeen, studying with Tes Institute through iQTS was a catalyst for becoming a more confident, inclusive and research-informed educator.

**Read more:** <https://www.tes.com/institute/case-studies/learners/clydeen-mcdonald>



# Special educational needs and disabilities services

**Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) services in the UK are a crucial aspect of the education system, aiming to provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all learners.**

## **The work of the SEND sector internationally**

UK Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) providers collaborate with other countries through partnerships, training programmes, assistive products and technology and consultancy services to share best practices, knowledge and expertise in the field of SEND.

## **Support available to international partners**

- **Diagnostic capacity building:** Collaboration with public and private sector partners to deliver accessible diagnostic services.
- **Direct service delivery:** Operating or partnering with institutions to deliver a variety of setting-based SEND support such as mainstream inclusive schools, specialist schools or alternative provision.

- **Policy guidance and development:** Policy gap-analysis, co-development of new strategies to enable a comprehensive inclusion policy, helping to raise awareness and challenge misconceptions, supporting government commitment to inclusion.
- **Leadership & expertise:** Lead and collaborate on largescale educational development projects, providing expertise on inclusion internationally.
- **Building capability:** Universal and bespoke training opportunities for teachers and leaders in international and national schools worldwide – galvanising them to improve their special educational needs and disabilities provision through high quality, accessible teaching, and to support their host country’s progress towards inclusion.
- **Assistive Technology and other Products:** Assistive technology and other products support learners, teacher and communities. These tools can help learners to access the curriculum in greater depth, learn with increased independence and assist educators in building ever more inclusive environments.

## Key contacts

**The National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN)** is a charitable membership organisation that supports special educational needs coordinators, senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and others to become effective, inclusive practitioners.

W: <https://nasen.org.uk/>

**British Assistive Technology Association (BATA)** is a UK not-for-profit that connects and represents the assistive technology sector, advocating for better access, awareness, and sector-wide progress.

W: <https://www.bataonline.org/>



# Education & skills partners: Certifying Bodies

**Awarding organisations are experts in developing high-quality qualifications that meet the needs of employers and learners. They approve centres and work with them to ensure high quality delivery of qualifications and carry out activity designed to assure the quality of qualifications.**

## **The work of awarding organisations internationally**

Awarding organisations work closely with international partners, governments, and institutions to develop and accredit qualifications that meet the needs of different countries.

The Ofqual Annual Qualifications Market Report<sup>12</sup> highlighted that over 8.5 million certificates were awarded for 2,613 different regulated qualifications to students by over 90 regulated awarding organisations outside the UK in the 2023 to 2024 academic year. This was up by 1.4% compared to the previous year.

## Support available to international partners

### Awarding organisations work globally to provide:

- **Qualifications:** Internationally recognised qualifications delivered globally through approved centres. Qualifications are designed to meet the needs of learners and employers in specific regions while maintaining an international standard.
- **Quality assurance & accreditation:** Development of quality assurance systems, procedures and accreditation of centres to achieve recognised standards that build and maintain quality provision.
- **Recognition:** Recognition of existing training provision assessed against a quality standard, including face-to-face, e-learning, assessed and non-assessed programmes.
- **Digital credentials:** Digital badges or micro-credentials to evidence specific competencies and knowledge acquired by learners, helping individuals to enhance their career prospects, while also helping employers to identify skilled talent to meet their workforce needs.

- **Consultancy:** Technical advice to develop and address educational policy, national skills strategies and industry needs. Tailored solutions in training, mapping, compliance and capacity building.

**Q-UK**, the UK Qualifications Exports Register operated by FAB showcases qualifications and other products/services that are available for export such as resources, research, and consultancy.

## Key contacts

The **Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB)** are the Industry Body for awarding organisations delivering vocational and technical qualifications, who enable the skills and employment related education and training in the UK and overseas.

W: <https://awarding.org.uk/>

Q-UK: <https://awarding.org.uk/q-uk/>

The **Joint Qualifications Council (JCQ)** is a membership organisation comprising the eight largest providers of qualifications in the UK. The JCQ provides a single voice for its members on issues of examination administration and, when appropriate, qualification and wider education policy.

W: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/>



# Education & skills partners: UK Skills Partnership (UKSP)

**Connecting global partners to the UK's best in skills, education and workforce transformation. The UK Skills Partnership (UKSP) unites the United Kingdom's leading organisations in technical and vocational education, workforce development and skills policy. Bringing together colleges, awarding organisations, sector bodies, professional institutes and specialist consultancies, UKSP represents a single gateway to the UK's world-class skills ecosystem.**

Working closely with the Department for Education (DfE), the Department for Business and Trade (DBT), and the Foreign,

Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and the British Council, the UKSP connects government, education and industry to design and deliver sustainable, inclusive workforce transformation programmes.

Through its Associate Member network<sup>13</sup>, the UKSP offers international partners access to the UK's best providers, those who set global benchmarks in vocational training, quality assurance, and system reform. Together, UKSP members have delivered over 900 projects across 60+ countries, spanning policy design, sector skills governance, micro-credentials, teacher training, and green workforce transition.

## The work of the UK Skills Partnership internationally

The UK Skills Partnership provides a coordinated entry point for governments, donor agencies, and employers seeking to strengthen their education and skills systems. Its members collaborate to deliver comprehensive, demand-led solutions that connect policy with practice.

### Support available to international partners

- **System and policy development:** Technical assistance for national and sectoral skills strategies, policy design, and TVET reform aligned with industry and economic priorities.
- **Study visits and delegations:** Tailored visits for ministers, officials, and industry leaders showcasing UK excellence in employer-led education, sectoral governance, and skills innovation.
- **Skills scoping and needs assessment:** In-country research and consultation to identify workforce priorities, assess institutional capacity, and define action roadmaps.
- **Market access and trade facilitation:** Mapping opportunities and facilitating collaboration between UK providers and international governments and donors.
- **Workforce development and capacity building:** Industry-aligned apprenticeships, micro-credentials, and professional development programmes co-delivered with local partners.

- **Knowledge exchange and partnership brokerage:** Connecting international partners with the right mix of UK expertise across sectors such as green energy, healthcare, logistics, tourism, digital, and manufacturing.

### A Network of Excellence: Associate Members

The UKSP Associate Members represent the breadth of the UK's skills offer, from world-leading colleges and awarding bodies to industry councils, EdTech innovators, and consultancies. Together, they form a collaborative platform through which international partners can:

- Access trusted UK skills and education providers matched to national priorities.
- Co-design multi-stakeholder partnerships across government, education, and industry.
- Engage in joint ventures, study tours, and demonstration projects with leading UK institutions.
- Adopt policy frameworks and quality assurance models proven to enhance skills outcomes and employer confidence.
- Benefit from a coordinated 'One UK' approach that unites public and private expertise for lasting impact.

## UKSP Methodology

1. **Diagnostic and scoping:** Assessing skills gaps, industry needs, and workforce trends through data analysis and consultation.
2. **Stakeholder engagement:** Convening government, employers, and education leaders to co-design priorities.
3. **Design and co-creation:** Developing policy frameworks, occupational standards, curricula, and qualifications aligned to market needs.
4. **Implementation and capacity building:** Delivering pilot programmes, training-of-trainers, and institutional strengthening.
5. **Impact and evaluation:** Measuring outcomes through return-on-investment (ROI) frameworks at firm, sector, and national levels.

## Why Partner with the UK Skills Partnership

- A trusted, government-endorsed gateway to the UK's skills and education expertise.
- Proven global track record in workforce development, policy design, and TVET reform.
- Ability to align industry, education, and policy for national transformation.
- Access to a collaborative network of the UK's most innovative and experienced providers.
- Commitment to inclusive, sustainable, and employer-led growth.

## Key contact

**UK Skills Partnership (UKSP)** is the UK collective representing the technical and vocational education and skills training sector of the UK.

W: <https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk>



# Education & skills partners: Sector bodies and National Skills Academies

**Employer-led partners shaping national and international skills systems. The UK's sector bodies and National Skills Academies (NSAs) sit at the heart of the country's employer-led skills ecosystem. They provide the critical link between industry, education and government, ensuring that workforce development, technical education and policy remain firmly anchored in labour market demand.**

These organisations are all members of the UK Skills Federation (UKSF) - the collective body representing internationally the UK's sector skills councils, professional institutes and NSAs. The UKSF provides strategic coordination and a unified voice for sector bodies, ensuring quality, collaboration and consistency across the UK's skills landscape.

## The work of sector bodies and NSAs internationally

Through the UKSF, sector bodies and NSAs work collectively to support international governments, donor agencies and education ministries to design and develop modern, employer-led, skills systems. They bring decades of hands-on experience in national reform and capacity building, offering end-to-end support and practical solutions that bridge policy, governance and delivery.

## Benefits of working with UK Sector Bodies and NSAs

- All members of the UK Skills Federation (UKSF) – the collective voice of UK sectoral and occupational skills expertise.
- Proven experience in TVET policy, system governance, and labour-market intelligence.
- Deep expertise in standards, quality assurance, and competency frameworks.
- Ability to align industry, government, and education for national workforce transformation.
- Strong commitment to inclusive, green, and digital transition goals.

## Case Study: International Collaboration in Nuclear Skills Development

National Skills Academy Nuclear (NSAN) & Saskatchewan Polytechnic Partnership, showcase UK Leadership & Innovative Model in Global Workforce Development. Sask Polytechnic is granted the rights to deliver NSAN's industry-leading nuclear training programmes across Canada. The suite includes the acclaimed Growing Awareness in Nuclear (GAIN) programme, designed to introduce new entrants from diverse sectors to nuclear fundamentals, as well as modules on nuclear safety culture, and leadership in nuclear environments. Sask Polytechnic can draw upon the expertise of NSAN's Nuclear Training Network (NTN), which encompasses a wide range of specialist training areas servicing skills for nuclear.

**Read more:** <https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/case-studies/canada-nuclear-skills-development/>

## Support available to international partners

- **System design and governance:** Guidance on how to establish and operate employer-led skills structures such as sector skills councils (SSCs), sector boards and National Skills Academies.
- **Labour market intelligence systems:** Design of analytical tools to collect and analyse workforce data to inform national skills and TVET policies.
- **Occupational standards and qualification frameworks:** Co-design of competency-based occupational standards, curricula, and qualifications aligned to international, national and regional frameworks.
- **Capacity building:** Development of skills and capabilities to improve governance, data insights and employer engagement across the skills system.
- **Employer partnerships and workforce alignment:** Adoption of proven models that connect employers and training providers through apprenticeships, work-based learning and professional certification.
- **Impact, ROI and evaluation frameworks:** Measurement of training and workforce outcomes using structured return on investment approaches and frameworks.

## Case study: Institute of the Motor Industry – Automotive in the UAE.

In response to the UAE's Net Zero 2050 strategy and the rapid adoption of electric and hybrid vehicles, Al-Futtaim Automotive recognised a critical need to upskill its workforce in electric mobility. Partnering with the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI), Al-Futtaim established the region's first IMI Approved Centre for Electric Mobility Technologies in Dubai in 2023.

**Read more:** <https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/case-studies/uae-net-zero-automotive/>

## Key contact

**UK Skills Federation (UKSF)** – Sector Bodies & National Skills Academies network representing the collective industry sector expertise of UKSF members

W: <https://ukskillsfederation.org.uk/>



# Education & skills partners: Professional Institutes

**UK Chartered institutes are professional bodies that have been granted a Royal Charter. They offer membership to qualified professionals who have demonstrated a high level of expertise and knowledge in their specialist areas. A number provide regulatory control of employees operating in regulated professions. They also offer training, education and networking opportunities to help members enhance their skills.**

## **The work of chartered institutes internationally**

Around 400 Royal Charters have been granted to bodies offering education provision in different industry sectors. With a strong presence in over 110 countries, Chartered institutes contribute towards building a skilled workforce that meets global standards by promoting professional standards and enhancing the knowledge and skills of individuals, supporting national strategies.



## Case study: CMI and Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS

Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS (UTP), Malaysia's highest-ranked private university, has launched a landmark strategic partnership with CMI, whereby UTP is investing in its graduates' futures by providing CMI membership and resources for three years after they graduate, setting a new benchmark for graduate support.

**Read more:** <https://ukskillpartnership.org.uk/case-studies/malaysia-petronas-cmi/>

## Support available to international partners

Chartered institutes provide opportunities for high value partnerships with universities, government and employers across the globe. They offer:

- **Professional membership:** International membership for individuals to demonstrate industry specific professionalism to others, particularly to potential employers or clients, as well as access to member benefits.
- **Accreditation to develop and strengthen skills:** Accreditation of existing academic and inhouse employer training programmes through mapping to chartered institute qualifications.
- **Qualifications to strengthen the education offer:** UK-regulated qualifications delivered through local partners, with formal recognition by chartered institutes to learners completing the programme.



- **Continuous professional development & learner enrichment:** Access to learning and professional development. Tools, resources, events and support to learners undertaking chartered institute qualifications or accredited programmes. Opportunity to achieve a recognised professional qualification and Chartered Status.
- **Capacity building:** Local capacity building through the standardisation of assessment, collaborations to share best practices, drive innovation, and develop industry-specific guidelines and regulations.

## Key contact

**Chartered Management Institute (CMI)** is the professional body for managers and leaders. CMI represents the full range of Chartered Bodies as part of the UK Skills Partnership (UKSP). CMI are the only organisation that can award Chartered Manager and Chartered Management Consultant status, the highest accolade for managers and leaders.

W: <https://www.managers.org.uk/>



# Education & skills partners: Education products and solutions

**Working together with educational providers are the UK's educational product and solution suppliers. Encompassing everything from edtech to classroom furniture, these companies reflect the quality and commitment of the British education sector. The British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) is the only trade association covering the entirety of the UK educational suppliers' sector. It has a 90-year heritage, and represents over 400 educational suppliers in the UK, including manufacturers and distributors of equipment, books, consumables, furniture, EdTech, ICT hardware and digital-content.**

## **The work of BESA internationally**

The British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) plays a pivotal role in promoting the UK education sector globally and supporting the UK Government's International Education Strategy (IES). As the trade association representing nearly 400 UK-based education suppliers, BESA provides expertise, resources and strategic guidance to help members thrive in international markets. Its work delivers EdTech solutions across all education sub-sectors ensures that UK education solutions are recognised worldwide for their quality, innovation, and impact.

## Case study: The National College and GEMS Education

With over 22,000 students under his care, ensuring the ongoing professional development of all GEMS Education team members was a key priority. GEMS Education looked to The National College, a leading British provider specialising in helping schools, trusts and nurseries achieve compliance, raise standards and reduce staff workload.

Chosen for its self-directed, personalised approach to learning, the platform delivers tailored content for all staff, educators and non-educators alike, supporting a culture of continuous development.

By embedding The National College as a central part of its professional development strategy, GEMS closed critical professional development gaps and empowered every team member to pursue meaningful growth. The result was improved staff engagement and enriched educational experiences for students, positioning the school as a leader in whole-school professional development.

**Read more:** <https://nationalcollege.com/case-studies/gems-education>

## Help and support to BESA Members

Through these solutions, BESA members help schools worldwide modernise their education systems, improve teaching quality, and deliver inclusive, future-focused BESA provides a comprehensive suite of services designed to support UK suppliers in navigating complex international landscapes:

### Export Advice and Guidance

BESA offers practical support to help members understand regulatory frameworks, cultural considerations, and market entry strategies. This ensures UK suppliers can operate confidently and compliantly in diverse regions.

### Trade Missions and International Exhibitions

BESA organises UK pavilions at major global education events and leads trade missions to priority markets. These initiatives connect UK suppliers with Ministries of Education, school groups, and distributors, creating direct opportunities for collaboration and growth.

### Market Intelligence and Research

Through detailed reports and insights, BESA equips members with data-driven knowledge to inform strategic decisions. Our research identifies emerging trends, high-potential markets, and competitive positioning opportunities.

## **Networking and Partnerships**

BESA facilitates introductions to key international stakeholders, enabling members to build trusted relationships and accelerate market entry. Our strong networks ensure UK suppliers have visibility and credibility in overseas markets.

## **Government Engagement and Advocacy**

BESA works closely with UK government departments to represent the interests of the education sector abroad. We advocate for policies that support export growth and ensure members benefit from government-led initiatives.

## **Export Training and Resources**

BESA provides webinars, guides, and best practice resources to equip members with the knowledge and skills needed for successful international expansion.

## **Impact and Value**

Through these services, BESA helps UK education suppliers showcase world-class solutions that improve teaching quality, enhance learner outcomes, and support digital transformation globally. Our work not only strengthens the UK's reputation as a leader in education innovation but also delivers tangible benefits to international partners seeking to modernise their education systems. By championing British education excellence and aligning with the UK Government's International Education Strategy, BESA ensures that our members, and the wider UK education sector, remain at the forefront of global education development.

## **Key contact:**

**British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA)** is the UK trade association for education suppliers. Established in 1933, BESA supports members through market intelligence, advocacy, and export services. It works closely with ministries and international bodies, helping members access overseas markets via trade missions, international exhibitions, and networking opportunities.

W: <https://www.besa.org.uk/>



# Education & skills partners: EdTech solutions

**EdTech (education technology) providers in the UK play a crucial role in supporting education and skills by using innovative technological solutions. These providers offer a wide range of tools and platforms to enhance learning, such as virtual classrooms, interactive learning materials, and assessment tools.**

## **Expertise and Solutions for International Markets**

BESA member companies offer a wide range of innovative products and services designed to strengthen education systems and improve learning outcomes globally. These solutions combine British education standards with cutting-edge technology and best practice methodologies.

## **Case study: Readspeaker's partnership with the Icelandic Transport authority**

ReadSpeaker is a pioneering voice-technology company partnering with public institutions, private organisations, and education systems in more than 70 countries. Its solutions are used across schools, universities, and workforce-training settings, demonstrating the flexibility and breadth of its technology.

One example of this is ReadSpeaker's collaboration with the Icelandic Transport Authority, where it helped make online driver-education and testing materials accessible to all learners—regardless of reading ability or language background. This initiative reflects a wider public-sector shift toward prioritising accessibility and showcases how digital tools can remove barriers to learning and assessment.

**Read more:** <https://www.readspeaker.com/resources/icelandic-transport-authority/>

## **Curriculum-Aligned Digital Learning Platforms**

Interactive platforms delivering core subjects such as maths, science, and literacy, aligned to local and international curricula. This enhances student engagement, supports personalised learning, and improves attainment through adaptive technology.

## **STEM and AI Education Resources**

Hands-on STEM kits, coding tools, and AI literacy programmes integrated with sustainability themes designed to build future-ready skills, promotes critical thinking, and prepares learners for careers in science and technology.

## **Teacher Professional Development (CPD)**

Structured training programmes, online CPD courses, and AI-supported lesson planning tools that upskills educators, boosts confidence in technology use, and ensures sustainable improvements in teaching quality.

## **Classroom Technology and EdTech Solutions**

Interactive whiteboards, learning management systems, and assessment tools tailored for diverse learning environments that facilitates blended learning, improves classroom efficiency, and supports data-driven decision-making.

## **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Resources**

Assistive technologies, inclusive learning materials, and diagnostic tools for early identification of learning challenges that promotes equity, supports neurodiverse learners, and enhances accessibility in education.

## **Educational Equipment and Learning Resources**

High-quality textbooks, manipulatives, and science lab equipment designed to meet international standards that improve practical learning experiences and ensures curriculum compliance.

## **School Leadership and Management Solutions**

Leadership training programmes, school improvement frameworks, and governance support tools which strengthen institutional capacity, drives strategic planning, and improves overall school performance.

## **Assessment and Data Analytics Tools**

Digital assessment platforms and analytics dashboards for tracking student progress to provide evidence-based teaching, early intervention, and continuous improvement.

## **English Language Learning Solutions**

Digital language platforms, phonics programmes, and teacher training for English as an additional language to enable high-quality language proficiency, support bilingual education, and opens pathways to global opportunities.

## **Whole-School Solutions**

Integrated packages combining curriculum resources, technology, and training for complete school transformation to provide a holistic approach to improving teaching and learning outcomes across all levels.

### **Case study - Twin Science – Global STEM and AI Literacy Programmes in Turkey**

Delivered STEM for Sustainability education and teacher training through partnerships with national NGOs and corporate sponsors reaching 1.7 million students in disadvantaged regions. Twin Science delivered hands-on STEM kits, digital learning platform, and sustainability-focused curriculum. Partners included NGOs, Rolls-Royce, Microsoft, Intel and Google.

**Read more:** <https://www.twin.org>



# Education & skills partners: British Council

**As the UK's international education organisation, the British Council operates at the intersection of education, diplomacy, and development. We support peace and prosperity by building connections, understanding, and trust between people in the UK and across the world.**

British Council maintains strong relationships with governments, policy agencies, education providers, students and industry. It shares these networks with other UK international education organisations to support overseas collaborations.

## **The work of the British Council internationally**

The British Council works in over 200 countries and territories, and, in 2024-25, it reached 599 million people through its work in Education, English and Arts and Culture. British Council are on the ground in more than 100 countries. Working across all four nations of the UK and overseas, British Council's programmes are guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring our approach supports equitable access, lifelong learning, and opportunities for all.

## Support available to international partners

The British Council provides a wide range of solutions to markets that are looking to develop and strengthen their education and skills offer:

- **Student mobility, scholarships and alumni:** for students seeking to study in the UK and enhance their employability skills.
- **Education partnerships:** supporting higher education, TVET, science and school partnerships between the UK and other countries to develop better quality, more inclusive and globally connected education systems.
- **Non-formal education:** Empowering young people and future leaders through skills development to contribute to trust-building, cohesion and stability in their societies.
- **Improving standards of English:** Improving standards of English teaching, learning and assessment and supporting girls to develop English and digital skills.
- **English teaching, learning & assessment:** Every year, the British Council delivers 2.4 million International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests and supports 230,000 students learning English through our teaching centres and English Online. This helps students to study for UK qualifications via TNE or UK study.
- **Exam Assessments:** partnering with to UK awarding bodies in 100+ countries, with an emphasis on strengthening access, integrity, educational outcomes, and ensuring secure digital assessment at scale. In 2024/25, the British Council delivered 1,062,000 school exams (IGSEC/ A Level) and 732,365 professional and university exams.
- **Dialogue convenor:** providing access to UK expertise and experience and international good practice for policymakers, institutional leaders, trainers, and employers (and their representative organisations) to support the development of systems and institutions.

## Key contact

W: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education>  
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/skills-employability>



# Education & skills partners: Worldskills UK

**WorldSkills UK is an independent charity and skills development organisation that works across the UK to raise standards in technical education, apprenticeships and vocational training. It does this by partnering with education providers, employers and governments and drawing on international best practice through its membership of the global WorldSkills movement (which has over 80 member countries).**

## **It's core activities include:**

### **Skills Competitions**

- Organises regional, national and local skills competitions for young people and apprentices across many vocational areas (from digital and engineering to hospitality and construction).
- These competitions are industry-designed and free to enter and give participants the chance to develop technical and employability skills in real-world contexts.

- High-performing competitors can progress to international competitions (e.g., EuroSkills and WorldSkills), representing the UK on the global stage.

### **Benchmarking & Standards**

- Uses international benchmarking and insights from global skills competitions to help improve training standards and assessment in UK technical education.

### **Professional Development & Educator Support**

- Supports teachers and training practitioners with professional development programmes, including the WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence, which helps raise the quality of technical education in classrooms and training centres.

### **Careers & Advocacy**

- Designs resources and campaigns to promote the value of technical education and apprenticeships, helping young people and their influencers (e.g., educators, parents) understand career routes and future skills demand.
- Engages Skills Champions (alumni and role models) to inspire the next generation and share success stories.

### **Key contact**

**WorldSkills UK**'s mission is to inspire young people from all backgrounds to pursue high-quality technical education and apprenticeships, and to embed world-class skills standards across the UK's education and training system, helping drive investment, economic growth and individual success.

W: <https://www.worldskillsuk.org/>

# Accessing expertise and support

The organisations highlighted provide a routeway through to a multitude of world-renowned education and skills specialists. By engaging with these organisations, international partners and governments can gain access to invaluable knowledge and resources that can aid in transforming their own education systems. These experts bring with them a wealth of experience and proven strategies, enabling countries to strengthen their education and skills infrastructure and cultivate a highly skilled workforce.

## Expertise at specific levels of the education and skills system

- Early years:  
<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/>
- Schools: See associations listed under 'Key contacts' on page 12
- Technical vocational education and training:  
<https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/>
- Higher education: <https://ihe.ac.uk/>  
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/>  
<https://www.ucas.com/>  
<https://advance-he.ac.uk/>
- Transnational education:  
<https://ihe.ac.uk/>  
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/>  
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/>
- English language:  
<https://www.englishuk.com/>
- Special educational needs and disabilities services:  
<https://nasen.org.uk/>





## HM Government

### UK Embassies & High Commissions

The UK has Embassies and Missions in 179 Countries and Territories around the world. Many of these Posts have DBT commercial advisers.

W: <https://www.gov.uk/world/embassies>

### Department for Education (DfE)

DfE is responsible for children's services and education in England. Internationally, our ambitions are rooted in a desire to build lasting and positive education relationships around the world. DfE supports the growth of the UK education sector globally through its international partnerships work, the UK's International Education Strategy, and the International Education Champion, Sir Steve Smith.

W: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

### Department for Business & Trade (DBT)

DBT is the UK government department that supports businesses to invest, grow and export, creating jobs and opportunities across the country. The DBT Education team works closely with Embassies and High Commissions to support the UK education sector to grow and succeed internationally. It leads trade missions, both into the UK and overseas, to develop bilateral relations and trade partnerships in the education sector.

W: <https://www.business.gov.uk/>

### Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO)

The FCDO is the UK government department responsible for promoting the UK's interests overseas, supporting global security and prosperity, and reducing poverty through sustainable development. In education, the FCDO works with international partners to champion high-quality, inclusive learning systems, support girls' education, and strengthen global collaboration across the sector. Through its diplomatic network, the FCDO helps build strategic relationships that advance shared educational objectives and create long-term opportunities for the UK and partner countries.

W: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office>

## Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uks-international-education-strategy-2026>
- 2 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-international-education-strategy/>
- 3 <https://www.sfc.ac.uk/assurance-accountability/learning-quality/scotlands-tertiary-quality-enhancement-framework/>
- 4 <https://www.medr.cymru/en/>
- 5 <https://www.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales>
- 6 <https://uniswales.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2024-10/LE%20-%20Universities%20Wales%20-%20Impact%20of%20Welsh%20universities%20-%20Final%20report.pdf>
- 7 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>
- 8 <https://iscresearch.com/data/>
- 9 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/british-schools-overseas-how-to-get-accredited>
- 10 <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/27-01-2026/sb273-higher-education-student-statistics>
- 11 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-qualified-teacher-status-iqts/introducing-the-international-qualified-teacher-status-iqts-pilot>
- 12 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-qualifications-market-report-academic-year-2023-to-2024/annual-qualifications-market-report-academic-year-2023-to-2024#in-focus-international-market>
- 13 [https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/associate\\_members/](https://ukskillspartnership.org.uk/associate_members/)









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UK Government