

Key stages and post-16 options

ENGLAND –

The key stages are set out in 5 blocks. These are EYFS, Key Stage (KS) 1, KS2, KS3 & KS4.

The EYFS stands for the early years foundation stage which is from the ages of birth – 5 years, this means it covers all of early childhood and reception class (first year at school). The EYFS itself is a curriculum that sets out assessment criteria that the children should reach and by what age the children should be meeting these requirements. After EYFS, the structure moves to the National Curriculum where the children then are following key stages.

Key stage 1 is years 1 and 2 (ages 5-7)

Key stage 2 is years 3 to 6 (ages 7-11)

Key stage 3 is years 7 to 9 (ages 11-14)

Key stage 4 is years 10 to 11 (ages 14-16)

In England, it is law that anyone born after 1/10/1997 must stay in some sort of education until they are 18. There are different types of education that a young person can enrol onto. These may include A-levels, BTEC (or similar) or apprenticeships. All of these can gain someone a place at university, however the way they get their qualification is what differs. A-levels is written exams and coursework, these can be completed through a school sixth form, a sixth-form college, or college. BTECs (or similar) are usually completed through a college, these allow young people to gain their level 1,2, or 3 in a chosen subject area – for example childcare. Lastly, an apprenticeship is where the young person is learning on the job, they complete training for their job and then work in a place with the corresponding industry.

SCOTLAND –

Their key stages of education are very different to England's. Theirs is as follows:

P1 (Early level) *equal to reception in England* 4-5yrs

P2-P4 (First level) ages 6-8

P5-P7 (Second level) ages 8-11

S1-S3 (Third/Fourth level) ages 11-14

S4-S5 (Senior Phase) ages 14-16

^ Burnham L, 2018

In Scotland, if the student is 16 between the 1st of March and 30th September, they are allowed to leave in the June of that academic year (after 31st May). They can leave at the Christmas break if they are 16 between 1st October and end of February. In Scotland S6 is optional – this is A-levels, apprenticeships etc.

Although it is worth pointing out that S6 is optional, however apprenticeships can be for anyone above the age of 16. They are not just for people aged between 16 and 18.