

6.2 Administration and governance

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Governance

Overall responsibility for the education service in England lies with the UK Government. Although education is considered a devolved matter, England does not have its own devolved government - unlike Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The UK Government's [Department for Education](#) (DfE) is responsible for all phases of education in England. It has policy-making responsibility for children's services and education, including higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills.

DfE is supported by 17 agencies and public bodies. These include:

- [Ofqual](#) – the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, is the independent regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments.
- [Ofsted](#) – the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, is responsible for the inspection and regulation of day care and children's social care, and the inspection of children's services, schools, colleges, initial teacher training, youth work, work-based learning and adult education.

While [local authorities](#), schools and other education providers must operate within an overall policy framework set by DfE, the education and training system is characterised by a high level of institutional autonomy.

[Higher education institutions](#) are private bodies that, subject to their degree-awarding powers, are free to design their programmes and awards and to determine the conditions on which they are awarded. They are also responsible for their own staffing, admissions and research.

The [UK Council for Internet Safety \(UKCIS\)](#) is a collaborative forum through which the government, the tech

community and the third sector work together to create a safe online environment for all, including young people. It is part of the Department for Culture, Media and Society (DCMS), the Department for Education (DfE) and the Home Office. It expands the scope of the previous [UK Council for Child Safety](#). One of its priority areas is online harms experienced by children and young people including cyber bullying and sexual exploitation.

Further information is available in the articles '[Administration and Governance at Central and/or Regional Level](#)' and '[Administration and Governance at Local and/or Institutional Level](#)' in the Eurydice national description for England.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

There is a formal structure to facilitate cross-governmental cooperation on ending long-term youth unemployment: the Earn or Learn Cabinet Committee. Its terms of reference are:

To drive progress to abolish long-term youth unemployment by: creating 3 million new apprenticeships; supporting young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET); and ensuring that all young people are either earning or learning.

The Committee is a group of ministers that can take collective decisions that are binding across government. Its [membership](#) includes:

- the Secretary of State for Education
- the Lord Chancellor/Secretary of State for Justice
- the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
- the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

It also includes relevant Ministers, such as the Minister for Digital and Culture.

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. It focuses on the mobilities of young people in higher education. The [Erasmus+ UK National Agency](#) is a partnership between the [British Council](#) and [Ecorys UK](#) and is a main feature of governance and cross-sectoral cooperation of organisations in the English higher education system.