

Table 7

Subjects in the compulsory phase curriculum

This table aims to map the subjects studied in the compulsory curriculum mapped against the English National Curriculum.

	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
England	5-16	5-16	5-16 ⁸	5-14	5-14	11-14	5-14	5-16	5-14 ⁹	5-14	5-16	11-16 ¹⁰	Religious education, 5-16 Careers education and guidance, 11-16 Sex education 11-16 Work-related learning, 14-16
Ireland	4/5-15 ¹¹	4/5-15	4/5-12 ¹²	4/5-15 ¹²	4/5-15 ¹²	4/5-15		4/5-15	4/5-12 ¹³	4/5-12 ¹³		4/5-15 ¹⁴	Social, Personal and Health Education 4/5-15 Religious education 4/5-15 Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) 12-15
Northern Ireland	4-14	4-14	4-14 ¹⁵	4-14 ¹⁵	4-14 ¹⁵	11-14	4-14 ¹⁶	4-16	4-14 ¹⁶	4-14 ¹⁶		4-16	Religious education 4-16 Personal Development and Mutual Understanding 4-16 Learning for Life and Work 11-16 Skills and capabilities Language entitlement
Scotland	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16 ¹⁷	4/5-16 ¹⁷	4/5-16	4/5-16 ¹⁸	4/5-16 ¹⁹	4/5-16	4/5-16	4/5-16 ¹⁸	4/5-16 ²⁰	Health and wellbeing 4/5-16 Religious and moral education 4/5-16

⁸ England: At age 14-16, science may be taught as combined science or as individual subjects: physics, chemistry and biology

⁹ England: Art and design

¹⁰ England: Citizenship and personal, social and health education

¹¹ Ireland: Sub-divided into Gaeilge and English

¹² Ireland: As social, environmental and scientific education (SESE) for four/five- to 12-year-olds. Science is an optional subject for 12- to 15-year-olds but is studied by the vast majority of junior cycle pupils (92% in 2009).

¹³ Ireland: Taught as 'Arts education' which comprises visual arts, music and drama for four/five- to 12-year-olds.

¹⁴ Ireland: Part of social, personal and health education for four/five- to 15-year-olds. In addition, the compulsory subject 'Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)' is taught to 12- to 15-year-olds.

¹⁵ Northern Ireland: Taught as the 'World Around Us' for four- to 11-year-olds and 'Environment and Society' for 11 to 14-year-olds.

¹⁶ Northern Ireland: Taught as art, design and music

¹⁷ Scotland: Taught as part of social studies

¹⁸ Scotland: Taught as part of technology

¹⁹ Scotland: Taught as 'Health and Wellbeing'

²⁰ Scotland: Taught as part of religious and moral education

	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
Wales ²¹	7-16 ²²	7-19	7-16	7-14	7-14	7-14	7-14 ²³	7-16	7-14	7-14	7-14 ²³	7-16	Personal and social education (PSE) 7-16 Religious education 7-16 Welsh as a second language 7-16
France	6-16	6-16	8-16 ²⁴	8-16 ²⁵	8-16 ²⁶	7-16	8-14 ²⁷	6-16	6-14 ²⁸	6-14 ²⁸	8-15	8-16 ²⁹	'Discovering the world', 6-8 Individual support, 15-16
Germany ³⁰	Varies												
Hungary	6-18	6-18	6-18 ³¹		10-18 ³²	9-18 14-18 ³³	6-14 ³⁴	6-18	6-16/18	6-16	12-15/18	10-14 ³⁵ 12-13 ³⁶ 16-17 ³⁷	Environment, 6-10 Nature, 10-12 Our earth and environment, 12-16 Class session, 10-18 Dance and drama, 10-12 Ethnography, 10-12 Cinema and media, 13-14 Introduction to philosophy, 17-18 Health, 13-14 Careers/work-related education 14-18
Italy ³⁸	6-14	6-14	6-14	6-14	6-14	6-14 ³⁹	6-14 ⁴⁰	6-14	6-14	6-14	11-14	6-14 ⁴¹	

²¹ Wales: The foundation phase (children aged three-seven) is based on seven statutory 'areas of learning': personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity; language, literacy and communication skills; mathematical development; welsh language development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. This table therefore starts at age seven for Wales, although education is compulsory from age five.

²² Wales: English or Welsh

²³ Wales: Technology comprising design and technology and information technology

²⁴ France: Experimental science and technology for eight- to 11-year-olds, life and earth science for 11 to 12-year-olds, life and earth science and physics/chemistry for 12- to 16-year-olds

²⁵ France: Geography is part of humanities for eight- to 11-year-olds, history/geography/civics for 11- to 12-year-olds, and history/geography for 12- to 16-year-olds

²⁶ France: History is part of humanities for eight- to 11-year-olds, history/geography/civics for 11- to 12-year-olds, and history/geography for 12- to 16-year-olds

²⁷ France: As part of experimental science and technology for eight- to 11-year-olds, and technology thereafter

²⁸ France: Art and music are combined as 'the arts'

²⁹ France: Civics is part of humanities for eight- to 11-year-olds, history/geography/civics for 11- to 14-year-olds, and civics, legal and social education for 14- to 16-year-olds

³⁰ Germany: Curriculum content varies from *Land* to *Land* in Germany. As a rule, subjects at primary level include German, mathematics, *Sachunterricht* (general studies), art, music, sport and, in most *Länder*, religious instruction. At lower secondary level, the Standing Conference of Ministers lays down a framework schedule for Grades 5-9/10, requiring certain core subjects in every type of school and course of education: German, mathematics, the first foreign language, natural sciences and social sciences.

³¹ Hungary: Environment taught from age six-10, nature from 10-12, physics from 12-17, biology from 12-14 and from 15-18, chemistry from 12-16, and 'Our Earth and Environment' from 12-14

³² Hungary: History and citizenship ages 10-14

³³ Hungary: Second foreign language

³⁴ Hungary: Technology and lifestyle

³⁵ Hungary: Sometime taught as history and citizenship

³⁶ Hungary: Anthropology and social studies, ethics

³⁷ Hungary: Social science and ethics

³⁸ Italy: Subjects taken in the compulsory years of upper secondary education depend on the choice of upper secondary school (*liceo*); this table therefore stops at the end of lower secondary education, age 14.

³⁹ Italy: English is taught from age six, a second modern foreign language is added at age 11.

	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
The Netherlands	4/5-15 ⁴²	4/5-15				4/5-15		4/5-15	4/5-15 ⁴³	4/5-15 ⁴³			Social and environmental studies ⁴⁴ Healthy living; social structures ⁴⁵ Man and society, 12-15 ⁴⁶ Man and nature, 12-15 ⁴⁷
Spain	6-16	6-16	6-16 ⁴⁸	6-16 ⁴⁸	6-16 ⁴⁸	8-16	12-16 ⁴⁹	6-16	6-16	6-16		10-16	
Sweden ⁵⁰	6-16	6-16	6-16	6-16 ⁵¹	6-16	6-16	6-16 ⁵²	6-16	6-16	6-16			Craft 6-16 Home and Consumer studies 6-16
• Switzerland	Varies ⁵³												
• Australia	6-16	6-16	6-16	6-16 ⁵⁴	6-16	6-16 ⁵⁴	6-16 ⁵⁵	6-16 ⁵⁵	6-16 ⁵⁴	6-16 ⁵⁴	6-16 ⁵⁵	6-16 ⁵⁵	Economics, 6-16 Business 6-16
• Canada	Varies ⁵⁶												

⁴⁰ Italy: Taught as 'technology' and 'art and design'

⁴¹ Italy: In the 2009/10 school year, the teaching of 'Citizenship and Constitution' began on an experimental basis. It is not a separate subject and its contents are developed by each school through pedagogical projects included in the history-social area of study

⁴² The Netherlands: Dutch and Frisian – in Frisian speaking areas

⁴³ The Netherlands: Combined to form 'art education' for five- to 11-year-olds, and 'art and culture' for 11- to 15-year-olds

⁴⁴ The Netherlands: 'social and environmental studies' includes geography, history, science (including biology), citizenship, social and life skills (including road safety)

⁴⁵ The Netherlands: 'healthy living/social structure' includes geography, history, science (including biology), citizenship, social and life skills (including road safety)

⁴⁶ The Netherlands: 'man and society' consists of 12 core objectives covering asking questions and doing research, placing phenomena in time and space, using sources, the organisation of themes and the ideas of citizenship

⁴⁷ The Netherlands: 'man and nature' consists of eight core objectives covering physical, technological and care-related subjects, including living and non-living nature, humans, animals and plants and their relationship to the environment, physical and chemical phenomena, the build and function of the human body, research skills and learning to question, and caring for oneself, others, and the environment

⁴⁸ Spain: Taught as 'knowledge of the natural, social and cultural environment for children aged six to 12. Science may be taught separately for 12- to 16-year-olds.

⁴⁹ Spain: Taught as technology

⁵⁰ Sweden: The time allocation for all subjects during the nine years of compulsory education is set centrally. Schools decide how this time is allocated and when subjects are introduced.

⁵¹ Sweden: 885 hours are allocated to the teaching of geography, history, social studies and religion

⁵² Sweden: Science includes technology

⁵³ Switzerland: There is considerable freedom regarding the content of the primary curriculum, except in mathematics, foreign languages and some aspects of the mother tongue, where there is some national agreement/guidance on standards. The HarmoS agreement, which has come into force in some cantons, harmonises arrangements for introducing the teaching of foreign languages - the first language from Year 5 (age 10) and the second from Year 7 (age 12). In all lower secondary school types, students are usually taught the mother tongue language (German, French, Italian, Rhaeto-Romanic), mathematics, a second national language (French in the German-speaking cantons and the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino, German in the French-speaking cantons), natural science, geography, history, civics, music, art, physical education.

⁵⁴ Australia: Geography, languages and the arts will be covered by the second phase of curriculum development. Expected in 2011.

⁵⁵ Australia: Economics, business, civics and citizenship, health and physical education, information and communication technology and design and technology will be covered by the third phase of curriculum development. Expected in 2012.

⁵⁶ Canada: There is no national level curriculum in Canada

	Mother tongue	Maths	Science	Geog	History	MFL - foreign lang	DT -design technology	PE	Art	Music	ICT	Civics	Other
Japan	6-15	6-15	6-15 ⁵⁷			10/12-15 ⁵⁸		6-15	6-15	6-15			Social studies, 8-15 Moral education, 6- Class/homeroom activities, 6- Integrated study, 8- Homemaking/industrial art, 12-15
Korea	6-15	6-15	8-15			8-15		8-15	8-15	8-15		8-15 ⁵⁹	Disciplined life, 6-8 Intelligent life, 6-8 Pleasant life, 6-8 Orientation programme, 6-8 Practical arts/home economics, 10-15 Social studies, 8-15
New Zealand	5/6-16	5/6-16	5/6-16			5/6-16		5/6-16 ⁶⁰	5/6-16				Social science, 5/6-16 Technology, 5/6-16
• South Africa	6-15 ⁶¹	6-15	9-15 ⁶²				9-15 ⁶³			12-15 ⁶⁴			Life skills ⁶⁵ 6-15 Social science 9-15 Life Orientation 12-15 Economic management science 12-15
Singapore	6-16/17 ⁶⁶	6-16/17	8-16/17 ⁶⁷	12-14 ⁶⁸	12-14 ⁶⁸	6-16/17 ⁶⁹	12-14 ⁷²	6-16/17	6-14 ⁷⁰	6-16/17		6-16/17 ⁷¹	Humanities Other options: ⁷² Social studies, 6-14 Health education, 10-12
• USA	Varies ⁷³												

⁵⁷ Japan: Life environment studies, ages six-eight

⁵⁸ Japan: Recent changes mean that, from the 2011-12 academic year, English is being introduced as a first foreign language for elementary school students in Years 5 and 6, ages 10-12

⁵⁹ Korea: Moral education/ethics

⁶⁰ New Zealand: Health and physical education

⁶¹ South Africa: Children choose a first and second official language

⁶² South Africa: Taught as 'natural science and technology'

⁶³ South Africa: Technology is taught from age 12 to 15

⁶⁴ South Africa: Taught as 'art and culture'

⁶⁵ South Africa: 'Life skills' comprises 'beginning knowledge, creative arts, personal and social well-being'

⁶⁶ Singapore: A choice of Chinese, Malay or Tamil. For six- to 10-year-olds this includes health education and information literacy

⁶⁷ Singapore: At age 14, students choose at least one of: biology or human and social biology; physics; chemistry; science/integrated science

⁶⁸ Singapore: At age 14, students choose at least one of the humanities; literature; geography; history

⁶⁹ Singapore: English is taught as a foreign language from age six; another language is an option at age 14

⁷⁰ Singapore: Art and craft; it is an option from age 14

⁷¹ Singapore: Civic and moral education

⁷² Singapore: Other subjects available at age 14 include a third language (French, Japanese, German or Malay language elective); art and crafts; music; fashion and fabrics; food and nutrition; commerce; principles of accounts; design and technology; and religious knowledge.

Sources/Further information

For more detailed information on the content of these tables, see the following sections and subsections of the full Archive.

Curricula (age 3-19) ⇒ 5.2 Second phase: Primary ⇒ 5.2.2 Compulsory subjects **AND** 5.2.3 Optional/elective subjects

Curricula (age 3-19) ⇒ 5.3. Third phase: Lower secondary ⇒ 5.3.2 Compulsory subjects **AND** 5.3.3 Optional/elective subjects

⁷³ There is no national curriculum for compulsory phase education. Individual states have the right to establish curriculum guidelines. Education programmes throughout the 50 states generally include English grammar, reading and writing; mathematics; science and the scientific method; United States' history and government; art; music; health and nutrition; practical arts; physical education; geography; and foreign languages. Many schools are also beginning to teach the history, culture, and traditions of other nations and peoples.