



# Subject Benchmark Statement: Education Studies

## The Basics

This summary is designed to provide a short and accessible overview of the Subject Benchmark Statement for Education Studies for students, employers and academics. It is not intended to replace or alter the Statement, which should be referred to in the design and approval of courses and when any further detail is required.

Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the benchmark academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas, and in respect of particular qualifications. They provide a picture of what graduates in a particular subject might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their course or programme.

Subject Benchmark Statements are presented in four sections. Section 1 outlines the contextual information - providing the operational landscape, and boundaries, of subject discipline. This includes consideration of the ways in which the discipline addresses wider social goals, specifically in relation to: equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI); accessibility and the needs of disabled students; education for sustainable development (ESD); enterprise and entrepreneurship; and the impact of artificial intelligence on the subject practice.

Section 2 covers distinctive features of the course, including curriculum design, partnership arrangements, flexibility of delivery, progression and ongoing monitoring processes. Section 3 explains any features relevant to teaching, learning and assessment activities for the subject. Section 4 describes the benchmark standards of achievement reached by all graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours in the subject, with some subjects also including achievement at master's level.



## Why study a degree in Education Studies?

Education Studies is concerned with understanding how people develop and learn throughout their lives, the nature of knowledge, and critical engagement with ways of knowing and understanding. It offers intellectually rigorous analysis of educational processes, systems and approaches, and their cultural, societal, technological, political, philosophical, environmental, historical and economic contexts. Courses include the study of broader perspectives such as international education, economic relationships, the effects of globalisation and the role of education in human rights and ecological issues. They all include critique of current policies and practice and challenge assumptions.

Students can participate in, construct and contest discourses, exemplified by reference to debate about values, personal and social engagement, educational practices and how these relate to communities and societies. Students have opportunities to develop their critical capabilities through the selection, analysis and synthesis of various perspectives, and are able therefore to position themselves in a reasoned manner in a changing world. Students are prepared for a broad range of careers and are equipped to engage in lifelong learning in the course of their working lives.



## What are the main teaching and learning approaches in Education Studies?

Approaches to teaching and learning in Education Studies consider inclusive, interactive and reflective knowledge-based methods drawing upon practice, theory and relevant literature/evidence. The focus of individual Education Studies courses will vary, with programme teams ensuring that relevant teaching and learning practices are used for the context of their course.

Courses are designed to ensure student success by:

- promoting independent learning, helping students take responsibility for their own learning
- encouraging students to be aware of their own development, learning progress and achievements through self-assessment and reflection
- enabling student success by ensuring learning is as accessible as possible
- promoting higher education provider services where students need additional support to meet learning needs
- facilitating career success by helping students develop skills for employability and entrepreneurship
- helping to facilitate an inclusive environment that benefits all learners, and encouraging critical engagement with EDI in the curriculum
- being cognisant of diverse student backgrounds and journeys, meeting all students where they are, and then scaffolding experiences to get them to where they need to be.



## How are students assessed?

Education Studies programmes are designed to model a variety of effective practices in situations associated with assessment activities. Assessment methods in Education Studies may include, but are not limited to:

- academic posters
- assessment of placement practice or observations
- diverse communications like blogs, magazine articles and leaflets
- authentic scenarios, simulations and virtual placement scenarios
- case studies
- class-based, conference and webinar presentation delivery

- creation of education resources and assets
- critical reflections on practice
- debates, professional discussions and podcasts
- essays and other verbal and non-verbal assessments
- extended projects or dissertations
- formal examinations (open book, seen or unseen)
- game-based outputs (including board games and card games)
- group-based and collaborative projects
- verbal and non-verbal examinations or vivas
- peer assessment
- project-based outputs
- portfolios, patchworks and synoptic assessments
- reports
- roleplay teaching practice, including PSRB requirements where external accreditation is involved
- videos and animations
- websites, docuslides and other digital artefacts
- work-based competency assessments.

Some forms of assessment raise issues of accessibility for some students and alternatives are offered in such instances, in accordance with the principles of Accessibility discussed on **pages 4-5** of the Statement.



## Benchmark Standards

The minimum threshold, typical and excellent standards that a student will have demonstrated when they are awarded an honours degree in Education Studies are outlined on **pages 19-25** of the Subject Benchmark Statement. The vast majority of students will perform significantly better than the minimum threshold standards. Each higher education provider has its own method of determining what appropriate evidence of this achievement will be and should refer to [Annex D in The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#). This Annex sets out common descriptions of the four main degree outcome classifications for bachelor's degrees with honours - 1st, 2.1, 2.2 and 3rd.

The full statement was developed by subject experts drawn from across the sector. Details of the Advisory Group can be found on **page 26** of the Statement.

Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as an expert quality body on behalf of the higher education sector.

### Read the full Subject Benchmark Statement

The [full Subject Benchmark Statement](#) is available on the QAA website.

Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as a membership organisation on behalf of the higher education sector.