

University of Roehampton International Summer School

School of Education

Module Title: Two Children – Options and Decisions in English Education

Module Code: EDS020C901H

Module Tutor: Pdraig Egan

Module Rationale

English education policy, over the past 70 years, focused on the development and expansion of educational opportunity so that there is diversity of educational provision within England coupled with a drive for increased parental engagement and choice. Education structures in place since the 1960s have been transformed by the recent introduction of the academies, free schools, city technology colleges and the re-birth of the grammar school. Distinct legal frameworks govern each type of school, which brings particular obligations for curriculum and accountability. All of this runs in parallel to the diverse, albeit costly, provision available within the private sector.

This module will enable students to develop a breadth of knowledge of English education so that they can explore the choices that parents must make as they select the most appropriate educational provision for their child. Students will explore and gain an understanding of the different freedoms enjoyed by each type of school, who is accountable for children's educational outcomes, the position of parents in the school community and the funding models that are applied.

By the end of the module, international students will be able to draw comparisons between the components of the English system and similar elements in their home country. A framework built upon social and economic drivers, curricula, accountability structures and the potential to develop meaningful parental engagement will facilitate these comparisons.

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this module will...

- Know the key drivers for educational reform in England and how this has driven policy and legislation.
- Know the range of provision available at each stage of a child's education.
- Understand the differences in curriculum available in each school.
- Understand the differences in governance and accountability in each type of school.

Week One:

Session:	Content
1.1	Programme Introduction: What are our perceptions and misperceptions of English education?
1.2	Where are we now?: Surveying the changing landscape of English education (1964-2016)
1.3	Planning for our future: Children and their Learning at Nursery and Reception
1.4	How do we interpret classrooms? Learning to observe and reflect on observations
1.5 and 1.6	Visit to Nursery/Reception Class
1.7	What do I value and believe? Exploring the relationship between beliefs and classroom culture
1.8	Unpacking the assessment: Who are these Two Children?

Week Two:

Session:	Content:
2.1	Why are there so many choices?: Free, faith, academies and grammars schools – for an island nation there sure is a lot of choice
2.2	School Visit – A Free and Faith School in Action
2.3 and 2.4	School Visit – A State Primary School in Action Teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2
2.5 and 2.6	School Visit – An English Public School How does teaching and learning differ in private education? Or does it?
2.7	With so much choice, how do we judge?: Ofsted and accountability in English education
2.8	Reflecting on Learning: Asking the Big and Little Questions

Week Three:

Session:	Content:
3.1	What are the tensions in English education?: Race, poverty and social exclusion
3.2	Is secondary education the same as high school?: Choices, transitions and curricula in English secondary education
3.3 and 3.4	School Visit – An English Secondary School Teaching and Learning in Keys Stages 3 and 4
3.5 and 3.6	School Visit – The Most Vulnerable Pupils Teaching and Learning in a Special Needs School
3.7	Reflecting on the Learning Journey: Reviewing Who Are These Two Children
3.8	Final Session and Feedback

Teaching and Learning Methods

Learning about the nature of education provision in England is linked together through an extended case study of two fictitious children. The key political drive within English education has been to give an element of choice to parents. Students taking this module will follow the lives of Amira and Sebastian from birth through 18 via these choices.

As they follow these two children, students will gain an understanding of the range of provision available at every stage of the educational journey. Asked to imagine themselves into the role of parents, students will have to opportunity to meet and question outstanding practitioners, experts, and visit exemplar provision while having this set within a historical and contemporary context by experienced University staff.

The programme will be taught through:

- Lectures given by University of Roehampton Staff
- Guest lectures who are noted experts in the field
- Visits to London schools which serve as illustrations of educational provision

Assessment

Assessment for the module is through the submission of a written essay, which is to be 2,500 words in length.

Students are asked to use their knowledge and understanding of compulsory education systems in England to develop a persuasively argued essay focused on answering the question: 'What is a parent to do?: Critically review potential educational choices at two key stages of education so that you, as a parent, can make an informed choice suitable for your child's needs.

Students are to consider the biographies of the children carefully so that they understand the cultural, social and economic realities faced by the two sets of parents. Each parent will want the best for their child but may face educational challenges within the system that may make achieving this aspiration difficult. Students will need to focus on two key transition points in their essay where they use the biographical sketches, knowledge from lectures, school-based observational knowledge and personal research to describe the potential issues at the stage for the child and why they have made the decision to send the child to a specific school at that point in their educational journey. Depending upon the student's interest and training background, they could choose from the following transitions:

- 1) Selection of nursery provision and then the selection of primary school for their child.
- 2) Selection of primary school for their child and then the selection of secondary education for their child.
- 3) Selection of secondary education for their child and then the selection at post-16 education.

In writing the essay, the students should briefly explore their own philosophy of education and what they would hope their child, the type of school selected and why this may fit the needs of the child and the type of curriculum that their children will follow. They should critically evaluate these choices using research and observational data to substantiate their arguments.

Core and Essential Texts

Finn, M. (9 September 2016) Why the ghost of grammar schools keeps on haunting us. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/why-the-ghost-of-grammar-schools-keeps-on-haunting-us-63679> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Gillard, D. (2009) *Short and Fraught: the History of Primary Education in England*. Available at: <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/articles/28primary.html> (Accessed: 12/11/16).

Gillard, D. (2016) *Education in England: a Short History. Gove v. the Blob*. Available at: <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history/chapter13.html> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Gorard, S. (9 July 2013) A contradiction at the heart of Gove's curriculum. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/a-contradiction-at-the-heart-of-goves-curriculum-15890> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Gorard, S. (7 June 2013) Gove's education plan is a curate's egg few will want to eat. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/gove-education-plan-is-a-curates-egg-few-will-want-to-eat-14949> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Great Britain. (2012) *Education System in the UK*. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/219167/v01-2012ukes.pdf (Accessed 12/11/16).

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Great Britain. House of Commons Education Committee. (2015) *Academies and Free Schools. Fourth Report of Session 2014-2015*. Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmeduc/258/258.pdf> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Husbands, C. (9 May 2015) Conservative victory mean England's school system will look like few others in the world. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/conservative-victory-means-englands-school-system-will-look-like-few-others-in-the-world-41553> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Jones, K.L. and Tymms, P.B. (2014) Ofsted's role in promoting school improvement: the mechanisms of the school inspection system in England. *Oxford Review of Education* 40 (3) pp. 315-330. Available at: <http://dro.dur.ac.uk/12184/1/12184.pdf> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Perry, T. and Morris, R. (14 July 2016) Time for an honest debate about grammar schools. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/time-for-an-honest-debate-about-grammar-schools-62370> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Riddell, R. (29 April 2016) Forcing all schools to turn into academies is not education's biggest problem. *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/forcing-all-schools-to-turn-into-academies-is-not-educations-biggest-problem-58462> (Accessed 12/11/16).

Shimmon, K. (26 May 2010) What is an academy? *The Guardian*. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/may/26/what-is-an-academy> (Accessed 12/11/16).