

EngineeringUK Priority Schools Approach 2023/24 Academic Year (formally known as 'EDI Criteria')

EngineeringUK's vision is that **the UK has the diverse workforce needed for engineering and technology to thrive and to drive economic prosperity, improve sustainability and achieve net zero.**

The engineering workforce could and should be much more diverse, for example: women make up just 16.5% of the engineering workforce, compared to 48% across the whole workforce; 11% of the engineering workforce are from a UK minority ethnic background, compared to 13%; 11% of the engineering workforce are disabled, compared to 15%; and 24% are from a lower socioeconomic background, compared to 26%. It will be impossible to resolve the homogeneity of the engineering workforce without drawing in new entrants and we know that potential future engineers coming up through the education system are increasingly diverse. For example, the proportion of those taking engineering-related apprenticeships that are female or UK minority ethnic has increased since 2014.

EDI criteria pilot and outcomes (2020/21 Academic Year)

In Autumn 2020, EngineeringUK developed a set of 'EDI Criteria' to identify schools that we would prioritise for our programmes in order to reach more young people from groups underrepresented in engineering.

Applying this approach in academic year 2020/21 did lead to an increase in the proportion of schools accessing our programmes who were EDI Criteria schools - for all programmes the proportions were at least approximately in line with the national proportion of EDI Criteria schools (47%-54%) and in most of the programmes this was above the national proportion. More importantly, analyses of the demographic profile of the young people who participated shows that when working with EDI Criteria Schools there were higher proportions of young people from UK minority ethnic backgrounds, those eligible for Free School Meals, disabled young people and those with special educational needs.

EDI criteria iterations

With the knowledge that this approach has worked well to help reach young people from underrepresented groups, EngineeringUK has retained the original approach for 2021/22 academic year. There is one exception to this - with the underrepresentation of females in mind, we have sought to ensure that the EDI Criteria include girls schools who meet the FSM and UK minority ethnic criteria at a lower threshold (see below for details). This means that we are now reaching schools where a proportion of the girls also have intersectionality of being from a lower socio-economic group or from a UK minority ethnic background.

EDI criteria selection

Whilst it is noted that there will be regional variations in the data provided below, it was decided that using national statistics was the best approach as EngineeringUK focusses on the national picture - aiming to improve the diversity of the engineering workforce in the UK, rather than on a region-by-region basis.

Changes for 2023/24 - introduction of EDI Criteria for primary schools

The approach for secondary schools or their equivalents has remained consistent with 2022/23. For 2023/24 we are also introducing an EDI Criteria for primary schools. We tested taking the same approach to primary schools as secondary schools, and this yields similar results. We are therefore taking forward this approach for the 2023/24 academic year. We will review this primary school approach at the end of 2023/24 to ensure it is working, and make any necessary amends for 2024/25.

Participant level data collection

As outlined above, in addition to school data, we have also collected data on the demographics of students who participate in our programmes, to understand whether we are engaging with young people from groups underrepresented in engineering. An example of the types of questions asked is available here: [Demographic Question Data Bank](#)

Secondary school criteria

We consider a school to meet our EDI criteria if they are:

- equal to or above national average in **both** Free School Meals (FSM) and proportion of UK minority ethnic students (middle column)

or

- equal to or above **one** of the ‘significantly above average’ criteria (right hand column)

	National Average (median)	Significantly above average
England		(Top 30% FSM ¹ , Top 25% UK minority ethnic students)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	≥ 22.8%	≥ 30.7%
UK minority ethnic students	≥ 25.3%	≥ 56.6%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location	-	rural settlement (less than 10,000 people), sparse area ²
Wales		(Top 25% FSM, Top 25% UK minority ethnic students)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	≥ 18%	≥ 27.2%
UK minority ethnic students	≥ 7.9%	≥ 14.7%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location	-	(Data unavailable - identify this manually)
Scotland		(Top 25% FSM, Top 5% UK minority ethnic students)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	≥ 15.1%	≥ 22%
UK minority ethnic students	≥ 4.2%	≥ 9.2%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location		settlement of less than 10,000 people with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more
Northern Ireland		(Top 40%FSM, no ethnicity data available)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	-	≥ 30.9%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location	-	(Data unavailable - identify manually)

For reference (these percentages do not include special schools as 100% of special schools meet the criteria):

- 49% of secondary schools in England meet the criteria
- 59% of secondary and middle schools³ in Wales meet the criteria
- 40% of post-primary schools in Northern Ireland meet the criteria
- 65% of secondary schools in Scotland meet the criteria

Gender

Single-sex girls schools who have above average proportions of pupils eligible for Free School Meals OR above average proportions of students from UK minority ethnic backgrounds meet the EDI Criteria. This is a lower threshold than for other mainstream schools in order to prioritise schools which have 100% girls of whom a high proportion are also from lower socio-economic groups or UK minority ethnic backgrounds.

Programme participants from co-ed schools should be at least 50% female unless there is a good case otherwise.

¹ 30% FSM used in England so address regional disparity. See technical document for more details.

² For a full definition of sparse according to the ONS 2011 Urban Rural classification, please see:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239477/RUC11methodologypaperaug_28_Aug.pdf

³ Middle schools in Wales are secondary schools with a primary campus on site

Primary school criteria

We consider a school to meet our EDI criteria if they are:

- equal to or above national average in **both** Free School Meals (FSM) and proportion of UK minority ethnic students (middle column)

or

- equal to or above **one** of the ‘significantly above average’ criteria (right hand column)

	National Average (median)	Significantly above average
England		(Top 30% FSM ⁴ , Top 25% UK minority ethnic students)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	≥ 20.1%	≥ 30.3%
UK minority ethnic students	≥ 19.5%	≥ 45.5%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location	-	rural settlement (less than 10,000 people), sparse area ⁵
Wales		(Top 25% FSM, Top 25% UK minority ethnic students)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	≥ 18.18%	≥ 29.3%
UK minority ethnic students	≥ 29.9%	≥ 35.7%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location	-	(Data unavailable - identify this manually)
Scotland		(Top 25% FSM, Top 5% UK minority ethnic students)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	≥ 12.5%	≥ 26.5%
UK minority ethnic students	≥ 4.3%	≥ 9.4%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location		settlement of less than 10,000 people with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more
Northern Ireland		(Top 40%FSM, no ethnicity data available)
Free School Meal Eligibility*	-	≥ 26.7%
SEND students	-	SEN schools/PRU
Rural Location	-	(Data unavailable - identify manually)

For reference (these percentages do not include special schools as 100% of special schools meet the criteria):

- 49% of primary schools in England meet the criteria
- 61% of primary schools in Wales meet the criteria
- 40% of primary schools in Northern Ireland meet the criteria
- 65% of primary schools in Scotland meet the criteria

Gender

Single-sex girls schools who have above average proportions of pupils eligible for Free School Meals OR above average proportions of students from UK minority ethnic backgrounds meet the EDI Criteria. This is a lower threshold than for other mainstream schools in order to prioritise schools which have 100% girls of whom a high proportion are also from lower socio-economic groups or UK minority ethnic backgrounds.

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