

**LEVEL 2 AWARD**

**THINKING AND REASONING SKILLS**

Unit 2 Thinking and Reasoning Skills Case Study

**B902/RB**

**PRE-RELEASE MATERIAL**

**To be opened on receipt**

**JUNE 2011**



**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- This resource booklet is for examination preparation. You will be given a clean copy in the examination.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

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  - Document 7 Sahid's questionnaire
- This document consists of **16** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

**INSTRUCTION TO EXAMS OFFICER / INVIGILATOR**

- Do not send this resource booklet for marking; it should be retained in the centre or destroyed.

## Document 1: School leaving age: the issues and evidence

In most countries, attending school is compulsory for all children up to a specific age. After that age, students have the choice of Further Education, employment or training for a job. In the UK, Further Education can be accessed at a school Sixth Form, a Sixth Form College or a College of Further Education. Most students who go into Further Education continue on afterwards to Higher Education, usually at a university.

School leaving ages across the world are often linked to when young people are seen to be mature enough in their society, because the state would rather not force mature people to do what they do not want to do.

There is considerable debate over the effect of the school leaving age on the economy. Some argue that it is important to have young workers in the workforce since there are financial benefits to employing 16 year olds because the minimum wage they can be paid is roughly 2/3 the amount for people over the age of 22. The national minimum wage in 2010 was £5.80 an hour for workers aged 22 and over, £4.83 for workers aged 18 to 21 and £3.57 for workers aged 16 to 17. Others argue that it is better to have older people, with increased skills levels among the workforce, in order to compete with other countries.

The debate over the school leaving age also depends on what the curriculum includes at school and whether there are opportunities, other than school, for young people up to the age of 18. Should schools and colleges offer a purely academic curriculum, or should they include vocationally based courses, training and apprenticeships, like plumbing or hotel management?

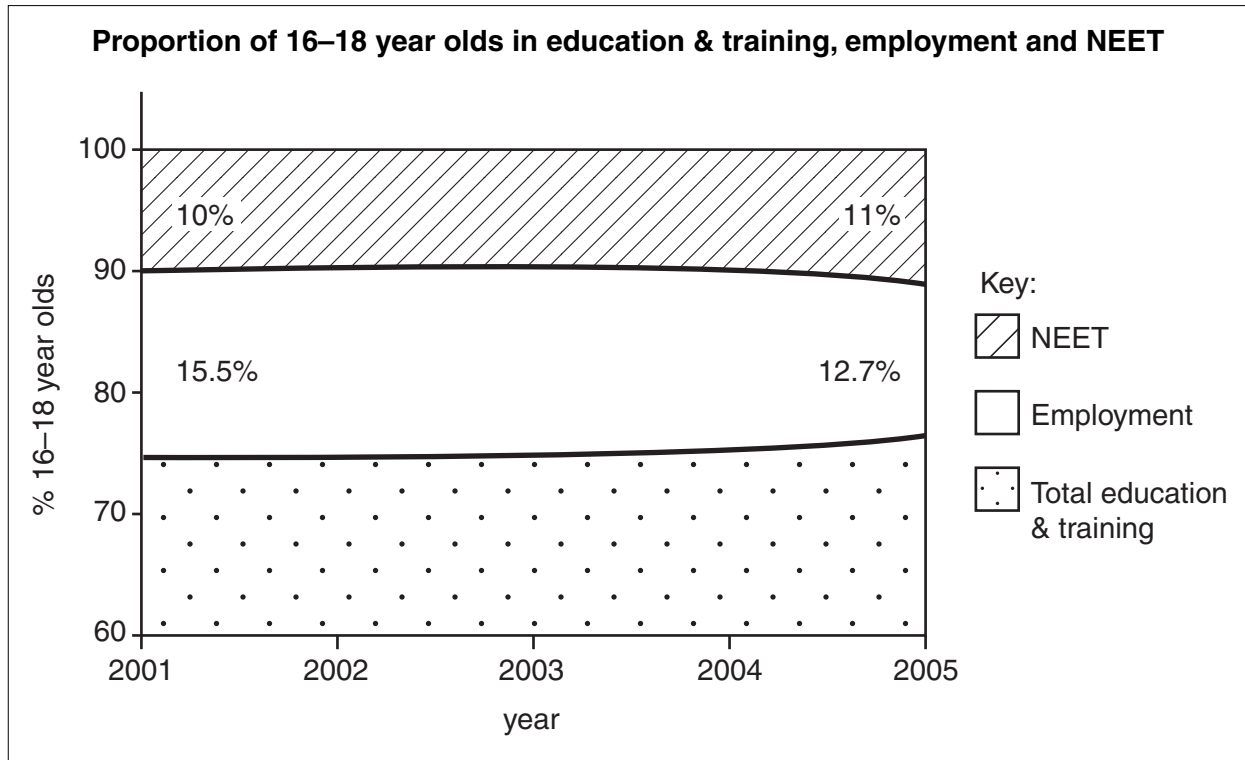
### Changes in the Law in the UK

- 1870 Compulsory school attendance from 5 years old.
- 1893 Minimum leaving age set at 11 years old.
- 1899 Minimum leaving age raised to 12.
- 1918 Minimum leaving age raised to 14.
- 1947 Minimum leaving age raised to 15.
- 1971 Minimum leaving age raised to 16.
- 1997 Minimum leaving age raised to the last Friday in June in the school year that students reach the age of 16.

### What are NEETs?

“NEET” is a Government term for 16- to 19-year-olds who are ‘not in education, employment or training’. In 2008, NEETs were 20 times more likely to commit a crime and 22 times more likely to be a teenage mum than other young people of the same age. It was estimated there are 150,000 of them in the UK and they cost the taxpayer an extra £100,000 over the course of their lifetime.

(Source: BBC News online  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/4158696.stm>)



(Graph Source: Wikipedia)

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/c/c5/NEET\\_graph.png](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/c/c5/NEET_graph.png)

## Document 2: Is staying on in education worthwhile?

The following dialogue took place in a local coffee shop between a number of young people who had previously been at school together.

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Sahid is nineteen years old and is in his first year at university, studying for a degree in Media and Education Studies. He stayed at school for Sixth Form to study for A Levels.

Miriam is also nineteen years old. She left school after her GCSEs to get married. She has a two year old daughter. She is currently at the local College of Further Education studying part-time for a qualification in Childcare Studies. She hopes to set up her own child-minding business when she finishes the course.

Michael is twenty years old and works full-time in his family's restaurant. He did not attain any GCSE passes, despite his teachers labelling him as 'the brightest boy in years'. Throughout Years 10 and 11 he worked part-time in his family's restaurant.

- Sahid            Everyone should carry on at school after Year 11 just as I did, because it has given me the brightest future out of all of us.
- Michael        What do you mean by the brightest future? At the moment, I earn a decent wage, I can run my own car and have started to think about buying my own flat. You are nineteen years old and haven't even started earning and on top of that you will have huge debts after university.
- Miriam         Having a bright future and being happy isn't just about money. It's about family, security and having options. Education gives people so many more options for their futures.
- Sahid            I totally agree. Having stayed at school and gone to university will not stop me earning money; in fact I am more likely to be richer than you two in ten years time. For me, I have just postponed earning my money, so I can have a better job.
- Miriam         That's not what I was saying, Sahid. It was really important to me to leave school at 16 to get married and start a family. That is the whole point of life, not how much you earn or whether you have got loads of qualifications.
- Michael        But this is the UK, Miriam. It is not usual to leave school and get married and start your family straightaway. While you were claiming benefits to support yourself, I was the one who was paying the tax for both of you! In fact, come to think about it, I am more useful to society than you two, because I pay tax and am not on any government support or university loans. I'm the one giving back to society.
- Sahid            Hang on a minute. When I finish my degree, I will be earning more money than you and then obviously paying more tax.
- Michael        But you will not finish your degree until you are twenty-one. I will have been paying tax since I was 16 – 5 more years than you.
- Miriam         I don't know if paying tax for longer will equal paying more tax over a shorter period. Michael does have a point though. Sahid and I are relying on the government for support at the moment. I wonder if the amount we have received in benefits and loans will work out to be more or less than the tax we will ultimately pay for having more qualifications.
- Michael        You know I was one of the brightest in our year group at school and I have no qualifications. Also having a piece of paper with grades on it isn't the only way to prove you are clever. Therefore, qualifications are not important.
- Sahid            If you were the brightest in the year group, then why didn't you try harder in your GCSE exams?
- Michael        What's the point of studying ten subjects, when I will never use them in the future? I wasn't motivated when I had to be there, so what was the point of carrying on to do more of the same?
- Sahid            So how will you show people that you are clever? What about when you come to go for a job?

- Michael Since leaving school, I have learnt my family business. I have been a waiter, a cook, a manager in our restaurant. That's a huge amount of experience. Staying on at school would not have given me this practical experience. I have been more useful for my family and the country as a whole by paying tax.
- Miriam But what happens if your restaurant has to close? What options do you have then? Could you not have just been patient, got your GCSEs, done an apprenticeship or got some training after you left school?
- Michael You are a fine one to talk about patience! If you have now gone back to college at 19, why didn't you just go there straight after school anyway?
- Miriam The whole country thinks a person is an adult at 16. The law lets you get married, have sex, allows boys to join the army. 16 years old is when you start to be an adult. At that age, no-one should force you into having more education.
- Sahid You can't vote though at 16! I could not imagine doing all the things you two have done since leaving school. I want to be young, to be free and protected from paying bills and changing nappies and all that stuff for as long as possible!
- Michael So should everyone have been forced to stay on then? Give all young people a longer childhood? Once the government starts doing this, soon they will be making parents pick up their 18 year old children from school to prevent road accidents, forcing them to have babysitters when parents go out at night and we will end up in a situation where young people cannot function on their own at all.
- Sahid It helps the country and each person if they do stay on in education or training. More qualifications help people to get better jobs and lives. Everyone would be equal, because it won't just be the kids from richer families staying on and getting more qualifications.
- Miriam If everyone has the same qualifications, won't that mean that there will be more competition for jobs?
- Michael Can you imagine the amount of money that would be needed to make extra places at Sixth Form and colleges if everyone continued learning or training after GCSEs? Would it be worth it in the long run?
- Sahid I think we will all have to agree to disagree. It is obvious that you two were happy to leave after GCSEs and I will always think education to eighteen years old is the best thing for everyone. You won't be able to persuade me otherwise!

As part of a piece of coursework Sahid collected detailed responses from four people with differing views about the school leaving age. The responses are given in Documents 3 to 6.

**Document 3: Should parents and their children be allowed to choose when they should leave school?**

Sara Andrews was Sahid's first respondent. She is a full-time teacher in a comprehensive school and a member of the CECE (The Campaign to End Compulsory Education). She believes that all children and their families should be able to choose how long they remain in school.

Paragraph 1	As a teacher, I know that so many young people can't wait to leave school; they truant and are generally not engaged with the National Curriculum. We should not be forcing them to stay. My campaign urges the government to consider removing any particular date for the end of compulsory education.
Paragraph 2	I was teaching when the law was changed in 1971 so that all young people had to remain in education until their 16 <sup>th</sup> birthday. There was so much unrest and the school had 40 broken windows a week. I hated teaching those young people who obviously felt caged by remaining in school. The students were disruptive in class and there were huge increases in exclusions.
Paragraph 3	Letting students leave whenever they feel it is right allows everyone to be happier. This is because teachers will be pleased to teach the students who want to remain; truancy will be reduced and also the resources in schools will not be so stretched.
Paragraph 4	Some people argue that more time in education means more skills. These people obviously have never worked in schools or with young people! Force-feeding young people "skills" is like trying to get more water into a wet sponge. Neither is likely to succeed. It is better for the young people to call it 'quits' than to carry on.
Paragraph 5	In the USA, several states have allowed students to leave earlier than the legal minimum age if they work instead. In other states, students can leave with parental consent. In Kansas, students can drop out before the recorded minimum age if, after a counselling session, both student and parents sign a disclaimer – a statement showing that they understand the consequences. Two of the American states, Wyoming and Kentucky, had to reverse their decision to raise the school leaving age. Once again the USA is showing us the way forward and the UK must follow.
Paragraph 6	Many families need their children to make an economic contribution to the family income, often for example on a farm or in a family business. Working at an early age can help these families to survive. Also, unqualified youngsters may gain an advantage over their qualified peers by having a few years' work-experience on the shop-floor. If they are forced to stay in school as long as their peers they lose this advantage. Less education for them means a greater earning potential, as well as support for their families.
Paragraph 7	We should not be forcing young people to stay in education longer than they wish. The government must consider removing any particular age or date for the end of compulsory education. It will benefit teachers like me, the young people and their families and the country as a whole. It is worthwhile to make this change.

#### Document 4: Should every child stay in education until 18?

Karl Abraham was Sahid's second respondent. He is the director of the Institute of Further Education Studies. He believes that all young people should remain in education until at least 18 years old. The Institute is a private, fee charging College of Further Education, which offers young people between the ages of 16 and 19 education opportunities, focusing on a set curriculum of English, maths, ICT and modern foreign languages. It has regularly been at the top of the league tables for Further Education. All of the students are expected to continue to university after leaving the Institute.

Paragraph 1	In my view, a child or young person must be in education until they become an adult. It is the whole point of childhood to prepare the individual for adult life. A 16 year old is not an adult. The law believes that they are not, and this is shown by not allowing them to vote. At 16, most are not mature enough to make an informed opinion, whether it is about voting or choosing what their future will be. All young people should continue in education for as long as possible. Training, apprenticeships and employment must be left until adulthood.
Paragraph 2	Education provides the opportunity to acquire more skills and therefore more options. It has been shown many times that those with more education find it easier to find work and that they are more likely to find that work satisfying. Young people are naturally lazy and given the choice, they would drop out of education to play computer games all day. But they don't realise that when they are working, they will need a job that will challenge them, rather than boring them and leaving them frustrated.
Paragraph 3	In today's fast changing, dynamic world, everyone needs skills to prosper. And the days where many people could leave school at 16 without qualifications and work their way up into a fulfilling and rewarding career are behind us. The demand for high level skills has increased over the last 20 years and is likely to continue to do so with a 50% increase in the proportion of jobs that demand high level skills by 2020. In other words, in the future, the UK will need more analysts and managers than factory workers and manual labourers. The only way we can be prepared for this future is by ensuring that children stay in education until they are adults.
Paragraph 4	Only when we can ensure that everyone is in education until 18 (at least) can we ensure that every child is treated equally. Allowing some to do A levels, others to get apprenticeships or training and others to get a job after GCSEs means that we are promoting inequality.
Paragraph 5	Young people should not be exploited. They should be given skills and knowledge for their future careers. Should we allow youngsters in 2010 to work on a minimum hourly wage of £3.57, when the average adult hourly wage is £14.40? Additionally, some apprenticeships do not allow youngsters to have a wage – just the possibility of getting the EMA (educational maintenance allowance) of £30 a week in term time. Surely it is better to have the students in school or college, learning a balanced curriculum. It is worthwhile to make the change I have suggested.

**Document 5: Should students only be allowed to leave education when they have reached a specific standard?**

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Mary MacDonald was the third respondent. She is the chairperson of the Association for the Improvement of Education which argues that there should be a minimum standard to reach before leaving education. She is very proud that three of her four sons have skipped at least one school year, because of their high ability.

Paragraph 1	In our opinion, the whole debate about the school leaving age is slightly confused. I think that age does not matter. People should only be allowed to leave education when they have reached a certain standard, regardless of their age.
Paragraph 2	We all know young people who are the same age, but who have hugely different levels of maturity. For example, some may still be playing with toys, while others of the same age may be responsible enough to work in their family business. It is the same with education. Age doesn't matter, standards do.
Paragraph 3	In 2009, a quarter of seven-year-old boys failed to master basic writing skills. In reading, 19% of boys did not manage to achieve level 2, meaning they could not read simple passages or express opinions about the major events or ideas contained in those passages. In maths, 11% of children could not order numbers up to 100, or add or subtract in their heads. When numeracy and literacy skills are so essential to learning, what is the point of these students going from Year 2 into Year 3? Don't they need to get to the basic standard first?
Paragraph 4	It has been argued that additional support will be available for those who don't hit the expected level, including one-to-one tuition. What a huge drain on the resources provided by the tax payers. Instead of spending loads of money on 'catch-up' help, just keep the students in the school year which they need to pass, before progressing to the next school year.
Paragraph 5	The USA, France, Belgium, Spain, Germany and Canada are just some of the countries where their education system repeats years for failing students. They are showing us the way forward and it would be right to bring in this system into the UK.
Paragraph 6	By ending compulsory education only when students have reached the level of having 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*–C has many benefits. Brighter students can progress more quickly. They don't need to wait around for the lazy students in the class. It could encourage some pupils to study harder if they think they will fail.
Paragraph 7	Also, a higher level of education is maintained if all students have to achieve the same pass rate. Surely we want everyone in the country to have the same basic level of achievement, as it promotes equality. If it means that hard working 14 year olds and lazy 19 year olds end up leaving school at the same time, then so be it. This is what has to happen to make sure everyone in the country has enough skills to work in the fast-paced society that the UK is becoming. It is important to make the change.

## Document 6: Is real work experience more important than education?

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Teri Goldstein was the final respondent. She is the founding member of the Campaign to Promote Real Work Experience. Teri undertook work experience during her GCSEs which led directly to a managerial position in the company for whom she worked straight after leaving school at 16. She has given over 100 young people work experience in her company over the last 12 years. She argues that the government should allow young people to stay in school or gain real work experience after the age of 14. Real work experience means that young people leave school at the age of 14 to take up full time work in order to gain the real skills and experience they need for a successful career.

Paragraph 1	Allowing young people to choose work instead of GCSEs and Further Education is really important because employers want it. Employers want to see that their workers have experienced getting to work on time, have learnt how to work with a diverse range of people, understand customer service skills and even that they can tolerate mundane work. The best way to teach these skills is to get students at a young age and show them the reality of the working world, not merely a one or two week placement during key stage 4.
Paragraph 2	This is really important to develop the right skills and knowledge. Not only is real work experience an ideal opportunity to put some of the theory young people have learnt at key stage 3 into practice, but is also an opportunity to develop new skills at the same time. Most of the things that young people learn at GCSE and A Level will never be used in the work place. Real work experience is relevant to their future careers.
Paragraph 3	This helps young people to decide which industry or job they might like to work in (or identify those that they definitely do not!). If young people are not allowed to make an informed decision until later in their lives, then they will spend precious time in their adulthood making mistakes.
Paragraph 4	Employers could use real work experience as an extended interview for jobs. In some companies those who are already working there have an advantage and automatically progress to the next step of the recruitment process. Allowing young people to start at the age of 14 will mean that they can secure a job earlier in their lives.
Paragraph 5	Our campaign recommends that the law is changed so that all young people have the option of work or education from the age of 14. It is so valuable for our society.

## Document 7: Sahid's Questionnaire

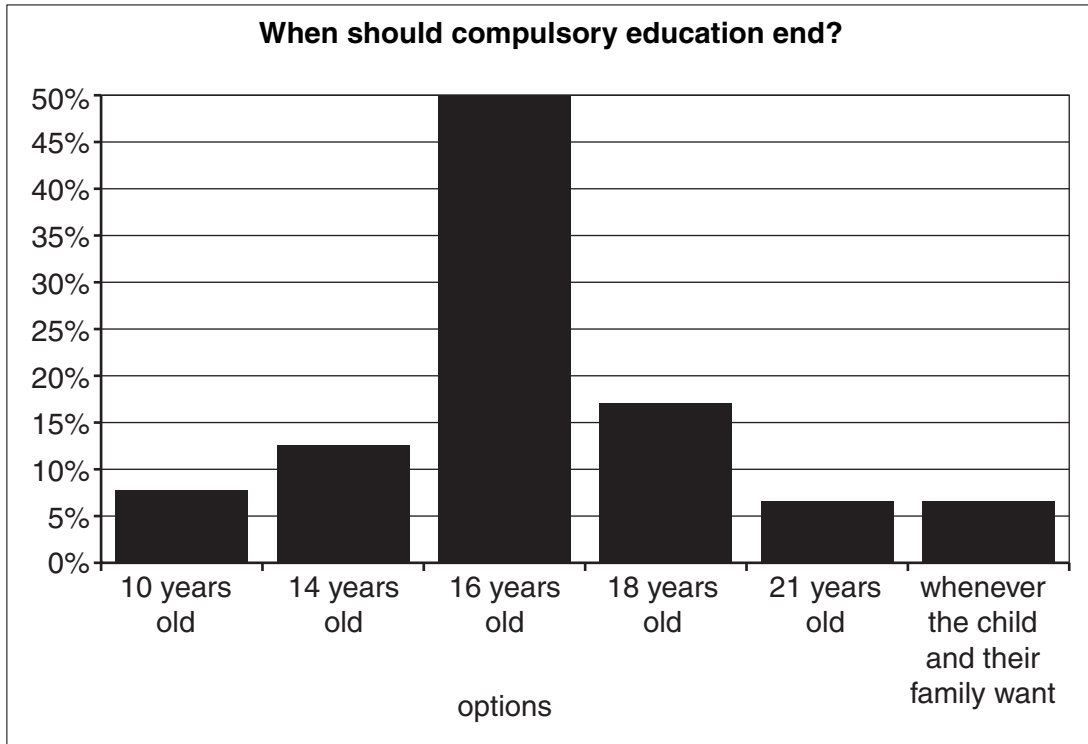
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Sahid also sent out a questionnaire to students at his university to gain their views on the school leaving age. A copy of this questionnaire is given below.

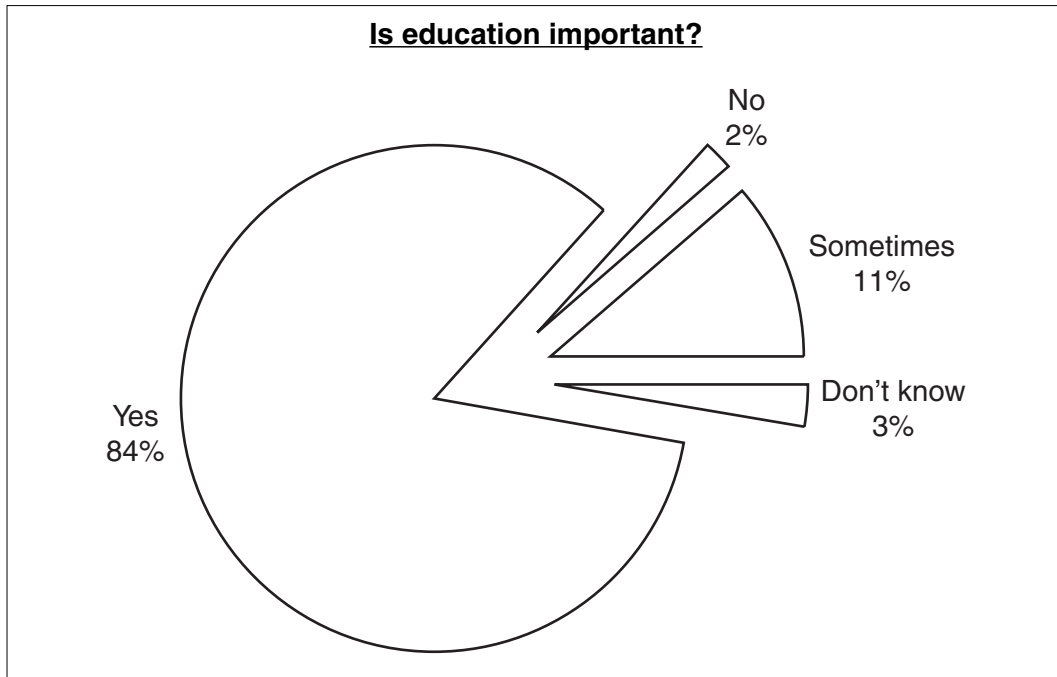
<u>School Leaving Age Questionnaire</u>	
<p>When should compulsory education end?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 10 years old</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 14 years old</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 16 years old</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 18 years old</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 21 years old</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Whenever the child and their family want</p>	<p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Is education important?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>What is the best way to improve education?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More teachers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fewer exams</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Smaller classes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pay students for high exam grades</p>	<p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

## Results from the questionnaire

- Number of questionnaires sent out: 1450
- Number of questionnaires returned: 248
- Percentage of questionnaires returned: 17%

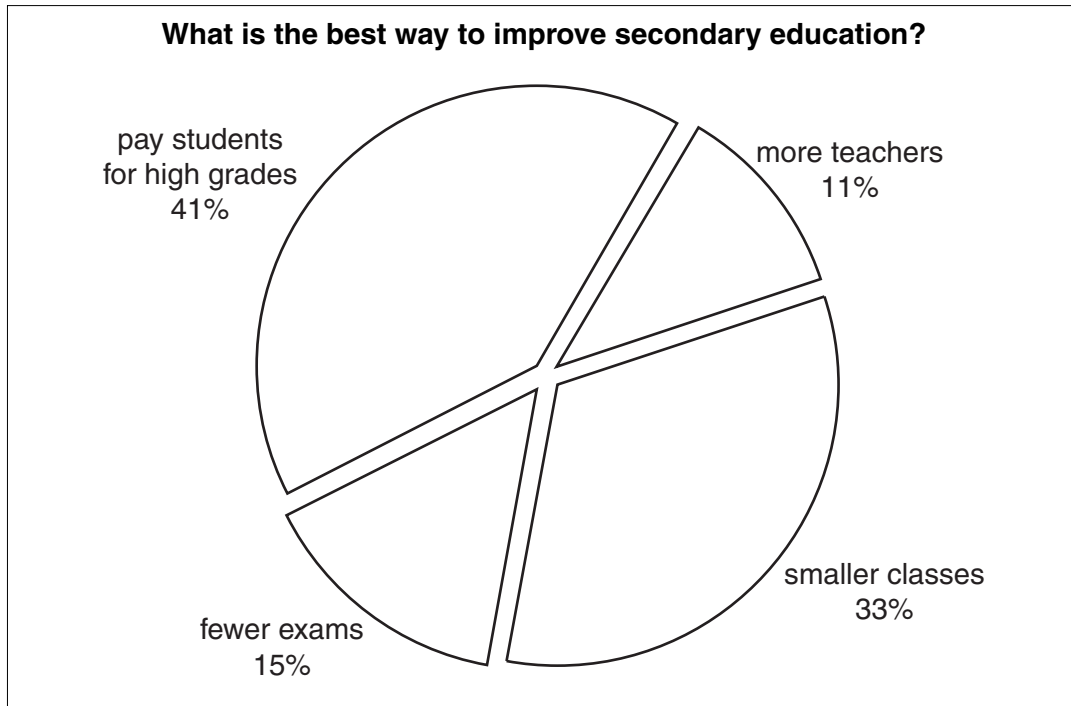
Additional comments

- It did not matter to me that there was a legal age to finish school, I carried on studying because it was important to my future.
- I was home schooled, meaning that I was educated at home by my mother. Does the law say when that should have ended? I don't know!
- It would have been great to have had the choice to leave at 14 years old.
- If children could leave at 10 years old, loads of them would do and just hang around the streets all day.



Additional comments

- It's important to me.
- It is important now, but I can't wait to be finished.
- No-one can tell if education is important until the end of their lives.



#### Additional comments

- Does it need to improve? It worked for me.
- I would have loved to have been paid for getting the GCSE grades that I worked hard to get – but I did it for myself rather than to make money.
- There are loads of other ways to make the system work. The questionnaire should have given further options.

#### Sahid's conclusions

- The majority of people believe that education is important and that compulsory education should end in the teenage years, so we should make sure that every teenager is in school.
- Practically everyone believes that the way to make education better is to put more resources into schools in the form of teachers, reducing class size or giving money for results. So the government should increase taxes to make education better.





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