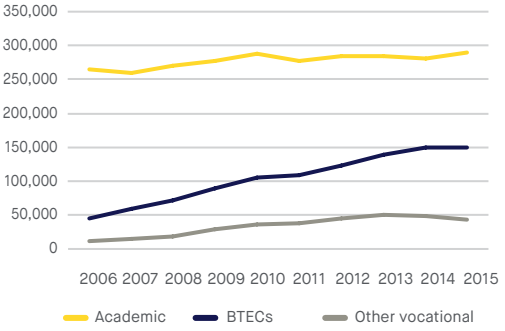
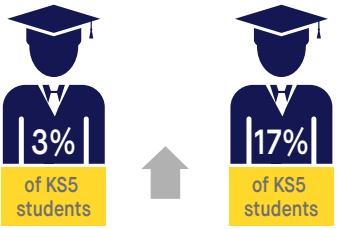
The number of vocational courses taken at KS5 has been rising while academic numbers are flat



There has been an increase in the number of pupils combining academic and vocational qualifications in the last decade



completed both academic and vocational courses in 2006

completed both academic and vocational courses in 2015

Which pupils are taking vocational qualifications at KS5?

66% of FSM pupils studied a vocational course in 2015

44% of non-FSM pupils studied a vocational course in 2015 - up from 14% in 2006

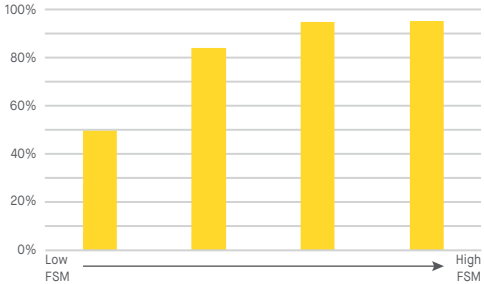
37% of pupils achieving good GCSEs went on to do vocational courses in 2015 - up from just 8% in 2006

Parental attitudes towards vocational qualifications vary

% of parents agreeing that vocational qualifications offer good university prospects, by household income

School type likely to impact take up of vocational courses

- 85% of pupils attending FE colleges take vocational courses
- 31% of KS5 pupils in state schools now take vocational courses compared to 2% in 2006
- Schools with low FSM intake less likely to offer vocational subjects at KS5 but fairly even across other schools



What do headteachers say about vocational courses?

"GCSEs are largely cheaper to fund. You have a teacher, you have textbooks, and a lot of it is classroom based...whereas the BTECs we've looked into need more specialist provision"

"We've got experience of students getting into Russell Group universities with BTEC qualifications...so we're loathe to give those up...right now we're continuing them even though some of the government messages and league tables and so on are quite anti vocational education"

SMF Social Market Foundation

Pearson