**Coding Scheme for Northern Ireland**

**Notes:**

1. **Common Codes:** 
   1. ‘Other’, ‘Reasons that don’t make sense’, ‘NA’, ‘Interesting Responses’ and, ‘Overly vague responses’ have same codes for all questions – 90, 91, 92, 93 and, 94.

**This allows for consistent usage of these codes across questions.**

* 1. ‘Practical’ and ‘Quality’ are consistently coded as 1 and 2 across questions.

1. **(93) Interesting Responses:** Assignment of responses to this category depends entirely on you. You may choose to assign responses that are especially thought provoking, humorous, or somehow don’t fit the template.
2. **(91) Use ‘Reasons that don’t make sense’ category sparingly**, and only after seeing to it that there is no sensible interpretation that you can squeeze out of the response. Be generous, but not to a fault.
3. **(94) Overly Vague responses** are responses that are so general that they give little more than agreement or disagreement with the posited question. Ex. (for 18a) K6 Need for change and I85 The collaboration of one or more schools is in everyone's best interest . Use sparingly.
4. **A response can be assigned to multiple categories. But do this with care, especially if number of assigned categories exceeds 2. (Assignment to ‘Interesting’ is not counted.)**
5. **Categorization is only limited to numbered categories.** The sub bullet points (typically enumerated as a,b,c..) are merely there as descriptors, and to provide context.
6. **Responses that argued against the position they were supposed to be supporting**: There are a lot of responses that argued against the position they were supposed to be supporting. **Why?** It is likely that the people did not read the question carefully, which is worded slightly confusingly, but had meaningful things to say. These reasons will be carried over to the appropriate variable, and tallied there.

**How to code these**: These should be coded using the categories from the opposite side battery. For example if response to 18a is a reason for opposition to all-ability schools, use categories from 18b. There is one twist – to help distinguish these reasons - prefix them with c. For example, code 4 will become c4.

1. **Unsure about category? Mark all responses with yellow (color the cell yellow) where you are unsure of the response option.**

**Q. 18a**

Think first about the proposal of having a system of **all-ability schools, all providing the same wide curriculum**. Regardless of your own opinion, **what reasons would the** ***people who strongly support this*** give for their position? Provide up to five reasons in the spaces below. If you can’t think of any reasons, don’t worry about it, just move on to the next question.

**Additional Information:**

**Introduction**

In the future, pupils in Northern Ireland will be expected to receive a common statutory curriculum up to age 14 years, but from this age onwards they will have greater choice in the range of subjects they chose to take. For pupils aged 14 years and over, all schools will be expected to provide a choice of at least 24 curriculum subjects.

Few, if any, schools in Northern Ireland are currently able to deliver the full range of subjects required. Schools will be encouraged to develop collaborative arrangements with other schools in order to deliver the required courses, but it will be up to schools and managing authorities to negotiate those arrangements locally.

The Omagh area contains a number of primary and post-primary schools. There are a number of quite small rural schools. Some schools are attended mainly by Catholic pupils and some are attended mainly by Protestant pupils. In the town itself there are three schools that currently select their pupils on the basis of the +11 transfer tests and so have a particular emphasis on academic subjects. The other schools are non-selective.

In the Omagh area the number of young people entering schools has fallen by about 10 per cent over a five year period and will likely continue to decline. This means that some rationalisation of schools is likely to occur in the coming years.

**Academic and Technical/Vocational schools**:

This system is the status quo in the Omagh area.

**Grammar Schools** are considered to be the most elite secondary schools in Northern Ireland. They tend to give a more focused academic emphasis to their curriculum and are attended by some of the most academically gifted students. Students generally apply for Grammar Schools with the +11 Transfer Tests at age 11.

**Technical/Vocational schools** are secondary schools that provide a curriculum that focuses on vocational or technical areas in addition to academics. They usually cater to students with a much wider range of abilities.

**All-ability schools**: Under this proposition, all schools would do away with +11 selection and seek to provide the same, wide curriculum for their pupils. The most likely way this could be achieved would be through the development of a very small number of large schools and it is not clear this could be fully achieved in a largely rural area. Because of the size of the schools, this arrangement would also likely mix Catholic and Protestant students.

**+11 Transfer Test:** Is an academic placement test for 11-12 year olds of British origin, which is still in use in the Omagh area schools. It plays a significant role in determining to which post-primary school Omagh pupils attend.

**Notes**

* Read Page 7-9 of the briefing materials

**Categories for question 18a (Support)**

1. Practical (pecuniary, logistics kind of reasons)
   1. Funding
   2. Convenience
2. Quality ~ Increases Academic quality
   1. Students will be given a better education
   2. Students will learn from one another
   3. Academic resources will improve
3. Equality ~ Increases equality
   1. Students will be given the same opportunities and resources
   2. Lessen elitism
4. Decreases Prejudice, Promotes Understanding
   1. Increased tolerance
   2. Increased integration
   3. Ease Sectarian Tensions
5. Other benefits for students (around +11) issues, age and development
   1. Less stigma for +11
6. Other
7. Reasons that do not make sense
8. N/A
9. Interesting Responses
10. Overly Vague Responses

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**Q.18b**

**And what reasons would the *people who strongly oppose this* give for their position?**

**Categories for question 18b (against)**

1. Practical (pecuniary, logistics kind of reasons)
   1. Expense
   2. Convenience
   3. Think that changes will be too difficult to implement
   4. Content with Status Quo
2. Academic Quality
   1. Preference for grammar schools
   2. Loss of attention for students, particularly for those in the top and bottom quartiles
3. Are prejudiced – ignorant, dislike the other religion
4. Fear prejudice
5. Fear other problems with mixing
   1. Fear problems (fights, drugs, etc.)
   2. Fear bullying
6. Self Interest
   1. Grammar schools don’t want to give up elite status
   2. Parents of students in Grammar schools don’t want to give up status
7. Prefer single sex schools
8. Tradition
9. Other benefits for students
   1. Maintains identity
10. Other
11. Reasons that do not make sense
12. N/A
13. Interesting Responses
14. Overly vague responses

**Q. 19a**

Now think about the issue of **whether children should attend schools only with other children of their own religion or should attend schools that have a balanced enrolment of Protestant and Catholic pupils.** Regardless of your own opinion, what reasons **would the *people who* *think that children should attend schools only with other children of their own religion* give for their position**? Provide up to five reasons in the spaces below. If you can’t think of any reasons, don’t worry about it, just move on to the next question.

**Additional Information:**

**Denominational Schools:**

As in the rest of Northern Ireland, most post-primary schools in Omagh comprise those attended mainly by Catholic pupils or those attended mainly by Protestant pupils: in fact, a little less than 10 per cent of these schools have a significant proportion of ‘minority’ pupils in their enrolments. The Churches often directly control schools through their school boards. Despite the traditional role of the Churches in education in Northern Ireland, however, parents have the right to apply to send their children to any school.

**Integrated schools**: This option would involve the establishment of formal Integrated schools in which all the partners, including the Churches and the other education providers, would have a right to play a role. All post-primary schools would become integrated schools. These schools would mix Protestant and Catholic students, remove the traditional role of the Churches in education, and, arguably, restrict choice for parents and pupils.

**Categories for Question 19a (Against schools with mixed religious student bodies)**

1. Practical (Pecuniary, logistics, etc.)
2. Academic Quality
3. Are Prejudiced
   1. Ignorance
   2. Bigotry
4. Fear prejudice
   1. Fear of repercussions
   2. Loss of standing in community
5. Fear other problems with mixing
   1. Fear problems (fights, drugs, etc.)
   2. Less bullying
6. Tradition, Community, Group Identity
   1. Group identity
   2. Sense of community
   3. Worry that mixing students will weaken student’s cultural and moral moorings
7. Want religion in schooling – for example - religion is an integral part of schooling, etc.
8. Other
9. Reasons that do not make sense
10. N/A
11. Interesting responses
12. Overly vague responses

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**Q. 19b**

And what reasons would ***people who think that children should attend schools that have a balanced enrolment of Protestant and Catholic pupils*** give for their position?

**Categories for Question 19b (Support schools with mixed religious student bodies)**

1. Practical
   1. More funding
   2. Saves money
   3. Better for children of mixed marriages
2. Academic Quality
3. Equality
4. Promotes Understanding in Children and Parents
   1. Increased tolerance
   2. Increased integration
   3. Better social development/ mirrors real world
   4. Greater understanding
   5. Way to break violence cycles
5. Religion shouldn’t be part of public schools ~ as religion is a personal matter, has no place, or doesn’t need to there in schools.
6. Other
7. Reasons that do not make sense
8. N/A
9. Interesting responses
10. Overly vague responses

**Q.20a**

Now think about the issue of **whether, if schools with different religious compositions enter partnerships, the children from both schools should at least sometimes be taught in the same classroom**. Regardless of your own opinion, what reasons would the ***people who strongly agree*** *with this* give for their position? Provide up to five reasons in the spaces below.

**Additional Information:**

Under government plans it is intended that schools will collaborate with one another to a greater extent in the future largely as a consequence of delivering the educational reforms and for economic reasons.

**Shared courses**: Two or more schools could agree to operate common courses which would be undertaken by pupils across all of the collaborating schools. By pooling resources schools could more readily deliver the educational reforms. These collaborations could mix protestant and catholic students together in the classroom. Logistically, however, it could be difficult to accomplish.

**Categories for question 20a (Support school partnerships)**

1. Practical
   1. Makes Economic Sense
2. Academic Quality
3. Equality
4. Promotes Understanding
   1. Increased tolerance
   2. Increased integration
   3. Better social development/ mirrors real world
   4. Less conflict
   5. Better understanding
5. Small Step Towards Integrated Schools

1. Other
2. Reasons that do not make sense
3. N/A
4. Interesting Responses
5. Overly vague responses

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**Q.20b**

And what reasons would the **people *who strongly disagree with this* give for their position**? Provide up to five reasons in the spaces below.

**Categories for question 20b (Against school partnerships)**

1. Practical (Pecuniary and logistics)
   1. Disrupt School efficiency
2. Quality
3. Are prejudiced
4. Fear Prejudice
   1. Bigotry
   2. Fear
   3. Ignorance
   4. Could increase tension / segregation
5. Other problems of mixing
   1. Fears of bullying, being discriminated
6. Only a half-measure to Integrated Schools
7. Prefer single sex classrooms, opposed to gender mixing
8. Tradition, Religious and Moral Focus in School
   1. Sense of community
   2. Favor their own religion
   3. Worry that mixing students will weaken student’s cultural and moral moorings
   4. Child may lose a sense of Identity
   5. Indoctrination – children may be indoctrinated
9. Other
10. Reasons that do not make sense
11. N/A
12. Interesting responses
13. Overly vague responses

**Q.21a**

Now think about the proposal for **schools combining primary and post-primary pupils (for example, ages 7-14).** Regardless of your own opinion, **what reasons would the *people who strongly support schools combining primary and post-primary pupils* give** for their position? Provide up to five reasons in the spaces below.

**Additional Information:**

Most post-primary schools in Northern Ireland either take pupils aged

11-18 years, or pupils aged 11-16 years.

**Traditional pattern**: This arrangement reduces the number of times pupils have to change schools. It also relies on the +11 Transfer Test.

**Primary and Post-primary Combination:** This option delays +11 selection so students have longer to mature. It may also require students to switch schools more frequently.

\*This question does not correlate as closely with the briefing materials as the others, so be aware of less cogent and predictable reasons for and against the proposal.

**Categories for question 21a (Support combining primary and post-primary students)**

1. Practical (pecuniary, logistics kind of reasons)
   1. Easier transportation
   2. Easier for parents
   3. Keep rural schools open
   4. Earns school more money
   5. More Cost-Effective
2. Quality
3. Individual student level reasons: Career, stress, personal
   1. Lets children mature before choosing specialization
   2. Children too young at 11 – less stress/pressure
   3. Improve performance
   4. Prevents children from changing schools so young
   5. Siblings and friends stay together longer
4. Equality or do away with +11
5. Other
6. Reasons that do not make sense
7. N/A
8. Interesting responses
9. Overly vague responses

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**Q.21b**

And what reasons would the ***people who strongly oppose schools combining primary and post-primary pupils* give** for their position? Provide up to five reasons in the spaces below.

**Categories for question 21b (Against combining primary and post-primary students)**

1. Practical
   1. Don’t think that the schools or teachers are equipped to handle the change
   2. Need new teachers
   3. School closings?
   4. Operational Inefficiency
   5. Too Many School Changes
2. Academic Quality
   1. Would increase class size
3. Individual student level reasons: Career, stress, personal
   1. Helps younger students mature
   2. Improve performance
   3. Prevents children from changing schools so young
   4. Older children not stimulated by the company of the younger ones
   5. Older Students Ready to Move on
   6. Some Children too Young to Change Schools
4. Fear Other problems of mixing
   1. Bullying
   2. Younger students may feel uncomfortable around 14 year olds
5. Satisfied with status quo
6. Tradition
7. Other
8. Reasons that do not make sense
9. N/A
10. Interesting responses
11. Overly vague responses