

Table 1: Aspects of the PIAAC findings identified in the OECD Country Notes as ‘key issues’

Aspect	Japan	UK (England & Northern Ireland)	France
<i>Sample Size and Coverage Rateⁱ</i>	5278 adults aged 16 to 65, with coverage rate of 47%.	8892 adults (5,131 in England, and 3761 in N.I.), with coverage rate of 60.5% (weighted average).	some 7000 adults, with coverage rate of 64%.
<i>Comparative Performance in Literacy and Numeracy (using country averages)</i>	top in both proficiencies	L indistinguishable from OECD average; N statistically significantly below OECD average	among the lowest in L&N
<i>Comparative Performance in PSTRE (using % at Levels 2 or 3)</i>	% at Levels 2/3 similar to OECD average in overall sample; but % of youngest age group at Levels 2/3 was lower than OECD average.	49% scored at or below Level 1; but the participation rate for this element of the survey was above the OECD average.	(not assessed)
<i>Variations in L and N proficiency related to (a) age</i>	little variation	negligible difference between oldest and youngest groups (unlike most other countries)	the youngest group performed better than the oldest (like most other countries)
<i>Variation in L and N proficiency related to (b) educational attainment and social background (parental education)</i>	little variation according to educational attainment	large variation in literacy attainment according to socio-economic background particularly among young people	large variations according to both compared to other countries; i.e. higher levels of inequality
<i>Variations related to other factors: (c) place of birth and length of residency</i>			performance in L of French born significantly better than performance of those born outside; limited improvement in skills with duration of residency

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<i>Demands for L, N & PSTRE skills, leading to problems of over-education and over-skilling</i>	employers not sufficiently utilising their workforce's competences	top in rate of self-reported 'over-qualification', but low rate of self-reported over-skilling (i.e. reporting workplace demands for skills less than self-perceived skill levels)	low reported demand for L, ICT and skills for "resolution of complex problems" in workplaces; demand for N in employment greater than elsewhere
<i>Relation of L and N proficiency to outcomes such as labour market participation and wage rates</i>	"returns to proficiency" in wage rates and employment rates are lower than elsewhere; in particular, underutilisation of women's high skills level in the labour market	strong positive correlation (compared with other countries)	positive correlation between L levels and employment status (and level of earnings) , but weaker relationship than elsewhere
<i>Policy recommendations</i>	need for employers to put workforce's competencies to better use to translate the proficiencies into economic growth and well-being	address social inequalities among young people; and increase opportunities for second chance learning for low-skilled adults	need for educational policies aiming to integrate immigrants into economic and social life

ⁱ The rate of coverage of the population is the response rate times (1 – rate of exclusions); certain groups are excluded from the working population if they are deemed not accessible to interviewers (e.g. living remotely, or in certain institutions).