

Curriculum for Excellence: The Senior Phase Explained





Welcome to Curriculum for Excellence: The Senior Phase of Learning Explained



Curriculum for Excellence places children and young people at the heart of Scottish education. The new curriculum is built around a commitment to giving every child the best possible chance to realise their full potential and become:

- * successful learners
- * confident individuals
- * responsible citizens
- * effective contributors

These four capacities govern the entire curriculum from age 3 to 18 and aim to raise the standards of achievement for all school pupils within the Broad General Education and in the Senior Phase of learning.

This booklet will give you the information you need to understand the Senior Phase of learning in schools and how it will affect your child. We hope you find this guide useful and clear.

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Contents

The Senior Phase of Learning: Overview	3
Moving into the Senior Phase	4
Learning within the Senior Phase	6
Qualifications in the Senior Phase	8
Beyond the Senior Phase	10



The Senior Phase of Learning: Overview

The Senior Phase is defined as:

‘learning which takes place in the final stages of compulsory education and beyond, normally around ages 15 to 18’

For many learners school will continue to deliver learning in the Senior Phase. However, this will increasingly involve partnerships with a range of other providers such as colleges, work-based training providers and employers.

What are learners entitled to in the Senior Phase?

The Senior Phase will provide specialisation, depth and rigour and prepare young people well for achieving qualifications at the highest level of which they are capable. Experiences within the Senior Phase of learning will also help develop the necessary skills young people need to make positive choices about their future.

In order to achieve this learners are entitled to:

- * Support and advice to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities that the curriculum can provide.
- * The opportunity to obtain appropriate qualifications.
- * The opportunity to continue to develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities (see page 1).
- * Opportunities to develop the skills for learning, life and work with a continuing focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.
- * Support in moving to future learning or employment.

The curriculum will allow opportunities for young people to develop skills and attributes outwith traditional classroom-based activities.



Moving into the Senior Phase

Does the Senior Phase mean that one type of education suits all?

No, in designing the Senior Phase schools will ensure that learners can progress in different ways and at different rates. Schools will ensure that opportunities and qualifications which young people take meet their learning needs and help prepare them well for their next steps. This may mean S4, 5 and 6 pupils studying together towards the same qualification.

The curriculum in the Senior Phase should follow on from and make links to learning in the Broad General Education. Schools will support all young people in planning an appropriate, motivating and challenging learner journey in the Senior Phase, in contexts relevant to the world of work.

The curriculum in every school is influenced by the following principles:

- * challenge and enjoyment
- * breadth
- * progression
- * depth
- * personalisation and choice
- * coherence
- * relevance



These principles apply to all stages of learning and create a broad framework within which schools can develop a range of learning opportunities and learning pathways which are focused upon the needs of the learners.

If you would like more information about these principles please visit Education Scotland's Parentzone website.

www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/index.asp





Learning within the Senior Phase

How is learning in the Senior Phase different to learning in the Broad General Education?

In many ways, learning in the Senior Phase will be the same as in the Broad General Education and continues to be influenced by:

- * the ethos and life of the school as a community
- * curriculum areas and subjects
- * interdisciplinary learning
- * opportunities for personal achievement

There continues to be a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across all aspects of learning and every teacher will support learners to develop these skills.

Schools will also continue to plan for learning through interdisciplinary contexts which offer challenge and opportunities for transferring and applying skills and learning across different subject areas.

What skills will be developed in the Senior Phase?

Schools have a responsibility to prepare young people for life beyond school which includes the development of skills for learning, life and work.



To help young people prepare for their future choices, learning opportunities will foster the following transferrable and interconnected skills.

- * literacy
- * numeracy
- * thinking
- * health and wellbeing
- * leadership
- * working with others
- * personal learning planning/study skills
- * enterprise and employability



Qualifications in the Senior Phase

The Senior Phase will be the period when young people take qualifications. The number and range of qualifications undertaken is a matter for the young person together with their parents and teachers to decide. The key message for learners and their parents is that subject choice at all stages needs to be clearly linked to future career plans and should be guided by support available through the school.

In the Senior Phase, schools have more flexibility to meet the needs of all their learners, through:

- * the length of learning programmes
- * the number, range and level of qualifications
- * decisions about level of qualifications, for example National 4 or 5, Higher or Advanced Higher

Learners may study subjects over one or two years and they could mix and match a range of qualifications at different levels across the three years of their Senior Phase of learning. For example, during S4, learners may be studying some subjects for which they will be presented for examination at the end of S4. However, they may also continue studying some subjects until the end of S5 before being presented for the examination. This may also happen across S5 and S6. Some learners will also take college courses as well as school courses within their Senior Phase as part of their normal timetable.

The guiding principle is that qualifications are taken at the appropriate stage for the individual young person.



Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

SCQF level	Current	New
12	Doctorate	Doctorate
11	Masters	Masters
10	Honours Degree	Honours Degree
9	Ordinary Degree	Ordinary Degree
8	Higher National Diploma	Higher National Diploma
7	Advanced Higher	Advanced Higher <i>Externally examined</i>
6	Higher	Higher <i>Externally examined</i>
5	Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade	National 5 <i>Externally examined</i>
4	Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade	National 4 <i>Internally examined</i>
3	Access 3 Foundation Standard Grade	National 3 <i>Internally examined</i>
2	Access 2	National 2 <i>Internally examined</i>
1	Access 1	National 1 <i>Internally examined</i>

For more information about qualifications please visit the SQA website www.sqa.org.uk



Beyond the Senior Phase

How will schools prepare young people for leaving school?

Employability

Schools will use a variety of methods to ensure that young people have access to employability opportunities and experiences which help them identify and find out more about the potential career they may wish to work towards. These opportunities give young people, especially those who may wish to pursue vocational training or employment post-school, valuable experiences which will help them to develop a better understanding of the world of work.

College and university

Schools work with colleges and universities giving young people information and experiences which can help them make better choices about Further and Higher Education.

Edinburgh College shares information about courses with schools at appropriate points in the school year. Information regarding the application procedure for college courses is also shared. This gives young people and their parents the information they need to make informed choices about college courses.

We continue to develop good links with our four local universities and a variety of initiatives have been developed to increase young people's awareness of university courses and the application process.



More information

Further information about post-school opportunities will be addressed in the booklet *Curriculum for Excellence: Leaving School/ Making Positive Choices*

How can I help my child?

The partnership of learner, parents and teachers is the most effective way to ensure that young people maximise their opportunities in school and achieve the best they can. Sharing information is the key to making this partnership work.

To help guide your child's choices in the Senior Phase, your school will hold information evenings and parents' events. Other relevant information may be shared by letter or leaflet, or through the school's website.

How can I help at my child's school?

Schools work with a range of partners to enhance the learning opportunities and wider achievement they can offer young people. Partners can get involved in a number of ways, for example mentoring individual learners or helping with extracurricular activities such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. If you would like to find out more about how you could help in your child's school, please contact the head teacher or the chair of the parent council.

If you have specific concerns or you wish to share information which affects your child, you should contact your child's pupil support teacher who will be more than happy to discuss these with you.





HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

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MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ আনন্দের সঙ্গে অনুবাদ করব

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