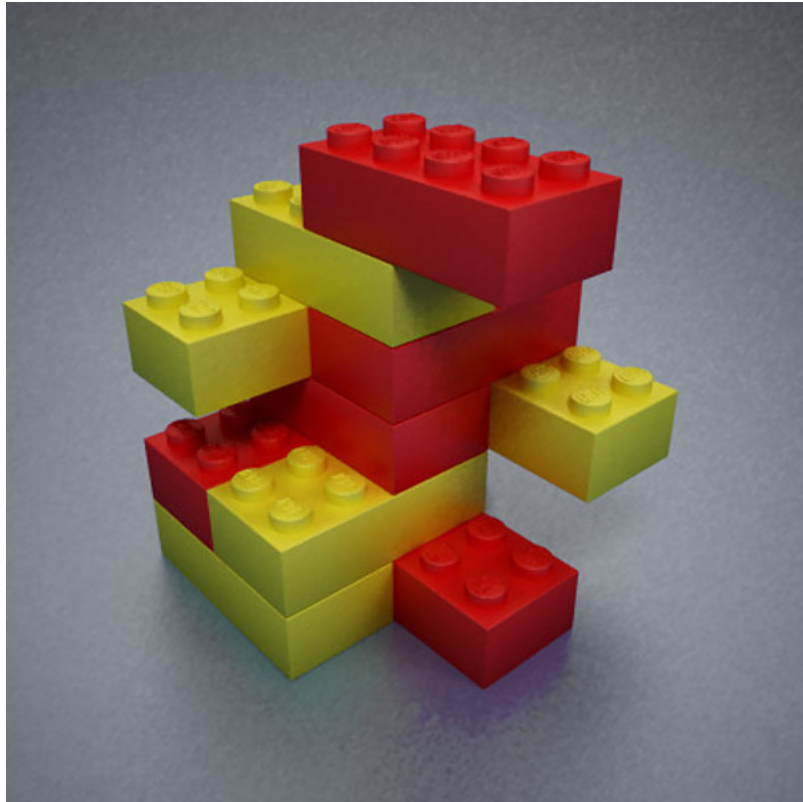


curriculum for excellence

**Building OUR Curriculum**  
Improving Pupils' Achievements through CfE



Building Our Curriculum Self-Help Group

Report 5 – The Senior Phase:  
Partnerships for Improved Learning

January 2015



curriculum for excellence

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Improving Pupils' Achievements through CfE

Building Our Curriculum Self-Help Group  
Report 5 – The Senior Phase:  
Partnerships for Improved Learning

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Building Our Curriculum Self-Help Group

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## Acknowledgements

The members of the BOCSH Group wish to thank their education authorities, as noted in Appendix A, for their consistent support for the work of the group.

Particular thanks are expressed to Dundee City Council for their significant support in arranging the appearance of a printed version of this report.

Thanks are also offered to members of national agencies and other colleagues who have advised, consulted on and/or otherwise supported the development of this report.



# 1 Executive Summary

## WHAT IS THIS MATERIAL?

*Building the Curriculum 3: a framework for learning and teaching* provides the national framework for the Scottish secondary curriculum. It indicates that:

‘Every child and young person is entitled to expect their education to provide them with:

- > a curriculum which is **coherent** from 3 to 18
- > a **broad general education**, including well planned experiences and outcomes across all the curriculum areas from early years through to S3
- > a **senior phase** of education after S3 which provides opportunity to obtain qualifications as well as to continue to develop the four capacities
- > opportunities to develop **skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work** (including career planning skills) with a continuous focus on **literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing**
- > **personal support** to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which *Curriculum for Excellence* can provide
- > support in moving into **positive and sustained destinations** beyond school’

[Scottish Government, 2008, pp.4-5]

The principal focus of this resource is the third of these requirements, the Senior Phase (S4-S6), within which pupils exercise increasing control and choice in their education, study for selected qualifications and prepare for successful transition to further education, higher education and the world of work. Inevitably, however, both this booklet and its associated case studies will also address aspects of the other five requirements as the senior phase is inextricably tied to them.

This resource is designed to assist all those who plan, implement, evaluate and support effective teaching, learning, achievement and attainment in Scottish secondary schools by offering advice and exemplification to assist their work in planning and implementing Senior Phase programmes to the highest possible standards.

This resource is the fifth report by the Building Our Curriculum Self-Help (BOCSH) Group: a consortium of current and recent educational senior managers, drawn from a group – sixteen, at the date of publication - of Scottish education authorities. The resource consists of two elements:

## Curriculum for Excellence – The Senior Phase: Partnerships for Learning

- this booklet
- a website ([www.bocsh.org](http://www.bocsh.org)) established to support BOCSH's contribution to developing, exemplifying and evaluating *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE). The website contains full versions of the Case Studies plus further case studies and support materials provided by schools and authorities who were not fully ready to publish at the time of “printing” of this material.

Beyond this executive summary, the booklet contains three main sections. The first of these contains a brief introduction to the BOCSH Group, the background to the publication of this resource and the national context within which Senior Phase developments are taking place. The second section contains a core of information on the planning and implementation of the Senior Phase within *Curriculum for Excellence*, examining key aspects of this, considering exemplification of these areas and addressing related “how?” and “with what?” questions. It also contains information which seeks to address the ‘with whom?’ question by considering how partnerships (with other schools, across local authorities, local employers and with community organisations and colleges/universities) can support improved learning, teaching and attainment. The third section contains a set of summaries of school and authority Case Studies. Only 3-page summaries are included in the booklet; the full case studies reside on the website.

A summary of key issues from these three sections is given below:

### **The BOCSH Group**

The membership of the BOCSH Group (and also its subgroup which developed this resource) is given in Appendix A.

### **Background and Context**

All schools in Scotland have now been working towards successful implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence* for approximately a decade with the programme “going live” in all Scottish schools in August 2010. In secondary schools, all First Year pupils began learning within the *Curriculum for Excellence* programme at that time. The first cohort entered the Senior Phase in August 2013 with the first tranche of S4 qualifications being awarded in Summer 2014. The first cohort entered S5 in August 2014 with initial results expected in Summer 2015, although the full achievements of that first cohort will not be seen until Summer 2016. Interestingly, however, the first cohort with full experience of *Curriculum for Excellence* from Primary 1 onwards will not reach secondary schools until August 2017 and will not complete their programme until, potentially, June of 2023, almost exactly 20 years after the beginning of CfE development.

This resource should be considered in conjunction with guidance and/or exemplification supplied by Education Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, various Scottish local authorities and also by some commercial providers. The role of members of the BOCSH Group within this wider context has been to work cooperatively – with their authorities and with other willing partners - to contribute some suitable resources and provide high quality professional development opportunities for senior leaders to support the leadership and management of implementation of aspects of the *Curriculum for Excellence* programme - in this case, to provide a second set of support materials for the Senior Phase.

### **Emerging National Trends in the Senior Phase**

Chapter 3 contains a core section examining emerging (and, in some cases, re-emerging) national trends in the development and implementation of the Senior Phase and also considering a range of contexts, particularly partnerships for learning, within which the Senior Phase is being implemented.

### **Case Studies**

Chapter 4 contains a set of nine school and/or education authority Case Studies. Each Case Study is represented in the booklet by a 3-page summary and is available in full on the website as a detailed Case Study (often with significant additional material in the form of appendices) containing information on why, how and through what means the school/authority has planned and implemented its Senior Phase. Information is also included on key strengths of the school's/authority's approach. As schools and authorities implement their own chosen solutions, these are illustrated by appropriate examples.

The full authority/school Case Studies held on the website include an overview of curricular and attainment planning for the Senior Phase, including a summary of the whole-school approach, curricular structures, transition arrangements, staff roles, roles of partner organisations and individuals. Information is also included on strengths of the school's/authority's approach. These are drawn from: transition planning (from the BGE to positive post-school destinations), goal/target-setting & tracking, skills development, interdisciplinary learning opportunities, curricular progression from S3 to S4 to S5/6 (including aspects of integrated provision) and planning for achievement and attainment.

### **Conclusions**

Chapter 5 contains a short Conclusions section examining what needs to be done next to complete the Senior Phase implementation process.

## 2 Introduction

This document is one of a set of reports by the Building Our Curriculum Self-Help (BOCSH) Group. Previous reports have considered:

- **BOCSH Report 1 (2009): the initial planning and implementation issues related to the Broad, General Education (BGE)**
- **BOCSH Report 2 (2011): early consideration of the Senior Phase (SP) aspects of Curriculum for Excellence**
- **BOCSH Report 3 (2014): the development of Universal and Targeted Support**
- **BOCSH Report 4 (2015): an overview of Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL).**

Further studies are planned to include other aspects of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

The purpose of this document is to provide a sustained analysis of how different schools and authorities are using the opportunities provided by *Curriculum for Excellence* to develop and provide improved learning, skills, achievement, attainment and learner destinations within the Senior Phase. The involvement of all staff, school leaders, local authority leaders and business, industrial, FE/HE and community partners in these major whole-school (and beyond school) processes are also considered. The analyses and accompanying discussions embodied in the nine attached case studies have helped each of the participating authorities and schools to evince their own philosophy, ethos, planning and implementation strategies in relation to using partnership approaches to developing the Senior Phase.

Each school or authority's strategy has been reviewed and further developed in the light of initial experience with planning and implementing the Senior Phase of *Curriculum for Excellence*. The work of each school also includes curriculum design, timetabling, staff planning, accommodation/resource review and enhancement, partnership development, transport planning, qualifications and assessment planning and planning for sustained, positive destinations for all learners. In so doing, the case studies touch on almost all of the key issues related to successful implementation of the Senior Phase.

Each authority/school Case Study includes information on why and how the school/authority has planned and implemented a whole-school (and, in almost all cases, beyond school) approach to the Senior Phase, including staff and partner roles, training and accreditation, curriculum design, learner pathways, timetabling, staff planning, accommodation and resource planning, partnership development, transport planning and qualifications and assessment planning. Information is also included on the key strengths of the school's/authority's approach (and schools have been chosen to exemplify a broad range across the different case studies). As schools and authorities present their own chosen solutions, these are illustrated by examples drawn from: in-school development, business partnerships, college and university partnerships, community partnerships and campus delivery models.

To keep this core booklet within realistic and readable page limits, 3-page summaries of the Case Studies are given in Section 4. A standardised summary format has been adopted in reporting on each Case Study, allowing readers to compare and contrast the approaches taken and the issues in different sizes and natures of schools. The full case studies are provided for further, in-depth study on the BOCSH website ([www.bocsh.org.uk](http://www.bocsh.org.uk)) which has been made available by local authority BOCSH partners for public use, with free downloads.

Users may also wish to review the earlier work of the BOCSH Group. Since the original reports were published electronically (as well as on paper, in the case of reports 2 and 3), those reports and the embedded case studies may also be found on the BOCSH website.

### 2.1 The BOCSH Group – Membership and Aims

This document has been compiled by personnel from the BOCSH Group - a consortium of senior curriculum managers (and recent former senior managers) drawn from approximately half of the thirty-two Scottish Local Authorities, working in association with colleagues from certain national bodies. Both the Authorities involved and the membership of the group are given in [Appendix A](#). The membership of the working sub-group which produced this resource is also given in Appendix A.

The BOCSH Group aims to:

- Encourage and support a “coalition of the willing” to provide exemplar material to support local authorities, schools, curricular leaders and teachers engaged in implementing Curriculum for Excellence.
- Develop and highlight good practice in leading and managing whole-authority and whole-school approaches to Curriculum for Excellence.
- Provide a strategic view of the key actions which should be carried out by schools in implementing both the BGE phase and Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Provide insight into key strategic aspects of Curriculum for Excellence such as learning and teaching, assessment and profiling, curriculum design, timetabling, staffing, (personal) support and interdisciplinary learning.
- Develop on-line and textual support materials to underpin development of these key aspects.

### Using our Website

The Building our Curriculum Self-Help (BOCSH) group website is supported by BOCSH partner local authorities to whom BOCSH expresses its gratitude. This report, together with previous reports, can be accessed via the website. The URL address is:

<http://www.bocsh.org.uk>

The site may be accessed by any reader and the linked files and resources downloaded without cost for closer consideration. Please feel free to investigate and use the

## Curriculum for Excellence – The Senior Phase: Partnerships for Learning

resources the group has published here.

Our website is intended to support greater sharing and discussion of the major issues involved in planning a curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. The BOCSH group would welcome additional case studies - for this report, previous reports or forthcoming reports - from any authorities or schools interested in contributing to the ideas contained here. EAs/schools/HTs interested in contributing are asked to use the appropriate template (templates for the case studies associated with Reports 1-5 are also on the website). Please also consider adding your materials to this resource to further assist other schools and authorities. Contact details are included on the site.

It is our continued intention to develop a shared reservoir of ideas and thinking around the planning and implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence* via our website – based on the clear understanding that everything included remains a work in progress and that iterations of plans will inevitably be required in order to respond to changing circumstances and the needs of learners etc. Our website should be regarded as a source of ideas and discussions around developing thinking on curriculum planning and organisation.

N.B. The members of BOCSH don't pretend to be 'experts', we are merely a multi-authority group sharing developing practice.

## 2.2 Background

All schools in Scotland have been planning and working towards the successful implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence* for the last decade with the programme "going live" in all Scottish schools in August 2010. In secondary schools, all First Year pupils began learning within the *Curriculum for Excellence* programme at this time. This particular report is concerned with the planning and implementation of the Senior Phase within secondary schools. This aspect of *Curriculum for Excellence* 'went live' in August 2013, although many schools and authorities had invested considerable time and effort in planning for this in earlier years.

This resource is provided to support all teachers, specialist (subject/curriculum leaders, guidance and support for learning) teachers, school leaders and relevant education authority staff with appropriate exemplification as they engage with the process of planning, developing, implementing and reviewing the Senior Phase of *Curriculum for Excellence* in their schools. As such, this resource demonstrates the thoughts and processes worked through by a set of volunteer schools and local authorities. Amongst other aspects, it addresses:

- Curriculum Design for the Senior Phase
- Timetabling issues associated with these curricular plans
- Transition planning (from the BGE to the Senior Phase to positive post-school destinations)
- The importance of partnerships to improving learning, teaching, achievement, attainment and the acquisition of maintenance of positive destinations for all learners

- Achievement and attainment
- Forms of involvement of partners – individuals and organisations
- Approaches to maximising the benefits of the Senior Phase – in-school, cross-school and in the wider community

The approach taken in this resource is to provide:

- An executive summary of the subject matter covered in this resource
- A high-level, strategic overview of national trends in planning, developing and implementing the Senior Phase within this document
- Hyperlinks to key national documents within the electronic version of this document
- 3-page executive summaries of the school case studies within this document
- Links to the BOCSH website containing full and dynamically updated versions of the case studies

Therefore, this document – whether read physically or electronically - is only the key to a wider resource mostly contained on a linked website. This is provided deliberately to:

- Permit each of the Case Study schools to maintain and update their work
- Encourage others to add their own work, thus providing an expanding set of exemplars for all schools
- Act as a focus for study, CPD and professional reflection.

Schools wishing to add a case study to the set of Senior Phase case studies should contact Mt Graham Hutton at the e-mail address given at the beginning of this document.

## 2.3 The National Context

By early 2013, all the relevant policy papers and national guidance had been published for the implementation of the Senior Phase within *Curriculum for Excellence*, although further national guidance has followed. Education authorities and schools, whilst continuing to develop their approach to the Broad, General Education Phase which precedes the Senior Phase, are heavily engaged in developing their thinking around the organisation of wider, deeper and more effective (for all learners) approaches to the S4-S6 years, including communicating and consulting with staff, parents, pupils and their local community on the possible approaches to take in supporting their learners through these challenging and potentially highly rewarding years, taking cognizance of range of learners' needs and the school's local context.

In planning for the Senior Phase in secondary schools, school teams are seeking to improve both attainment and achievement through:

- Identifying learner needs and enhancing the range and diversity of learning pathways
- Improving teaching methodology and resources
- Improving and broadening leadership
- Being innovative in curriculum planning and timetabling
- Identifying and developing of appropriate skills in learners

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- Target-setting, mentoring and tracking
- Providing Support for learning and achievement
- Involving key stakeholders - staff, pupils, parents, employers and FE/HE partners - in partnerships to support and enhance learning and attainment
- Developing new and improved means of offering learning opportunities

These aspects are in turn facilitated and enhanced by:

- The development of flexible approaches within the school/authority
- The development of partnerships to enhance learning and attainment
- The use of ICT-based systems to provide information for staff, pupils and parents
- Innovative curriculum design and timetabling

Starting points for relevant national advice may be found as follows:

### Curriculum for Excellence Overview:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/index.asp>

### CfE Key Curriculum Support and Materials:

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource\\_tcm4735014.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-685174-64&class=l2+d148554](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource_tcm4735014.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-685174-64&class=l2+d148554)

### Key Documents:

#### a) Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/howdoyoubuildyourcurriculum/curriculumplanning/whatisbuildingyourcurriculum/btc/btc3.asp>

#### b) Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for Learning, Life and Work:

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/publications/b/publication\\_tcm4619528.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-685173-64&class=l3+d148554](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/publications/b/publication_tcm4619528.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-685173-64&class=l3+d148554)

#### c) Building the Curriculum 5: A Framework for Assessment:

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/publications/b/publication\\_tcm4617095.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-685173-64&class=l3+d148554](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/publications/b/publication_tcm4617095.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-685173-64&class=l3+d148554)

## The Senior Phase

Documentation specifically related to the Senior Phase includes:



- a) CfE Briefing 6: Progression from the BGE to the Senior Phase (part 1):

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource\\_tcm4742055.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource_tcm4742055.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554)

- b) CfE Briefing 7: Progression from the BGE to the Senior Phase (part 2):

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource\\_tcm4744860.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource_tcm4744860.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554)

- c) CfE Briefing 8: Progression from the BGE to the Senior Phase (part 3):

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource\\_tcm4748089.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource_tcm4748089.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554)

- d) CfE Briefing 12: Planning for Learning part 2: Further learning, training and employment beyond age 16:

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource\\_tcm4809709.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/c/genericresource_tcm4809709.asp?strReferringChannel=thecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-715583-64&class=l3+d148554)

In Section 3, a brief summary of emerging national trends in developing and implementing the Senior Phase has been presented. This is intended as a reference framework against which the individual Case Studies may be considered. It has been drawn from consideration of the views of schools represented in the Building Our Curriculum process, from national and local authority seminars, from discussions amongst the authority representatives in the BOCSH group, from national, local authority and school documentation and from research carried out with representatives of schools, authorities and national agencies.

The work summarised in this document was carried out in 2014 with the intention of having the results available to support authorities and schools as they move to consider, identify and finalise the next phase of their *Curriculum for Excellence* provision for the Senior Phase as the first cohort reaches S6 in Session 2015-16.

# 3 Emerging Senior Phase Trends

## 3.1 Overview

The Senior Phase of *Curriculum for Excellence* represents the final three years of a learner's 3-18 learning experience, covering the age range from 15 to 18. The Senior Phase follows on from, and builds upon, the learner's previous experiences in nursery and primary education and in the Broad General Education (BGE) phase encompassing the first three years (S1 – S3) of secondary education. As *Building the Curriculum 3 (BtC3)* suggested, 'children and young people are entitled to experience:

- A curriculum which is **coherent** from 3 to 18
- A **broad general education**, including the experiences and outcomes well planned across all the curriculum areas, from early years through to S3
- A **senior phase** of education after S3 which provides opportunity to obtain qualifications as well as to continue to develop the four capacities
- Opportunities for developing **skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work** with a continuous focus on **literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing**
- Personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which *Curriculum for Excellence* can provide
- Support in moving into **positive and sustained destinations** beyond school'

(Scottish Government, 2008, p.11)

The Senior Phase has had a different gestation process from the earlier parts of CfE in that:

- it was not the initial concern of a national development process that concentrated on the 3-15 years and
- development of the Senior Phase has directly involved the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the agency with responsibility for qualifications.

These aspects, aligned with schools' natural concern to ensure that learners gain appropriate qualifications from their Senior Phase experiences, have meant that the main focus of Senior Phase development has lain firstly with S4 qualifications, particularly at National 5 and 4, and then with Higher courses, whether schools have undertaken the revised Highers in the first session or not. Although research in schools and authorities has identified their acknowledgement of the importance of transitions, skills, interdisciplinary learning and support, along with the continuing importance of the Four Capacities, the main focus of development so far has clearly centred on qualifications and the courses leading to them.

This document attempts to look more widely at the Senior Phase, to refocus on all aspects thereof and to consider the important (and possibly vital) contributions which partnerships within schools, with other schools, across authorities, with business and industry, with Further and Higher Education and across communities, can bring to the learning experiences, achievement and attainment of all learners.

### Evolving Priorities in the Senior Phase

Initially, development work in schools and authorities, as well as national development by Education Scotland and SQA, concentrated on S4 and on the associated National 4 and 5 courses studied by many S4 learners. Developments related to Highers necessarily came somewhat behind those associated with the first courses to be experienced by the initial cohort of learners following the *Curriculum for Excellence* model. Strangely, however, there appeared to be little national focus (and only belated information to schools) on the National 3 courses which it might have been assumed would be accessed by round 10-12% of S4 learners, based on previous attainment results. Likewise, although National 1 and 2 are highly specialised and support a very specific group of learners, there was again little evidence available in schools of the development processes to support these courses during the build-up to Session 2013-14 when the first cohort entered the Senior Phase.

Some debate surrounded school/authority moves to implement the revised Highers which have been developed to follow on from National 5 as the first *Curriculum for Excellence* cohort moved into S5. Some schools decided that learners' needs were best served by adopting all or many of the new Highers, some have operated a mixed economy of new and existing Highers and some have retained the existing Highers for the first year. Further development work is also underway to prepare for the revised Advanced Highers available from Session 2015-16.

Alongside these course and qualification related activities, significant development has been undertaken - nationally, at authority level and in individual schools - to re-assess curricular models and to broaden the range of learner pathways which they embody, thus enabling learners to access the 'extensive opportunity for **personalisation and choice**' (Scottish Government, 2008, p.40) which the Senior Phase should offer them. The development of opportunities to offer enhanced choice and to improve the personalisation of learning has included school and authority consideration of how partnerships – within schools, among schools, in consortium arrangements and with external partners such as employers, colleges and universities could improve learners' opportunities and improve their learning, attainment and achievement. As part of this work, there appears to be a renewed drive to offer Senior Phase learners an increasing range of vocational pathways as well as the more frequently encountered academic pathways which populated pre- *Curriculum for Excellence* senior course choice forms. This move has been supported by the appearance of *Education Working For All!* (Scottish Government, 2014), which is more familiarly known as the Wood Report.

As the earlier quote from *BtC3* indicated, qualifications and progression to academic and/or work-based destinations are not the only priorities for curriculum planners and those who support learners. There are several other key priorities, including Skills for Learning, Life and Work, interdisciplinary learning to unify and add coherence to Senior Phase learning and the continued development of the Four Capacities. A 64-school

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survey carried out over the last two sessions by one of the authors of this document suggests that, in a majority of schools sampled, these latter priorities are still relatively underdeveloped. There is thus much work remaining to complete the many (and often complex) priorities which attend the Senior Phase.

### Progressing from the Broad General Education

Throughout Scotland, schools have adopted a range of curricular structures to deliver the Broad General Education (BGE) phase of *Curriculum for Excellence*. All of them seek to ensure that each young person has similar educational opportunities to develop a broad educational platform covering all of the curriculum areas and preparing them to continue their studies into the Senior Phase. Schools must ensure that the Experiences and Outcomes covered in the BGE (certainly at Level 3 for the vast majority of young people and for many also at Level 4) are at the centre of learning and provide the basis required to achieve the Four Capacities. To quote BtC3:

“The period from S1 to S3 has a clear purpose: that all young people will have a strong platform for later learning and for successful transition to qualifications at the right level for them.”

(Scottish Government, 2008, p.35)

As young people enter the Senior Phase their learning pathways need to become more individual, suiting their specific needs and inclinations. Schools need to use the BGE to develop that solid foundation so that each learner can move forward into a more specialised pathway through their Senior Phase studies:

“Every young person is entitled to experience a senior phase where he or she can continue to develop the four capacities and also obtain qualifications”

(*ibid.*, p.11)

The Senior Phase, as distinct from the Broad General Education, is the stage ‘when the young person will build up a portfolio of qualifications. It is the stage of education at which the relationship between the curriculum and National Qualifications becomes of key significance.’ (*ibid.*, p.15). Young people can only do this if appropriate support and advice are available to assist them in moving forward to the Senior Phase. School leaders (at all levels) also have to be clear what they want young people to be able to achieve in the Senior Phase and must enhance the range of available opportunities to meet the needs of all learners, particularly at both ends of the wide learning spectrum which exists in Scotland.

### Learning, Teaching, Achievement and Attainment in the Senior Phase

The Senior Phase, however, does not centre purely on qualifications. The entitlements of *all* Senior Phase learners are explicitly stated in BtC3 (p.15):

“All young people in Scotland have an entitlement to a senior phase of education which:

- provides specialisation, depth and rigour
- prepares them well for achieving qualifications to the highest level of which they are capable

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- continues to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- continues to provide a range of activities which develop the four capacities
- supports them to achieve a positive and sustained destination.”

Most schools already do some or many of these well and all schools have a basis on which to make progress. They provide the opportunities to help young people build up their portfolio of achievements and qualifications through a wide range of courses at all levels in the Senior Phase. This document – in both the main text and the Case Studies - highlights examples of how this can be done for the benefit of all learners.

In a range of contexts including smaller schools, rural schools, island schools and, across all authorities and schools, in areas where resources are becoming ever tighter, the challenge of providing these opportunities is significant. It is therefore necessary that schools and local authorities do not simply hold on to what they have or attempt to ‘add a little at the margins’ but seek to be innovative. A key aspect of such innovation lies in the development of strong partnerships with a range of organisations such as colleges, universities, employers, the voluntary sector and other providers to deliver a personalised learning experience for every young person and a key focus of such partnerships is to ensure that the traditional academic pathways of the senior years of Scottish secondary schooling are accompanied by an equally broad set of ‘industry relevant vocational pathways alongside academic studies’ (Scottish Government, 2014, p.8).

Not all our young people are academic and it is vital that we harness the skills and competencies of all our young people appropriately. As the Wood Report indicates: ‘more than 50 per cent of our young people don’t go to university and, of these, very few leave school with vocational qualifications with labour market currency’ (*ibid.*,p.7). Thus the traditional curriculum of academic subjects in the Senior Phase needs to be developed far more than was the case before *Curriculum for Excellence*:

‘Supporting children and young people in their learning involves a range of people... It is important to work in partnership to “get it right for every child”  
(Scottish Government, 2008, p17).

Indeed it is vital that the qualifications young people aim for: ‘should be flexible and designed to offer pathways to the next stage, whether in further or higher education, employment or training. They should be able to be taken at school, college or other settings’ (*ibid.*, p7).

This implies that partnerships are crucial. This is clearly stated in BtC3:

“Partnership working is an important element in curriculum planning. Partners are referred to at various points in this document; the term should be interpreted widely to include all those who can contribute to delivery of the experiences and outcomes and development of the four capacities. It will include, for example, further education colleges, Careers Scotland within Skills Development Scotland, youth work staff, health professionals, voluntary sector providers, training providers, children’s services staff, parents, employers and community learning staff. Those involved in planning the curriculum will need to integrate personal support with learning. There will be a significant but important challenge for schools, colleges and other agencies to work in partnership to achieve this.”  
(*ibid.*, p9/10)

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This document offers evidence of a variety of ways in which such partnerships are enhancing young people's learning across Scotland.

At the centre of the delivery of education is, of course, learning and teaching. Learning should be available in numerous forms, such as interdisciplinary learning. The use of methodologies such as Assessment is for Learning, flipped learning and co-operative learning, as currently used in many establishments - particularly in the BGE, need to be developed far more in the Senior Phase to motivate and inspire young people to learn more effectively and develop their social skills as well as acquiring the requisite skills for learning, life and work. The use of Glow, self-supported study, and video-conferencing are also to be encouraged as alternative methodologies enhancing learning.

Interdisciplinary learning can also be used to take advantage of opportunities to work with partners who are able to offer and support enriched learning experiences and opportunities for young people's wider involvement in society and a separate BOCSH report has been published prior to this report which outlines good practice in this respect.

### Planning for Achievement and Attainment

National *Curriculum for Excellence* documentation emphasises that providing all learners, whatever their individual needs, with opportunities to succeed in, and be recognised for, their achievement, both attainment and wider achievements, is one of the primary purposes of *Curriculum for Excellence*. This should also be seen in the context of the requirement on local authorities (and thus schools) in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to:

'secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them; and they shall exercise their functions in relation to such provision with a view to raising standards of education'

(Scottish Executive, 2000, p.2).

Together, these requirements might be read in several ways: it might be assumed that schools and authorities are required to increase the number of qualifications gained, to increase the quality of qualifications gained, to increase new opportunities for both attainment and wider learning, to introduce new means of acknowledging the achievements of learners or to provide improved forms of acknowledgement for existing wider learning. In truth, *all* of these are potentially accurate, although the specific balance in any authority or school depends on where the organisation (and, crucially, the teachers and learners therein) lies on its journey towards improvement.

The two strands, attainment and wider achievement, are generally (and correctly) presented for discussion as a pair but are then considered separately in almost all relevant publications. This document, whilst acknowledging that planning for attainment and achievement must lead to an *integrated* senior curricular structure with an appropriate range of pathways for *all* learners, follows the pattern of considering the issues related to attainment and achievement separately but purely for ease of description.

### Attainment

The first significant change related to the Senior Phase has been the introduction of 'new' one-year National Qualifications at SCQF Levels 3 to 5 in S4 to replace both 'old' national Qualifications and Standard Grades, all of which were studied over two years (although 'old' NQs were *designed* to be taken as one-year courses). The processes through which this initial phase has been carried out and the results (and implications of the initial results) gained by the first cohort are discussed in Section 3.2.3. This first phase has been closely followed by the appearance of revised Highers in S5 and will be further extended by the impending appearance of revised Advanced Highers in S6. Again, these are examined in Section 3.2.3.

In planning for improved attainment, school leaders and classroom teachers alike are faced with issues relating to improving quantity and/or quality of attainment while increasing opportunities for vocational education, development of the Four Capacities and unifying learning through wider learning, including aspects of interdisciplinary learning. These issues are also discussed in Section 3.2.3

### Achievement

As *Building the Curriculum 5 (BtC5)* suggests:

'All children and young people are entitled to have the full range of their achievements recognised, and to be supported in reflecting and building on their learning and achievements. Schools and other establishments will provide opportunities for learners to achieve and encourage them to participate.'

(Scottish Government, 2010, p.4)

*BtC5* is clear that it is for local authorities and schools to successfully plan and implement this, taking account of available national advice, but points to Skills Development Scotland, local councils' Community Learning and Development (CLD) organisations, youth workers, colleges and the voluntary sector as potential supportive partners in this process. Interestingly, partnerships with business and industry are not included in this context. *Building the Curriculum 3* acknowledges that good practice in recognising achievement exists in some areas:

'A number of education authorities, schools, colleges and other education providers across Scotland have already developed ways of recognising their pupils' achievements, through the use of certificates and awards, school notice boards, on-line portfolios and awards ceremonies. Many, however, do not have such arrangements in place or are looking to develop their approach to this. As part of the *Curriculum for Excellence* programme, the Scottish Government is actively considering how to support local authorities, schools and other education providers in doing this.'

(Scottish Government, 2008, p.45)

*BtC5* makes the point (Scottish Government, 2010, p.8) that achievement includes subject-based learning and attainment as a subset, but also covers interdisciplinary learning and even wider contexts for learning, both in schools and beyond. Key exemplars identified include:

- achievement through formally recognised awards or programmes (e.g. the Duke of Edinburgh's Award) which provide opportunities for young people to develop their potential

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- achievement through arrangements which do not lead to an accredited award but which are formally organised ( e.g. through voluntary work or leadership roles within the school)
- development of skills and capabilities through achievements in the school, home or wider community (e.g. participation in sport, the arts or community activities or through aspects of personal responsibility, such as being a young carer).

Approaches to improving achievement and related challenges are also explored in greater depth in Section 3.2.3.

### Roles of Local Authorities and Schools

Both local authorities and their schools have crucial roles to play in the development of improved learning opportunities for all Senior Phase learners but there is an equally strong reason for external partners to play a role.

#### Local Authorities

The general roles of the local authority in providing ‘school education’ (Scottish Executive, 2000, p.1) for ‘every child of school age’ (*ibid.*, p.1) and endeavouring ‘to secure improvement in the quality of school education’ (*ibid.*, p.2) are a matter of statute. The same Act introduced means through which authorities should ensure high standards in their schools through School Development Planning, regular review of school performance and delegation of ‘management’ (*ibid.*, p.5) powers and responsibilities to headteachers.

These general powers and duties also apply specifically in the contexts of *Curriculum for Excellence* and its Senior Phase. Somewhat surprisingly, the most seminal national CfE document, *Building the Curriculum 3* (Scottish Government, 2008), mentions local authorities only 10 times in its 53 pages and the two most significant mentions lie in a quote from the now largely neglected OECD Report, *Quality and Equity of Schooling in Scotland* (OECD, 2007):

‘The concept and design principles of a Curriculum for Excellence offer a broad framework within which local authorities and schools can create a range of learning opportunities that contain both intrinsic and extrinsic incentives for engagement. It should be the responsibility of local authorities to ensure that their communities have access to a wide range of programmes involving different delivery platforms, flexible approaches and sharing and collaboration amongst providers. Schools for their part are responsible for offering a broad curriculum and for differentiating this to address particular strengths and weaknesses.’ (OECD, 2007)

This suggests that there are three roles for the local authority in supporting the Senior Phase:

- investigating with schools and external partners how learners may be offered both intrinsic and extrinsic incentives to successfully engage with learning
- actively engaging with a broad range of local/national partners in ensuring that, within their Council area, learners have access to the widest possible range of learning pathways, whether delivered at schools or in other locations



- quality assuring *and* supporting schools in their developments of flexible curricula and their embedded courses, units, assessments and learner support mechanisms

Given the underlying financial climate, the significant reduction in curriculum support personnel in many authorities and the underlying duty to improve, these roles represent a challenge for many, if not all, authorities. There is potential here, however, as an absence of finance can cause long-held beliefs and structures to be re-evaluated and innovative solutions developed.

The potential importance of *external* partners, whether colleges, businesses, universities or community organisations, in supporting this challenging situation and thereby benefitting themselves as well as learners is explored further throughout this chapter but one example is offered at this stage. The appearance of *Education Working For All!* (the Wood Report) (Scottish Government, 2014) offers such an opportunity with its clear message that over 70% of Scottish businesses have no current contact with education. To prevent an uncoordinated melée of mutual approaches by schools and businesses, there is a clear role for authorities (and related bodies such as ADES), working in partnership with employers' organisations (such as CBI Scotland, Chambers of Commerce, etc.).

*Internal* partners also important to local authorities as much of the expertise authorities have lost through staff reductions continues to exist (along with other aspects of expertise) in school leaders at various levels and, in some specific aspects, in other areas of the Council. Although there are many examples of good practice by local authorities in developing aspects of internal partnership, it *may* be necessary for some councils to adopt a less controlled approach, encouraging partners to contribute more to the vision for CfE and its Senior Phase and also to take on key roles, while councils maintain responsibility for organizing QA teams (peopled by a mix of school and EA staff, as seen in examples of good practice) and for strategic direction of the initiative. Through a combination of such linkages, it is possible for local authorities to contribute appropriately to vision, policy development, consultation, planning, training, resourcing, implementation, evaluation and, crucially, amendment of initiatives in the light of evidence gathered.

### Schools

The foreword of *How Good Is Our School? The Journey to Excellence Part 3* (HMIE, 2007), more commonly referred to as HGIOS3, suggests that, 'increasingly, schools are improving the quality of learning through actions which are imaginative and innovative' (p.2). *Curriculum for Excellence* and its Senior Phase provide very clear opportunities for schools to be both imaginative and innovative in developing opportunities for learners to improve their learning, achievements and attainment. HGIOS3 also suggests a context for CfE development by emphasising in-school and wider partnerships, positive collegiate cultures and the involvement of individual teachers, groups of teachers and, where appropriate, all staff in cyclically envisioning, developing, delivering, evaluating and improving high quality teaching and learning.

In developing the Senior Phase of CfE, schools will be considering how to maximise learners' motivation (both extrinsic and intrinsic), interest and enjoyment and how to

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support their individual career aspirations, not by attempting to build several hundred individual curricula but by consulting with learners, parents, the local community and local businesses to ensure that they provide both a breadth and appropriate depth of learning, achievement and attainment opportunities for learners of all abilities. These opportunities will be expressed through the range of curricular pathways available to learners, with the courses, units and other learning contexts populating these pathways available in a range of settings including the school itself, other local schools, local colleges and the premises of local employers.

The role of senior leaders in schools will include carrying out initial research to establish what works well and would continue to work well, what might be added to improve learning and teaching and what needs to be stopped or replaced; facilitating and acting upon consultation; developing a shared vision for an improved Senior Phase; implementing this through improved curricular models to meet as many as possible of the needs identified through consultation; increasing the diversity and quality of provision by involving partner providers; actively seeking such appropriate partnerships; providing support, training and resourcing; maximising the potential benefits by encouraging flexible working across and beyond the school and also by encouraging shared ownership, shared leadership and shared evaluation of the project, thus building a research - consultation - vision - development - training/resourcing - partner recruitment - implementation - evaluation cycle within which the results of research and evaluation in earlier cycles are used to improve future cycles.

### **Roles of Partners from Business, Industry and the Wider Community**

To some extent, Scotland's track record in attempting to provide equal (or even relatively equal) status for vocational learning, progression to the world of work and partnership with business, industry and the wider community has not been one of unalloyed glory: the consistent (and consistently reinforced across a broad range of stakeholders) yardstick for evaluation of secondary education has been that of academic attainment and progression to university.

In the post Second World War era, there have been five significant attempts to improve vocational education and/or more coherently involve business and community-based organisations in school education. Of these, the Brunton Report, *From School to Further Education* (SED, 1963), and the Howie Report, *Upper Secondary Education in Scotland* (SOED, 1992) were abandoned by governments and their agencies, although the analyses of the problems around vocational education and business links contained in these reports were more widely accepted than their proposed solutions. To some extent, the advent of Standard Grade and then Higher Still (and its related 'old' National Qualifications) addressed some of the concerns in these reports but much was left unresolved. Two further initiatives, a UK-wide initiative - the Technological and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) - and a Scottish initiative - *16-18s in Scotland: An Action Plan* (SED, 1983) - operating in the same time frame (1983 to the late 1990s) attempted to make some improvements both to education-industry linkage and to the range and nature of courses available to vocationally-oriented learners. Both could claim some successes although the resulting 'marriage' of the vocational qualifications body, SCOTVEC, and its long-established academic cousin, SEB, could not be claimed to have been an overnight success.

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These four initiatives led to some re-evaluation and/or some reorganisation of Scottish education but it would be difficult to suggest that they resolved the issues of academic-vocational parity, led to much greater business involvement or shifted the essential paradigm of Scottish education from an academic emphasis or the goal from university entrance. A fifth initiative, however, has recently appeared. The Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce has issued a new report, *Education Working For All!* (Scottish Government, 2014) - more commonly referred to as the Wood Report - which again addresses these issues.

Before considering the Wood Report's implications for schools and employers alike, it is perhaps appropriate firstly to 'zoom out' to examine what the politico-educational view of partnership with business should include. BtC3 offers a broad and helpful definition of the potential partners available to schools and of some of the necessary actions:

'the term should be interpreted widely to include all those who can contribute to delivery of the experiences and outcomes and development of the four capacities. It will include, for example, further education colleges, Careers Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, youth work staff, health professionals, voluntary sector providers, training providers, children's services staff, parents, employers and community learning staff. Those involved in planning the curriculum will need to integrate personal support with learning. There will be a significant but important challenge for schools, colleges and other agencies to work in partnership to achieve this.'

(Scottish Government, 2008, p.10)

*Building the Curriculum 4: skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work (BtC4)* reminds us of the importance of planning the Senior Phase to provide appropriate learning opportunities and curricular pathways for all learners. In so doing, it provides a clear rationale for learning partnerships:

'The curriculum should be designed, managed and delivered in such a way that takes full account of each learner's individual needs and stage of development. All young people, but particularly those in need of more choices and more chances, will benefit from different approaches to learning and opportunities to access learning in different contexts. Working in partnership affords young people a broad range of opportunities and scope for greater personalisation and choice, with benefits for both the young person and the partner organisation. Working with each other, and with other partners such as parents, employers, public bodies and voluntary organisations, can help schools and other learning providers to make the most of their contribution and recognise their part in promoting lifelong learning.'

(Scottish Government, 2009, pp.8-9)

The summary version of *BtC5* (2010) makes the point that partnership must be worked at by all partners. It requires school and other staff to develop shared vision, principles and aims, as well as shared mechanisms for planning, implementing and evaluating joint work:

'Children and young people learn in a variety of settings, supported by a range of partnerships. Recognising, assessing and recording their achievement needs careful collaborative planning on the part of all those involved. Learners do best

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where staff concerned develop in partnership a shared understanding of the aims of learning and the standards and expectations across the curriculum.'

(Scottish Government, 2010, p.6)

Meanwhile, *BtC3* suggests that, for genuine success, partnerships must necessarily include learners and parents as well as teachers and members of the business, Further and Higher Education communities:

'Designing the curriculum requires planning in partnership with young people, their parents and carers and with a range of others who can contribute effectively to their learning, based on good evidence of progress in learning.'

(Scottish Government, 2008, p.25)

These various insights provide a framework against which the appearance of the Wood Report (2014), its recommendations and the Scottish Government's response may be assessed to help identify how these can help build more effective partnerships for learning.

Sir Ian Wood's Commission made 39 recommendations, not all of which are germane to this document or directly relevant to teaching and learning in the Senior Phase. They fall into three groups related to:

- Education and Training (13 recommendations, 6 of which apply to schools)
- Involvement of Employers (12 recommendations, 4 of which relate directly to schools)
- Advancing Equalities (14 recommendations, 5 of which relate directly to schools)

Readers are referred to the Wood Report for the details of these recommendations which affect not only curriculum designers or timetablers but course designers and teachers, Guidance teachers and Learning Support teachers.

The Scottish Government's response to these recommendations is of particular interest. Their most tangible support comes in the form of the relatively modest sum of £1 million for Invest in Young People groups, in £3 million to Skills Development Scotland to support equality in Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) and in a target to increase MAs to 30,000 new starts per annum by 2020. Better Careers Guidance software tools are also promised. Required/requested action in schools and local authorities is less clear. Beyond a statement which says:

'As ever, early intervention is crucial. This means action that is very often focused on young people who are still in the school system. For this reason, the development of Scotland's young workforce will be a joint endeavour between us and partners in local government'

(Statement by the then Cabinet Secretary for Training, Youth and Women's Employment, June 24, 2014)

it is as yet unclear how the recommendations of the report will impact on schools. What is clear is that a renewed commitment by employers and government to education-industry partnership represents an opportunity for local authorities and schools to develop or further develop learning partnerships to support learners of all abilities and interests. This is further explored in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 and illustrated in the Case Studies of Chapter 4.

## 3.2 Pathways to Sustained Positive Destinations

As outlined in the overview above, it is crucial to the success of the Senior Phase, to its role as the culmination of 15 years of learning and to its role in preparing learners for work and further learning, that each learner can access a broad, enjoyable and beneficial set of learning pathways which will interest them, engage them in wanting to learn, support them in acquiring the necessary qualifications and skills and prepare them for lifelong learning, the world of work and other aspects of their future life. The development of appropriate curricular pathways is considered in this section.

### 3.2.1 Curriculum Design Issues

#### Developing Appropriate Learner Pathways

One of the principal foci of *Curriculum for Excellence* has been the desire to develop learning pathways which are appropriate and relevant to the needs of *all* learners. The highly academic pathways of the past – including, in some cases, a ‘5 Highers at all costs’ mentality – are no longer sufficient. Learners develop at different speeds and the extent of their maturity is often linked to their achievement or lack thereof. It is vital that learners, formerly forced into courses ill-suited and possibly of little interest to them and then left to flourish (or perhaps to perish), have an appropriate range of engaging courses from which they can choose learning experiences which interest and engage them. This does not (and cannot) imply that every learner will have a completely individualised set of experiences as no school can afford this. It does, however, imply that schools must be more judicious and more ambitious in:

- a) seeking out possible new courses and experiences
- b) cooperating with others to enhance their ability to offer such experiences
- c) being flexible in their approach to how, where and with whom learners can access their chosen courses
- d) being innovative in the ways in which they construct a timetable to enable as broad (and deep) a range of potential learning (and achievement) experiences as possible.

The case studies included in this document highlight flexible learning, partnerships with colleges, a campus model and other community partnerships. The roles of volunteering, work experience, work shadowing, and studying courses in other venues rather than just the traditional school placement are also examined in the case studies. Many schools and other establishments have already developed exemplar pathways to inspire young people to looking at alternative flexible ways of attaining their career goals. The advent of treating S4-6 as one cohort has already enhanced the possible pathways of young people by allowing the many less popular course to become more viable and thus allow young people a wider and deeper choice in their studies.

However, the pathways open to young people need to be deeper and broader than previous pathways. Young people need to ensure that they are multi-talented and thus their curriculum should comprise more than just courses leading to qualifications. As *BtC3* puts it: ‘There is a continuing emphasis, for example, on health and wellbeing

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appropriate to this phase, including physical activity and opportunities for personal achievement, service to others and practical experience of the world of work.’ (p15). By ensuring these opportunities are available in some form, more appropriate pathways for young people will exist.

### Ensuring Sustained Positive Learner Destinations

“Every young person is entitled to support in moving into a positive and sustained destination.” (BtC3, p18)

Positive destinations is a challenge for schools and local authorities and new systems for planning and a different approach to partnership working need to evolve as a priority. There has been general recognition that early intervention with families is important in breaking the cycle of social disadvantage – dealing with generations of people in a family who have never worked. To that end there has to be strategic planning to ensure positive destinations lead to employment and economic growth. Local Authorities have a definite role to play here in supporting flexible approaches and more effectively planned transitions to support young people and improved partnership with further education providers. There also has to be different mind-set to support the process of preparing young people to leave school; schools need to seek to hold on not just to those who already have planned positive destinations – albeit to go to university, college or employment, but, more importantly, to hold on to those intending to leave, but with nothing to go to.

As *BtC3* states, ‘the OECD Review recognised that for higher attaining young people the post-school transition to further or higher education is fairly straightforward but that for weaker learners there were more complex and uncertain pathways’ (p.18). There must therefore be an emphasis on developing the skills of young people - including resilience – and for matching them to those required in the workplace. The case studies indicate ways in which to do this.

### The Contribution of IDL in the Senior Phase

Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) is an important element within *Curriculum for Excellence*, not merely in the context of the BGE but also in the Senior Phase. Since IDL is one of the four contexts for learning within *Curriculum for Excellence*, it is not an optional extra.

Whilst many schools have begun to develop IDL within their BGE programmes, it is an area which research suggests has generally been neglected in the development of the Senior Phase, with relatively few schools taking it forward on any coherent basis. IDL is the subject of a separate BOCOSH report, *BOCOSH Report 4: Developing Interdisciplinary Learning*, and it is recommended that practitioners use that report in conjunction with this document as a starting point for developing their own ideas or as a support to further development. In *BtC3* it states that:

‘Interdisciplinary studies can also take advantage of opportunities to work *with partners* who are able to offer and support enriched learning experiences and opportunities for young people’s wider involvement in society.’ (our italics)

(Scottish Government, 2008, p. 21)

This underlines the need for transformational approaches, working with partners to significantly enhance (and provide a real-life basis for) the curricular experience of Senior Phase learners. Effective IDL can take different forms, including individual stand-alone projects or longer courses of study, as well as providing “opportunities for mixed stage learning which is interest based.” (Scottish Government, 2008, p11). Those opportunities can support young people in exploring different and/or wider issues, solving problems or completing an integrative final project, covering different curricular areas.

IDL in the Senior Phase can:

- include projects on several linked areas, with relevant experiences and outcomes, particularly, for example for National 4 pupils
- revolve round ASDAN, John Muir or similar qualifications which enhance the skills for learning, life and work
- include community involvement with specific aims and outcomes which involve partners in the community supplementing and complimenting what the school can offer
- involve problem-solving activities which cover more than one curriculum area
- be the mentoring of new skills, predominantly provided by partners outwith schools in areas traditionally not taught in schools, e.g. in industrial settings
- create “days out” from the curriculum – again with specific experiences and outcomes which enhance young people’s learning away from the traditional curriculum structure.

The Scottish Baccalaureates in Science, Languages, Expressive Arts and Social Sciences also provide further opportunities for schools to develop partnerships to allow young people the opportunity to work across curriculum areas in an inter-disciplinary way.

### Developing Partnerships for Improved Achievement

As previously discussed, there are significant benefits to developing a set of learning partnerships between schools and/or authorities and aspects of their local communities including business and industry, community organisations, other aspects of the local council, as well as with parents, teachers and pupils themselves. However, as also previously noted, there have also been inherent challenges in developing a broad and appropriate set of learning partnerships within a school. Some of these have related to staffing restrictions (or non-availability) within a school or authority, some to non-availability of appropriate qualifications in a school context, some to lack of work-related opportunities, some to lack of suitable external partners and some to lack of parity of esteem (both in educational circles and in the wider community) with respect to non-academic courses and work-based learning. Although there have been instances of good practice, these have not always been replicable, partially because, as the Wood Report suggests,

‘Scotland has a diverse labour market with significantly different supply and demand trends across different regions. For example, what works in the predominantly rural regions wouldn’t work in the big cities, while regions like

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Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire experience very different labour market conditions with a very buoyant oil and gas sector.'

(Scottish Government, 2014, p.45)

The strategic approaches and partnership arrangements set out in Section 3.3 attempt to address these issues and the case studies of Section 4 attempt to exemplify ways in which schools and authorities are attempting to provide increased opportunities for learners of all abilities, backgrounds and aspirations to improve both their attainment and their wider achievement. They also demonstrate that a 'one size fits all' approach is neither in place nor intended: the schools and authorities providing case studies have attempted to address their own local needs.

The potential contribution of external partners to offering a broader and deeper range of opportunities for wider learning and achievement through additional or enhanced curricular pathways is significant but is unlikely simply to appear at a school without significant effort. There are several means by which partnerships may be developed to meet such needs. These include:

- Authority-based approaches to local Chambers of Commerce, individual employers, colleges and community organisations, including geographical and virtual campus arrangements
- School-based approaches (either in the absence of a local authority initiative or to augment an authority initiative to meet the specific needs of the school's own learners)
- Subject or multi-subject approaches where the partnership is designed to enhance learning in a curricular area or across several curricular areas (e.g. STEM, Modern Languages) in one or more schools in an authority.

These partnerships should be established, developed and improved in a long-term manner through which all partners (but principally the learners themselves) benefit. Such partnerships should be jointly envisaged, planned, developed, resourced, implemented, evaluated and cyclically improved by all partners, set against an agreed set of objectives and against an agreed and cyclically reviewed development and improvement plan. There are aspects of this in the Wood report's 15<sup>th</sup> Recommendation but the emphasis is slightly different.

### **Adding Value through Local Authority Initiatives.**

As initially considered in Section 3.1, there are several aspects of Senior Phase development where local authorities can play a key role. These include:

- development of a strategic vision for Senior Phase developments in the Council Area in partnership with schools, businesses and local communities
- identification of key internal and external partners with and through whom aspects of the necessary development, implementation and evaluation processes may be more effectively carried out
- conducting appropriate research to clarify issues related to the overall initiative (before, during and after the initiative)
- strategic consultation with partners and communities



- development of evidence-based council policy
- strategic planning and development of the initiative
- provision of high quality CPD (and support for appropriate training of external partners)
- provision of strategic and devolved resources (and working with partners to add to resourcing)
- appropriate support for school implementation of the initiative
- the strategic overview of review and quality assurance processes and the involvement of appropriately skilled partners in carrying out such reviews
- development of amended plans for further cycles of development and implementation in the light of internal and external evaluation evidence

Some examples of local authority good practice in these contexts include:

- the development of an authority-wide campus approach to the Senior Phase
- the use of 'business breakfasts' to draw in potential business partners at a time when they are able to engage more easily
- authority-maintained (and developed) databases of potential partners
- synchronisation of transportation across schools to facilitate pupil transfer, thus maximising numbers in Senior Phase classes
- development of college outreach sites in schools and community centres
- authority – university/college/business partnerships to support Baccalaureate project work
- authority-maintained (and developed) work experience databases
- inter-authority cooperation to spread costs, and increase the quality and reach, of CPD
- 'city campus' approaches to maximise learner pathways and attainment in areas where the density and proximity of learner populations facilitate this
- use of video conferencing to link learners in widely-separated schools and to facilitate contact with business partners for whom travel would prohibit such involvement
- inter-authority sharing of curricular (and other) expertise through *ad hoc* groups (e.g. BOCSH) and/or joint secondments of skilled individuals

### 3.2.2 Achievement and Attainment

Scottish local authorities' legal responsibility to provide 'adequate and effective provision of school education' (UK government, 1980) is enshrined in the Education (Scotland) Acts of 1945, 1962 and 1980 and the additional responsibility to 'secure improvement in the quality of school education' in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 (Scottish Executive, 2000). Councils' duty, and apparent freedom, to govern school-based education has long been highlighted by central government. Inevitably, councils exercise this duty and privilege through the work of their local schools, although few councils or schools would entirely accept the national view regarding freedom in their

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actions – the reality is a more complex dance involving national politicians, civil servants, national agencies, local politicians, education officials, headteachers, teachers and their unions, parents, employers, universities and the media.

Historically – and by common consent (despite occasional protests from unions, headteachers and, to a lesser extent, local authorities) - the most commonly used yardstick of progress in improvement has been that of examination results, resulting from a common Scottish view of education as the key enabler of any learner's potential to progress from their local primary school to one of Scotland's universities. Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education employ more subtle yardsticks (as enshrined in *How Good Is Our School? The Journey to Excellence: Part 3* (HMIe, 2007) with which to measure improvement but, despite their laudable attempts to emphasise learning and teaching, leadership, quality assurance, the work of staff and the role of parents, even *their* key performance outcomes focus on attainment although, commendably, also on achievement and planning for improvement. Of these three, by far the most clearly identifiable in HMI reports (and newspapers) is attainment. The other two key performance outcomes – achievement and governance/leadership – are far less the subject of public discussion.

As explored in Section 3.1 and implicit in the two paragraphs above, there has been a long-term imbalance, both in the minds of politico-educational leaders and those of the public, regarding the relative importance of academic and vocational education and of the qualifications/experiences/skills deriving from these twin (but not equal) educational tracks. *Curriculum for Excellence*, allied to the Wood Report (Scottish Government, 2014), offers schools and their learners an opportunity to finally redress this balance by giving not only parity of esteem to vocational qualifications and to school links with the world of work and the wider community but also through promotion of the concept that the needs and aspirations of each individual learner – whether to proceed to university, college, work or some other destination – are of prime importance. This necessarily implies that a '7 or 8 Standard Grades to 5 Highers to 3 Advanced Highers' curricular structure (or something similar) will still have importance, as societal preconceptions do not change overnight and academically able learners will still require many aspects of this pathway, but also that other pathways will increasingly gain currency, especially if the Wood Report gains momentum in a manner that its four postwar predecessors failed to achieve.

These changing circumstances are already resulting in profound changes to the patterns of curricular uptake by learners and to the quantity and distribution of qualifications gained, as considered in the following section.

### The Changing Pattern of Achievement and Attainment

Several curricular change processes have differentially developed in Scottish secondary schools as local authorities and their schools have begun to formulate responses to *Curriculum for Excellence*. These are examined in more detail in Section 3.3.2 but for the purposes of this section may be summarised as:

- Changes to curricular structures within the Broad General Education phase
  - To improve progression from primary school
  - To provide for personalisation and choice

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- To provide both breadth and depth of learning experience
- To provide pace and challenge for all learners
- To develop S3 as an effective platform for improving progression to the Senior Phase
- To begin to develop new approaches such as interdisciplinary learning
- Specific changes to S4 curricular structures
  - To respond to the changed timescale for SCQF Level 3-5 qualifications
  - To improve progression from the BGE and through the Senior Phase
- Changes to the overall Senior Phase curricular structure
  - To provide a broader range of curricular pathways
  - To provide more effective progression through curricular levels for learners of all abilities
  - To offer alternative approaches to the repeated 'two-term dash' model, including 1-year and 2-year courses
- Moves to provide a much broader and more vocationally relevant curriculum
  - To support all learners in attaining sustained, positive destinations
  - To improve employability
  - To enhance the skills
  - To prepare learners for lifelong learning and the world of work

The means of carrying out these challenging agendas have varied considerably across authorities and, in some cases, within authorities. In the BGE, some schools have offered choice within courses while others have offered choice between courses. The starting point for choice of subjects had varied widely with some beginning with limited choice of subject courses in S1, others in S2 and all by S3.

In the Senior Phase, the initial point of divergence across schools has been the S4 curricular structure with schools offering learners the opportunity to take anything from 5 to 8 courses in S4. Inevitably, this has already led to significant changes in the quantity of attainment in different authorities and across schools in some authorities. It is less clear what is happening with respect to the quality of attainment and it must be remembered that this change process is continuing as more schools appear to be moving away from the traditional 8 subjects.

This is being followed through by moves to amend the entire Senior Phase structure in some schools, with some offering all learners the traditional opportunity to take qualifications in S5, S5 and S6, others to take a mixture of SCQF 3-5 and Higher qualifications in S5 (after a 2-year process) followed by further qualifications in S6 and some to take initial qualifications in S4 followed by further qualifications in S6. A few schools have begun to develop more complex variants of these models with optional certification points for some learners at stages other than their main certification points. Again, this is examined in Section 3.3.2.

The impact of these changes can only be seen at this stage in the attainment of the first S4 cohort. In late 2012, Education Scotland provided figures suggesting that S4 curricular structures were diverging. The figures were:

Table 3.1 Local Authority Uptake of S4 Structures

No. of S4 courses per learner	No. of Local Authorities (LAs)	Percentage of LAs	Notes
8	5	15.6%	43.7% of schools (as well as some schools from the 'mixed' group) remained with 7 or 8 subjects at this point
7/8	4	12.5%	
7	5	15.6%	
Mixed (school choice)	11	34.4%	Just over a third of LAs offered a free choice to schools in order to meet their local needs
6	7	21.9%	Just over a fifth of LAs either agreed with their schools, or mandated them, to offer only 6 courses
5	0	0%	No LA opted for 5 courses but a small number of schools from the 'mixed' group opted for 5.

[From a presentation by Mr Kenneth Muir, then Strategic Director Curriculum, Education Scotland (28/11/2012)]

Comparison of national attainment statistics for 2012-13 and 2013-14 demonstrates the quantitative impact of some schools presenting candidates for 7, 6 or even 5 courses, as opposed to the 'traditional' 8. The underlying distribution of schools appears to have changed slightly since Mr Muir's speech, with more schools embracing a '6-course' approach but the numbers do not appear to have shifted significantly from the picture as identified in November 2012.

As may be seen from the following table, the overall **quantity** of attainment is significantly down (by around 13.4%):

Table 3.2 Level 3-5 Attainment: National Levels

Attainment at SCQF Levels 3-5 (from 'old' & 'new' qualifications)	2012-2013	2013-2014	Percentage Change from 2013 to 2014
Level 3	65675	27526	-58%
Level 4	190006	141395	-26%
Level 5	300008	312499	+4%
Total: 3-5	555689	481420	-13.4%

More significantly, the balance of Level 3, Level 4 and Level 5 passes appears to have altered dramatically from 2013 to 2014:

Table 3.3 Level 3-5 Attainment: Changing Patterns

Attainment at SCQF Levels 3-5 (from 'old' & 'new' qualifications)	2012-2013 (as % of total Level 3-5 passes for the year)	2013-2014 (as % of total Level 3-5 passes for the year)	Change from 2013 to 2014
Level 3	11.8%	5.7%	-6.1%
Level 4	34.2%	29.4%	--4.8%
Level 5	54.0%	64.9%	+10.9%
Total: 3-5	100%	100%	-13.4%

These figures raise more questions than they answer: about whether the **quality** of attainment has improved (although a large minority of headteachers and deputies interviewed in connection with this document suggested that some/many learners had attained at a higher level than expected and that this was causing some challenges in S5) or whether the inherent standards of the new examinations have remained at the same level as before, about whether some teachers entered candidates who might have been expected to attain at level 3 for National 4 examinations as the National 3 materials appeared later, about whether '6-column schools' are raising the quality of learning and about whether at least some of the apparent change is transient and will 'settle down' as the old qualifications slowly disappear and the new qualifications become better understood by pupils, teachers and examiners alike.

With only one year's data, it is not yet possible to identify trends but the data prompt a number of questions. It will take several more years for sufficient data to appear to permit analysts to ascertain whether the outcome of the radical changes in S4 structures in some or many schools leads to improvements in the quantity and/or quality of attainment. It will take slightly longer to determine what impact these changes have on Higher and Advanced Higher results, particularly in schools adopting two-year courses (see Section 3.3.2) as part of their Senior Phase provision.

As of yet, there has been no publication of data demonstrating whether the number of opportunities for achievement (other than through SQA qualifications) has increased, whether the extent of success by learners who access those opportunities has increased, or whether the range and quality of such opportunities for achievement has improved. It is possible that Insight will provide such data in future but it will require the

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Scottish Government or COSLA, with the assistance of schools and local authorities, to be proactive in collecting and publishing such data for observers to be able to ascertain whether there is evidence that the quantity and quality of achievement has increased.

### Formal and Alternative Qualifications

The SQA is traditionally seen as the main provider of qualifications in Scotland. The new National Qualifications (Nationals 3-5) are now on stream and bedded-in. although the revised Highers are only now being implemented and Advanced Highers have yet to begin. The implementation of the new Higher (National 6) is currently somewhat mixed with some schools and local authorities developing and introducing the new courses during session 2014-15 with first presentations in May 2015, whilst others are delaying introduction and presentation until 2015/16. With the development of the new Advanced Higher courses in 2015/16, the qualifications designed to meet the challenges of *Curriculum for Excellence* will finally become a reality.

However, the purpose of *Curriculum for Excellence* is to better meet all learners' needs and to support not raised attainment but also increased and improved achievement. Achievement is much harder to track through qualifications. Although the appearance of Insight, the Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool, will hopefully provide schools and the wider public with opportunities to assess how well schools are succeeding in increasing learners' achievements, this cannot be more than a porthole through which to observe some aspects of achievement.

Although the breadth of qualifications offered by SQA has widened considerably in recent years, both through the appearance of further examinable subjects and through the certification of Skills for Learning, Life and Work, there are other bodies within and beyond Scotland which provide additional and alternative certification for learners – ASDAN, the John Muir Trust Award, the Prince's Trust, Saltire Awards and the Diana Award to name but a few. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is also seen as a means to raise achievement in schools and has been used as such for many years.

Within *Curriculum for Excellence*, it is the aim of schools to widen the net of qualifications on offer to young people in schools. Enhanced links with colleges and now universities (see the Ellon Case Study in Section 4) illustrate this. There have also been successful experiments, for example in schools such as Breadalbane Academy, Aberfeldy, in developing coherent programmes to develop a range of rural skills including game-keeping, forestry, estate management and farming. Some of these schemes have involved colleges and/or Sector Skills Councils.

### Recognising Achievement

As *BtC3* indicates:

'There should also be planned opportunities for personal achievement and increasing contributions to the school and community.'

(Scottish, Government, 2008, p.40)

Schools and other establishments are moving to recognise pupils' achievement – both in schools and outwith - in more positive ways. The advent of the end-of-BGE portfolio has

helped this, as has its precursor the P7 portfolio, which many secondary schools are building on, to create the e-portfolio all pupils should have by the end of S3. In the Senior Phase, opportunities in most schools are already numerous but, nevertheless, it is widely seen as an area for schools to develop further.

The discovery, recording and celebration of pupil achievement is often a difficult pursuit, particularly with regard to achievements outwith school. The traditional Scottish psyche of hiding one's light under a bushel requires a culture change and Scottish schools must try to support this change. Worryingly, a number of pupils do not appear to wish their achievements outwith school to be noted and this makes life difficult for schools, if they are to respect the wishes of the individual but at the same time celebrate pupil achievements.

Almost all schools are developing systems to record and celebrate pupil achievement, but it does require a culture change in many schools, starting with the transition from primary to secondary, to mark the achievements of young people in a more positive, significant and helpful way. E-portfolios, headteachers' praise sessions, use of school websites are all ways to further celebrate pupil achievement.

### Achieving 100% Sustained and Positive Destinations

Schools are adept at recording where their young people go after leaving school, be it to Higher or Further Education, training, apprenticeships, employment or unemployment. However, some of these destinations do not turn out to be as sustained as hoped and the worrying drop-out rates at college, university and even with regard to apprenticeships and training, undermines the sustained part of our young people's destinations and ultimately the positive part, too. It is important that young people develop resilience and the ability to work and study independently that must be a focus for schools and colleges.

This links back to the quality of teaching and learning mentioned earlier. 'Spoon-feeding' young people the requirements to pass exams can often allow them to gain qualifications in the short term, but does not produce independent learners who have learned how to learn and are consequently able to adapt and change their learning patterns to cope with the demands of study at Higher and Further education. The Case Studies attached illustrate possible ways of achieving this.

### 3.2.3 Developing Skills, Qualifications and Awards in Partnership

The importance of external partners to providing a broad, engaging and challenging set of learning experiences for all learners is not a new concept. In *Improving Scottish Education 2005-2008* (2009), HMIE said that:

'Working in partnership with others is a fundamental way for educational establishments and services to help practitioners act in ways that make positive differences for children, young people and adult learners. A coherent curriculum requires close collaboration across transitions. This means that educational providers must work with each other, with parents and with other services for

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children and adults to ease learners' transitions between stages and educational sectors. Such joint working ensures a continuous lifelong learning experience where barriers to learning are successfully identified and tackled.'

(HMIE, 2009, p.17)

*BtC3* further emphasised the importance of learning partnerships to build both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in learners:

'Partnerships with colleges, youth work services, the voluntary sector and employers will open up a wide range of motivating choices, based upon the experiences and outcomes, to meet the needs of all young people. '

(Scottish Government, 2008, p.37)

### Developing Skills

Until (and, in some schools beyond) the introduction of *Curriculum for Excellence*, skills were sometimes considered as part of the 'vocational curriculum'. Within secondary schools, this was often provided through courses (certificate and non-certificate) within which learners developed skills specific to a vocational area and also more generic skills such as literacy, numeracy, ICT skills, teamwork, critical thinking and problem-solving. This often led to skills-based learning being linked to practical contexts and to 'less academic' learners, possibly leading to progression to the workplace or to college programmes linked to one or more trades.

The aspirations of this traditional approach have been replaced in *Curriculum for Excellence* by an emphasis *for all learners* on the acquisition of the knowledge, understanding, skills and other attributes needed to assist them in developing the Four Capacities. Thus, we have moved from the development of practical skills and core skills for one group of learners and the development of academic abilities for the other group to a position where the focus is on the outcomes of learning and the skills needed by all learners as they prepare for learning, life and work.

Skills for Learning, Life and Work (Scottish Government, 2009, p. 5) comprise several sets of overlapping skills:

- **Personal and learning skills** that enable individuals to become effective lifelong learners
- **Literacy and numeracy**
- The **five core skills** of communication, numeracy, problem solving, information technology and working with others
- **Essential skills** that include all of the above
- **Vocational skills** that are specific to a particular occupation or sector

The key role of practitioners and their partners is to plan and provide learning experiences within which learners of all abilities can develop, demonstrate and apply their skills. The role of partners in helping to develop a range of stimulating and motivating learning contexts within which learners can develop both skills and knowledge is highly significant.



## Choosing Qualifications and Awards

The questions related to the mechanics and underlying philosophy of providing qualifications (e.g. 'how many?' (particularly in S4), 'for how long?' and 'when?') have already been considered in Sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 and are not repeated here.

In choosing the qualifications for which young people are to be presented, it is crucial that their needs are matched with what is on offer. In other words, it is vital to begin the design of a school's curriculum and qualifications with the needs of the young people and match those to the qualifications available. It is indeed 'courses for horses', rather than the other way round. The importance of partners in broadening and deepening the range of qualifications available to learners is as crucial here as in supporting the development of skills.

The purpose of the Senior Phase is to build up a portfolio of qualifications leading to a (genuinely) sustained positive destination. Putting every young person in for a Maths qualification in S4 and S5 may help the numeracy of the nation, but it may not suit every young person who is not mathematically minded, nor may it assist them in reaching their desired destination. Schools and other establishments will have to think radically outwith the confines of the traditional curriculum and this is one example of where interdisciplinary learning may come into its own in the Senior Phase. Alternative qualifications such as ASDAN awards, Saltire Awards through volunteering in the community, John Muir awards for environmental courses and activities and awards through YASS are a few examples of qualifications which may be attained as a result of a specific course or of IDL activities..

## Working with Partners

In developing learning opportunities which can provide learners with improved skills, qualifications and personal attributes, schools – particularly in a time of financial stringency - must necessarily both do more themselves (through flexible working, more efficient and effective timetabling, fine-tuning staffing, development of new courses and introduction of new qualifications) but must also seek middle to long term partnerships to enhance their provision. Such partnerships will involve organisations and individuals who are familiar to the school and some who are less familiar. Senior Phase learning pathways will, as before *Curriculum for Excellence*, involve the school itself, other local schools and colleges, local employers, community organisations (e.g. local charities, Duke of Edinburgh and other youth groups, local sports clubs), and branches of the local council itself (e.g. direct works organisations, community learning and development services, horticultural services, library and museum services, planning services, primary schools).

The greatest potential increase in partnerships relates to business and industry. As the Wood Report (Scottish Government, 2014) indicates, 'more than 50% of [Scottish] young people don't go to university and, of these, very few leave school with vocational qualifications with labour market currency' (p.7). There is a clear need to involve business and FE partners a) in careers guidance, b) in helping to provide learning pathways to vocational qualifications, c) in providing high quality work experience and d)

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in helping to ensure that learners of all abilities and interests have experience and understanding of the world of work. Wood (Scottish Government, 2014, p.17) suggests that 70% of Scottish businesses have no contact with education: there is therefore significant opportunity to promote partnerships but objectives, responsibilities, plans, development strategies and evaluation systems all need to be created and operated. Wood's baseline suggestion is that every school should have at least one long-term business partnership. Given that some schools have built significant networks of learning partners, this seems unambitious but it may represent a starting point for some.

Colleges have undergone profound change in recent years and some schools report that college partnerships have suffered during this period. Again the Wood Report (*ibid.*) offers significant potential support for improvements in this context, although research carried out for the creation of this document suggests that some schools (and some authorities) have created significant partnership models with their local college(s), including the provision of joint school/college HNC courses to offer breadth and depth of vocational learning.

Most schools have links with some community organisations. However, there is still much more that can be done to introduce learners to the world of work and to community involvement. Strangely, local councils have not all (and not always) offered involvement with their non-education departments. With the advent of *Curriculum for Excellence*, however, this is changing quickly with schools reporting a range of additional learning pathways in areas such as horticulture, wood and metalworking, as well as work experience for a range of occupations e.g. primary teaching, secretarial and administrative work, librarianship.

### 3.3 Strategic Approaches to the Senior Phase

#### 3.3.1 Overview

As outlined in the overview given in Section 3.1, there is a clear need for a strategic approach to implementing the Senior Phase so that, in each authority and school, the Senior Phase may:

- be well planned, developed, implemented and evaluated to ensure that each learner's needs and aspirations are well catered for and that each member of staff is well briefed, fully involved and is able both to contribute appropriately and to lead and develop aspects of the school programme, both within and beyond their area of subject expertise
- provide orderly and supportive transitions from the BGE Phase, within stages of the Senior Phase and to genuinely sustained and positive destinations for all learners
- offer (within the constraints of finance, staffing and availability of wider partnerships) learners an appropriate choice of curricular pathways permitting them to address their own specific needs and to pursue their own learning pathway
- maximise the achievement and attainment of each learner

- appropriately involve internal and external partners in these activities

To achieve these demanding requirements, each authority and its schools will require to consider in which contexts and in which combinations in-school, cross-school, business partnership, FE/HE partnership and campus approaches should be employed.

Pre-conditions for success in achieving these goals include:

- the development of whole-school ownership of, and commitment to, the school's Senior Phase programme
- the appointment of SMT lead officers for *Curriculum for Excellence* and for school partnerships and their active support by other SMT members and middle leaders within the school
- commitment by school Support teams to the full meaning of 'Support for Pupils and their Learning, including active participation in developing careers guidance, course choice advice to learners and partnerships for learning
- faculty/departmental commitment to universal support, to interdisciplinary learning and to working with external partners
- flexibility on the part of all members of the school community, seeking genuine improvement rather than preserving prior arrangements

### 3.3.2 In-School Approaches

#### Establishing a Flexible Climate

If timetabling is "the art of the possible", then the possibilities available to the timetabler (and thus eventually to learners) are greatly increased by a willingness to be flexible among school leaders, members of staff, parents and learners.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of developing and implementing *Curriculum for Excellence* to more closely meet the needs of young people is that of ensuring an appropriate climate within the school in which all members of the school community have genuine opportunities for involvement in the planning, development, implementation and review of the programme. There is a particular need for teachers to be involved in envisaging, planning, developing, discussing and leading aspects of the programme and for them to stand aside from any previously-held positions, however cherished, and to embrace new and/or improved aspects of the learning programme, some of which will not necessarily fit conveniently within subject headings or will involve cooperation across subject areas or working with new partners to develop learning pathways beyond the conventional subject boundaries. Such developments form part of the wider professional debate in a school and also provide professional development opportunities for teachers who may wish (and be able) to develop areas of their expertise hitherto undeveloped in the traditional curriculum

There is great potential for learners to benefit from such actions but there is a challenge for leaders at all levels in ensuring that teachers are both able and willing to contribute to such approaches and that they feel part of the decision-making process. This is not something to be thrust upon teachers or support staff.

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Parallel situations exist with parents and pupils. A survey carried out across 64 secondary schools during 2013-4 by one BOCOSH member demonstrated that the areas where most schools felt least well prepared and/or had carried out least work were those of consultation with their community, consultation with parents and consultation with pupils. These were closely followed by the development of interdisciplinary learning and developing flexible working practices. This suggests that there is still much to do in these areas for most schools.

### **Establishing Learner Needs and Interests**

Inevitably, learning is at its most effective when learners are engaged, committed and enjoying their learning. Although there are many aspects of the curriculum that will be necessary for all learners, schools will make significant efforts to personalise their learners' curricula, perhaps from early in the BGE (perhaps initially by differentiation and choice within topics and activities but increasingly through choice between/among topics and activities). As the Senior Phase approaches, learners and their parents will wish to contribute to discussions about the specific needs and interests of the individual learner. Although schools cannot provide hundreds of individual curricula – they are not staffed on this basis – they can effectively combine the expressed interests and choices of individual learners through means such as “open choice” course choice processes where learners select from a list of subjects, rather than a column choice structure, leaving the timetabling team to manage their choices into a workable timetable structure. The use of timetabling software and clash analysis processes has made this task much more manageable and there is significant good practice in Scottish schools.

There is also a clear role for the expression of learner/parental choice in terms of the external partnerships sought by the school and this will be linked to the local and wider job market and employment opportunities.

### **Mentoring Individual Pathways**

In all schools, the role of the Guidance or Pupil Support teachers is vital to ensure that young people are given relevant information about the choices and pathways open to them. The advice and information that support staff members give to the young people in their caseload must be up-to-date, relevant and appropriate. The support staff must know or at least have the support and backup of SCS and other external agencies to provide the mentoring for choosing the correct beneficial pathway for each young person. Throughout the journey along the pathway, support staff must be able to coach and mentor their caseload in a positive, supportive and robust way.

The role of class mentors in a universal support environment is also crucial as the mentoring teacher (see *BOCOSH Report 3: Supporting Learners* (BOCOSH, 2013)) will see her/his pupils regularly, perhaps daily, and will be in an excellent position to monitor individual progress, achievement and attainment and to liaise with class teachers and with Guidance/Pupil Support colleagues where enhanced support is required. The mentor/personal support teacher has a key role in supervising the transfer of all achievement/attainment information from pupils and their set of teachers to the learners' profiles and records and will seek to help each of the, say, 20 to 25 learners (but in some schools this may still be full classes of 30) in their personal support group/class to commit to their learning, to achieve and to attain, using the targets, goals, information on progress and evidence of homework done (or not). The promoted support teacher leads and assists their set of mentors and seeks to support, unify and enhance the learning in the group of classes for whom they have responsibility and, along with the mentors and, possibly, senior pupils in the personal support classes adds extra support to each child.

The traditional Guidance role of pastoral support for learners' physical and emotional wellbeing also continues to be of significant importance in supporting learners throughout their learning pathway but, in the context of Universal Support, both the classroom teacher and the mentor have very important roles in supporting the wellbeing of each learner through their personal input to each learner. It is perhaps appropriate to see this as a continuum of pastoral support, starting with the classroom teacher, with the mentor having a more holistic overview of the wellbeing of their set of learners and the Support specialist, probably the Guidance teacher(s) associated with a House, having a broader view and taking a lead role for learners with 'higher tariff' issues.

### Curriculum Design

#### Modelling a Flexible, Enabling Structure

Even more than with the Broad, General Education, it is important that a school's Senior Phase curricular structure is structured to encourage a broad range of learning pathways designed to meet the needs of learners of all abilities and interests. This cannot be the same as providing completely individual curricular choices as no school is staffed on this basis.

Providing flexibility and meeting almost all learner choices is based on a number of principles:

- regular consultation, both formal and informal, with learners and their parents to ascertain ahead of annual curricular design (more accurately re-design as a basic view of what might constitute an enabling structure will have been developed) and timetabling. This will take several forms: informal consultation with S3 to S5 learners about what they may wish to take next year, formal course choice (free choices or columnar choices), on-going discussions with mentors and promoted support staff, parents' evenings to support course choice, video recording of parental and pupil views on the curriculum for use in staff discussion, etc.
- regular discussion and consultation, again formal and informal, with staff regarding what they and their department/faculty can offer, either in a subject-based context or as part of learners' wider learning
- the development, discussion and testing for suitability of trial curricular structures which embody various ways (e.g. traditional S4 > S5 > S6 models, S4 then S5+6 models, S4+5 then S6 models, fully integrated S4-6 models) of meeting previously identified (through the above consultations) learner needs and aspirations
- creation of curricular elements within the overall structure which lend themselves to supporting enhanced curricular pathways (e.g. columns shared with other schools and/or colleges, half-day blocks to permit out-of-school learning, asymmetric weeks)
- regular and detailed liaison with partners to ascertain which curricular pathways they may be able to provide and/or support, at what times they are able to offer these and the extent of flexibility they have in being able to respond to change (should this be necessary).

Having carried out at least the initial consultation stages of the above list, the school's curriculum design team will wish to attempt to produce one or more updated curriculum designs. These will inevitably include arrangements for learners' effective transition from primary, the development of learning experiences through the Broad General Education (including breadth and depth of learning, learner choice and clear opportunities for

progression), specific consideration of the twin roles of S3 as end point of many broad and general aspects of learners' curricular journeys and as a year of transition to the Senior Phase, consideration of how and when learner choice can and should be exercised and finally consideration of how to structure the S4-6 learning experience, including transitions from S3, within S4-6 and also to the world of work or tertiary education. There will also be a need to consider specific aspects of the Senior Phase that may not have had prominence in the school's 'traditional' curricular planning: these may include interdisciplinary learning, the continued development of the Four Capacities and of Health and Wellbeing and, lastly, a much more developed set of learning opportunities for learners with a vocational interest. As this document concentrates on the Senior Phase, those arrangements relating to primary transition and the early parts of the BGE are not included here. Readers should consult with *BOCSH Report 1: The Broad General Education* and with national resources such as the Education Scotland website for these. The remaining issues are considered below.

### **Progression from S3 to the Senior Phase**

Progression through the BGE and, specifically, from S3 to the Senior Phase has common principles across all secondary schools. These include supporting progression, increasing personalisation and choice and developing depth of learning. Coherence and breadth also remain relevant in the Senior Phase but there is a renewed emphasis on relevance, challenge and interest/enjoyment at this stage as learners are encouraged to follow their aspirations, plan for their future lives and make appropriate curricular choices to support these. There are, however, some significant differences across schools and authorities in how these principles are delivered. Schools generally move from a common curriculum early in the BGE to a 'core plus options' model in S3 to an S4 model comprising from 5 to 8 subject columns.

In S3, schools generally provide a core of learning experiences centred on English and Mathematics along with PE, PSE and RME. Some schools augment this core with interdisciplinary learning, enterprise or problem solving activities. Beyond the core, schools typically provide a set of options drawing on subjects arranged within curricular areas in a manner similar to the Munn modes of earlier curricular schemes. Very few appear to have attempted to maintain the full breadth of the curriculum into S3 as the need to prepare learners for successive years of 1-year or, in some cases, 2-year, courses appears to predominate.

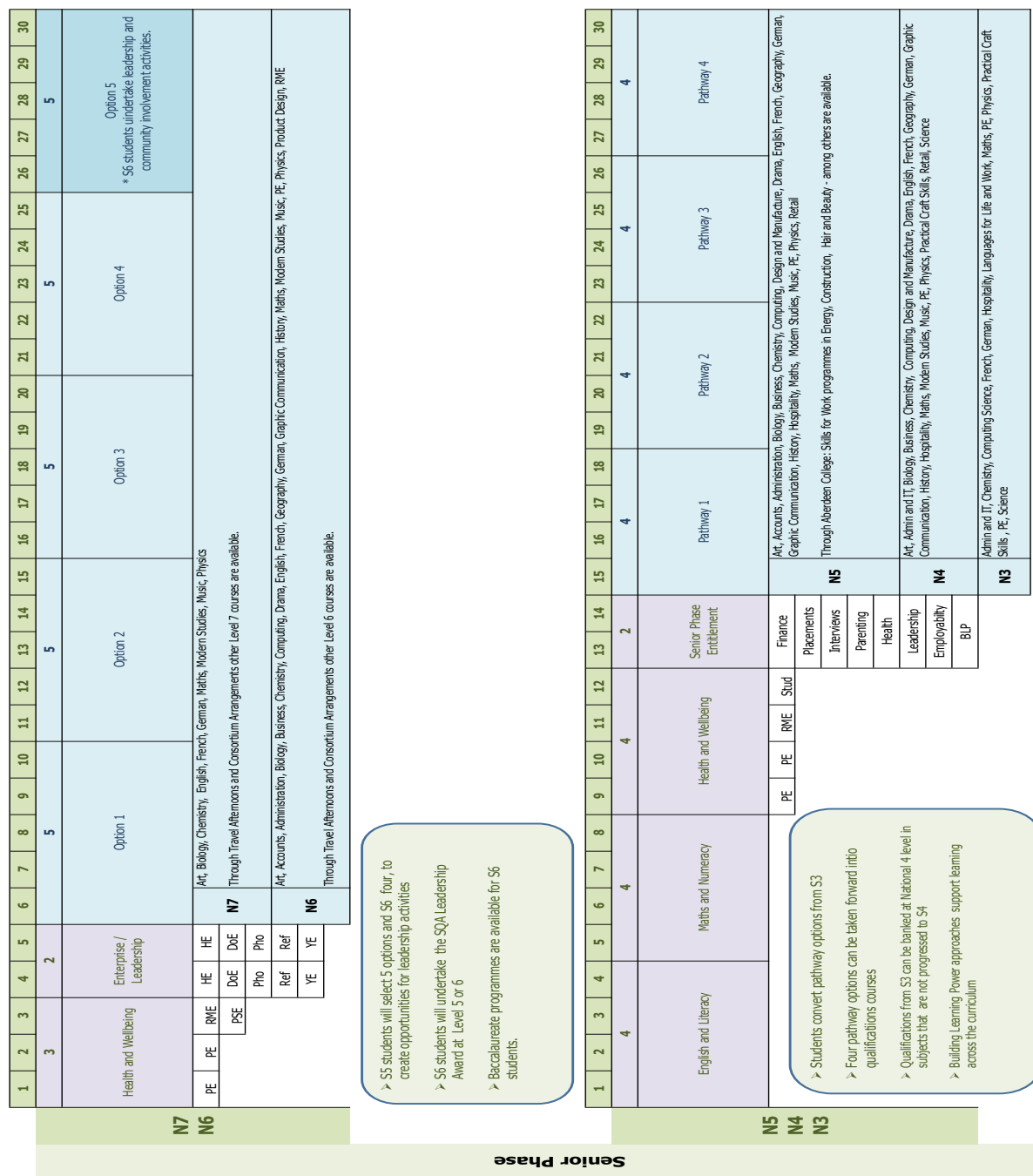
The actual mechanism for providing options varies considerably with many schools continuing to offer English, Maths and six options, generally in a 4(E)-4(M)-3-3-3-3-3-3 period arrangement with the remaining 4 periods (in a 30-period week) given over to PE (2), PSE (1) and RME (1). In a 32 or 33-period week, the remaining 2 or 3 periods are often more creatively employed, supporting short courses (or 'Masterclasses'), interdisciplinary learning and/or other topics such as enterprise, leadership, higher-order skills development or problem-solving. Other schools offer 7 to 9 S3 options alongside English and Mathematics, usually in 2 period blocks, with the remaining 4 to 8 periods, given a 30-period week, being deployed to support the rest of the core plus the wider experiences described earlier. Research for this document also uncovered a small number of schools offering 5 S3 options. A typical arrangement embodying 9 (x 2-period) options is shown here:



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and 7/8-column structures generally resemble pre-CfE models and are thus not illustrated here. However, a typical 6-column S4 structure is shown in Figure 3.2.

## Figure 3.2 A 6-Column S4 Structure



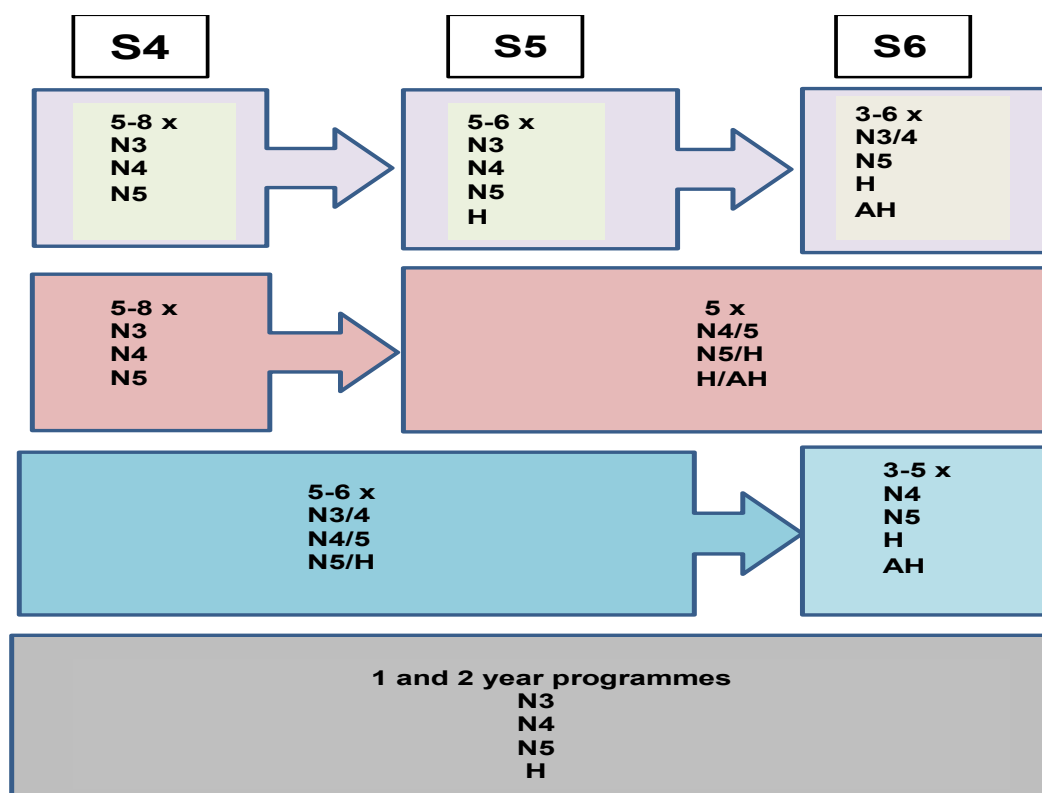
[Reproduced by permission of Mr Derek Brown, Head of Education in Fife Council and former headteacher of Oldmachar Academy, Aberdeen City.]

### Progression within the Senior Phase

The four most common approaches to progression through the Senior Phase are demonstrated in Figure 3.1.



Figure 3.3 Senior Phase Progression Models



Most schools are still offering 6-8 courses at SCQF levels 3-5, with a few more offering 5 courses. Of these, a significant majority appears to still be offering a fairly 'traditional' set of pathways moving from the 5-8 S4 courses to 5 or 6 courses in S5 to 3-5 courses in S6. It may be that a few of these will move to the second model where the S4 courses give way to 5 (or 6) courses at anything from National 4 to Advanced Higher over a two-year period. It remains to be seen whether such an approach will generate sufficient quality (and quantity) of attainment to justify leaving out one set of examinations. This second model does, however, address the 'two-term dash' concerns which the one-year initial qualifications in S4 increased from the previous model.

The third model is the inverse of the second with learners taking two years for their initial qualifications, followed a one-year S6 programme. Research suggests this is more likely to be attempted in schools with mostly average to able learners where a drive to reach 5 or even 6 Highers, or a mix of Highers and National 5s, after two years would provide a stable platform both for university entry and for an Advanced Higher and Baccalaureate programme in S6.

The fourth model is generally attempted by schools which have moved away from specific year-based courses to a more integrated model where the needs of the learner, irrespective of their year group are paramount. The example shown in Figure 3.4 has been used by LTS and Education Scotland to exemplify an integrated approach.

Figure 3.4 A Sample Integrated Model

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	5 x 30 mins			
S4/5/6	A	AH/H Option 1 Maths/English/Bacc. Project OR other key choice		AH/H Option 1 Maths/English/Bacc. Project OR other key choice		AH/H Option 3: Free Choice		AH/H Option 4: Free Choice		AH/H Option 5: Free Choice		O p t 3 4 5		O p t 3 4 5		P S E		P.E.		Personal Support														
		B	Option 1: Nat 3/4/5	Option 2: Nat 3/4/5	Option 3: Nat 3/4/5	Option 4: Nat 3/4/5	Option 5: Nat 3/4/5	Option 6: Nat 3/4/5	Option 7: Nat 3/4/5	Op 1 2	PSE & RME	P.E.	Personal Support																					
			College Course(s) (with linked Work Experience C+G) OR Option 1 (with 1 per. RME and 1 per Opt. 6)		College Course(s) (with linked Work Experience C+G) OR Option 1 (with 1 per. RME and 1 per Opt. 6)		Option 3: Nat 3/4/5	Option 4: Nat 3/4/5	Option 5: Nat 3/4/5	Option 6: Nat 3/4/5 OR College Course	Option 6: Nat 3/4/5 OR College Course	Option 6: Nat 3/4/5 OR College Course	P.S E	Personal Support																				
S3	S2	S1	Mathematics: Maths & NUM	Choice: Free (from list) OR L3	English: Language & LIT	Choice from: Languages: L2	Choice from: Social	Choice from: Science	Choice from: Technology	Choice from: Exp. Arts	P.E.	Personal Support																						
			Mathematics: Maths & NUM	English: Language & LIT	Language: Languages: L2 (and L3?)	Language: Languages: L2 (and L3?)	Social	Science	2 Choices from: Technology and/or Expressive Arts	ICT	P.E.	Personal Support																						
			Mathematics: Maths & NUM	English: Language & LIT	Language: Languages: L2 (and L3?)	Language: Languages: L2 (and L3?)	Social	Science	Techno-logy	Exp. Arts	P.E.	Personal Support																						

[Reproduced by permission of Dr Jim Scott, SCSSA and ELLCConsulting (former headteacher of Perth High School).]

In terms of **quantity** of attainment, Models 1-4 are capable of supporting 13-20, 13-14, 8-11 and around 12-14 qualifications. It is much harder to predict whether increased **quality** will come from Models 2 to 4: clearly, at least some headteachers (and their schools) believe this to be so in their local context. Education Scotland has carefully refused to endorse any particular model, indicating that it is for schools and local

authorities to decide how best to meet the needs of their learners. One other national spokesperson has somewhat publicly espoused 6 courses in S4 but it will require a round of inspections **plus** the results of international comment e.g. from OECD or PISA to provide more complete illumination of appropriate practice here.

### Developing IDL in the Senior Phase

Developing IDL in the senior Phase requires more thought and effort than in the BGE. The competing pressures from subjects in S4-6 for time to cover the syllabuses leading to National Qualifications put the time available at a premium. In a 30-period week, with 5 columns of 5 plus 2 periods for PE, 1 for SE and possibly 1 for RE, then schools are left with 1 period for any possible IDL development as a timetabled slot. This flexible time has invariably been given up in the past to one column to enhance attainment in those subjects (often Maths) which make a coherent case for more time.

The advent of the 33-period week can allow schools some time for initial steps into IDL in the Senior Phase, but again pressure for additional time for subjects can mean that IDL remains the 'poor relation'.

Although there are possibilities for timetabled ICL in 32/33-period curricular models, schools must look to develop other ways of delivering IDL in the Senior Phase. Although this list is not exhaustive, it draws upon initial research carried out for this document. Schools can develop IDL through:

- Limited time allocation (e.g. 1 period per week) short tasks and projects linking aspects of a learner's curricular programme
- "Days out" of the curriculum to develop higher order thinking skills in big issues of the day
- IDL through subject teachers supporting broadly-based learning activities based across two or more individual subjects
- The four Scottish Baccalaureate courses and their projects
- Linking PE/SE and RE in a cross-curricular project involving spiritual, physical and mental health issues.

### Learner Pathways – Breadth, Depth and Integration

The term 'learning journey' is often seen as a holistic way of looking at how a young person learns and develops as they move through the Senior Phase to a positive destination. It provides reference to a pupil's learning and development both personally and academically over a period of time and as such the influences that informs decision making at key points during the journey.

A learner's journey is unique and each school setting provides pathways to ensure the desired outcome can be met for each individual. Parents, curricular staff, guidance staff, partners and pupils all contribute to the journey in a constructive way to help equip an individual with the skills to sustain long term learning, life and work.

Within the journey itself, skill sets, learning techniques, leadership and creatively traits can be developed in a variety of contexts not just within the classroom. Extra-curricular activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, school leadership opportunities, work

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experience, working with partners, clubs and activities, both within and outwith school, and life experiences can all provide a basis for making well informed choices within the senior phase. These learner pathways should reflect the breadth as well as the depth of a young person's learning and indicate how they have had a joined-up and integrated learning experience at school, college or in a variety of contexts and locations.

Many schools have developed learner pathways which exemplify how young people can move forward in the Senior Phase. Examples of these learner journeys can be seen in some of the Case Studies.

### Timetabling the Senior Phase

Timetabling the Senior Phase presents both significant opportunities to improve the breadth *and* depth of learning opportunities for all learners. Although there is currently (and quite correctly) much focus on improving curricular pathways, enjoyment and opportunity for less able and/or vocationally-minded learners, there are also opportunities to take what have been very traditional '8-column to 5-column or 6-column' structures and convert them to more innovative and enabling structures which can potentially support S4, 5 and 6 learners learning in the same classes, provide scheduled opportunities for learners to learn on-site and off-site in a range of academic, academic and community-based contexts.

The advent of the BGE and now the Senior Phase have seen considerable efforts across schools to develop more appropriate curricular structures, sometimes founded in changes to day and week structures. Councils have also been considering further changes (including some potential reductions to the school day/week). Although there are undoubtedly potential staffing savings in some of these approaches, it would be important to realise that external partnerships need to be established, maintained and serviced (using staff time!) and that savings in one context may result in costs in others.

In the context of *Curriculum for Excellence*, it remains important to ensure that the timetable is both as efficient and as effective as possible. The timetable is efficient if it maximises the use of available teacher time. Efficiency is enhanced by curricular models which ensure that teachers' non-contact time is efficiently handled e.g. the 33 x 50 minute model and the 30 x 50 + 5 x 30 minute model are both efficient in this context. Efficiency is also increased if the timetable utilises a high percentage of the available accommodation.

A timetable is effective if it provides appropriate choices and pathways for every learner whilst still providing flexibility for the timetabler in his/her allocation of time to columns and subjects. Inevitably, there will be a trade-off between efficiency and effectiveness in any timetable as the school's curriculum team, including the timetabler, strive to offer as many desirable curricular pathways as possible whilst being as efficient in the use of staffing and accommodation as possible. The almost inevitable outcomes of this process are that a school is unlikely to be able to offer all the curricular pathways it would wish from its own resources, making the contribution of partners a potentially highly valuable one, and that the school will have to pay some staffing prices to support partnerships so that staffing costings must take account of the realities of liaising with and supporting partners while they themselves support the school. This can be a point of debate with local authorities which are understandably attempting to reduce staffing costs in challenging times.

However, since the main drivers for CfE are to improve learning, teaching, attainment and achievement, thus supporting the development of the Four Capacities, this section considers timetabling the Senior Phase from this perspective rather than as a mechanistic exercise

### Timetabling Priorities

Timetabling has always been “the art of the possible”. In trying to ensure that we respond to the key drivers of CfE, meet pupil needs more directly and prepare pathways for sustained positive destinations, this task is now becoming even more challenging. Timetabling priorities have always been conflicting and now in addition to the usual restrictions and parameters curriculum designers and timetablers need to:

- develop alternative pathways hitherto unconsidered
- use staff in more original and more flexible ways, with their agreement and support
- use external staff to deliver and possibly assess courses within the establishment and outwith
- make significant savings in staff, time and money
- share resources with other establishments/authorities in partnerships or consortium arrangements
- examine the potential benefits (and pitfalls?) of alternative school days/weeks

As noted earlier, there has been some debate on Senior Phase curricular models – is it one cohort with 3 year groups as one (S4-6), or 1+2 (S4 and S5/6) or even 2+1 (S4/5 and S6). In some authorities, schools have been encouraged to develop their own thinking on these models, depending on their own situation and pupils; in other authorities, after initial debate, an authority-wide model has been agreed (or, occasionally, required). Within the structure, should there be 6, 7 or 8 subjects in S4, but does this then narrow to the traditional 5 in S5, and 3-5 in S6? In some areas, schools have opted for 5 courses throughout the Senior Phase; in some others 6.

In deciding the structure of the Senior Phase, schools have necessarily liaised with outside partners – colleges, universities, businesses etc., and have had to plan the timetable to fit in with these external structures and priorities. In the most successful partnerships, there has been a positive compromise from both sides to achieve the best model for learners.

Schools have also been under pressure in this time of austerity to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in their timetabling. The viability of classes in some small schools has led to a narrowing of the curriculum in the Senior Phase, which can only be remedied by the development of partnerships, campuses, consortia and other wider structures which permit smaller schools to offer as wide a curriculum as larger schools.

The move to the asymmetric 32- or 33-period week has given schools and other establishments greater ability to develop partnership learning. In some schools’ thinking, a more flexible working week for staff has also been proposed in order to accommodate alternative pathways, with suggestions such as staff working on Saturdays or at other times such as pre 9am or post 4am, rather than following the traditional 5 day week. These issues lead us to consider how to model more flexible curricular structures.

### Options for the School Day and Week

Traditionally, Scottish secondary schools operated a 40-period week with 8 x 40-minute periods in a day, plus 10 minutes' registration, with a few schools maintaining this model until recent times. In more recent years, a 30-period week has been fairly commonly used across Scottish secondary schools, with a day structure consisting of 6 x 53-minute periods plus 12 minutes of registration time, or slightly divergent period lengths (53/54) and a 10-minute registration period. A few local authorities, however, opted for an asymmetric week with, as the name implies, differing numbers of periods on different days, thus allowing time (often on a Friday afternoon) for extra-curricular activities and staff CPD within the parental working day. The commonly quoted City of Edinburgh example occupies 28 periods, 6 per day except on Friday which has only 4. Periods last for 60 or 55 minutes.

Many school weeks partially waste the teaching time available from each member of staff. Each teacher is contracted to teach for 22 and a half hours per week. This represents 1350 minutes per week.

In each of the week models shown, the use of teacher time is as follows:

**Table 3.4 School Day and Week Models**

MODEL	30 periods (v.1)	30 periods (v.2)	30 periods (v.3)	32 periods	33 periods	40 periods	55 periods
Periods per Day	6	6	6	7,7,7,7,4	7,7,7,7,5	8	11
Asymmetric / Symmetric (A/S)	S	S	S	A – (either Fri pm for CPD, etc. or 3 shorter pm's)	A – (either Fri pm for CPD, etc. or 2 shorter pm's)	S	S
Length of period	55	53	50	50	50	40	30
Regn/Supp Time	0	12	30	10	0	10	0
Max Teach time	1350	1350	1350	1350	1350	1350	1350
Wasted teaching time per teacher (m)	30	18 or 25 (reg/non-reg teacher)	0 (non-reg can take 3 extra periods)	0 (non-reg can take 1 extra period)	0	20 or 30 (reg/non-reg teacher)	0
Max teaching periods	24	24 (25 if non-reg)	24 (27 if non-reg)	26 (27 if non-reg)	27	(33 if non-reg)	47

With the coming of *Curriculum for Excellence*, many schools have sought to re-evaluate their day/week structures, with significant numbers opting for non 30-period structures. Of these, the commonest is the 33-period week of 33 x 50-minute periods. This fully utilises the 1650 minutes available within the week and requires registration to be carried

out within lessons. It potentially maximises class contact time and thus the availability of staff cover, meeting one of the timetabling tests of the following sub-section by utilising staff in a highly efficient way. Perhaps the second commonest structure is a modified 33-period week where 3 of the periods are broken up into daily 30-minute Support/registration periods, again providing for efficient timetabling but also offering an effective solution in providing a focus for Support (in some or all of the 30-minute periods), assemblies, short courses, homework support, etc. A further 32-period variant of the asymmetric week also exists as does a 55-period week where periods are combined in singles, doubles and trebles to provide teaching and learning opportunities of different durations, addressing some of the issues which traditionally surround subjects such as PE and HE whilst also allowing shorter times for Support, assemblies, etc.

As yet, no single solution has emerged as a standard response to Curriculum for Excellence, although variations of the asymmetric week or its cousin, the '30 + 5 Support' week, are undoubtedly gaining ground.

### Timetabling to Facilitate Partnerships

Although not always the easiest of the timetabler's priorities to achieve, a key objective in enabling partnerships for learning to function is the development of a flexible structure within which partnership learning may be placed. Several of the curricular/timetable models examined have built-in blocks which may be conveniently configured as afternoons, mornings or half-mornings and within which learners and, where appropriate, members of staff may move to undertake learning or teaching in an appropriate place.

Typical timetable constructs used to facilitate partnership learning include:

- Two or more neighbouring schools timetabling one or more columns at the same time, preferably with the column starting and/or ending at a natural break in the timetable (start of day, interval, lunch, end of day): these columns would include subjects – particularly minority subjects - to be shared.
- Two or more neighbouring schools synchronising their full timetables.
- A school (or more commonly a set of schools) coordinating part of their timetable with a local college. Commonly, this would be a day or one or more half days.
- A school or schools using an asymmetric week structure to develop a block (or blocks) of time when senior learners can move to off-site venues to carry out additional learning experiences beyond their basic curriculum.
- A school or schools agreeing partnership learning opportunities in an identified column (or columns) with one or more local businesses.
- A whole authority coordinating a part of the timetabled week for partnership learning involving schools, colleges and local businesses. This would also involve transport provision and possibly virtual classes (by videoconferencing or other means) to maximise curricular pathways.

In each of these scenarios, there are issues to be overcome, including:

- Transport issues, including liaison with local transport companies, possible renegotiation of authority transport contracts, use of school minibuses,

acquisition of bespoke transport e.g. 4x4 vehicles for delivery/collection of learners at remote rural sites

- Location issues, of which the commonest relate to rural schools and/or rural business partners: these are evident in remoteness of colleges, length of journeys to transport learners to college/business provision
- Finance issues relating to specialist clothing, specialist equipment, transport costs and training of community-based (rather than business) personnel to support them in teaching/assessment roles
- Accreditation of community-based and business personnel to support them in teaching/assessment roles

### 3.3.3 Cross-School Partnership Approaches

Jointly providing courses, units or other learning experiences with nearby schools is the most basic form of partnership through which the range of learning and achievement/attainment pathways offered to learners may be increased. This sub-section and subsequent sub-sections examine how partnerships are being used to improve opportunity, achievement and attainment for learners.

#### Staff/Pupil Sharing: Benefits and Costs

Within local authorities and schools under budget constraints which appear to be becoming more restrictive, it is vital that we analyse various ways of sharing staff and/or pupils, including the campus approaches set up in a number of authorities. Staff sharing allows a pooling of resources, usually at Higher and Advanced Higher levels, although S4 courses are increasingly being considered in this context where integrated S4-6 curricular structures have been developed. Pupil sharing allows learners to move between schools to take courses which are not available in the base school. Several possibilities are available:

- Sharing a member of staff, usually from a minority subject e.g. Mandarin across two or three schools, permitting each to run courses. This is usually carried out where a part-time teacher is unlikely to be available or where such teachers are difficult to recruit and the offer of a shared full-time contract makes the post more attractive to candidates.
- Supporting learners in moving from one school to another for certain parts of their week to take a specific subject not available in their base school.
- Synchronising one or more timetable columns across two or more schools to permit either pupils or staff to move between/among schools.
- The development of city or large town campus models with integrated partial or complete senior timetables.
- The development of whole-authority campus models where all school and college timetables are integrated, wholly or partially, and where transport issues are managed by schools and the authority, acting in partnership.



Such approaches can offer young people from schools where there is little chance of creating a viable class (due to the relative unpopularity of the subject or small numbers in the Senior Phase cohort) the opportunity of a significantly broader set of curricular pathways. There is also a potential saving in staffing if two or more small classes can be combined to create one larger class. However, a move to meet the needs of small numbers of learners across several schools by creating a class where no class would have existed can potentially cost the host school. It is then necessary to consider in which classes these pupils would have participated if this class had not been established. There is, therefore, a need for 'ground rules' in such sharing so that schools are not left with costs in the process of resolving other schools' problems. Schools contacted during the creation of this document have indicated that there have been no inappropriate costs and some staffing savings from such approaches. Several noted that pan-authority agreements or inter-school agreements about staff and other costs were part of the establishment of a sharing process.

The Case Studies attached show two examples of how this can be achieved.

### Enhancing Curricular Breadth

Apart from staffing economies, the most significant reason for adopting a staff/pupil sharing approach is to increase the number of subjects (and levels of subject), and thus the number of pupil pathways, available to learners. It is unlikely that a set of schools would require to share resources to provide Mathematics or English or probably Science. However, all other curricular areas are possible.

#### 'Minority' Subjects

Minority subjects (or subject levels) are often the beneficiaries of column synchronisation or 'centre of excellence' approaches. This is particularly true of:

- Advanced Higher subjects other than Mathematics and English
- Minority Highers e.g. aspects of Business Education, Modern Languages and Technology, also Computing, Drama
- Minority National 5 courses, especially where a school is operating an integrated S4-6 timetable and lesser-used courses can be made available to all year groups across several schools.

#### Other Aspects of Learning

As well as academic courses, staff/pupil sharing approaches can be used to increase the number of vocational learning opportunities and to provide coherent progression into higher levels of college provision. Some schools have also linked with Sector Skills Councils e.g. LANTRA to provide land-based learning experiences and qualifications. This is explored further and exemplified in Section 3.3.4.

#### Centres of Excellence

A few authorities have considered turning some or all of their secondary schools into 'centres of excellence' for specific subjects. Most of the long-standing examples have had specialist roles e.g. Music schools. However, at least one authority has considered brokering agreements among its secondary schools in order to have Advanced Higher and possibly Higher pupils for subjects beyond Mathematics and English concentrated in

either one or (if a larger authority) so that, say, School A would specialise in ICT, School B in Business Education, School C in Health and Wellbeing, School D in Technology and so on.

There are significant potential staffing efficiencies (and thus savings) in such an approach but it also raises questions about the career opportunities for subject staff in those subjects where the school is not a 'centre of excellence'. There are also pupil/parental issues if they were to be required to move to another school after 4 or 5 years in their original school. It is possible that pupils would only move for specific subject(s) lessons but this then raises issues relating to significant movements of pupils among schools and consequent transport costs, particularly in authorities where school minibuses have been removed to a corporate fleet.

### 3.3.4 Business Partnership Approaches

Traditionally, schools have worked with local and national businesses, although sometimes in a limited way. There has been considerable variation of practice with some schools developing a broad range of partnerships and others very few. Although geography plays a significant part in this for rural and semi-rural schools, it is not the only relevant factor, however, as there are instances of urban schools with few partnerships and rural schools with highly developed sets of partnerships. The key issue lies in developing partnerships to meet the needs of a school and its learners but also provide benefits for the partners, whether business, college, university or community organisation. The benefits for partners can come in ways related to potential employees through:

- Providing them with early access to the potential local workforce
- Allowing them to assess the skills and qualities of local young people
- Reducing recruitment costs due to having a better picture of potential employees
- Potentially bringing more well qualified, adaptable and highly skilled young people into the workforce

and in ways related to education through:

- Gaining access to local schools and education authorities – and thus the opportunity to influence curricular discussions
- Increasing school and authority partners' knowledge and understanding of the world of work
- Discussing employers' needs and the qualities, skills and qualifications they seek in potential employees

The Wood Report (Scottish Government, 2014, pp.42-43) supports these benefits and identifies others. It also proposes mechanisms such as Regional Invest in Youth Groups (*ibid.*, pp.45-46). These may prove to be of significant value in supporting and strengthening education-business partnerships but the danger that these will become (too) high level 'talking shops' must be considered. There also appears to be a need for a subordinate group whose role is the practical implementation of the agreed strategic developments. Wood also correctly suggests that all schools should have a nominated senior staff member whose role will include an overview of all school partnerships. There

is, however, a further need for promoted guidance staff and class mentors to play effective roles in this context, as well as some departmental linkages that will benefit both sets of partners.

### Importing Expertise and Opportunity

Business partnerships offer benefits to both sides. The benefits for business were set out above. However, the benefits for schools are also significant. These offer multiple opportunities to bring extra dimensions to what a school can provide for its learners. This can include employer participation in:

- The design, delivery and accreditation of work high quality experience programmes – improving quality, broadening the range of available placements, teaching/lecturing, assessing and evaluating.
- The selection, delivery and assessment of relevant courses and qualifications to broaden and deepen a school's curricular pathways – choosing from all available qualifications, including courses leading to SQA, college certificate, HNC, alternative (e.g. ASDAN, John Muir) and sector skills council (e.g. Building Futures Group, LANTRA, People 1<sup>st</sup> and SkillsActive) qualifications
- Aspects of Careers education through presentations to learners, mock interviews, course inserts, heightening awareness of apprenticeships, raising awareness of differing job roles, requirements and career pathways, coordination of teacher placements, provision of case studies for careers websites, etc.
- Enterprise education – supporting enterprise teams, providing specific technical information, assisting with business plans, etc.

All of these contexts offer multiple opportunities for business involvement in schools and school involvement (learners and teachers) in local businesses. They also offer opportunities for learners to gain skills, experience and qualifications which they would not have gained in a traditional senior school programme.

### Off-Site Courses: Industry-Specific and Academic

Off-site courses provide opportunities for learners to learn within a business environment, possibly within the context of work experience or work shadowing. In such a context, learners can access college-type courses, SQA courses and units or specific awards and qualifications linked to an area of business or a specific job.

Examples of such learning opportunities include a link between Perth secondary schools and a large local insurance company to support learners in developing both specific insurance industry qualifications and also coherent and sustained work experience. A further example lies in the development of significant links between a rural Perth and Kinross secondary school and local landowners, farmers, estate managers and a Sector Skills Council (LANTRA) to provide learners with qualifications and experience in land-based industries.

### Course Tutors: Attributes and Accreditation

Working with partners may involve the school/authority in investing in the skills of the individuals from a company, farm or shop so that they may be trained to teach and/or assess some or all of a course or unit. This may not be a significant cost for the school in terms of finance as some companies will carry out such training in partnership with the

## Curriculum for Excellence – The Senior Phase: Partnerships for Learning

school as they see such involvement as developing their own workers. In some cases, funding for teaching/assessment training for partner teachers or assessors may be available through such bodies as Sector Skills Councils. Schools considering such an approach are recommended to research with accreditation agencies such as SQA or ASDAN to establish what competences are required and with bodies such as Sector Skills Councils or local/national grant-making trusts to establish whether any funding is available to support such training.

Examples of such developments have been seen in schools where local companies, organisations, farms, shops, estates, etc. have entered into partnership with a school or authority (and possibly a local college) to provide learners with qualifications in game-keeping, farm working, factory working, estate management, wildlife management, leisure management, etc.

Child protection issues clearly apply here and all persons volunteering for such roles will require to undergo appropriate checks to ensure that they are appropriate persons to be responsible for individual learners or groups of learners. It is important that schools build appropriate levels of joint working with the partner organisation/individual to ensure that they are aware of the quality and safety of the pupil experience at all times. The quality of teaching and assessment also need to be appropriately verified, both by the examining body and by the school itself (usually through a school liaison officer, probably a teacher from an appropriate department).

### Skills Development

The development of appropriate skills – for learning, life and work – is a highly significant part of *Curriculum for Excellence*, not only for learners with a vocational drive but for all learners, regardless of the academic-vocational balance of their studies. It is as important for a would-be physicist to have interpersonal, problem-solving and ICT skills as it is for a potential plumber to have interpersonal, numeracy and problem-solving skills and not least because it may be that neither attains their original career nor may they stay in that role for life. Each learner requires a ‘toolkit’ of skills which will equip her/him for their future learning, job(s) and wider existence.

Business partnerships are important to the development of skills not only because of the vocational aspect, although business partners and the learning activities they can support offer an unparalleled opportunity for the acquisition of such skills. However, business partnerships also offer opportunities for learners to learn and develop other skills in context e.g. interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, interview skills, as well as learning to apply their basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. There are also opportunities in many Scottish businesses to observe and try the application of foreign language or STEM skills.

There is significant potential for learners to display intrinsic motivation in their learning as they may see the benefits of learning in a meaningful context as far more relevant than the traditional academic pathways into which many learners with wider interests were forced by the exigencies of the ‘traditional’ senior timetable and the lack of curricular partnerships in some schools. The Wood Report (Scottish Government, 2014, p.20) recognizes this and identifies the dangers for individual learners and for society in general of young people becoming disengaged from learning. Wood makes a coherent case for vocational, skills-based courses within a revised curriculum and for Modern Apprenticeships (*ibid.*, p.20-32) but fails to fully identify the wider benefits for all learners

of acquiring a broad and flexible skillset as part of their learning. It will be important for local authorities and schools to bring the wider importance of skills for all learners to discussions in contexts such as work experience, joint curricular ventures and Invest in Youth Groups (*ibid.*, pp.45-48).

### Work Experience as Part of Achievement

In many schools work experience has been a long-established part of a young person's learning experiences. This has taken place mainly in late S3 or S4 and allowed in theory young people the chance to see the world of work and to learn some of the skills required through first-hand experience. Not all work experience placements have been a positive experience, and several authorities have taken steps to try to ensure that young people have a more relevant and positive work place experience at a more relevant time and place.

The purpose of education at all levels is to prepare pupils for the world of work. The basic skills needed to enjoy and flourish in employment can be gleaned from a pupil's time in school. Often it's not the qualifications that count most, but the dealing with people, task management, communicating effectively and other important skills which are often taken for granted. Work experience in school, during early stages of the Senior Phase, can be very successful for a number of pupils who are taken out of their comfort zone, to test their skills in the 'real' world of work. This reflects the aim of making 'other options open to young people to pursue their learning' (BtC3, p39). However this is only for a few weeks at most and often the skills learnt are not translated into the school learning environment.

Many schools throughout the senior phase will try to link work experience and education for a small number of pupils. Work experience is now very much part of the Senior Phase and viewed as an acceptable choice for pupils who perhaps are not ready to move on from school to full employment or college. Work experience can last for many weeks and can vary in time to as much as 4 hours per week. There are, now, more concrete structures available to recognise the curricular value of work experience. The SQA for example have The Employability Award at SCQF levels 3 and 4. This is an introduction to the world of work for those pupils who are unsure about how to gain and sustain employment. The course focuses on generic employability skills and aims to help pupils develop skills and attitudes which will be applicable across all areas of employment.

The Wood Report takes this even further and suggests more modern apprenticeships should be available to young people within the Senior Phase. This would focus schools on providing pupils with the skills, qualifications and vocational pathways that will lead young people directly to employment opportunities. School partnerships would thus evolve to include not only industry but also local employers, with skills being developed within the Broad General Education to provide a pathway to a positive destination for many pupils during the Senior Phase.

### Learner Support

Throughout the Senior Phase, be it in school, college or a variety of different locations, appropriate support for the learner (and their learning) must be visible, relevant and appropriate. In school, the tutor/mentor and/or the Pupil Support teacher have a crucial role in ensuring that there is appropriate support for the learner. They are well placed to engage the learner in learning conversations about their experiences and to offer further

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experiences in other sectors, such as the voluntary sector, and to help plan, deliver and evaluate aspects of the learner's programme for learning. However, no one person can do this alone and the need for partnerships to support the learning, achievement and welfare of all pupils is evident.

The 2013 publication by the BOCSH group on Supporting Learners (BOCSH Report 3) gives excellent advice and guidance on how this can be done and it is recommended that schools consult this publication in this matter. It should be noted that *Building the Curriculum 4*, *Building the Curriculum 5* and *Improving Scottish Education 2005-08* all emphasise the importance of support as an integral part of making partnership learning work)

### 3.3.5 College and University Partnership Approaches

#### Broadening Horizons: Additional Pathways

College and university partnerships bring considerable benefits to learners across the ability and vocational interest spectra. They offer the potential for additional curricular pathways for all learners, whether vocationally or academically inclined.

In partnerships with local colleges, the Wood Report (Scottish Government, 2014, pp.24-28) correctly suggests that there is a need for the Scottish Government, local authorities and regional college boards, with significant input from local business and industry, to agree and implement a strategic agenda which will support the local development of improved vocational pathways. As ever, the devil will be in the detail as, although there have been (and are) excellent examples of effective local authority – college – school joint working, there has not been a consistently high standard across all local authority areas. Some highly successful initiatives have been launched but have faded as the directors of education, college principals and/or headteachers who forged the original agreements have moved on to be replaced by others who may have had other priorities.

Wood's remedy for this is to ensure that education authorities, regional college boards, Skills Development Scotland and regional Invest in Youth groups are all bound together by agreements and in different groupings. This sounds complex, however, and there will be a clear need for all this activity to focus upon ensuring that practical solutions are developed which provide additional interesting and challenging pathways, vocational and academic, which will inspire and motivate learners to achieve and/or attain at a higher level, to develop an awareness of tertiary education and the world of work and to develop the Four Capacities to as full an extent as possible.

#### In-school College Courses

In-school college courses have developed in some schools and across some authorities. In such a partnership, a member of the college staff will visit a school to deliver a course rather than teaching the course in the college itself.

This may occur for a number of reasons. It can be cost-effective for the college to provide such outreach where the number of learners in the school (or where the school

acts as a hub, bringing together learners from several schools) is sufficiently large to provide a class of meaningful size. This balances the costs of transporting pupils (and the consequent disruption of their timetables) with the costs of bringing a lecturer from the college to a remote location. It may also be that the school has specific facilities (e.g. grounds where garden work or other agricultural/rural skills may be practiced) or college facilities are fully occupied at the time when the class takes place. Such arrangements also take place in semi-rural or rural schools where transporting learners to a distant college can occupy a significant part of the learning week and it provides better, more consistent learning to bring the lecturer to the learners. In such a situation, the method of meeting the temporal and financial costs of transporting the lecturer and blocking out a significant part of their working week will be agreed by the college, school(s) and local authority.

### HNCs

As part of the provision available to learners in the Senior Phase, some schools are offering a limited number of HNC courses (usually only one or two) to increase the range of learning pathways. Such HNCs are usually delivered by college staff either in the college and/or in a school or some other location (e.g. at a golf course or on a farm). Generally, these are offered as two-year courses occupying one column (usually as a half-day) of a pupil's Senior Phase timetable. Examples of such courses have included Rural Studies, Horticulture and Green-keeping. Such additions to a Senior Phase course choice can provide urban learners with opportunities for more rural activities or pupils from rural areas with industrial/commercial pathways.

### Baccalaureate Partnerships

Both universities and colleges have been proactive in supporting learners undertaking Scottish Baccalaureates. With the expansion of Scottish Baccalaureates to include:

- [the Scottish Baccalaureate in Languages](#)
- [the Scottish Baccalaureate in Science](#)
- [the Scottish Baccalaureate in Expressive Arts](#)
- [the Scottish Baccalaureate in Social Sciences](#)

there are considerable opportunities for the most able senior learners to undertake a challenging and rewarding learning programme integrating aspects of their learning, adding depth and breadth to their learning and preparing them more effectively for Higher Education and ultimately employment.

The support of universities and colleges has been most evident in the Baccalaureate project, with some particularly proactive authorities negotiating agreements with a local university and/or college to bring together all Baccalaureate learners (or those from one or more of the set of Baccalaureates) to be supported in achieving their project. Support has included:

- advice in framing the project
- provision of equipment and/or facilities to facilitate completion of the project
- support from university/college staff through seminars, lectures and/or practical advice

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In session 2013-14, 177 learners attempted a Scottish Baccalaureate (Expressive Arts: 3, Languages: 22, Science: 137, Social Sciences: 15), of whom 145 passed (72 with distinction). Perhaps slightly worryingly, this was down from session 2012-13, when 191 learners attempted the four Baccalaureates (Expressive Arts: 5, Languages: 32, Science: 142, Social Sciences: 12), of whom 165 passed (94 with distinction). Given the number of Scottish secondary schools and the number of colleges and universities, there is clearly significant potential for growth at this most academic extremity of the learning spectrum. Initial research for this publication suggested that where coherent partnerships embracing local schools and a university and/or college had been established, there was significantly greater chance of a learner attaining either a basic Baccalaureate pass or a Distinction grade.

### 3.3.6 Campus Partnership Approaches

Campus partnerships are (usually) highly developed inter-school partnerships, linking a either a sub set of, or all of, a local authority's secondary schools, probably in partnership with a local college, colleges or colleges and a university. Although there had been limited campus-type experiments in the past, campus models are a feature of some local authorities' response to Curriculum for Excellence (and to the financial crisis).

They may be seen to take several forms. Commonly, these include:

- City Campus (S5/6 or S6 only)
- Sixth Form College
- Whole-Authority Campus
- Virtual Campus

City campuses are generally based either in one of Scotland's cities or in large towns with sufficient population to adopt such an approach. In many cases, their focus is specifically on S6 learners as a means of maintaining and possibly increasing a meaningful range of Advanced Highers and minority subject Highers. Some city campuses also support S5 pupils, particularly those seeking to take minority subjects. Travel is minimal due to the short distances involved and senior learners can be entrusted to make these journeys unescorted. Accommodation varies with individual courses being sited in various schools, concentrated in one or two (where there is available space) or located in a local college or university facility. Sixth Form Colleges are traditionally seen as an English construct, but there have been tentative steps in a few authorities to consider developing a city campus into such an institution. This would inevitably be the cause of considerable discussion with local headteachers, teachers, parents and learners themselves. This may explain why such moves have not yet resulted in a pilot institution.

Whole-authority campuses are, to some extent the 'holy grail' of campus arrangements where all local secondary schools and colleges (with possible business and university involvement) cooperate to provide a comprehensive set of curricular pathways ranging from the most academic through to a broad range of vocational courses and college courses keyed to the world of work. Although there have been significant discussions across authorities about setting up such constructs, the best-known (and apparently most developed) example is that of West Lothian where considerable effort and investment has been made in developing a pan-authority course registration system, in improving facilities and equipment on various sites to support new or enhanced courses



and in making changes to transport arrangements to accommodate a significant rise in travel by senior learners. This model was reported on as a Case Study in BOCSH Report2: The Senior Phase and readers are referred to this via the BOCSH website (see Section 1). It is not yet clear to what extent any of the authority campus pilots has developed into a sustained model.

'Virtual campus' is a title used to encompass various means of extending a physical campus arrangement to schools whose geographical arrangement makes it difficult or impossible to participate in a physical campus arrangement. Means of implementing such arrangements include on-line teaching and discussion groups, virtual learning environments (VLEs), videoconferencing, conference calls (with associated slide presentations running in each site) and, very tentatively, 'virtual world' software which allows individual learners to enter a graphical learning environment. The last of these is potentially the most exciting and beneficial for learners, particularly in contexts such as Modern Languages, History, Modern Studies or Art. Learning and Teaching Scotland carried out some impressive pilot work almost a decade ago but encountered difficulties in making their trial software available, partially because of issues with corporate servers but some council experiments have had limited success. It may take another software generation before learners can fully benefit from this.

## 4 Case Studies and Summaries

### Overview

The Case Studies provided here have all attempted to embody the philosophy of *Curriculum for Excellence*, to marry this to the ethos of their schools and the needs of their pupils, to demonstrate their planning for transition from the BGE Phase and their planning and implementation of the Senior Phase. They have also addressed the issues raised in Section 3 of this publication.

The Case Studies summarised in this section illustrate the work of individual schools and entire education authorities in responding to the opportunities and challenges of *Curriculum for Excellence*. They represent the work of seven different schools and two separate Local Authorities. As such, they have been chosen to exemplify a range of sizes, catchments and circumstances.

The schools and Education Authorities are:

- Case Study 1** - Dundee City Council
- Case Study 2** - Grove Academy
- Case Study 3** - Ellon Academy & Aberdeen University
- Case Study 4** - Ellon Academy and North-East College
- Case Study 5** - Buckhaven High School
- Case Study 6** - Inveralmond Community High School
- Case Study 7** - South Ayrshire Council
- Case Study 8** – Preston Lodge H.S.
- Case Study 9** -

In each case, the school or authority has addressed the following issues:

- Size, Nature and Context of the School/Authority
- Development of the Senior Phase curriculum
- Principles of costs – Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling
- Planning for change – School Transition 2013-2016 and Beyond
- Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

Further sections are contained in the full case studies available on the BOCSH website.

## Executive Summaries

To ensure that readers will not be daunted by a huge tome but will instead pick up this publication in the hope of reading a succinct approach to *Curriculum for Excellence*, to transition and to the Senior Phase, only summaries of each case study are supplied below, but in sufficient detail to permit the reader to decide which full case studies to access from one of the electronic sources (see below).

A typical full case study contains four to twenty pages of detailed information, often accompanied by further appendices, on why and how the school or authority is approaching the Senior Phase of *Curriculum for Excellence* in the way it has.

## On-Line Resource

The nine full Case Studies are contained (in the form they were in on the date of publication) on the BOCSH website ([www.bocsh.org.uk](http://www.bocsh.org.uk)).

## Case Study 1: Dundee City Council

### Partnership Learning in the Senior Phase

#### 1 Description of Schools

Dundee City has 9 secondary schools and is well served by one FE College and two Universities. There are approximately 3,500 pupils in the Senior Phase across the schools, of which potentially 500 pupils will access elements of their curriculum with the partner organisations.

#### 2 Rationale for the Senior Phase Curriculum

In partnership with the Education Department, Dundee College has been delivering a successful programme of courses for S3 and S4 pupils for many years. This has constituted one afternoon per week in each of S3 and S4. The evolution of a new curricular structure and the development of new national qualifications mean that this model is no longer feasible and therefore a group was established to develop an alternative model.

Over the same time period in partnership with the Education Department, Dundee University and Abertay University have provided facilities and tutors for the development of a City Campus to deliver Advanced Higher subjects and the Scottish Baccalaureate for pupils across all secondary schools. Provision for the College and City Campus options are timetabled on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.

#### 3 Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

##### Dundee and Angus College

A group, consisting of a number of very experienced timetablers, was set up to explore areas including:

- A timetabling solution(s)
- An implementation timeline
- Information for guidance staff
- College capacity

Young people now have the facility to select a college subject from their option choice form - this includes a choice of 22 courses. (Appendix 1) The college option is one of six choices that pupils will make in S4 and one of five choices that pupils will make in S5/6. As a result the pupils selecting a college option will be timetabled appropriately thus avoiding a deficit model.

College courses are one academic session in duration and pupils will be certificated at SCQF level 4, 5 or 6. Pupils in S4 or S5 have the option to continue with their college course in S5 and S6 should they wish to opt for that progression route. Selecting a

college course has the same status as selecting a school course. Case Studies will be developed to highlight this. Information on the college courses on offer are integrated into the course choice booklet that schools provide to pupils and parents. This information is also shown in the school zone of the college website.

By early March schools provide the names of the young people who have chosen a college option. The criteria for being considered for a college offer include appropriate attendance levels and prior academic attainment. Pupils are interviewed and the offers communicated to the schools by end of March. Pupils begin their college course in June

This model provides an excellent opportunity to further integrate our partnership work with Dundee and Angus College. As the model further evolves, as well as each single year resulting in exit point qualifications, there will also be sign posted progression routes to guide young people through, potentially, three years of college which could lead to SCQF level 6 or 7 qualifications or HN units in some courses.

The senior phase college provision is based on the premise that pupils will complete their course in one year by attending college on two afternoons per week. In subsequent years pupils will have the opportunity to progress with the course they have chosen should they wish to do so. Alternatively they may also choose to study a different course at college.

### **Dundee University/Abertay University - City Campus**

Dundee City Campus was established three years ago. Following an extensive evaluation including focus groups of pupils, teachers and parents, the model has evolved over time.

Due to falling demand for some subjects in individual schools, the Universities, in a spirit of partnership, offered free teaching facilities and in some cases tutorials for the pupils. This allows pupils from several schools to come together and be taught on a modern campus, with all the additional benefits that brings.

The Advanced Higher subjects offered within the Campus model would be considered by many as core, including English and Mathematics, and their loss from school timetables due to low numbers of uptake in individual schools would have limited opportunities for these pupils. Other subjects offered include History, Geography, Modern Studies, French and Business Management but these are reviewed on an annual basis to consider viability.

Secondary school teachers are made associate university staff to enable them to access class-room facilities, IT and Library systems. For many pupils City Campus may be their first encounter with higher education, so it is hoped that many will aspire to continue their studies.

There is a universal model for all schools. Schools with less than 10 pupils selecting a subject use the Central Campus for the subjects on offer. Schools submit numbers for each subject by mid March. Schools retain responsibility for registering and recording progress and reporting to parents. The campus teacher sends relevant information to schools for distribution and feedback on parents' evening. A link is established with the Home School.

## Curriculum for Excellence – The Senior Phase: Partnerships for Learning

All other Advanced Higher subjects are offered in school and by schools, with information sharing occurring at an early stage to allow consortia arrangements to be made. Schools establish which courses they plan to run, days and times of delivery and pupil numbers. Schools justify sets through their own staffing arrangements.

Dundee has been involved in the Baccalaureate since its introduction. Initially with science but this has now developed across Languages, Social Sciences and Expressive Arts. There is a strong partnership with the Universities and lecturers there act as professional tutors supporting the young people through their inter-disciplinary project. Teachers and tutors work together to assess the projects and a local quality assurance process has been developed. Many schools offer the interdisciplinary project as a stand alone unit for pupils in S6. A range of subject areas have been studied by the pupils undertaking the Baccalaureate.

### 4 Principles of Costs - Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling

The new College programme costs are currently being discussed. The City Campus model provides some additional funding where schools provide a teacher to deliver the Advanced Higher at the University. The staffing formula is topped up by 0.22 FTE for every teacher delivering at the campus. This is added to school's staffing complement and equates to 7 periods - 4 for delivery, 2 for travel and 1 for preparation/marketing/communication. The delivering Campus Teacher is also given 2 supply days cover over the course of the session.

To encourage consortia approaches in the initial years, where 2 schools work together the authority will add 0.1 FTE staffing allowance to the school delivering - where 3 schools work together 0.2.FTE would be added.

Transport costs to College and Universities are met centrally.

### 5 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

Pupils who undertake a College option are assessed and receive parental reports at the appropriate time in liaison with individual schools. Qualifications are offered at SCQF levels 4-6.

As a development to the City Campus all Advanced Higher pupils will have the opportunity to undertake an online programme called 'Discover Learning at Dundee'. This programme fully prepares and qualifies potential students for undergraduate entry to the range of University of Dundee degrees. This course is studied at SCQF Level 7.

There is continued development of the Baccalaureate provision across all subject areas to allow it to become fully integral to the senior phase options.

### 6 Impacts and Outcomes – review and evaluation for continuing improvement in the senior phase

Continued evaluation, review and development of these options and their place within the senior phase of the curriculum are reviewed on an annual basis. Our pupils report positively on the learning opportunities afforded to them through college and university experiences.

## Case Study 2: Grove Academy

### Partnership Learning in the Senior Phase

#### 2 Description of School

Grove Academy is situated in Broughty Ferry, Dundee. The current roll is 1243 with nearly 600 pupils in the Senior Phase. The school has a reputation for its attainment and achievement and has been regularly one of the top-achieving schools in Scotland. The catchment is mainly middle class, but a large number of placing requests from areas of deprivation outwith the catchment widens the SIMD profile. 60% of the intake of one of the three associated primaries comes from outwith the catchment area. There is a significant number of pupils displaying Autistic Spectrum Disorder on the roll but there is no specific unit dedicated to enhancing the support for these pupils.

#### 2 Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

Prior to the development of Dundee City Council Guidelines on a CfE curriculum structure, it was proposed a move to a 33 period week. After consultation, this proposal was withdrawn in the light of staff and pupil opinion across the authority. Subsequently, at Grove, it was proposed to move from the traditional 40 period week to a 30 period week, bringing the school in line with all other schools in Dundee. With this and the introduction of the new Grove Curriculum, based on the DCC Guidelines, the SLT also proposed a change from registration to Tutor Time and that Tutor Time should be vertical. These four major changes met with significant opposition from staff, pupils and parents, but were overcome through discussion and compromise.

One of the main tenets of our Senior Phase curriculum is that pupils are allowed a free choice of subjects in S5 and S6. There are no compulsory subjects, although English is highly recommended in S5 and almost all pupils do this. In S4, pupils must study English and Mathematics and are allowed to choose any four other subjects. There is initially no column choice sheet, but a free choice sheet, listing the subjects and levels being offered for the session in S4 and in S5/6. Pupils make their choices and column structures are then created reflecting as many wishes as possible. Under-subscribed subjects do not run, resulting in some pupils having to consider their reserve choice. In session 2014/15, 90% of Senior Phase pupils accessed all their initial subject choices.

With free choice, departments expand (or contract) according to pupil demand. Small departments are not restricted to one class in a particular column. Above all, allowing pupils to select courses where they have the greatest strengths leads to better attainment in S5/6 and this is very important in a traditionally high-attaining school. Feedback from the Rector's "5 A Day" interviews also bears witness to the popularity and positivity of free choice. Pupils are also very positive about 6 subjects in S4, mainly as they do not have to follow the modes in the old system and no longer have to do subjects they do not enjoy – reflecting the CfE principle of Challenge and Enjoyment! Free choice also has its disadvantages; we set a minimum of 10 pupils for a class to be viable. Staffing can be an issue if a department is oversubscribed. It also takes time to sort out columns to match the pupils' choices. However, we fully believe the advantages outweigh the disadvantages considerably.

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In order to accommodate the principle of free choice, the timetabler has developed a rotating matrix to gather information from pupil choice more efficiently. The design takes into consideration the many demands placed on the Senior Phase and also provides scope to introduce new choices that will become available in future, for example through the Wood Report. With resources such as staffing becoming increasingly 'tight' the matrix structure allows more flexibility when creating the schematic structure for S3-6. The matrix is set up within curricular areas repeated across columns to provide free choice. By rotating a pupil or groups of pupils between the columns viable classes can be created and linked to the schematic which is inherently influenced by staffing. The rotating matrix may allow us to increase the number of pupils whose choices we can make but its ultimate aim is to make better use of available staffing and resources.

The curriculum model personalises each pupil's pathway and a number of exemplar pathways have been provided for the perusal of pupils and parents. Pupils are encouraged to study courses at a suitable level, but this might be in a bi-level or even tri-level class, particularly in minority subjects. Some pupils in S5/6 may join a National 4/5 class if it is running at a time which fits with one of their columns.

### **Importance of partnerships**

We have over one hundred partnerships which are making an impact on our young people's learning and achievement. The school is involved with Dundee and Angus College in providing courses of a more vocational type, such as cosmetology, joinery and construction, two afternoons per week. By agreement across Dundee City Council, this occurs on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. With regard to Advanced Higher courses, the school is part of the wider City Campus. This is also available on two afternoons per week for 2 hours each thus allowing learners one possible AH course outside their school. Courses are held at Dundee University, but practical subjects use consortium arrangements between schools. AH subjects with fewer than 10 learners must run courses either through the Campus or as consortia or include learners in bi-level or tri-level classes in school.

Over the last few years we have run very successful Science Baccalaureate courses and the numbers doing this are increasing slowly. The Baccalaureate IDL project has been very beneficial. The school has also developed the use of Pupil Support Workers as instructors in S4-6, particularly in the development of ASDAN, Saltire and Youth Achievement Awards, as well as the very popular Duke of Edinburgh Award. We are currently working with Volunteer Champion in Dundee to set up volunteer opportunities for S5/6 pupils as part of their curriculum. This will widen learners' experiences and opportunities. We have also encouraged those pupils, particularly in S6, who wish to support their career choice through additional work experience in the community.

### **Arrangements for IDL**

This is the one of the four contexts for learning where we have a huge development task. We started to develop IDL through a period in S3 three years ago, but, on advice from HMIE in February 2013, we decided to "park" the development for a year and established a working group to develop a whole-school view of the concepts, ideas and developments in IDL. We have now built on Primary liaison, the organic growth of IDL links between subjects in the BGE, as well as an IDL period in S2 social subjects. The group is now looking at introducing "Days Out" and/or "Themed Weeks", as well as the current implementation of the SQA Scottish Studies Award to develop IDL further in the Senior Phase. The publication of the BOCOSH report on IDL has also been of great use.



### 3 Principles of Costs - Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling

Our staffing level is 85.3 FTE based on the 2013 census of 1223 (not the current 1243), plus 4.0 FTE for Support for Learning which is in addition to the main staffing calculation. Because of the principle of free choice, the subject staffing profile of the school has followed the choices made by pupils. For instance, courses in Business Studies grew in popularity (as did achievement levels) over the last three years, resulting in the department increasing from 2.0 FTE to 4.3 FTE.

### 4 Planning for change – School Transition 2013–2016+

Planning for further change centres on the school's Improvement Plan. The current plan ends this summer and, in the next few months, evaluation will be undertaken by the Strategy & Improvement Group, along with consultation on the content of the next three-year plan. This is a crucial part of transformational change in the school in terms of teaching and learning, support and curriculum. Work streams will include:

- The development of alternative and more flexible pathways for learners, particularly with the help of partners, support staff and parents
- The development of the school and authority response to the Wood Report
- Better pupil support through the further development of Health & Wellbeing Tutors
- Better learning and teaching through more reflective self-evaluation
- Improved attainment through improved curricular pathways and improved teaching and learning.

Throughout the last three years the school has attempted to use available resources and finances in a more focused way. This year, through prudent budgeting, departments were able to bid for over £52,000 of development funds, which were disbursed, based on departments' Improvement Plans.

### 5 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

All departments have developed assessment, tracking and monitoring systems in S1-3.

In the 2014 SQA exams, attainment in S4 at National 5 compared to Standard Grade Credit in 2013 increased in almost all subjects. However, Grove Academy's 'Achilles heel' has always related to low ability pupils (particularly in SIMD Decile 9), often few in number, who did not have their attainment needs met fully. They were sometimes 'square pegs' in traditional 'round' curriculum holes. Our latest MidYIS baseline assessment scores for 2014 indicate that this situation has changed dramatically in the last four years, and sadly, not for the better. In 2011 (current S5) 36% were in the A Category (top 25% across the UK) and 13% in Category D (bottom 25%). This year there were only 17% in Category A but 28% in category D.

The concerns around this change centre on their literacy and thus groups of teachers have been trained in Fresh Start. Looking to their future and those of the three cohorts above them who also fall into this category, a PT Guidance was seconded to look at alternative pathways and a more suitable curriculum for these young people so that they are not being set up to fail. SQA courses such as Leadership, Personal Development and Enterprise and Employability are being developed. However, there is still reluctance on the part of these pupils, and particularly of their parents, to take a more vocational approach, and this is a culture change we are currently working on.

## Case Study 3: Ellon Academy Flexible Learning Partnership – S6@Uni

### Partnership Learning in the Senior Phase

#### 1 Description of School

Ellon Academy is a split-site, non-denominational school with an integral college facility in Aberdeenshire. There are approximately 1050 pupils. Four years ago we modified our 'pupil week' to a 32 + 1 period structure. SQA related STACS and INSIGHT data regularly place Ellon Academy in deciles 2 or 3.

#### 2 Rationale and Development of the Senior Phase

Following extensive consultation across the school community, the SMT developed a *Curriculum for Excellence* model reflecting national principles and practice documentation, Aberdeenshire Children's Service guidance and consultation with our parents/carers, primary colleagues, academy staff, pupils and local employers. Over the past six years, following continued consultation and engagement with stakeholders, our curriculum model has evolved to ensure it continues to provide the framework for high quality teaching and learning to take place.

Learning in the senior phase (S4-S6) is delivered through a 6-column structure. National 3-5 courses are allocated 4 periods with National 6 courses receiving 5. National 7 and Aberdeen University course time allocations are by negotiation with faculties.

#### 3 Development of the Aberdeen University / Ellon Academy Flexible Learning Partnership (FLP)

Over the past five years, Ellon Academy and Aberdeen University staff have developed and established a flexible learning partnership – S6@Uni (FLP) that provides S6 pupils with further academic challenge and the opportunity to gain UCAS accreditation that is recognised by all Scottish universities (Appendix 1). Furthermore, as S6 pupils are enrolled as university students, the partnership provides them with the opportunity to experience what post-school academic life at university might entail!

Due to the healthy local job market and general high S5 attainment across the school, it became clear that the more traditional S6 experience at Ellon Academy was not attracting all pupils to continue their education at the school. This was reflected in the declining S6 pupil 'stay on rate'. Following discussion with Aberdeenshire colleagues, senior pupils, parents/carers and local employers the school made numerous changes both to the curriculum and the way in which it was delivered. One of these changes was the introduction of the FLP.

The FLP was established to provide a unique opportunity for S6 students to gain an advantage in the competitive Higher Education market. By studying one of the university courses, S6 students will gain accreditation towards their chosen future

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Scottish degree, and by demonstrating this academic commitment throughout their final year at school, they will be better placed when University Admission Officers are considering applications. In summary, the FLP provides:

- Additional UCAS accreditation
- Free access to University modules/courses
- Potential accreditation of first year university units in S6
- On-line learning and assessment
- Tutorial support
- Practical workshop at university (one weekend per course if required) to complete practical activities
- Attainment that is recognised by all Scottish universities
- Personal and social development opportunities.

Initially the FLP focussed on developing a university partnership across Science subjects. Over the past four years, to reflect the broader needs and interests of S6 pupils, the FLP has evolved to incorporate Social Science courses. Through consultation with parents/carers, principal teachers and university staff, S6 pupils have the opportunity to study university courses in conjunction with school-based Higher/Advanced Higher courses.

The following 'linked' courses have been offered. Not all courses run each year.

Ellon Academy Courses	Aberdeen University Courses
Geology Units	Introduction to Archaeology
AH Geography	Introduction to Prehistoric Scotland
AH Biology or AH Geography	Ecology and Environmental Science
AH Chemistry	Essentials of Chemistry
H Computing	Web Application Development
AH Geography	Global Worlds/Global Challenges
AH Physics	Astronomy and Meteorology
H RMPS	What Makes Us Human?
AH Modern Studies	Criminal Law
H Media Studies	Introduction to Film & Cinematic Experience
H Business Management	Business Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
H Politics	Introduction to Political Science
AH English	Controversial Classics

### 4 Principles of Costs - Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling

Delivery costs for this programme are minimal. Each course costs about £200. By registering as Aberdeen University students, the course costs have been met through grants. From session 2013-2014, course costs are being met, in part, by Aberdeenshire Council.

Pupils studying FLP courses are not allocated additional timetabled time on the curriculum. Study and course work is completed independently either at home or during school study time. By linking Aberdeen University courses with Advanced Higher Grade

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courses our S6 pupils learning experience has greater depth and relevance to post-school education. Pupils report positively on the integrated course relevance between the Advanced Higher Grade and University courses. Currently our S6 pupils engage with the Aberdeen University courses through Advanced Higher Grade subjects. This has increased the number of Advanced Higher Grade candidates and positively impacted on course viability. This has contributed to a broader curriculum for our most able pupils.

### 5 Planning for change -School Transition to 2016 and beyond

Currently the school, in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council, is considering extending the current programme.

The introduction of the S4-S6 Senior Phase provides a 'longer learning' opportunity for our most able pupils. The school senior phase curriculum structure will provide the opportunity for any Senior Phase learner to take Aberdeen University courses thereby providing greater academic challenge. The school plans to use this opportunity to co-ordinate courses over a two or three year period, enabling pupils to complete a university year at school. If successful, this opportunity will have huge personal, social, financial and educational benefits.

### 6 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

The twelve-week Aberdeen University courses follow the programme undertaken by full-time university undergraduate Science and Social Science students. Courses are split into two semesters (February and September) and S6 pupils have the opportunity to undertake one or two courses during the academic year.

Each course is assessed at SCQF Level 7. S6 pupils have commented that the university module has helped them in their 'linked' S6 school course. Lectures are recorded and made available through the Internet, allowing S6 pupils to review them at a time and place of their choice. Course materials and additional guides are also accessed through the course website. Some courses require attendance at practical laboratory sessions held in Aberdeen, these are held over a weekend to fit round school commitments. A university 'Advisor of Studies' supports school students and attends the S5/S6 Parent Evening to report progress.

Courses are assessed through marked assignments, laboratory reports and an end of course exam.

### Impacts and Outcomes – review and evaluation for continuing improvement in the Senior Phase

Continued evaluation, review and development of these courses and their place within the Senior Phase of the curriculum is undertaken annually by the Rector.

Over the past five years this (and others) strategy has resulted in increased:

- S6 stay on rates (41% in 2009, 56% in 2012)
- Cumulative S6 5+ Higher Grade attainment (27% in 2009, 35% in 2012)
- Cumulative S6 1+ Advanced Higher Grade attainment (21% in 2009, 26% in 2012)

In addition our pupils report positively on the independent learning opportunities, their personal and social development and confidence about going to University.

## Case Study 4: Ellon Academy & North East Scotland College Partnership

### Partnership Learning in the Senior Phase

#### 3 Description of School

Ellon Academy is an Aberdeenshire split-site, non-denominational school with an integrated college facility. There are approximately 1050 pupils at the school, with an additional 100/200 college students accessing the facility on a weekly basis. The school now has a rising roll, attracting approximately 10% of pupils from other catchment areas.

To ease the pressure on accommodation, in 2002 another secondary school opened within the Ellon Academy catchment area. As a direct result of this opening, the school roll dropped from around 1750 to about 1000 pupils. Following this reduction, accommodation in one building of the split-site school was adapted to provide North East Scotland College with workshop, ICT and general-purpose teaching areas. The College now use this space as their Learning Centre. Three years ago the school modified the 'pupil week' to a 32 + 1 period structure. SQA related STACS (now INSIGHT) data regularly place Ellon Academy in deciles 2 or 3.

#### 2 Rationale and Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

Following consultation across the school community the Senior Management Team developed a *Curriculum for Excellence* model that reflected the national principles and practice documentation, Aberdeenshire Council Children's Services guidance and, most importantly, the outcomes of consultation with our parents/carers, primary colleagues, academy staff, pupils and local employers.

Over the past five years, following continued consultation and engagement with stakeholders, our curriculum model has evolved to ensure it continues to provide the framework for high quality teaching and learning to take place.

Learning in the Senior Phase (S4-S6) is delivered largely through a six-column structure. National 5, 4 and 3 courses are allocated four periods with National 6 courses receiving five periods each. Time allocations for National 7 and Aberdeen University courses are by negotiation with faculties.

#### 3 Development of the North East Scotland College / Ellon Academy Partnership

Over the past six years, Ellon Academy and North East Scotland College have worked in partnership to provide a range of courses and Skills for Work qualifications that support learning across the Ellon and Northeast community. Initially, following consultation with S2 pupils, Intermediate 1 Skills for Work courses in Construction and Care were delivered to Ellon Academy pupils. This then developed to incorporate other Aberdeenshire secondary schools wishing to opt into the curriculum on offer.

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Courses were first delivered in S3 and S4 across two column choices. Originally each column had three periods of delivery time. Two double periods in each of the columns were used on different days by the college to deliver courses. The third 'extra period' in each of the two columns were timetabled together and taught by our Technical Education teachers. Our Technical and Home Economics staff worked with the College to agree practical and theoretical tasks complementing Skills for Work courses. Many pupils also link their college courses with appropriate Home Economics and Technical classes. Each college course has a minimum of 10 and maximum of 15 pupils.

Two years later, as a result of feedback and a move to a 32+1 period week, the courses were delivered across a single day. This was achieved in a single, six-period day by grouping together two double periods across both columns. The remaining single period in both columns was also used to deliver Skills for Work courses to this group whilst other pupils in that year group attended a single period of both PSE and Religious and Moral Education (RME). The Skills for Work pupils were kept together and taught PSE and RME at the time when all other pupils in the year group are attending the two remaining single periods in the columns. This then facilitated a six period Skills for Work teaching day with only two additional teaching periods (PSE and RME) being required and no disruption to other courses being taught.

At the end of S3 all pupils involved chose a further Skills for Work option to be followed in S4. This was usually a progression to Intermediate 2 in the same subject. College staff are trained in and support the school's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy and assessment and reporting procedures. North East College College staff provide written feedback on progress which is incorporated into the assessment calendar.

Annually, one or two courses are provided 'free of charge' with the opportunity for the school to buy additional ones. Skills for Work courses offered to date include:

- Construction Intermediate 1/Intermediate 2
- Energy Intermediate 2
- Engineering Intermediate 2
- Care Intermediate 1
- Uniformed Services Intermediate 1
- Rural Skills Intermediate 1

### 4 Principles of Costs - Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling

Each additional Skills for Work course has a cost of £10,000. This cost is offset against school staff savings. In addition, particularly at Intermediate 1 level, the college provides invaluable breadth to the curriculum. Pupils taking Skills for Work courses are more engaged with their learning and SCQF attainment at these levels is enhanced.

### 5 Planning for Change -School Transition in the Period 2013–2016+

The introduction of the Senior Phase (S4-S6) has provided an opportunity to move away from stage learning (S3/S4) to learning by ability. Currently we offer single year Skills for Work courses in the Senior Phase. Progression opportunities will be available for most courses. Current and future planning involve the combination of school and college HNC and HND delivery.

## 6 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

Continuing Professional Development for college staff has ensured greater consistency in teaching, learning, assessment and reporting. Qualifications awarded are linked to the school but separate from the school's attainment profile. It is hoped that the separate school and college examination data will be ultimately linked to enable the school to accurately reflect attainment through INSIGHT data.

## 7 Impacts and Outcomes – Review and Evaluation for Continuing Improvement in the Senior Phase

Ellon Academy staff are confident that the college provides meaningful learning experiences for a significant cross-section of our pupils. The opportunity to link this experience to attainment and positive and sustained destinations is also invaluable.

Despite studying one course fewer (choosing Skills for Work courses across two columns) attainment has remained high and increased over a four-year period:

1. 5+ Level 3 attainment 2009 – 92%, 2012 – 96+%
2. 5+ Level 4 attainment 2009 – 83%, 2012 – 92+%
3. 5+ Level 5 attainment 2009 – 41%, 2012 – 52+%
4. Positive school destinations are 95+% and increasing.

In addition pupils are more engaged with their learning with annual statistics demonstrating that referrals as a result of inappropriate behaviour are significantly reduced.

## Case Study 5: Buckhaven High School

### Partnership Learning in the Senior Phase

#### 1. Description of School

Buckhaven High School is situated in the town of Buckhaven close to the A915 and the adjoining town of Methilhill. A 6 year comprehensive, the school serves a catchment area of several villages and small towns each with their own distinctive character. The school includes a pupil Additional Support teaching block.

This year the pupil roll is 1230 pupils with a senior phase cohort of 493 including 230 in S4, 165 in S5 and 98 in S6. The school catchment is in an area of social deprivation with 80% of the learners in the bottom 3 SIMD deciles and the school average is 2.7. The FME is 28% and the attendance rate average is 90.5%. The staying on rates are 69% for S5 and 62% for S6. The number of leavers entering a positive destination is 89%.

Attainment has been relatively steady over the last 3 years with around 23% of S4 gaining 5+ level 5 awards and 12% of S5 gaining 3+ Highers. All exclusion figures are below the Fife average and below the Scottish average for session 12/13. The school has a department of additional support with a roll of around 40 learners a year. Many have a mixed support package and most attain at levels 2 and 3.

#### 2 Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

In 2008 comprehensive review of vision and values took the school (and partners) through a process of reflection and sharing views and values. This resulted in a clear sense of what the school values and how all should engage in the process of delivering those values through a vibrant curriculum. The four capacities were the basis for evaluating attainment and achievement in a holistic sense. The ethos of the school and the high expectations that pupils and staff must have, were the driving force for the highest possible standards and subsequent outcomes for all our pupils.

The design of this model was based on:

1. Having shared aims in relation to the delivery of Learning and Teaching.
2. Ensuring that the levels of attainment and achievement in the school are based on a culture of inclusion and suitability for all.
3. Ensuring that each pupil (as far as possible) has access to the full range of outcomes and experiences.
4. Providing coverage across the 8 curricular areas up to the 3rd level by the end of S2 (as far as possible.)
5. Maintaining breadth through a curricular structure embracing a whole range of learning opportunities with appropriate teaching methodologies.
6. Providing depth through planning, preparation and delivery of high quality experiences by committed staff, which offer support and challenge for every pupil.
7. Linking personalisation and choice directly to the curriculum framework from S1-S6 and linking to individual courses in subject areas, activities and projects



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8. Informed (or supported) choice opportunities will be increased as pupils progress through S1-S6.
9. Providing each learner with planned and coherent opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work with a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing.
10. Providing increased physical activity opportunities to help promote healthy living.
11. Ensuring a common option base for S4, S5 and S6 pupils to support greater flexibility and appropriate challenge.
12. Providing increased time in subject learning in S3-S6 to directly promote deeper learning and greater confidence.

The pupil week consists of 30 periods of 53 minutes plus registration of 12 minutes each day. Following consultation across the school the following design principles were agreed:

- 1 S4 would continue to go to Maths and English as discrete groups as the departments preferred this and could staff it.
- 2 Higher subjects would get 6 periods with a double once a week.
- 3 S5/6 pupils studying at National level would be in with the S4 for the 5 periods allotted and would go to a +1 option for the 6<sup>th</sup> period when the Higher pupils would get their double and the S4 would be extracted to go to Maths or English.
- 4 All year groups would get 3 periods of Health and Wellbeing.
- 5 There would only be S5/6 in the 5<sup>th</sup> column as S4 would get their Maths and English during that time also.

This design can be seen more clearly in the diagram below:

<b>S4 English/ Maths</b>			<b>English</b>		<b>English</b>		<b>English</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>English</b>		
<b>S4 choices</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>			<b>3</b>
<b>S5/6 National Courses</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>3</b>
<b>S5/6 Higher/ Adv. High</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>6</b>				<b>3</b>

To timetable this, S3 made their course choice options early in the year and the S4 columns constructed. They were then made compatible with the Higher and Advanced Higher options and given as a course choice to the S4/5 due to return as S5/6 the following year.

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The +1 option provided wider achievement and further accreditation options for S5/6 studying at National level. Senior Literacy, Personal Development, Scottish Studies, Performance PE and Sociology were the short course options offered this year. This will develop into a wider programme over the years.

During +1 time, any bi-level classes were left with the Higher cohort only and staff had 1 period with these Higher only pupils to support their progress and studies. The cost of this is partly offset by having large cohorts in the +1 classes.

### 3 Principles of Costs - Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling

The structure of the school week has remained unchanged since the move to 33 periods in 2009. Registration suits the fixed horizontal structure of the pupil support arrangements and therefore in terms of cover the timetable is costly. All unpromoted teachers need 7 periods non-contact to give the stipulated 300 minutes for preparation and correction.

Average time over 300 minutes is around 42 minutes. Take this for around 85% of the staff (this excludes SMT and support staff) from a staffing of 86 gives  $42 \times 0.85 \times 86 = 3070$  minutes per week extra = 2.27 fte per week at on costs of around £35k a session = £79 000. This is very costly and for session 2015/16 will need to be examined.

The pupil support plan has 10 Guidance teachers, 3 at grade 4, 1 at grade 2 and 6 at grade 1. They are split across the year groups and form teams with high levels of expertise in areas pertinent to the groups they support.

### 4 Planning for change -School Transition in the period 2013–2016+

This aspect is embedded in the above sections.

### 5 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

The school has made the area of “feedback” a major development over the last 2 years. Following the work of Hattie the school principles for reporting were revisited and the 5 statements above give a summary of the main points.

## Case Study 6: Inveralmond Community High School Partnership Learning in the Senior Phase

### 1. Description of School

Inveralmond Community High School is a comprehensive non-denominational school situated in the Ladywell area of Livingston, West Lothian. The school roll in 2014-2015 is 1088. The school has a strong, inclusive ethos and offers a vibrant environment for learning and teaching. As a Community School we have outstanding facilities. Our learners have access to these facilities during the day and after school. We also have a fully equipped hairdressing salon and beauty room allowing young people to participate in a wide range of qualifications and develop a range of skills.

At Inveralmond we have a wide range of approaches to achievement both in and out of school. We encourage our young people to have high expectations and high levels of self-esteem to prepare them for life and work. Our key purpose is to provide all our young people with a coherent curriculum, high quality learning and teaching, rich opportunities for achievement and attainment and a strong sense of community and shared values. A collegiate approach has been adopted to school improvement and we work well together to ensure the best possible outcomes for our young people

### 2 Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

Following extensive consultation and engagement with all stakeholders, our curriculum model has evolved to ensure it prepares and equips our young people for life in a rapidly changing world and the world of work. There is much more focus on providing our young people with the opportunity to develop skills, gain qualifications and learn about career relevant pathways which will lead directly to employment opportunities and successful futures.

Learning in the Senior Phase (S4-S6) is delivered through a 6-column structure. Courses in S4 are allocated either 4 or 5 periods. All Higher courses are allocated 6 periods. In S4, learners study English and Mathematics at the appropriate level, to ensure they leave the Senior Phase with a qualification in these areas, and also study PE, RME and PSD. Learners choose 4 additional subjects and are encouraged to choose subjects to ensure progression and enable them to achieve at the highest level in S5. In S5, learners study five subjects in addition to studying awards or qualifications to support personal achievement. In S5, the majority of learners participate in PE and RME. For some of our learners, progression is about breadth of learning, while for others it is depth. We meet the needs of all learners by providing a range of pathways for all our young people. In S6, pupils study four subjects alongside a range of personal achievement opportunities. There are no compulsory subjects in S5/6.

We have a range of achievement pathways fit for purpose in the 21st Century and adopt a GIRFEC approach. Our curriculum model allows pupils to select appropriate exit points, to meet their learner needs. Achievement pathways are determined through an extensive 'Opportunity for all' programme, the use of End Point Data, learner reflection

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diaries and extensive tracking and monitoring systems (Appendix 3). Over a number of years, ICHS has implemented a range of courses to meet the needs of all learners (Appendix 4). We have developed the curriculum with a clear focus on engaging all learners, to ensure the delivery of qualifications and experiences which lead to industry recognised qualifications, alongside academic qualifications. These achievement pathways are delivered in partnership with West Lothian Campus and, where necessary, other training providers. We provide a range of Skills for Work courses with a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Partnership working is at the heart of our curriculum design thus broadening the range of achievement pathways for our learners. To achieve better connectivity and co-operation between our school and the world of work, we have established business partnerships to ensure young people at all levels understand the expectations of employers. As well as modernising our curriculum, these partnerships support local businesses to develop a skilled workforce. We are engaging with Modern Apprenticeship schemes and Academies and are aiming for our partners to view themselves as co-investors and co-designers rather than simply customers. Effective use is made of Labour Market Intelligence from SDS, thus enabling us to develop our curriculum to enhance employment opportunities.

We are working closely with WL College to ensure all young people have the choices and opportunities to fulfil their potential. We develop pathways with training providers, for example Blackburn Local Employment Scheme (BLES) and Rural and Urban Training Skills (RUTS), which allow young people to participate in industry-related training.

### **West Lothian Campus**

There is a strategic approach at Local Authority level. The West Lothian Campus offers learners in all schools the opportunity to access courses and qualifications from all eleven secondary schools, West Lothian College and Queen Margaret University. The eleven schools work closely together to ensure there is provision for all young people in West Lothian. A full range of AH and Higher courses are on offer, including Highers such as Dance, Drama, Psychology and Computing.

The College-Schools Partnership is part of the West Lothian Campus, allowing S4-6 learners to go to college two afternoons per week. College provision offers learners the opportunity to: experience learning and teaching within an FE environment; gain suitable qualifications apply for progression to FE/HE courses; be equipped to progress to employment with enhanced employability skills. Courses on offer at WL College include: HNCs in Computing or Engineering; Higher Photography; Construction; AH PE.

The West Lothian Campus, in partnership with Queen Margaret University, will offer four Academies next session: the Hospitality and Tourism Academy; the Creative Industries Academy; the Food Science Nutrition Academy; and the Health and Social Care Academy. These academies will offer our young people the opportunity to develop a skills and career opportunities. Academy classes take place at Queen Margaret University. Young people will take part in a variety of classes, go on industry visits and gain a qualification which can help them to get into college, university or work. Entry into these courses varies and National 5 units also count towards entry qualifications.

Throughout the Broad General Education, learners are preparing for Senior Phase choices. Learners are engaged in lessons which incorporate career management skills and consider appropriate routes for each individual young person in relation to their academic ability and their attributes, capabilities and future career pathways. Our Inspire Learning Programme provides the appropriate platform for these reflections and

discussions to take place. Didbook, our Profiling Tool, enables learners to reflect on their learning journey and plan for the future.

### **3 Principles of Costs - Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling**

The school operates a 33-period week, which is highly efficient. West Lothian operates an asymmetric week, allowing opportunities for staff and learners on Friday afternoons. Some college courses take place on Friday afternoons, as do West Lothian 'masterclasses' for Highers. A number of network afternoons are organised to enable staff to develop the curriculum and share practice in a collegiate manner.

We have a large range of facilities enabling effective delivery of a full range of Skills for Work courses and opportunities for Wider Achievement. In order to engage a select group of learners, we employ a full time hairdresser/beauty teacher. Through ICHS's first Numeracy day we have gained and strengthened our business partner links. Students used this learning opportunity to consider their future career paths and the role of numeracy within these. This partnership working has led to established partnerships with various. There is also a range of planned opportunities for developing the four capacities through accredited courses and awards: Personal Development, ASDAN, Duke of Edinburgh and Leadership.

### **4 Planning for change - School Transition 2013–2016+**

ICHS is undergoing transformational change in terms of curriculum, learning and teaching and personal support. We are developing a future perspective through our existing improvement planning processes. We are aiming to address the future needs of our learners in a rapidly changing world. There are six Improvement Teams, each with a leader and coach. Each team has an action plan with clear measures of success, looking inwards, outwards and forwards to secure positive outcomes. This approach has transformed the professional learning culture in our school. There is a CPD team who are supporting staff with transformational change through developing professional enquiry and sharing best practice and ideas. The staff CPD BLOG is used to evaluate impact on school improvement. It also keeps staff informed of updates, including those from staff attending CPD events, SQA and Education Scotland.

The Local Authority is split into three HUBs. Our HUB schools work well together in a collegiate fashion and regularly share practice. Headteachers, Deputes, PTCs and departments work together and HUB in-service days have discussed new developments and shared practice.

### **5 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications**

All staff work with appropriate Education Scotland resources. We are in the process of devising a robust Tracking and Monitoring system for the Broad General Education and working on improving our S3 curriculum. All staff are fully prepared to support young people in the assessment process. National 3-5 have been successfully implemented and our Verification Policy was commended by SQA. All departments attended SQA implementation events last year for every subject area. A revised presentation policy was implemented and results improved considerably last session.

## Case Study 7: South Ayrshire Council

### Developing the Senior Phase

#### 1 Description of Schools

South Ayrshire Council has eight Secondary schools. All schools have a 33 period synchronized school day. All schools have 2 travel columns within S5/6 to offer College courses and school-based learning. School rolls vary between 500 and 1300 pupils.

#### 2 Rationale for the Senior Phase Curriculum

The Senior Phase is designed to:

- 1 Build on achievements in the broad general education (BGE);
- 2 Take advantage of local flexibilities in delivering the Senior Phase entitlements;
- 3 Provide a range of flexible progression pathways within and beyond the Senior Phase to meet the needs of all learners;
- 4 Promote the highest level of attainment in literacy and numeracy for all;
- 5 Meet the needs of young people who leave school at the end of S4;
- 6 Build on college partnerships; and
- 7 Promote and support employability skills, skills for learning, life and work.

#### 3 Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

Schools in South Ayrshire have had links with Ayrshire College for many years. In recent years, joint planning has been a greater feature due to the synchronized 33 period week across all schools. Through discussion and an identification of interests around employability, courses have been offered in a range of subjects and vocational qualifications linked to Skills for Work. In addition, each school agreed to adopt two travel columns within their S5/6 curriculum. These are timetabled Tuesday/Thursday and Wednesday/Friday afternoons. All schools have access to each of the courses on offer in these columns. Transport costs are supported by the local authority.

During session 2014-15, all schools agreed to consult on adopting a unified senior phase structure. The new model would offer young people the opportunity to present for 6 qualifications in S4, 6 in S5 and 6 in S6 – leading to at least 18 qualifications. Adopting the new model would allow the same option form to be used across S4-6. This would provide young people with greater access to a wider range of qualifications and learning experiences:

- 7 More choice for learners
- 8 More collegiate working – South Ayrshire Learning Campus
- 9 More focus on developing skills for learning, life and work
- 10 More opportunities for personal achievement
- 11 More opportunities for partnership – Ayrshire College, employers and the voluntary sector

Courses will be planned to reflect relevance to learning for life and work, both present and future. There will continue to be a focus on developing skills for learning, life and work that fully engage all stakeholders/partners in the school community. This focus will

be further enhanced in Senior Phase through links with business partners, work experience opportunities, community involvement as well as Ayrshire College and higher education partners. Discussions relating to the recommendations in the recently published document – ‘ Education Working For All! Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce (The Wood Commission)’ have been underway throughout this session to assist with planning for 2015-16.

### Engagement with stakeholders

Each school has engaged with parents/carers, staff and young people in relation to the adoption of a unified structure for the senior phase. Presentations to parents, staff and young people provided a platform for issues to be raised, discussed and clarified prior to the agreed model being implemented in 2015-16.

## 4 Planning for change - School Transition in the period 2013–2016+

Young people will have a choice of study at the various levels across the entire Senior Phase. They will be offered greater personalisation and choice through a number of curricular and whole school opportunities to develop new skills and further develop their own interests. An integrated structure will add flexibility to allow the curriculum to fully meet the needs of learners. In the Senior Phase, depth of learning will continue to be provided through opportunities for young people to engage with increasingly demanding concepts, develop progressively more complex cognitive abilities and build and learn new skills. The three-year Senior Phase will allow depth of study at different levels depending on the interests, aptitude and aspiration of our young people. Young people will also deepen their learning by applying it in new and different contexts.

### Breadth

For session 2015-16, the Senior Phase will cover 3 years with exit points as appropriate to individual young people’s aspirations and plans. In each year of the Senior Phase, young people will study up to 6 subjects or timetabled experiences at an appropriate level. Breadth will be further enhanced by viewing S4-6 as an integrated phase as young people build on their qualifications over a period of up to three years. All young people will study English and Mathematics in S4 at the appropriate level to ensure all young people leave the Senior Phase with a qualification in these two areas at the highest level they are capable of. Breadth will also be achieved through ensuring a number of personal achievement, personal development and vocational opportunities are offered as an integrated part of the curriculum. In order to further support the purpose of the curriculum all young people will receive 2 periods of physical education, one period of personal and social education at each stage of the Senior Phase. They will also receive their entitlement to RME.

### 2014-15

	Pathway						
	A	B	C	D	E		
S6: 6 periods	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice		
S5: 6 periods	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice		
S4: 4 periods	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice		

2015-16

	Pathway					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
S6: 5 periods	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Wider Achievement
S5: 5 periods	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Wider Achievement
S4: 5 periods	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice	Choice

#### Number of qualifications – over next 4 years

Year group/number of qualifications - moving through the new qualifications towards a 6 learning option model:

Young People in	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017/18
Present S3	BGE	6	6	6
Present S4	7	6	6	
Present S5	5	6		
Present S6	5			

## 5 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

In October 2014, Guidance and Senior staff attended a seminar organized in partnership with Ayrshire College. The purpose of this event was to provide more detailed information relating to College provision and to assist with future learner discussions in relation to the senior phase and personal planning. College staff provide progress reports for each pupil. Ayrshire College have a full-time member of staff who is dedicated to managing School – College partnerships.

## 6 Impacts and Outcomes – review and evaluation for continuing improvement in the senior phase

An evaluation and review of delivery is completed each year and used to inform planning for the next session. The Schools – College partnership group consisting of senior school and college staff meet termly to monitor progress and to discuss future provision.



## Case Study 8: Preston Lodge High School

### Developing the Senior Phase

#### 1 Description of School

Preston Lodge High School is an East Lothian non-denominational school serving Cockenzie, Port Seton, Prestonpans and Longniddry. Our catchment area is comprehensive, with a roughly even split in leaver destinations between Higher Education, Further Education and employment. Our key school priority is the development of an Accelerated Learning Cycle approach to classroom practice. To progress this work we have formed a partnership with Cramlington Learning Village. We have also implemented significant staff reorganisation, appointing a PT Classroom Practice and five Learning Coaches. Our in-school approach to professional learning is particularly strong and can be found at [www.edubuzz.org/plpl](http://www.edubuzz.org/plpl). Two years ago we established a fully integrated S4-6 Senior Phase, with many students coursed for two year Highers. In the past two years that model has developed to better provide student pathways and now includes a number of two-year National 5 courses.

#### 2 Rationale for the Senior Phase Curriculum

In 2010 we established a Curriculum Rationale, following extensive consultation with stakeholders. This culminated in a development day led by HMIE. The Curriculum Rationale was made workable through a Curriculum Plan, from which the following five key imperatives have been extracted:

- The primary vehicle for Preston Lodge High School's delivery of *Curriculum for Excellence* will be the very high quality learning experiences in our classrooms. This will be the key focus of school development in the coming years.
- This plan is the way in which our school will develop the school's Aims and Values, and the school's Curriculum Rationale.
- The plan will be formally reviewed on an annual basis against our Curriculum Rationale, and against our Aims and Values. Best advice suggests we would be wise at this stage to maximise flexibility in how our curriculum looks in three or four years time to reflect the changing nature of CfE. This document does provide clear advice for the short and medium term, but details of our curriculum beyond session 2011-12 may change based on feedback, new information and best practice.
- This plan does not describe the school's approach to meeting the needs of all learners. This particular document outlines the core school curriculum. Many programmes and courses within this core curriculum, and others outwith it, will ensure the needs of all learners are met.
- A learning skills programme will be introduced incrementally into the S1 – 3 curriculum through the Learning 2 Learn (L2L) programme. This will become a 3-year course of one period per week which has a proven track record in developing stronger independent learning skills than our students currently possess.

In the last two years our Senior Phase has evolved further. We offer students a free-choice 6-course model, four hours per week in S4-6. Most of our students undertake 2-year National 5 and/or Higher courses, although 1-year courses are available at most levels. A summary curriculum diagram does not fully capture the nature of our Senior

Phase whereas the course choice form that we use, deliberately designed to support conversations between the school, parents/carers and young people better illustrates our approach. Our fundamental aim is to ensure young people in S3 think through their Senior Phase before making choices for S4. Our local authority has allowed all secondary schools to develop their own curriculum model. As a result, we have been able to develop a unique **curriculum** that we feel best meets the need of our young people.

### 3 Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

Our Senior Phase structure was a direct result of intensive conversations within our Extended Management Team (PTs and SMT), rather than the curriculum committee process which has mitigated against radical change in some schools. Our EMT held sustained formal and informal discussions designed to foster understanding of the Senior Phase issues and the complexity and interconnectedness of most solutions. Critically, the SMT made structural decisions following those EMT discussions. Full cognisance was taken of the EMT view, but the SMT finalised some outcomes. A fully unified 3-year Senior Phase was established with six subjects providing 4 hours' study per week. A natural next step was to consider the role of 2-year courses, which were enthusiastically endorsed by almost all PTs. The real bone of contention within the school became the "N5 en route" question. Should students coursed for 2-year Highers be able to sit National 5 qualifications en route? Initially, a significant number of PTs felt students should sit National 5 en route, and some PTs freely admitted that their sentiment was the result of their own feelings of insecurity around new qualifications.

The school's starting position was that students would only sit National 5 en route in exceptional circumstances based on individual needs or because of specific subject requirements. After a lengthy process of negotiation, this position eventually resulted in 2-year Higher students in Music, Business Subjects and Modern Languages sitting National 5 at the end of year one. More interestingly, several subjects previously supportive of National 5 en route changed their mind due to two factors. Firstly, teachers gradually became clear that the students in front of them were genuine Higher candidates who need not spend time sitting National 5 assessments. Secondly, a number of subjects quickly realised that the assessment burden at National 5 was an unnecessary hurdle for students clearly capable of Higher level.

A key issue from 2013-14 was that the uncertain quality of S3 recommendations had resulted in a number of students being inappropriately coursed. Significant changes in presentation levels took place over that academic year, which caused difficulties with reporting, communication with families and bi-level teaching. A much clearer process of Senior Phase recommendations in S3 has largely rectified this. However, the possibility of sitting courses in S4 which students have not selected in S3 has revealed some real weaknesses in subject understandings of student attainment levels in the BGE. We have made significant use of various vocational pathways, including the South East Scotland Academies Partnership and local colleges. We also have a very large number of students in S6 studying Open University courses through the YASS scheme. In fact, we have the highest number of students in Scotland involved in this scheme, which has been a direct result of our attempts to ensure that student choice leads our curriculum.

### 4 Principles of Costs - Staffing, Rooming and Timetabling

We currently have a 27-period week with 1-hour periods. Our Accelerated Learning Cycle approach has led to calls from staff for longer blocks of time to allow proper

engagement with that learning cycle within individual lessons. However, several problems in our S4-6 model would occur if we lengthened periods. We are likely to retain a 27-period week with more use of half periods and double periods. By integrating our S4-6 Senior Phase we have been able to provide a much broader curriculum for our students for slightly less staff cost. The timetable efficiencies achieved with mixed S4, 5 and 6 classes has made this possible. We were surprised to find that our much richer S1-3 curriculum, including an extremely diverse range of innovative option courses (Appendix 4) was also fractionally cheaper than our previous S1-3 model. This was a result of tight timetabling of option courses with low uptake.

### 5 Planning for Change -School Transition 2013–2016+

We are currently undergoing a rigorous process of curriculum review. As well as consulting parents, students, HMIE and our local authority we have engaged our EMT in a ten-hour discussion process. Critically, we spent the first four hours considering the big issues before focusing in on the Broad General Education, Senior Phase, transitions from S3 and S4 and coursing issues.

### 6 Development of Assessment, Reporting and Qualifications

We are currently involved in the research phase of bringing in a much more robust approach to assessment, moderation, monitoring and tracking in S1-3. Having gathered best practice, we will pilot approaches in selected subject areas in March. A key outcome of our curriculum review (see below) has been a clear understanding of our need to move to a skills-based curriculum in S1-6, making full use of Significant Aspects of Learning materials to ensure that we are focusing learning in the right way. In many ways this has been an inevitable outcome of our school's focus on learning skills. Better-focused learning will allow us to achieve better assessment, moderation and interventions in S1-6. In conjunction with our development of learning skills in S1-3 we hope that S4-6 students will be better equipped with the wide variety of skills they need to become autonomous learners within the Senior Phase.

In S4-6 we have moved from annual parental reports to 4 Target Setting/Tracking Windows, providing stronger advice around 'next steps'. We now need to make more use of S3 profiles to inform next steps in the Senior Phase, and to better manage the transfer of assessment information between S3 and S4. We expect our implementation of 2-year courses to have a significant impact on our attainment profile.

### 7 Impacts and Outcomes

The initial outcomes of our curriculum review look set to be:

- A move to a fully integrated skills-based curriculum, better incorporating learning skills and enquiry skills, skills for LLW, literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing
- Better integration of generic learning skills across S1-3 in particular
- Improved approaches to assessment and moderation in S1-3, as part of a range of approaches aimed at improving progression, challenge and motivation in the BGE
- The establishment of clearer progression pathways in S3 and S4 with more courses for students of all abilities, with a focus on Nat. 4 courses and similar awards
- Improved alignment of S3 choices with S4 choices, whilst retaining our existing free choice model for Senior Phase courses
- Clarification of practical issues, including recommendation processes, coursing, subject time, the nature of 2-year course classes and 'safety nets'.

## Case Study 9: St. Andrew's Secondary School Developing the Senior Phase

### 1 Description of School

St Andrew's Secondary School is a denominational school in the East End of Glasgow, serving the areas of Carntyne, Cranhill, Easterhouse, Barlanark, Shettleston, Sandyhills and Mount Vernon. It has a roll of 1640 students and its catchment has been described as a severe deprivation hotspot. 56% of East End children live in the most deprived areas in Scotland (SIMD). This amounts to over 900 of the young people of the school. 98% of children in Barlanark and Easterhouse live in poverty – amounting to over 400 of the young people of the school.

The school went through a successful inspection, the results of which were published in January 2013.

### 2 Rationale for the Senior Phase Curriculum

As with all aspects of the school's Curriculum, the rationale has aspects which arise from national drivers, its Vision for Excellence and from the needs of the school community. The school is focused on delivering the entitlement to a senior phase of education after S3 which provides opportunities to obtain qualifications as well as to continue to develop the four capacities" and to "support in moving into positive and sustained destinations beyond school". The School Vision statement commits to:

- "The highest levels of attainment and achievement for every young individual young person."
- "To improve the lives and life chances of all our young people".

The Senior Phase plan is designed to help the school to deliver these commitments.

### 3 Development of the Senior Phase Curriculum

The school's Senior Phase model was developed in collaboration with all stakeholders. Preliminary discussion took place with both young people and parents who were in Senior School. They were asked, based on their experience, for their views on:

- the number of subjects that young people should study in the Senior Phase
- whether there should be the possibility of our Higher candidates bypassing lower level qualifications and working for 2 years at Higher Level
- an increase in the range of vocational options available to our young people

The views of the Parent Council on these questions were also gathered. These views were used as a basis for the formulation of the Senior Phase model. The model was also discussed with all staff at an In-service Day in October 2012. The outcomes of these discussions were then considered by the Senior Leadership Team and a response document was issued to staff. The model was then discussed with a group of S2 pupils (led by S6 pupils, as a leadership opportunity), who were to be the first cohort to enter the new Senior Phase structure. This was followed by discussion with the S2 group's parents to ensure there was a rounded family view of the plan and then with the full S2 Parent group - with further discussion to ensure that as many possible parents' views had been sought. The school has a partnership group which also discussed the plan to gather views and to start thinking on how, as partners, they could help implementation.

## 4 The Senior Phase Model

The school's Senior Phase model was developed to deliver the purposes of the Senior Phase as defined in *Building the Curriculum 3*. This was allied to key school issues:

- The school has a very large senior phase
- Within the cohort of pupils there is a wide range of ability, need and ambition
- Allowing for this, it was clear that a single structure could not meet the needs of the young people.

The school's model therefore has 3 pathways. Young people are allocated to a pathway based on the level of learning they have achieved at the end of S3:

### a) Core Pathway

This is the pathway closest to the school's original model. Most S4 pupils follow this model - between 190 and 200 pupils for whom this is their Senior Phase experience.

<b>S4</b>	Young people following this model have achieved Level 3 or 4 by the end of S3. They study 7 subjects for 4 periods a week in S4. They study English, Maths and 5 other choices. The other subjects are not compulsory and young people can choose particular curricular areas linked to their career aspirations. There are 2 periods of RE and 3 periods of PE. At the end of S4, all young people will have achieved 7 qualifications at either National 4 or National 5.
<b>S5/S6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Academic subjects for 5 periods per week</li> <li>• 3 Periods of Personal Achievement/Academic Support.</li> <li>• RE/PE for two periods per week.</li> </ul>

The level of study in each of their courses is built on their prior level of achievement at the end of S4. Alongside their academic subjects, young people will also gain a range of accredited personal achievement qualifications which they will study for 3 periods p.w.

### b) 6-Higher Pathway

This pathway is aimed at young people in the school with the highest level of academic ability. It is designed to provide:

- A 2-year experience of study at the highest possible level to the greatest level of depth possible.
- An experience of Higher which provides a higher level of development of learning skills, both independent and collaborative.
- Young people with greater levels of responsibility for their own learning.
- A response to the concern about the 2-term dash to Higher.
- An increase in the quantity and quality of Highers.

There are 75 young people currently following this pathway:

<b>S4</b> [NB There is no presentation for qualifications at the end of S4 for young people who are on this pathway.]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher Subjects x 4 periods per week</li> <li>• 1 Personal Achievement/Academic Support column x 4 periods per week.</li> <li>• RE x 2, PE x3</li> </ul>
<b>S5</b> [NB It is intended that these learners will be presented for 6 Highers at the end of S5.]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher subjects x 5 periods per week</li> <li>• 2 period2 of RE.</li> </ul>
<b>S6</b>	5 options including Advanced Higher/Scottish Baccalaureate/ Further Highers and a revised S6 experience preparing for progression to further study in Higher Education.

### c) Employability Pathway

This is designed to meet the needs of young people for whom many of the traditional curricular options/subjects do not provide the high quality learning experiences and highest levels of achievement to which the school aspires for them. There are currently 30 young people following this pathway. The young people on this pathway may not have achieved Level 3 by the end of S3. They also wish to have an experience of learning which has a greater practical component to it or more of an employability focus than was offered by the school pre Curriculum for Excellence. Within this route, there is a significant role for partners in expanding the range of options which the school offers.

There are 30 young people on this pathway following this learning model:

<b>S4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 school-based choices x 4 periods per week</li> <li>• 2 college afternoons per week</li> <li>• Individual links to a local employer providing practical support and work experience.</li> <li>• 2 additional periods of Employability skills, leading to Youth Achievement Awards.</li> <li>• PE x 3 and RE x 2.</li> </ul>
<b>S5/S6</b>	Pupils discuss progression in their college courses with the college prior to the start of S5. They continue with 2 afternoons in college. They also follow school options progressing from their learning in S4 and will have 3 periods of personal achievement to further expand their portfolio of qualifications.

### Personal Achievement/Academic Support

Throughout the Senior Phase, there is a commitment to personal achievement for all pupils. There are dedicated Personal Achievement columns in all 3 pathways at different times. These periods are designed to give the young people the opportunity to:

- Continue to develop the 4 capacities
- Develop skills for learning, life and work
- Gain accredited Personal Achievement qualifications.

### Tracking and Monitoring Pupil Progress

To ensure that the young people achieve to the maximum level through their pathways, the school has a detailed monitoring and tracking process. There is a detailed target setting process based on learning conversations between teachers and pupils. These targets form the basis for tracking exercises throughout the year. The tracking uses the school's 'traffic lights' approach to give a straightforward guide to parents and pupils.

## 5 Partnership

The school's senior phase model relies on partnership to deliver the range of options and opportunities for young people. The school has a wide range of partners who contribute directly to the experiences within each pathway. All partnership activities are co-ordinated by the school's Partnership Team, led by the Partnership Development Officer. She liaises with all partners and actively seeks other partners to become involved in provided a wider range of experiences and opportunities for young people.

## 7 Impacts and Outcomes

The intended impacts of the St. Andrew's Senior Phase model are the same as all the changes in the school:

- Improve outcomes for all the young people in the school.
- 100% Positive and sustained destinations when the young people leave school.

# 5 Conclusion

## Work in Progress

Like its four predecessors, this publication is still quite literally a work in progress. Although the *Curriculum for Excellence* programme will reach the first cohort's final year in Session 2015-16, it is inevitably the case that key features of the programme, including the Senior Phase and the development of partnerships for learning, will not fully bed in until perhaps the third cohort has completed its learning journey. Schools and authorities involved in the work of the BOCSH Group will continue to develop their thinking and practice as this process continues. This Senior Phase booklet is a second consideration of the topic: at least some of the other BOCSH Reports will be re-visited and re-issued as emerging practice develops into recognised good practice.

The schools and authorities involved in this report are currently halfway through their first iteration of the Senior Phase, developing initial approaches to the later parts of the Senior Phase as well as reviewing their BGE and S4 provision and organising the Senior Phase elements – learning and support partnerships, an inclusive, integrated senior curriculum, new/revised courses, enhanced learner pathways, senior phase interdisciplinary learning, senior phase support for and by senior pupils and appropriate use of mentors, ICT systems and promoted support staff in Support.

They are also continuing/revising CPD programmes for their staff (and, in many cases, staff from other locations), refining curricular structures and learner pathways, continuing to develop learning partnerships, revising and improving quality assurance systems and continuing to develop and implement new qualification systems. It will clearly be some time before they have completed these processes.

## The Need for Further Iteration

As this development work continues, the Senior Phase Case Study schools and authorities will continue to plan, implement, evaluate and modify their *Curriculum for Excellence* schemes. Inevitably, there will still be several iterations of many aspects of the Senior Phase work outlined above, not least as schools come to terms with the impact of their S4 structural and attainment choices and as schools and authorities absorb the implications of the Scottish Government response to the Wood Report. These factors will provide a crucial part of the learning of teachers and senior leaders.

To provide support for group members (and a wider audience), their progress will be itemised and published – both across the BOCSH Group and via the website noted in Section B – to encourage discussion of best practice in implementing *Curriculum for Excellence*. It is also anticipated that other schools and/or authorities will join the discussion hosted on the website.

Only through such recurring iterations of planning, implementation, review and debate will best practice emerge.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A Membership of the Self-Help Group

During this phase of its work, the membership of the Building Our Curriculum Self-Help Group has included:

Mrs Sue Bain	HT, Dumfries and Galloway Council
Mr Derek Brown	HT, Aberdeen City Council (until May 2014) Head of Education, Fife Council (from May 2014)
Mr Gordon Bone	HT, South Ayrshire Council
Mr Gavin Clark	HT, East Lothian Council
Mr Ben Davis	Acting HT, East Ayrshire Council
Mr David Docherty	DHT, West Dunbartonshire Council
Mr Graham Hutton	HT, Dundee City Council (* co-editor)
Mr Gerry Lyons	HT, Glasgow Council [BOCSH Chair 2014-15]
Mr David McClure	HT, Fife Council
Mr Gerry McCormick	HT, North Lanarkshire Council
Mrs Helen McCulloch	HT, Falkirk Council
Mr Tim McKay	HT, Aberdeenshire Council (*)
Ms Donna McMaster	HT, West Lothian Council
Mr David Mitchell	HT, Argyll and Bute Council
Dr Frances Murray	HT, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Dr Jim Scott	HT, Perth & Kinross Council (until January 2012) ELLC <i>Consulting</i> and University of Dundee (from February 2012); also SCSSA from August 2014. (* co-editor)
Mrs Carol Stuart	HT, Moray Council
Mrs Eileen Young	HT, Renfrewshire Council
Ms Pauline Walker	HT, Edinburgh Council

Members marked with an asterisk are members of the working sub-group which produced this resource.

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