

PARENT/CARER CONSULTATION - PHASE 2

Welcome!

National Parent Forum of Scotland and Connect have been asked to help gather the views of parents and carers about possible changes to the way qualifications and assessments work in Scotland, as part of an independent review. SQA is under review in a separate process.

The Review wants to ask about some broad ideas, and we've written a version for parents and carers that tries to use every-day language.

Access the parents/carers survey [here](#).

Alternatively, you can read and fill in the public consultation [here](#). The Review Team will put responses to this consultation online (where they have permissions) early in 2023.

You can find out more about why there is an Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment, how it is working and what it will do, [here](#).

The Review aims to put together ideas that bring Scottish qualifications and assessments up to date, meeting the needs of all learners, employers, colleges and universities, as well as Scottish society. That's all learners, wherever and whoever they are.

This is the second consultation activity in the Review. In Phase One, the Review asked for comments on the most important things that needed to be looked at: the Vision and Principles. The comments from this, as well as research, have led to the questions contained in this consultation. You can read the results of our parent/carers survey on the Phase One consultation [here](#)

After this consultation, the Review will make more detailed proposals that you will also have the chance to comment on. This is planned for January 2023). When the third phase is over, recommendations will go to Scottish Government in Spring 2023.

Please answer all or some of the following questions (please pass on any you don't have a view on).

1. Curriculum for Excellence - Four Capacities

Background: In Scotland we have the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) (see the NPFS CfE Nutshell [here](#)), including the four capacities that every young person can expect to develop in their learning.

Most courses in the Senior Phase should cover all four of the capacities but we have heard from many that qualifications taught in the Senior Phase of Scotland's schools and colleges 'focus too much' on the capacity 'successful learners'.

Question: Do you think it is important that information on learners' achievements in all four capacities are part of awards or qualifications?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

2. Out of School and College Successes and Achievements

Background: In the Review so far we have heard that learners should be able to show their successes and achievements outside school and college.

Questions: Do you think we should gather more examples of learning including for example, information on awards, learning and wider achievements, at home or in the community?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

3. Skills and Competencies

Background: During Phase One we heard the view that Senior Phase qualifications ought to focus more on recognising the full range of learners' skills and abilities or competencies.

The words skills and competencies mean different things to different people. Here's what the Review team mean:

Skills: sometimes called 'core skills', 'meta skills', or 'soft skills'. In this Review, young people, parents, colleges, employers and universities have told us that learners need to be able to:

- work together as part of a team;
- be creative;
- problem solve;
- have resilience;
- maintain their wellbeing;
- develop critical learning skills; and
- communicate effectively.

Competencies: A competence is more than knowledge and skills. It involves being able to mix and match to meet the needs of different situations. For example, being able to communicate well is a competence that might include knowledge of language, practical IT skills and attitudes towards the person(s) being communicated with.

Question: Do you think information should be gathered on learners' skills and competencies as part of their Senior Phase?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

4. What should be gathered as part of achievements, awards and qualifications?

Background: Awards and qualifications e.g. Nationals, Highers, Advanced Highers have different assessment methods. Some need learners to submit work throughout the course, sometimes there are external exams e.g. SQA exams, sometimes the school or college awards the qualification or award.

The Review has heard many calls for there to be a 'better balance' between external exams and other forms of assessment. We have heard the view that Senior Phase qualifications currently rely too heavily on end of year exams. In some countries teacher assessment counts for a lot of or most of a learner's grade.

Question: Do you think it would be a good idea to change the balance between exams and other ways of recognising learning?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

Please also tell us if you agree with exams in S4, S5 and S6.

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

Would you like to see learners have more choices of subjects and qualifications than they are usually offered, for example technical and academic subjects along with creative arts?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

Would you like to see learners build their own digital profile to show their learning and experiences/skills as they progress and mature?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

5. Awards for achievement at the end of the BGE

Background: We have heard views that it would be helpful to have the learning of all young people recognised when they finish the broad general education phase in school (usually at the end of s3). Some people have suggested this should be a digital profile where a learner is able to show the skills, experiences, learning and qualifications they have gathered. For most, this would be part of the move into the Senior Phase, although could be a leaving certificate if they are finishing school or college. Achievements gained during s4 would then be added to the certificate.

Question: Do you think this is a good idea?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

6. Recognising all achievement in the Senior Phase

Background: The Review team has heard suggestions that there should be a leaving certificate when a young person finishes school or college. This could include more achievements than simply subject based qualifications. For example, a leaving certificate could include evidence of skills and competencies in things like volunteering work, paid work, responsibilities at home or community activity.

Question: Do you think the idea of a leaving certificate is good?

Agree – Disagree - 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons of doing this?

7. The Potential of Technology

Background: Scotland has learnt a lot from the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, including how technology can be used to better support learning. However, we are also mindful that we cannot assume that everyone has equal access to technology or has the skills they need to use it effectively.

Some countries make much greater use of technology in assessment and qualifications. For example, some have a system whereby learners' achievements in their Senior Phase are assessed online. Others use technology to give learners different styles and types of assessment e.g., on-line simulations. Some countries use digital profiles to gather and present information on learners' achievements.

Question: How should Scotland's qualifications and assessment system make best use of digital technologies?

8. An approach that benefits all learners

Background: One of the things the Review has been looking at is how to make sure qualifications and assessment work for all learners, no matter their background, interests, where they are learning, or any additional support needs they may have.

Question: How important do you feel it is to make sure the qualification system in the future will support the rights of all learners, so all learners are able to be rewarded and recognised for their achievements?

Not important – very important 1-10 range

What are the pros and cons to doing this?

9. Anything else

Question: Is there anything else in relation to the reform of qualifications and assessment which is not covered in this consultation which you would like to raise?