

Benchmarks

Social Studies

March 2017

Education Scotland

Guidance on using Benchmarks for Assessment March 2017

Education Scotland's [Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\) Statement for Practitioners](#) (Aug 2016) stated that the two key resources which support practitioners to plan learning, teaching and assessment are:

- **Experiences and Outcomes**
- **Benchmarks**

Benchmarks have been developed to provide clarity on the national standards expected within each curriculum area at each level. They set out clear lines of progression in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics, and across all other curriculum areas from Early to Fourth Levels (First to Fourth Levels in Modern Languages). Their purpose is to make clear what learners need to know and be able to do to progress through the levels, and to support consistency in teachers' and other practitioners' professional judgements.

Skills development is integrated into the Benchmarks to support greater shared understanding. An understanding of skills and how well they are developing will enable learners to make links between their current learning and their future career options and employment.

Benchmarks draw together and streamline a wide range of previous assessment guidance (including significant aspects of learning, progression frameworks and annotated exemplars) into one key resource to support teachers' and other practitioners' professional judgement of children's and young people's progress across all curriculum areas.

Benchmarks have been designed to support professional dialogue as part of the moderation process to assess where children and young people are in their learning. They will help to support holistic assessment approaches across learning. They should not be ticked off individually for assessment purposes.

Benchmarks for literacy and numeracy should be used to support teachers' professional judgement of achievement of a level. In other curriculum areas, Benchmarks support teachers and other practitioners to understand standards and identify children's and young people's next steps in learning. Evidence of progress and achievement will come from a variety of sources including:

- observing day-to-day learning within the classroom, playroom or working area;
- observation and feedback from learning activities that takes place in other environments, for example, outdoors, on work placements;
- coursework, including tests;
- learning conversations; and
- planned periodic holistic assessment.

Benchmarks in curriculum areas

Benchmarks in each curriculum area are designed to be concise and accessible, with sufficient detail to communicate clearly the standards expected for each curriculum level.

Teachers and other practitioners can draw upon the Benchmarks to assess the knowledge, understanding, and skills for learning, life and work which children are developing in each curriculum area.

In secondary schools, Benchmarks can support subject specialist teachers in making robust assessments of learners' progress and the standards they achieve. They will help teachers ensure that learners make appropriate choices and are presented at an appropriate level for National Qualifications in the senior phase. This can help avoid excessive workload for teachers and unnecessary assessments for learners. For example, learners should have achieved relevant Fourth level Experiences and Outcomes before embarking on the National 5 qualifications. Schools should take careful account of this when options for S4 are being agreed. Benchmarks should be used to help with these important considerations.

Literacy and numeracy

In literacy and numeracy, Benchmarks support teachers' professional judgement of achievement of a level. Teachers' professional judgements will be collected and published at national, local and school levels. It is important that these judgements are robust and reliable. This can only be achieved through effective moderation of planning learning, teaching and assessment.

Achievement of a level is based on teacher professional judgement, well informed by a wide range of evidence. Benchmarks should be used to review the range of evidence gathered to determine if the expected standard has been achieved and the learner has:

- achieved a **breadth** of learning across the knowledge, understanding and skills as set out in the experiences and outcomes for the level;
- responded consistently well to the level of **challenge** set out in the Experiences and Outcomes for the level and has moved forward to learning at the next level in some aspects; and
- demonstrated **application** of what they have learned in new and unfamiliar situations.

It is not necessary for learners to demonstrate mastery of every individual aspect of learning within Benchmarks at a particular level and before moving on to the next level. However, it is important that there are no major gaps in children's and young people's learning when looking across the major organisers in each curriculum area.

Third Level Social Studies

| Curriculum Organisers | Experiences and Outcomes for planning learning, teaching and assessment | Benchmarks to support practitioners' professional judgement of achievement of a level |
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| People, past events and societies | <p>I can use my knowledge of a historical period to interpret the evidence and present an informed view. SOC 3-01a</p> <p>I can make links between my current and previous studies, and show my understanding of how people and events have contributed to the development of the Scottish nation. SOC 3-02a</p> <p>I can explain why a group of people from beyond Scotland settled here in the past and discuss the impact they have had on the life and culture of Scotland. SOC 3-03a</p> <p>I can explain the similarities and differences between the lifestyles, values and attitudes of people in the past by comparing Scotland with a society in Europe or elsewhere. SOC 3-04a</p> <p>I can describe the factors contributing to a major social, political or economic change in the past and can assess the impact on people's lives. SOC 3-05a</p> <p>I can discuss the motives of those involved in a significant turning point in the past and assess the consequences it had then and since. SOC 3-06a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compares a range of primary and secondary sources of evidence, to present at least three valid conclusions about a historical period. • Draws on previous work to provide a simple explanation of how people and events have contributed to the development of the Scottish nation. Providing at least two reasoned conclusions. • Provides at least two simple explanations as to why a group of people from beyond Scotland settled here. • Describes at least two impacts immigrants have had on life and culture of Scotland. • Provides an account with at least two simple explanations as to how and why society has developed in different ways comparing Scotland to another society in Europe or elsewhere. • Identifies at least three factors which contributed to a major social, economic or political change in the past. • Provides at least two valid opinions about the impact on people's lives of a major social economic or social change in the past. • Provides at least two valid opinions about the possible motives of those involved in a significant turning point or event in history. • Provides a valid opinion of the impact of this significant historical event. • Identifies at least two possible causes of past conflict, using research methods. • Presents in any appropriate form at least two impacts on people at that time. |

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| | <p>Through researching, I can identify possible causes of a past conflict and report on the impact it has had on the lives of people at that time.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-06b</p> | |
| <p>People, place and environment</p> | <p>Having investigated processes which form and shape landscapes. I can explain their impact on selected landscapes in Scotland, Europe and beyond.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-07a</p> <p>I can identify the possible consequences of an environmental issue and make informed suggestions about ways to manage the impact.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-08a</p> <p>I can investigate the climate, physical features and living things of a natural environment different from my own and explain their interrelationship.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-10a</p> <p>I can compare the social and economic differences between more and less economically-developed countries and can discuss the possibilities for reducing these differences.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-11a</p> <p>I can investigate the relationship between climate and weather and be able to understand the causes of weather patterns within a selected climate zone.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-12a</p> <p>By comparing settlement and economic activity in two contrasting landscapes. I can reach conclusions about how landscapes influence human activity. I can explain my findings clearly to others.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-13a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the processes which form landscapes across the world. • Provides a simple explanation of at least three processes involved in the development of any chosen landscape, for example, coasts, volcanic, rivers or glaciated. • Provides a simple explanation of at least three consequences of an environmental issue, and for each suggest how they could be managed. • Describes a natural environment different to their own, in terms of climate, physical features and living things. • Provides a simple explanation of at least three links between climate, physical features and living things in that environment. • Identifies at least three social and economic differences between developed and developing countries, for example infant mortality rate, % adult literacy rate, Gross National Product per capita. • Suggests possible ways these differences would be reduced, and provide valid opinions as to their likely success. • Demonstrates a basic understanding of the relationship between weather and climate. • Provides a simple explanation for a weather pattern within a selected climate zone, for example, convection rainfall in the rainforest. • Provides at least two explanations as to how landscapes influence human activity, using two contrasting areas. |

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| | <p>I can use a range of maps and geographical information systems to gather, interpret and present conclusions and can locate a range of features within Scotland, UK, Europe and the wider world.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-14a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews at least two simple graphical sources to interpret information and form a conclusion, for example, a map and a graph. • Uses relevant numeracy and digital technology skills to interpret at least two sources of data from maps and graphical information systems. • Locates increasingly complex features such as different physical landscape features and human features on maps of Scotland, the UK, Europe and the wider world for example, hills, mountains, valleys, population. |
| <p>People in society, economy and business</p> | <p>I can use my knowledge of current social, political or economic issues to interpret evidence and present an informed view.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-15a</p> <p>I can explain why a group I have identified might experience inequality and can suggest ways in which this inequality might be addressed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-16a</p> <p>I have compared the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Scotland with a contrasting society and can describe and begin to understand reasons for differences.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-17a</p> <p>I can discuss the extent to which my choices and decisions are influenced by the ways in which I am informed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-17b</p> <p>I can understand the arrangements for political decision making at different levels and the factors which shape these arrangements.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 3-18a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews basic sources of evidence such as newspapers or surveys used in arguments about current affairs to form a valid opinion. • Presents using appropriate methods an informed view of a current affairs issue. • Provides at least two simple explanations as to why a selected group might experience inequality, for example gender, race/ethnicity, age, disability. • Makes two or more reasoned suggestions of ways in which this inequality might be addressed. • Identifies their own rights and responsibilities as a Scottish citizen and makes a comparison with a contrasting society. • Gives at least two simple explanations for the differences between their own rights and responsibilities and those in a contrasting society. • Identifies at least three sources of information that influence the ways in which he/she is informed. • Provides at least two valid opinions about the ways in which choices and decisions might be influenced by bias or exaggeration. • Describes the role of elected representatives and/or groups which influence the political decision-making process at local, national or international level. |

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| | <p>I can describe how the interdependence of countries affects levels of development, considering the effects on people's lives. SOC 3-19a</p> <p>Having considered responses to a recent international crisis, I can contribute to a discussion of the effectiveness of the responses. SOC 3-19b</p> <p>When participating in an enterprise activity, I can explore ethical issues relating to business practice and gain an understanding of how businesses help to satisfy needs. SOC 3-20a</p> <p>I can present conclusions about the impact of the globalisation of trade on patterns of work and conditions of employment in Scotland, the UK or beyond. SOC 3-20b</p> <p>I can understand the necessity for budgeting and determine ways to manage finance, considering possible investment opportunities, savings, risks or borrowing needs. SOC 3-21a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the unequal nature of trading relationships and the consequences on people's socio-economic position, for example, Fairtrade, Arms Trade. • Draws valid conclusions about the effectiveness of the response, for example, NGOs, NATO, UN. • Identifies at least two ethical issues related to business practices, for example, Fairtrade, Credit Unions, food banks, zero hours contracts, recycling and packaging. • Describes how different businesses and not for profit organisations help to satisfy needs and wants. • Provides at least two simple explanations as to why budgeting is important to families and businesses. • Identifies methods (including digital ways) to manage and record financial transactions. • Outlines the costs and benefits of saving and investing money and the costs and benefits of borrowing money. • Describes and uses the practical skills (including digital skills) required to contribute to the success of an enterprise activity. • Identifies the advantages and disadvantages of international trade, and issues around free trade agreements. |
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Fourth Level Social Studies

| Curriculum Organisers | Experiences and Outcomes for planning learning, teaching and assessment | Benchmarks to support practitioners' professional judgement of achievement of a level |
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| People, past events and societies | <p>I can evaluate conflicting sources of evidence to sustain a line of argument. SOC 4-01a</p> <p>I have developed a sense of my heritage and identity as a British, European or global citizen and can present arguments about the importance of respecting the heritage and identity of others. SOC 4-02a</p> <p>By studying groups in past societies who experienced inequality, I can explain the reasons for the inequality and evaluate how groups or individuals addressed it. SOC 4-04a</p> <p>I can describe the main features of conflicting world belief systems in the past and can present informed views on the consequences of such conflict for societies then and since. SOC 4-04b</p> <p>I can make reasoned judgements about how the exercise of power affects the rights and responsibilities of citizens by comparing a more democratic and a less democratic society. SOC 4-04c</p> <p>I can present supported conclusions about the social, political and economic impacts of a technological change in the past. SOC 4-05a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to provide a valid argument on a historical theme. • Provides at least two valid opinions to support the argument. • Provides at least three reasons with explanation of the importance of respecting the heritage and identity of others. • Draws at least three reasoned conclusions about the reasons for inequality. • Provides at least two arguments including both for and against as to how a group or individuals have addressed inequality. • Describes in detail at least two of the main features of historical conflicting world belief systems. • Presents their own views on the consequences of such conflict and can provide reasons for them. • Compares and contrasts the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a more and less democratic society providing at least four comparisons. • Identifies the impact of a technological change with at least one of each: social, political and economic impacts and gives a reason for the conclusion. • Suggests at least three changes which have taken place in Scotland's industry. • Provides at least two positive and negative impacts of one of these changes. • Analyses the impact on the societies of the meeting of cultures in the past, drawing at least two valid conclusions. |

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| | <p>I can evaluate the changes which have taken place in an industry in Scotland's past and can debate their impact. SOC 4-05b</p> <p>I have investigated a meeting of cultures in the past and can analyse the impact on the societies involved. SOC 4-05c</p> <p>Having critically analysed a significant historical event, I can assess the relative importance of factors contributing to the event. SOC 4-06a</p> <p>I can express an informed view about the changing nature of conflict over time, appreciate its impact and empathise with the experiences of those involved. SOC 4-06b</p> <p>I can describe attempts to resolve international conflict and maintain the peace and can present my conclusion about how effective these attempts were. SOC 4-06c</p> <p>I can assess the impact for those involved in a specific instance of the expansion of power and influence in the past. SOC 4-06d</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses critical analysis to evaluate the relative importance of the factors which led to an historical event. • Expresses a developed and reasoned opinion about how conflicts have changed over time. Engages considerably in a discussion about the impact on those involved. • Describes at least two attempts to resolve international conflicts and maintain peace. Makes reasoned judgements about the success of these strategies. • Expresses at least three valid opinions about the impact on those involved in a past expansion of power or influence. |
| <p>People, place and environment</p> | <p>I can explain how the interaction of physical systems shaped and continue to shape the Earth's surface by assessing their impact on contrasting landscape types. SOC 4-07a</p> <p>I can discuss the sustainability of key natural resources and analyse the possible implications for human activity. SOC 4-08a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explains in some detail how at least two landscape types from across the globe are formed. • Evaluates the sustainability of at least two key natural resources and analyses possible implications for human activity. |

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| | <p>Having evaluated the role of agriculture in the production of food and raw material, I can draw reasoned conclusions about the environmental impacts and sustainability. SOC 4-09a</p> <p>I can assess the impact of developments in transport infrastructure in a selected area and can contribute to a discussion on the development of sustainable systems. SOC 4-09b</p> <p>I can develop my understanding of the interaction between humans and the environment by describing and assessing the impact of human activity on an area. SOC 4-10a</p> <p>I can explain the development of the main features of an urban area in Scotland or elsewhere and can evaluate the implications for society concerned. SOC 4-10b</p> <p>Having studied an economic activity, I can explain its development and assess the impact of change within its locality and beyond. SOC 4-10c</p> <p>Having researched the globalisation of trade, I can explain the interdependence of different parts of the world and assess the impacts for providers, consumers and the environment. SOC 4-11a</p> <p>I can explain how the distribution and control of important natural resources affects the international power and influences of states. SOC 4-11b</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates the role of agriculture in food production and draws at least three reasoned conclusions about the environmental impacts and therefore the sustainability of these methods. • Assesses the impact of developments in transport infrastructure in a chosen area. • Contributes to a discussion on the development of sustainable systems. • Describes and makes at least three valid conclusions about the impact of human activity on a chosen area. • Explains in some detail how any chosen urban area has developed, and evaluates the impact on the society. • Explains the impact of an economic activity in a chosen area and beyond. • Explains the interdependence of countries and areas of the world and assesses the impact on providers, consumers and the environment, for example low wages and environmental damage in developing countries. • Explains how the control of important raw materials can affect the international power and influence of states, for example, oil. • Asks and responds to questions about the future implications of population structures for Scotland and a contrasting area. • Identifies at least three threats facing main climate zones and analyses how these threats impact on the way of life. • Suggests the impact and possible outcomes of climate change on a chosen region and proposes reasoned strategies to slow or reverse the impact. • Explains links between weather and air pressure. • Evaluates different types of maps, and geographical representations of information to inform discussion on at least three topics. |
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| | <p>I can compare the population structure of Scotland with a contrasting country and can express informed views about the future implications for these societies. SOC 4-11c</p> <p>I can identify threats facing the main climate zones, including climate change, and analyse how these threats impact on the way of life. SOC 4-12a</p> <p>I can carry out a geographical enquiry to assess the impact and possible outcomes of climate change on a selected region and can propose strategies to slow or reverse the impact. SOC 4-12b</p> <p>I can demonstrate an understanding of weather and climate by explaining the relationship between weather and air pressure. SOC 4-12c</p> <p>I can use specialised maps and geographical information systems to identify patterns of human activity and physical processes. SOC 4-14a</p> | |
| <p>People in society, economy and business</p> | <p>I can evaluate conflicting sources of evidence to sustain a line of argument. SOC 4-15a</p> <p>I can contribute to a discussion on the extent to which people's needs should be met by the state or the individual. SOC 4-16a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discusses the extent to which individuals, organisations or the state should meet the needs of people, or stimulate the demand for goods and services. • Suggests the impact of a social issue, for example, poverty and demonstrates the attitudes of those affected. • Explains the development of a multicultural society and expresses a reasoned opinion on the issues associated with it, for example, the impact of immigration. |

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| | <p>Through discussion, I have identified aspects of a social issue to investigate and by gathering information I can assess its impact and the attitudes of the people affected. SOC 4-16b</p> <p>I can analyse the factors contributing to the development of a multicultural society and can express an informed view on issues associated with this. SOC 4-16c</p> <p>I can critically analyse the relative importance of the contribution of individuals or groups in bringing about change in a significant political event. SCO 4-17a</p> <p>I can evaluate the role of media in a democracy, in assessing its importance in informing and influencing citizens, and explain decisions made by those in power. SCO 4-17b</p> <p>I can compare and contrast two world ideologies to express an informed view on how ideology affects the lives of people. SOC 4-17c</p> <p>I can evaluate the impact which decision making bodies have on the lives of people in Scotland or elsewhere. SOC 4-18a</p> <p>I can debate the reasons why some people participate less than others in the electoral process and can express informed views about the importance of participating in a democracy. SOC 4-18b</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses the relative importance of the contribution of individuals or groups such as pressure groups in bringing about change in a significant political event. • Evaluates the role of media in a democracy, and assesses its importance in informing and influencing citizens and explaining the decisions made by those in power. • Compares and contrasts two world ideologies and how it affects the lives of people. • Evaluates the impact which decision making bodies have on the lives of people in any chosen area. • Expresses informed views about the importance of participating in a democracy and reasons for the lack of participation by some groups. • Contributes to a discussion on the actions and motives of a chosen group or organisation which seeks to achieve its aims by non-democratic means. • Presents an informed view as to how the expansion of power and influence of countries or organisations may impact on cultures, attitudes and experiences of this involved. • Evaluates the effectiveness of any chosen international organisations, for example the UN, NATO or the EU in meeting their aims. • Critically examines how at least three economic factors can influence the decisions and behaviours of individuals, businesses or communities. • Exemplifies the purposes and features of different sector organisations: private, public and third sector. • Contributes to a discussion on the relationship between these organisations and their stakeholders, recognising the contribution of entrepreneurial and enterprising behaviours. |
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| | <p>I can contribute to a discussion on the actions and motives of a group or organisation which seeks to achieve its aims by non-democratic means. SOC 4-18c</p> <p>I can present an informed view on how the expansion of power and influence of countries or organisations may impact on cultures, attitudes and experiences of those involved. SOC 4-19a</p> <p>By examining the role and the actions of selected international organisations, I can evaluate how effective they are in meeting their aims. SOC 4-19b</p> <p>I can critically examine how some economic factors can influence individuals, businesses or communities. SOC 4-20a</p> <p>I can research the purposes and features of private, public and voluntary sector organisations to contribute to a discussion on their relationships with stakeholders. SOC 4-20b</p> <p>I can evaluate working practices available to employees within different types of business organisations. SOC 4-20c</p> <p>I can evaluate the suitability of finance options available for setting up and supporting different types of business. SOC 4-21a</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates at least two working practices available to employees working within different types of business organisations. • Evaluates the suitability of at least two different finance options available for setting up and supporting a range of different types of businesses. • Records and analyses financial information to assist individuals and business in making appropriate financial decisions. • Evaluates the role of at least three different departments and personnel in terms of their contribution to the success or failure of the business. • Identifies internal and external factors influencing planning and decision making and evaluates how these decisions contribute to the success or failure of businesses. |
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| | <p>Having considered the financial needs of individuals and businesses, I can evaluate, prepare and present financial information and documents to assist in making appropriate financial decisions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 4-21b</p> <p>By researching the organisation of a business, I can discuss the role of departments and personnel, evaluating how they contribute to the success or failure of the business.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 4-22a</p> <p>I can identify internal and external factors influencing planning and decision making and can assess how these decisions contribute to the successes or failure of businesses.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SOC 4-22b</p> | |
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