

Essential Skills Statement of Ambition

The purpose of this statement is to ensure all students develop the required employability skills, life skills and attributes throughout their college experience to enable their positive achievement in learning, life and work.

Entitlement

The Scottish Government recognises that to compete successfully in a rapidly changing global economy, Scotland needs a workforce equipped with a broad range of skills, knowledge and attributes to meet modern employment and self-employment opportunities. Colleges have an important role to play in delivering both vocational and essential generic skills which employers expect in the workplace.

All Scottish colleges are committed to increasing the attainment levels in core and essential skills across all courses at all levels. Skills and attributes will be clearly identifiable by staff, students and employers in a common taxonomy of skills.

‘Our regionally-based colleges, of significant scale and influence, are now delivering a broad range of subjects and qualifications more focused than ever on meeting local labour market demand. All college students should have the opportunity to develop the skills for learning, life and work – making them stand out in the competitive and ever changing jobs market.’

Shirley-Anne Somerville,
MSP
Minister for Further
Education, Higher
Education and Science

The Curriculum for Excellence, in particular 'Building the Curriculum 4', entitles all students to be given the opportunity to develop their essential skills, with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. Colleges and 'teachers of skills' will equip and support our students in gaining these through the following:

- Design a curriculum where there is a major focus on the essential/core skills entitlement for all students which allows them to progress to the highest SCQF level they are able to achieve
- Improve attainment in core skills, especially, literacy and numeracy at all levels in the curriculum in order to address the National Skills Agenda for Scotland
- Create a college experience which offers opportunities to enhance student skills development in different contexts (student engagement)
- Ensure that students and staff recognise the importance of essential skills and employability attributes and can identify where these are developed within the curriculum
- Ensure that all students are able to articulate and evidence the development of their essential skills and employability attributes throughout their college experience
- Ensure full college engagement, where staff work collaboratively with essential/core skills teams, in the development of the learning experience
- Introduce an additional focus on essential skills at all levels, thus better supporting our students in a smooth and confident progression to further learning at college, transition to Higher Education and towards future employment or self-employment.

In summary, all of our learners are entitled to develop skills and attributes that equip them for life in innovative, creative and meaningful ways, and to the highest level, throughout their college experience with the support of the whole staff team.

'For success in any type of work there is a need both for the relevant technical and occupational skills, but also the generic life skills and aptitudes which underpin and enhance effective performance in any type of work.

In our rapidly-changing world, most people starting in work now will have many different types of jobs over the course of their working life and the critical generic life skills will play a key role in achieving successful career development.'

Sir Ian Wood

'On all college programmes the development of these "essential" or "core skills" is as important as developing the specific vocational skills of a given industry or employment. Equipping people with a strong set of transferable skills from the outset will help them to transition between different job roles over the course of their working life.

This statement of ambition is a welcome reinforcement of the role colleges must play in developing these skills.'

Rob Wallen,
Principal NESCoI, Chair of SCQF Partnership

'Essential skills are at the heart of a meaningful learning experience. They help to ensure that our learners are more employable and more successful throughout their life.'

Alan Armstrong,
Strategic Director, Education Scotland



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