



SCA Brief Guide to the Scottish Curriculum

Brief Guide # 5: Experiences and outcomes

The Scottish Curriculum for Excellence contains guidelines for schools to design their own teaching materials, along with underlying principles, capacities and qualities that education should develop in children.

However the bulk of the curriculum’s documentation consists of sets of **experiences and outcomes** in the different subject areas of the curriculum. These describe what understandings children should develop and what abilities children should acquire through undertaking learning and teaching programmes in school.

The **experiences and outcomes** are specific statements about a student’s skills and knowledge in each area, arranged by curriculum level to provide a progression through the levels from **Early** to **Level 4**.

Here is an example from the Social Studies curriculum area. It refers to one of the subjects within

People, past events and societies				
Early	First	Second	Third	Fourth
I am aware that different types of evidence can help me to find out about the past. SOC 0-01a	I understand that evidence varies in the extent to which it can be trusted and can use this in learning about the past. SOC 1-01a	I can use primary and secondary sources selectively to research events in the past. SOC 2-01a	I can use my knowledge of a historical period to interpret the evidence and present an informed view. SOC 3-01a	I can evaluate conflicting sources of evidence to sustain a line of argument. SOC 4-01a

Social Studies; *People, past events and societies.*

The code letters SOC refer to **Social Studies** and the numbers 0, 1, 2 etc refer to the curriculum level. This particular set of outcomes is coded with the number -01 because it is the first of 22 sets of statements under **Social Studies experiences and outcomes**. Some sets of statements contain

one statement per level, like this one, and others contain several related statements per level.

People, place and environment (continued)				
Early	First	Second	Third	Fourth
While learning outdoors in differing weathers, I have described and recorded the weather, its effects and how it makes me feel and can relate my recordings to the seasons. SOC 0-12a	By using a range of instruments, I can measure and record the weather and can discuss how weather affects my life. SOC 1-12a By exploring climate zones around the world, I can compare and describe how climate affects living things. SOC 1-12b	By comparing my local area with a contrasting area outwith Britain, I can investigate the main features of weather and climate, discussing the impact on living things. SOC 2-12a	I can investigate the relationship between climate and weather to be able to understand the causes of weather patterns within a selected climate zone. SOC 3-12a	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 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 I can demonstrate an understanding of weather and climate by explaining the relationship between weather and air pressure. SOC 4-12c

Subsequent statements are given the suffix letters -b, -c, -d, as below:

Teachers use the **experiences and outcomes** to inform them about what to teach students at each level in each curriculum area, and to assess when a student is secure in their learning.

When we create learning materials for schools we can use the **experiences and outcomes** to ensure that the materials are relevant to the curriculum and appropriate to the level at which they will be used.

The Curriculum for Excellence strongly encourages cross-curricular approaches, despite being organised in distinct subject areas. This means that a particular learning experience may address outcomes from several different subject areas, and use a range of learning approaches.

For example a learning activity about the First World War might use drama techniques to engage the students with archived letters from soldiers, leading to a writing or graphics activity in which they demonstrate what they have learned, culminating in an exhibition of work. **Experiences and outcomes** from the Social Studies, Expressive Arts and Languages areas are all addressed in this activity.

The **experiences and outcomes** for each subject area in the curriculum are set out in documents published by Education Scotland. They are available for download on the Education Scotland website at this address:

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

This page also hosts an interactive tool for identifying **experiences and outcomes** that are relevant to a particular learning activity. There is a separate Brief Guide (#6) about how to use this tool.

The **experiences and outcomes** documents are also available for download on our website through our Education pages.