



## Module 1: Introduction to the SCF

Guidance material	1.7 SCF Frequently asked questions
What is the purpose of this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This material will assist school leadership teams answer frequently asked questions on the <i>Abu Dhabi Education Council Student Competence Framework (SCF) for Private Schools - Competences for Abu Dhabi's 21st Century Learners (2014)</i>.</li> <li>It will provide implementation teams with consistent messages to share with staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>
When to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whenever a question arises during: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff discussions</li> <li>Staff meetings</li> <li>Parent meetings</li> </ul> </li> <li>To inform parent newsletters</li> <li>Speaking with colleagues from other schools</li> <li>Other stakeholders</li> </ul>
With whom to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff, school stakeholders, parents and the wider community</li> </ul>
Have you considered these materials first?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each question is supported by other guidance material. For more detailed responses refer to the guidance materials or directly to the <i>ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)</i> reports.</li> </ul>
How to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As answers to direct questions during discussions</li> <li>As part of a newsletter to parents on the SCF</li> </ul>
What next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This material supports the guidance material 1.8 <i>Parent newsletter</i>.</li> </ul>



## 1.7 SCF Frequently asked questions

### What is the Student Competence Framework (SCF)?

The Abu Dhabi Student Competence Framework is a model that broadly defines a set of values and competences which can be applied to a wide range of roles and situations. Values define a person's character and competences are a unique combination of skills, attributes and dispositions which provide us with the mechanisms with which we engage with the world around us. A common understanding of these values and competences forms a benchmark against which an individual or group can be evaluated. The SCF has been developed for the private school sector of Abu Dhabi and is being closely aligned to the academic curricular and extra-curricular programmes in these schools. These values and competences can be organised in a manner to encourage cross-disciplinary learning, teaching and assessment. The SCF details progressive skills outcomes both vertically (through the grades) and horizontally (across subjects.)

*(Situational Analysis section of the ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014) (p. i.9))*

### Why have a Student Competence Framework?

A major reason why a Student Competence Framework is important is because it ensures that the future skills of a country can be anticipated. Particularly for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, those skills which focus on students being flexible, creative, life-long learners are important. In an era when the pace of technological and economic change is so rapid it renders the acquisition of technical and subject- based knowledge quickly redundant.

*(Situational Analysis section of the ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014) (p. i.9))*

### Why is a Student Competence Framework important?

Having a set of generic competences defined and exemplified in a formal, structured framework is important because it:

- Ensures a country's future skills needs are being anticipated, and particularly for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Defines those competences which a country deems necessary for its students to be prepared for their next stage of education
- Provides a formal structure of competence outcomes which can then be planned, delivered and assessed
- Ensures consistency of competence outcomes across educational institutions and
- Provides a "checklist" for schools and teachers as to which competences should be integrated into the planning and delivery of their chosen curriculum.

*(Situational Analysis section of the ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014) (p. i.9))*

### Why has ADEC developed a Student Competence Framework?

ADEC has developed a student competence framework to align educational outcomes with the requirements of Abu Dhabi's Economic Vision 2030. In education this vision is to have young people educated to the best international standards with the skills to become productive workers who can contribute to making the economy internationally competitive.



It is also to ensure that students are equipped with the soft skills and behaviors required for 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Abu Dhabi's evolving economy regardless of their chosen curriculum. This framework aims to improve overall educational outcomes and the consistency of those outcomes.

(ADEC SCF PowerPoint presentation to Principals and Heads of Faculties, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014.)

## How was the Student Competence Framework developed?

Extensive consultation was undertaken with stakeholders including:

- Schools (principals, senior staff, teachers, students and parents)
- Higher education institutions
- Industry
- Government and the public sector and
- Internal ADEC consultation.

In addition international research and the benchmarking of best practice included examples from US (Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning), Singapore, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines. The framework was developed and written by Pearsons Education Limited and the pilot phase of the project has been contracted to Cognition Education Limited (New Zealand).

(ADEC SCF PowerPoint presentation to Principals and Heads of Faculties, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014.)

## What are the competences?

The Abu Dhabi SCF has identified thirteen core competences which begin at kindergarten or Grade 1 and continue to Grade 12. These thirteen competences are grouped into three themes:

Learning and innovation skills	
Those skills which enable students to become creative, innovative, flexible life-long learners who are able to be effective, multi-skilled productive workers	Critical thinking
	Creativity
	Problem solving
	Independent learning
	Digital competence

Personal and social skills	
Those skills which enable students to become a cohesive, productive and tolerant member of society who is well prepared for the next stage of their education.	Leadership and responsibility
	Collaboration/teamwork
	Communication
	Self-confidence
	Initiative/self-direction
	Entrepreneurship



### National and Global citizenship skills

Those skills which enable students to become concerned and responsible citizens who are active participants in the local community and the global, multi-cultural, technologically advanced world.

Global and environmental awareness

Cultural awareness/ citizenship

The achievement of the relevant parts of the ADEC Graduate Profile would require the achievement of the SCF core competences as well as the following “elective” competences: Health and well-being, economic and financial awareness, media literacy, and productivity and accountability.

*(Framework Requirements and Exemplifications section of the ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014))*

### What are the Student Competence Framework values?

The Abu Dhabi SCF has proposed seven core values. These are: respect, integrity, empathy, resilience, honesty, care, and tolerance. These values promote a positive attitude in students and provide a foundation for the development of the framework competences. Values are exemplified, not formally assessed. Values define a person’s character. The recognition and promotion of core values (also described as ethics and morals) are crucial to the successful development of generic competences in students. They are at the heart of the competence framework and provide the relevant contextual background that gives the framework its uniqueness.

*(Guidance for schools section of the ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014) (p. v.2))*

### Why develop the values and competences in all curriculum areas?

When developing students’ values and competences we are working alongside their families and with the wider community on a lifelong development process. Values define who we are as individuals and citizens and we develop these in the various contexts of our life that we live through. Competences are a unique combination of skills, attributes and dispositions which provide us with the mechanisms with which we engage with the world around us. Our unique combination of values and competences in many ways determine who we are as individuals, the work or employment we are best suited for, and the role we will play as citizens.

The most important role we can have as educators is to provide every student with experiences of their values and competences within our academic curriculum or grade level. Experiencing the values and competences in all aspects of our school life, and being expected to make personal judgments about them in relation to our personal development, are the essential reason why these values and competences have been included in the school programme. Including the values and competences across all curriculum areas supports students to appreciate those values and competences are an essential part of all their learning, not just in certain curriculum areas (for example communication is not just developed in the curriculum areas of Arabic and English).

*(Executive Summary section of the ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014))*



## **Do we need to assess every value and competence in every class?**

In the *Guidance for schools* section of the *ADEC SCF for Private Schools* it states that, values are exemplified, not formally assessed. This exemplification has most impact when the teachers and adults in the school exhibit these characteristics in all they say and do, by providing positive role models for students.

The *Design Considerations* section of the *ADEC SCF for Private Schools* suggests that all schools will be required to have measures in place to assess and record student competence development. One important point to stress here is that there is not an expectation that every lesson in every subject in every grade will assess the competences. It will be for individual schools to design procedures for capturing student competence development and to provide evidence that they are doing so. Some competences are not expected to be developed in the junior grades so it is important to refer to the *Framework Requirements and Exemplifications* section of the *ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)* for a detailed answer to this question.

(*Guidance for schools* section, *Design considerations* sections and the *Framework Requirements and Exemplifications* section of the *ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)*)