



Module 4: Understanding the competences and values

Guidance material	4.1.5 What is Digital competence?
What is the purpose of this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a brief introduction to the competence of digital competence
When to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When introducing the competences to teachers to support them in implementing this competence in their class programme.
With whom to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers
Have you considered these materials first?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce teachers to the SCF through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2 Structure of the SCF activity 1.4 Prior knowledge brainstorm activity 1.3 Definitions matching activity For further information on each of the competences, including student progressions, see 1.6 Close reading of ADEC SCF –Framework Requirements & Exemplifications.
How to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This resource can be used in a range of ways, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share with teachers and discuss it in staff meetings or departmental meetings. Encourage teachers to plan using the ideas in this resource. Discuss the ideas and then ask teachers to share their own ideas for teaching this competence. For more information on each competence read the <i>Framework Requirements & Exemplifications</i> section of the <i>Abu Dhabi Education Council Student Competence Framework (SCF) for Private Schools - Competences for Abu Dhabi's 21st Century Learners (2014)</i>.
What resources or equipment are needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of the <i>Framework Requirements & Exemplifications</i> section of the <i>ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)</i>.



4.1.5 What is Digital Competence?

Definition

Digital competence can be broadly defined as the confident, critical and creative use of ICT to achieve goals related to work, employability, learning, leisure, inclusion and/or participation in society.

(ADEC SCF for Private Schools Framework Requirements and Exemplification (2014) p.iii.16)

Background

This summary of research is provided as a background to this competence and further information can be found in the references below.

The OECD (2006) has identified that every young person will need to use ICT in many different ways in order to participate fully in a modern society. Rychen and Salganik (2003) contend that in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world it is essential that individuals master changing technologies and can make sense of large amounts of available information. This aligns with the *ADEC Student Competence Framework for Private Schools (2014)* which recognises digital competence and the confident, critical and creative use of ICT as one of the learning and thinking skills that will equip individuals to be lifelong learners and effective workers.

Digital competence is an evolving concept. Alamutka, Punie and Redecker (2008) advocate in their policy paper to the European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) that approaches to developing digital competence need to be dynamic and regularly revised because of the evolving technologies and their changing use in society. Digital competence also goes beyond an ability to use ICT tools. Fostering digital citizenship and developing awareness to the use of ICT tool and information in responsible and ethical ways is an essential adjunct to developing digital competence.

Digitally competent learners effectively use a wide range of information and communication technologies in responsible and ethical ways. They are confident, critical and creative users who can access, select, analyse and synthesise information from a wide range of digital sources and can critically evaluate information for relevance, importance and usefulness. Digital technologies support their developing understanding of global and environmental issues.





Learning Progressions

“The term ‘learning progression’ refers to the purposeful sequencing of teaching and learning expectations across multiple developmental stages, ages, or grade levels. The term is most commonly used in reference to learning standards—concise, clearly articulated descriptions of what students should know and be able to do at a specific stage in their education. In terms of the student competence framework, a learning progression is a road or pathway that students travel as they progress toward mastery of the skills needed for career and post compulsory education.”

(ADEC SCF for Private Schools Framework Requirements and Exemplification (2014) p.iii.7)

The *ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)* provides learning progressions from kindergarten / Grade 1¹ through to the end of Grade 12. These progressions provide clear descriptors of what should be expected within that competence at each grade level, for example:

At the end of this stage learners who are digitally competent are able to:

- effectively use a number of information and communication technologies in their learning environment
- access and select information from a relevant number of digital sources
- evaluate information and data sources for authenticity
- use technologies in a responsible and ethical way

At the end of Grade 5, learners who are digitally competent are developing the ability to:

- use a relevant number of information and communication technologies in their learning environment
- access and select information from a relevant number of digital sources
- evaluate information and data sources
- use technologies in a responsible and ethical way

Grade 5 and 6 Learning progressions for Digital Competence in the *ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)*. p.iii.25-26)

While the performance indicators within these progressions do not change in essence, they do expand in breadth and depth. This expansion makes the progressions a useful tool for both teachers and students. Below are some tasks teachers can undertake to help them make best use of these learning progressions:

- Read the progressions carefully as this will help you further understand this competence and what skills and attitudes make up that competence.
- Before reading the descriptors for the grade you teach, read the descriptors for the grades below. These descriptors are the building blocks of what students have experienced in this competence before they reached this grade level. Ask students to share their experiences of these descriptors (e.g. “Tell

¹ The *ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)* recognizes that not all schools are able to deliver all competences across all grades. *Table 5: A Road Map for the Delivery of the Competences across the Stages (p.iii.9)* provides schools with a ‘road-map’ to support them in making decisions on the delivery and development of the competences across the four stages of schooling.

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me about how you select information when you are researching on the internet?”) and use their answers to help you plan your starting point.

- While reading the descriptors for each grade level identify the ‘step up’ students need to make to move through the progressions. For example, at the end of Grade 5 digitally competent students are developing the ability to “*evaluate information and data sources*”, while in Grade 6 they “*evaluate information and data sources for authenticity*” (ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014) p.iii.26). Therefore their step up is learning how to check their data sources for authenticity. Ask yourself what this might look like, for example they could learn the importance of triangulating their information (when you triangulate your information you check that the information is the same from more than one source).
- Use the progressions when planning lessons to ensure your focus on a competence is based on the appropriate stage of the competence framework. The progressions are useful to refer to when giving specific feedback to students on their next steps in developing that competence.
- Support student to use the progressions to set goals and self/peer assess their own and others learning.

References

Abu Dhabi Education Council (2014) *Abu Dhabi Education Council Student Competence Framework (SCF) for Private Schools - Competences for Abu Dhabi's 21st Century Learners*. Pearson Education Limited

Ala-Mutka, K., Punie, Y., & Redecker, C. (2008). *Digital Competence for Lifelong Learning: Policy Brief*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

OECD (2006), *Are Students Ready for a Technology-Rich World? What PISA Studies Tell Us*, Paris: OECD Publishing.

Rychen D.S. & Salganik L.H. (Eds.) (2003). *Key Competences for a Successful Life and a Well-Functioning Society*. Göttingen: Hogrefe & Huber Publishers.