

Module 4: Understanding the competences and values

Guidance material	4.1.8 What is Collaboration/Teamwork?
What is the purpose of this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a brief introduction to the competence of collaboration/teamwork
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?	Copies of the <i>Framework Requirements & Exemplifications</i> section of the <i>ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)</i> .

4.1.8 What is Collaboration/Teamwork?

Definition

Collaboration means working together on a problem or a task. Collaborative learning is an approach to learning which asks students to work together in pairs, groups or teams to achieve common goals.

(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.

Collaboration and teamwork that results in enhanced learning and performance for all group/team members is based within the theory and practice of “cooperative learning”. In a “cooperative learning group” student’s work together to accomplish shared goals and they seek outcomes that are beneficial to all. Students in the group review information and data with each other, help one another understand it, and urge each other to work hard. Individual performance is monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that all students are contributing and learning. As a result the group is more than a sum of its parts, and all students accomplish at a higher academic level than they would if they had worked independently (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Collaborative learners can work together and support each other while completing a common task/goal. In completing the common task/goal, students develop their cognitive and metacognitive skills. This means students learning the skills of effective communication – talking, listening, paraphrasing, elaborating, and questioning to understand their world, acquire knowledge and problem solve.



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 Grade 10, learners who have effective collaborative skills are developing the ability to:

- work productively with others from a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- build relationships based on mutual respect for other views and backgrounds
- exercise flexibility, compromise and empathy to achieve a group's common objective
- act fairly in sharing workload and responsibilities within teams
- argue a point of view with consideration when challenging the differing views of an individual or the team
- work with others to guide and motivate team members to achieve team goals

At the end of this stage learners who have effective collaborative skills are able to:

- work productively with others to reach a common goal, using and sharing their acquired knowledge and understanding
- work effectively and respectfully with others from diverse backgrounds
- contribute to a harmonious and productive team ethic
- be flexible, and value and accommodate the views of others to achieve a common goal
- share roles and responsibilities for tasks and activities

(Grade 9 and 10 Learning progressions for Collaboration/Teamwork in the ADEC SCF for Private Schools Framework Requirements and Exemplifications. (2014). p.iii.34-36)

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

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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students have experienced in this competence before they reached this grade level. Ask students to share their experiences of these descriptors (e.g. “*Tell me about a time where you have shared responsibilities and tasks with others in a group or team to achieve a project or goal?*”) and use their answers to help you plan your starting point.

- While reading the descriptors for each grade level and identify the ‘step up’ students need to make to move through the progressions. For example, at the end of Grade 9 in Collaboration/Teamwork students are developing the ability to “*work effectively and respectfully with others from diverse backgrounds*” while in Grade 10 students “*work productively with others from a range of social and cultural backgrounds*” (ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014) p.iii.35). Therefore their step up is working *productively* with peers from a range of both social and cultural backgrounds. Ask yourself what this might look like, for example the teachers might co-construct with students a set of criteria about what ‘working productively’ looks like and sounds like (e.g. meeting deadlines, staying on task, etc.).
- 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.

Johnson, D., Johnson, R. (1999). Making cooperative learning work. *Theory Into Practice*, 38:2, 67-73