

Module 4: Understanding the competences and values

Guidance material	4.1.9 What is Communication?
What is the purpose of this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a brief introduction to the competence of communication
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?	<p>Copies of the <i>Framework Requirements & Exemplifications</i> section of the <i>ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)</i>.</p>

4.1.9 What is Communication?

Definition

Communication is the act of transferring information from one place [or person] to another. Having effective communication skills involves the ability to transfer information accurately, clearly and as intended, to suit the audience, task and purpose.

(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 field of communication theory and research is extensive. This reflects the importance of communication in every human endeavor. From birth, human beings are involved in making themselves and their ideas about how the world works known to others. This understanding of communication is reflected in the notion that communicative competence is developed in social situations. It is useful to consider the notion of the social construction of communication given that in school we are working to develop in our students a wide range of skills and the disposition to be effective communicators. Some useful points to consider when thinking about the link between social constructivism and communication are: communication makes us human; we exist in communication; realities are created in communication and inform the character of the process (Pearce, 2009).

Research has also shown that expert communicators are more successful in their work, educational and personal lives. OECD and business/employment studies strongly assert the need for workers who are able to employ sophisticated and effective communication strategies including the use of digital tools (Ananiadou and Claro2009).



The competence of communication comprises a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes including; oral, written, visual and nonverbal communication methods, listening skills, use of technology, awareness of audience and purpose, clarification of messages and the organization of ideas.

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 7, learners who communicate effectively are developing the ability to:

- communicate thoughts and ideas clearly, confidently and effectively for a range of purposes and audiences
- organise their communication
- listen attentively to decipher and respond to communications from others
- use a range of modern technologies as a means of communication
- develop an understanding of local and global perspectives of communication

At the end of this stage learners who communicate effectively are able to:

- use multiple strategies and methods to communicate in a range of settings
- communicate confidently and clearly using a range of methods
- provide clarification when responding to communication from others
- use a range of modern technologies as a means of communication
- describe local and global perspectives of communication

(Grade 6 and 7 Learning progressions for Communication in the *ADEC SCF for Private Schools Framework Requirements and Exemplifications. (2014). p.iii. 27-28*)

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 me about the different ways you communicate with different people?*”) 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 6 in communication students are developing the ability to “*provide clarification when responding to communication from others*” while in Grade 7 students “*listen attentively to decipher and respond to communication*

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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from others” (ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014) p.iii.28). Therefore their step up is learning how to be an attentive listener and how to respond appropriately. Ask yourself what this might look like, for example students might role play how to (and how not to) listen and respond appropriately.

- 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

Ananiadou, K. and M. Claro (2009), "21st Century Skills and Competences for New Millennium Learners in OECD Countries", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 41, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Pearce, W. B. (2009) *Communication and social construction: Claiming our birthright*. In Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz and Gloria Galanes (Eds). (2009) *Socially Constructing Communication*. Cresskill, N. J.: Hampton Press.