

## Module 4: Understanding the competences and values

Guidance material	4.1 What are competences?
What is the purpose of this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This material explains the competences that have been selected for inclusion in the <i>Abu Dhabi Education Council Student Competence Framework (SCF) for Private Schools- Competences for Abu Dhabi's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners (2014)</i>.</li> </ul>
When to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This activity could be used when introducing the competences to staff, to senior students, and to the parent community</li> </ul>
With whom to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers</li> <li>Parent community</li> <li>Students</li> </ul>
Have you considered these materials first?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.2 <i>Structure of the SCF activity</i></li> <li>1.3 <i>Definitions matching activity</i></li> </ul>
How to use this material?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This activity provides participants an opportunity to deepen their own understanding of the competences</li> </ul>
What resources or equipment are needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This resource</li> </ul>
What next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 <i>What is the SCF?</i></li> <li>The <i>Executive Summary</i> section of the <i>ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)</i></li> <li>The <i>Framework Requirements &amp; Exemplifications</i> section of the <i>ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)</i></li> <li>1.7 <i>SCF Frequently asked questions</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## 4.1 What are competences?

### Introduction

The *ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)* framework outlines thirteen competences grouped under three themes. Each competence theme is defined by a student outcome. The table below depicts the relationship between the three competence themes, expected student outcomes, and the thirteen specific competences to be developed in a private school education during grades one to twelve.

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

In addition students in Grades 10 to 12 will experience four additional competences. These are:

- Health and well-being
- Economic and financial awareness
- Media literacy
- Productivity and accountability.

### What are competences?

A competence is one of the personal resources an individual has developed that assists them to function in our complex society. A competence assists an individual to meet complex demands, by drawing on and using personal resources (including skills and attitudes) in any particular context. These personal resources are the unique set of competences an individual has developed.

*Competences are a unique combination of skills, attributes and dispositions.*

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



A competence however, is more than just knowledge and skills. It includes an individual's attitudes and learnings taken from their previous experiences.

Therefore, it is important to ensure that an individual experience each of the competences in a range of different curriculum areas and develop a range of life experiences. Individuals need a wide range of competences in order to face the complex challenges of today's world. However, it is of limited use to list all of the possible competences. Instead the selection of thirteen core competences has ensured that those most relevant to the societal outcomes required have been identified.

### Why have competences?

Globally, governments and educators are initiating student competence frameworks to ensure that schools develop young people who are equipped with generic competences (skills and attitudes) that will better prepare them to be effective life-long learners, productive workers, and global citizens. The aim of these competences is to develop citizens who can make a positive contribution to their community and their country.

In developing these competences global research was undertaken starting with the OECD DeSeCo project and report findings<sup>1</sup>. This project, undertaken in 2005, has had a significant influence on the development of competences around the world, including Singapore, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. Further discussion with key Abu Dhabi stakeholders, ADEC directors, and school leaders informed the specific selection of competences and their arrangement into three themes. A strong link has been made between these competences and the Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030, as shown in the diagram.

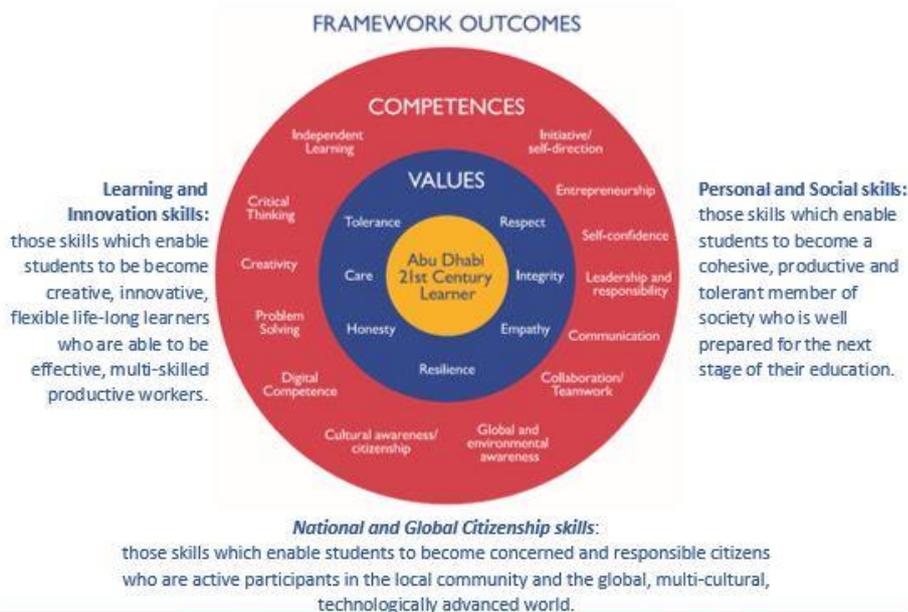
<sup>1</sup> OECD (2005). *The definition and selection of key competences report*. (DeSeCo Project).

الوحدة 4: ماهي الكفاءات؟

المادة التوجيهية: 4.1 فهم الكفاءات والقيم



## ABU DHABI ECONOMIC VISION 2030



## UAE/ABU DHABI NATIONAL IDENTITY

advanced, dynamic, forward-looking  
with a rich history, culture and heritage

Fig 1: Visual Representation of the Abu Dhabi Student Competency Framework

The introduction of the *ADEC SCF for Private Schools (2014)* framework is part of ADEC's strategic plan for supporting improved educational outcomes across the private school sector to ensure students from a wide range of private schools (all offering a range of different curricula) are equipped with the soft skills and behaviours required for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and Abu Dhabi's evolving economy, regardless of their school's chosen curriculum.

### What is required of private schools?

All private schools are required to:

- develop student competences across the three broad themes detailed above, regardless of a school's core curriculum
- embed the framework competences in the planning and delivery of the school curriculum, both compulsory taught curriculum and the extra-curricular activities undertaken at the school
- provide evidence that the framework competences have been mapped to the content of the school curriculum
- provide opportunities for all students, regardless of age, gender, background or ability, to develop the framework competences
- monitor, assess, and record student development of the framework competences
- develop in all students an awareness, appreciation and, where appropriate and practicable, the active practice of the framework core values.

## SCF Pilot School Case Study

### Competence classroom display

SCF Pilot School

Belvedere British School

In every classroom at Belvedere British School you will see the SCF competences displayed around the classroom whiteboard. These consistent school-wide displays support both teachers and students in talking about the competences every day.

- Teachers use the competences wall display at the start of the lesson to tell the students which competence they will be focussing on during their learning that day.
- Because each competence is on a separate card teachers can select the specific competence they want to share with their students.
- Some teachers draw arrows on the whiteboard pointing to the focus competence for that day's learning.
- When a student demonstrates a competence the teachers use the competence display to talk to the students about which competence they are exhibiting and how they are demonstrating it.
- Students are encouraged to take a competence off the wall and share with their class why they feel it is an important part of that day's lesson and how they experienced that competence during the lesson.



*'It has become a very useful tool for teachers to instantly reference and for students to keep the idea of which competence focus they are working on.'*

Philip Davies, Assistant Vice Principal  
Belvedere British School