



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

EDUCATION AND SKILLS COMMITTEE

T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP
Direct Tel: 0131 348 5222
Fax: 0131 348 5600
es.committee@parliament.scot

8 January 2019

Dear Director of Education

The Education and Skills Committee at the Scottish Parliament has agreed to undertake some work exploring the provision of modern studies provision across Scotland and also looking at the extent to which citizenship is a focus in secondary school education. Part of the basis for this work is a finding from Education Scotland in 2012 in its report Social Studies 3-18. It found that:

In a number of schools, where modern studies is not taught as a discrete subject, young people's entitlement in the area of people in society, business and economy is not being fulfilled. In these schools, it is proving difficult for young people to acquire the appropriate knowledge or skills, for example in relation to democracy and political literacy.

The Committee is interested in how experiences and outcomes which would map on to Modern Studies are delivered. On that basis the Committee has developed a series of questions that it is asking to all education authorities. These are attached in the annexe and the Committee would very much appreciate a response to these questions from you to inform its work. It is challenging to develop a set of questions that covers all of the relevant issues where the answers will generate an entirely accurate picture, including capturing the specifics of your area and your specific schools. On that basis if there are any considerations that we have not asked you to cover but you think would be valuable in informing our work, please also detail these in your response.

The response from your education authority will be published online alongside all other responses from other authorities. The Committee is seeking to establish a Scotland wide picture as opposed to focussing on one particular area. The Committee is also seeking views from Education Scotland on its national oversight and support role, using modern studies and citizenship as a case study. Please therefore feel free to also comment on the contribution Education Scotland makes in its national role within your response.

The Committee is seeking a response by Thursday 13 February. Please email your response to es.submissions@parliament.scot

Yours sincerely

Clare Adamson
Convener

Questions on modern studies and citizenship

1. What proportion of your schools offer Modern Studies as a discrete subject in BGE?
2. What proportion of your schools offer an integrated Social Studies Course in BGE?
3. In what proportion of your schools does PSE/PSHE curriculum cover citizenship in S1 – S3?
4. In what proportion of your schools does PSE/PSHE curriculum cover citizenship in S4 – S6?

Senior Phase

[NB please note these questions relate to whether your schools provide the following qualifications, as opposed to whether pupils attending your schools access these courses in other schools or in colleges]

1. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies National 3 qualification in Senior Phase?
2. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies National 4 qualification in the Senior Phase?
3. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies National 5 qualification in the Senior Phase?
4. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies Higher qualification in the Senior Phase?
5. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies Advanced Higher qualification in the Senior Phase?
6. Has the provision of qualifications at any of these levels fluctuated over the past five years? If so, please specify.

Staffing

1. What proportion of secondary schools in your area have at least one full time specialist modern studies teacher (or equivalent of at least 1 FTE)?
2. What proportion of the modern studies specialists in schools in your area are teaching in permanent posts?
3. Has the number of permanent posts in modern studies changed in the last 5 years in your area? If so, please provide details.

4. Of the secondary schools in your area that offer discrete Modern Studies classes in BGE, roughly what proportion of these classes are taught by a specialist modern studies teacher?
5. What proportion of secondary schools in your area offer Modern Studies qualifications of some form? Within this proportion, do you know the extent to which these classes are taught by a specialist modern studies teacher?
6. Are there any specific challenges in your area at present in relation to the recruitment of modern studies specialists? Has this become easier or more challenging over the course of the past 5 years?

General comments (optional)

1. What could help to improve the quality of teaching and learning in modern studies in your education authority area?
2. Are there any other comments you would like to make to inform the Committee's work?