



scottish credit and
qualifications framework

Our journey as an SCQF Ambassador School - Glenrothes HS



by Alan Cumming, Depute Head Teacher

Glenrothes High School has approximately 780 pupils. Our school serves the centre of a new town, where there has been, over the last 10 years, significant changes in the demographic and employment opportunities across Glenrothes. Several major employers either closed down completely or relocated. Almost 86% of our pupils live in SIMD 1-5.

On taking up post in August of 2014, Glenrothes High School had a very traditional curriculum with a limited number of National 3 or alternative qualifications, including Skills for Work courses. At the time it was a priority to review our Curriculum Rationale, to reflect changes in the town and take cognisance of current Labour Market Information from SDS. Links with local colleges were also limited at that time.

Initially we worked with Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) to introduce a bespoke course for Glenrothes High School; Grow Eat Make Sell (GEMS), where pupils gain a SCQF level 4 Horticulture qualification and units of Hospitality, Enterprise and Employability. This course has been particularly successful in engaging a range of learners and providing them with a direct pathway to SRUC.

Within our own curriculum context, we quickly developed courses at SCQF level 3 which were delivered within our main curriculum offering and discretely through our Support for Learning department.

Foundation Apprenticeships are a superb addition to our curriculum which have afforded our learners the opportunity to gain vocational experience in various fields of work, with clear employment opportunities. In session 2017-18, there were four Foundation Apprenticeship programmes being delivered within Glenrothes High School: Social Services (Children and Young People), Social Services (Healthcare), Engineering and ICT Software. This alternative pathway has been hugely successful with one of our pupils winning National Foundation Apprentice of the year. This in turn led to his appearance on Scottish Television's advertisement for Foundation Apprenticeships.

Over the last 5 years we have made significant progress in the delivery of courses in partnership with Fife College, to the extent that Fife College certificated 186 qualifications for Glenrothes High School learners last session. Most of these were delivered by college lecturers in school and resulted in pupils gaining a range of awards from National 4s and 5s, National Progression Awards (SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6) and HNCs. This year we have worked closely with the college to align timetables to allow learners to attend a combination of both school and college. A good example of this are pupils who wish to study law at university. We arranged that they would study a HNC for two days a week at Fife College alongside Advanced Higher English and one other subject at Glenrothes High School. Fife College also delivered during May (exam leave) a National Progression Award in Administrative Activities SCQF level 4 (which includes SCQF level 4 Employability) to our learners who would benefit from extra qualifications. The pleasing aspect of this work is the pathways that become clearer to the learners.

Our curriculum is developing on an annual basis. Glenrothes High School is offering a wider range of qualifications in line with localised Labour Market Information, which are better suited to meet the needs of our young people and community. The newest curricular subjects include the delivery of NPAs in Bakery, Cake Craft, Exercise and Fitness Leadership, Data Science, Computer Games Development, Travel and Tourism, Business and ICT and PC Passport, in addition to Skills for Work in Early Education and Childcare.

As an SCQF Ambassador School we have worked successfully with the community in promoting the range of qualifications available. Learners and parents now understand that different qualifications facilitate specific pathways better. For example, National Progression Awards often offer a vocational or practical element which fits well with the progression to college, or that the Foundation Apprenticeships offer a direct route into employment through a Modern Apprenticeship. As a result, learners make smoother and more efficient transitions to their chosen positive destinations. We are witnessing less pupils working towards traditional National 5 (SCQF level 5) courses in school, then moving to college to complete a SCQF level 5 course. An example would be pupils who complete a Business and IT NPA at SCQF level 6 who will progress straight onto HNC Business at SCQF level 7 at college.

If your school would like to find out more about the SCQF School Ambassador programme, have a look at <https://scqf.org.uk/support/support-for-educators-and-advisers/school-ambassador-programme/> or contact Donnie d.wood@scqf.org.uk