

Case Study

Scottish Studies Award (SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5) — Dalkeith High School



Background

In 2013/14 we have started delivering the *Scottish Studies Award* at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5 to our full S4 cohort — approximately 160 pupils. This has allowed us to give all S4 pupils the opportunity to achieve certification in eight qualifications — ie seven Nationals and the *Scottish Studies Award*.

Why did we choose to deliver the *Scottish Studies Award*?

The Depute Head Teacher and SQA Co-ordinator was involved with the original Scottish Studies Working Group, which recommended that SQA explore the possibility of developing a *Scottish Studies Award*. She subsequently became a member of the Qualification Design Team. This meant that the school had a sound knowledge of the requirements of the Award and was in a good position to offer it as an option for S4 pupils.

The fact that delivering the Award meant we could offer eight qualifications in S4 was also important in relation to pupil achievement. Parents were kept fully informed of this during the planning process for S4 Courses.

The Award will benefit pupils because it helps them to broaden their knowledge of the country they live in and encourages them towards independence in their learning. At this stage — September 2013 — many pupils have really used the opportunity to play to their strengths in terms of the activities they have been undertaking for the *Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus* Unit.

Delivering and assessing the *Scottish Studies Award*

In Dalkeith High School we have a team of volunteer tutors who have been working with pupils since June when the school timetable changed. Pupils were allocated *Scottish Studies* on the timetable when they moved to seven National Courses from the 11 options they followed in S3. This gave them eight periods per week, for around four weeks until the end of term, to begin work on the *Scottish Studies: Scotland in Focus* Unit and the Award.

Tutors now have time between August and Christmas to support pupils as they complete their *Scotland in Focus* projects — no more timetabled time but pupils are given time for one-to-one discussions with their tutors. This time will be used by tutors to give advice on how to complete projects, and to enhance, finalise and complete relevant paperwork such as candidates' checklists. Assessors' checklists will also be completed by individual tutors. Tutors have all been fully briefed and have groups of around eight pupils to look after.

Members of staff will also be attending the Scottish Studies Network Support Events this year to gain relevant experience — and to cascade that to other tutors. We also intend to use internal verification processes to assess each project.

All pupils will work towards two of the additional three Units which are needed to achieve the full Award during their English National Course and the *Religion, Belief and Values Award* which all are undertaking in core RME. The third Unit will be drawn from their other National Courses, depending on the options each pupil has chosen.

All relevant departments are ensuring that learning, teaching and assessment for Units which can contribute to the *Scottish Studies Award* cover an appropriate Scottish context. This will ensure that we can use the Units that will give pupils the best possible outcome for the Award.

We are also hoping to be able to give pupils the opportunity to progress to the next level for the Award in S5 and S6.