



# ACCESSIBLE, EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

## Policy 1:

**The Scottish Government needs to take urgent action to reform the national curriculum and assessments, in line with the views and needs of young people.**

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## Endorsed by:



## What's this all about?

Young people told us they want their education experiences to build lifelong skills and knowledge that are based on experiential learning and analytical thinking skills to prepare them for their future. Learning about topics like British Sign Language, Braille, LGBTQ+ history, anti-racism and the histories of people of colour, relationship education, health and wellbeing, political literacy and critical literacy skills, are vital to their future.

**“We must take urgent action to make the curriculum accessible for every young person and that all their needs are met so that they can have a positive and useful learning experience”**

– Young woman aged 12-13, Dumfries and Galloway

**“There should be less exams at the end of year. Put in place more continual assignments as it's less stressful that a massive exam at the end of a school year”**

– Young woman, aged 14-17

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## What are young people in Scotland calling for?

- Decision makers must put young people at the heart of designing an education system and a curriculum that creates equality and opportunity, and which supports and enables all young people through their learning.

**“The curriculum would benefit by offering more opportunities for students to learn practical real world skills like aforementioned personal finance, but also more apprenticeship and alternative career pathways.”**

– Young man aged 22-26, Aberdeen

- The Scottish Government should consider the needs of young people in assessments and exams, and increase relevant, up-to-date and helpful mental health support young people with additional support needs should be better supported in line with their individual needs.

**“Exams are crushing mental health, and the addition of too much content in courses is only adding to the problem.”**

– Young woman aged 14-17, Scottish Borders

- Young people call for expanded choice on the subjects they learn, on the subject they learn, led by interest, rather than timetabling.

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– Young woman aged 12-13 - Dumfries and Galloway

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## Evidence and support

- In August 2024, the Office of the Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland [provided evidence to the Education, Children and Young People’s Committee at the Scottish Parliament](#), ahead of their consideration of the Bill.
- In preparation for providing evidence, they met with their Young Advisors to discuss wider issues in education. The Young Advisors described the run up to exams as “awful” and high pressure. In some cases, they were tested on material they hadn’t yet learned. They felt that it was more a test on memory and ability to write rather than the subject material, especially for subjects like art.
- Specific [proposals set by the CYPCS](#) included effecting culture change, a learner interest committee, a learner charter, reinstatement of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) as an independent body, reform of SQA appeals and future reform of Qualifications and Assessments.
- Children in Scotland’s [Changing our World report on Education and Learning](#) is a report involving Children in Scotland’s Children and Young People’s Advisory Group aged between 8 and 25 with different backgrounds, experiences and views.
- One young person in the group said the curriculum in both primary and secondary schools should be regularly reviewed, to reflect what is most important in the current world such as

climate change and 3D modelling. Subject choices should be broad and accessible from wherever you're learning.

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## **What has SYP done?**

Previous [SYP consultations](#) include [SYP's response to the Scottish Parliament's Call for Views on the Education \(Scotland\) Bill \(2024\)](#) and [SYP's response to Education Reform: A Consultation on the provisions of the Education Bill \(2023\)](#). The [SYP Policy Log](#) includes several policies on curriculum and assessment reforms.