

Business Education

A portrait of current practice

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1. Introduction

Business Education – a portrait of current practice is one in a series of portraits by HMIE, depicting current practice in key aspects of the Scottish curriculum. The portrait series is a recent initiative by HMIE, flowing from the *Improving Scottish Education* (ISE) report¹. It is intended to promote improvements in Scottish education by drawing on the findings of inspections to stimulate reflection and debate. This portrait includes case studies of effective practice, which were highlighted at the November 2006 good practice conference in business education.

An important purpose of the portrait series is to relate existing pedagogy and curricular provision to the aspirations of *Curriculum for Excellence*. By stimulating debate about teaching for effective learning, the portraits will challenge us all to review the extent to which current practice is successfully promoting the four capacities in all young learners.

This portrait is based on evidence obtained from HMIE visits to schools during the period 2000 to 2007. These visits included both general inspections and other visits to examine effective practice. Inspectors evaluated the quality of learning, teaching, meeting pupils' needs and achievement.

2. Improving Scottish Education

Improving Scottish Education (ISE) was published by HMIE in March 2006. This report highlighted the need to build on the strengths in Scottish education to meet the needs of learners for the challenges of a rapidly changing global society and broaden the range of their achievements.

ISE indicated that pupils in secondary schools were often motivated and willing to learn, but were sometimes passive learners. There were many strengths in the secondary sector, but more sustained encouragement was needed for pupils to be independent learners and creative thinkers, actively involved in and responsible for their learning. An overview of business education inspections 2000 to 2007 is provided below. It indicates that the opportunities for pupils in business education courses to engage actively and creatively in their learning, to work purposefully and at a brisk pace, and to meet appropriate challenges, were not consistent across schools. These aspects are explored in greater depth in this portrait of business education in the secondary sector. There is a particular need to encourage young people to think creatively and independently and to engage confidently in debate and discussion.

¹ Improving Scottish Education. HM Inspectors of Education 2006

A portrait of current practice in teaching for effective learning

Teachers of business education have welcomed the principles of *Curriculum for Excellence* and its opportunities to improve learners' achievement. One immediate and distinct advantage lies in the important concept of achievement as wider than attainment. There has been a widely-held view among many effective practitioners that a narrow perception of attainment, such as that concerned only with success in those aspects of the subject tested by national qualifications, fails to reflect the full spectrum of outcomes for pupils which business education provides. The subjects taught within business education departments have many strengths on which to build to help learners develop the four capacities. Staff are beginning to explore how *Curriculum for Excellence* will help promote and enhance effective learning in business education. It is important to recognise also the major contribution which business education can make to priority themes such as enterprise, citizenship and sustainable development by providing learners with core information and communications technologies (ICT) skills and specialist business and management skills. Such skills are an important complement to the creativity and technical skills associated with each of these major educational and social topics.

Whilst recognising that many effective business education departments contribute significantly within schools to the promotion of successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors, this section of the portrait explores some of the more specific contributions which the subject makes.

Successful learners

What do we do well in business education to develop successful learners?

Signpost to successful learners

Effective teaching in business education will help to develop successful learners who:

- *have achieved appropriate skill levels at each stage, and prior to entry to next stage;*
- *can justify and explain key ideas and concepts orally;*
- *can make reasoned evaluations and justify opinions based on carefully researched evidence;*
- *can work collaboratively to solve problems concerning social and business challenges; and*
- *can access and successfully interpret a range of statistical data using Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), where appropriate.*

Effective business education departments offer a wide range of experiences to learners to develop their skills, techniques and understanding in a variety of aspects of business education. Some of the key characteristics drawn from very good practice where teachers promote successful learning include the following.

Teachers:

- relate lessons to real-life contexts and demonstrate how skills in business education can be applied in a range of important personal, social and vocational settings;
- draw on links with businesses and enterprise activities to endorse the value of learning in business education, as important life and vocational skills;

- have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and fully involve them in lessons;
- carefully plan lessons and share the learning outcomes of lessons with pupils;
- sum up what has been covered at the end of each lesson;
- express outcomes in pupil-friendly language;
- use words associated with learning, such as *understand, able to, aware of*;
- link outcomes to clearly identified success criteria;
- ensure the pace of work in lessons is appropriate;
- set high expectations with regard to the length, detail and accuracy of pupils' answers;
- use a variety of approaches including direct teaching of classes, groups and individuals to encourage imaginative, creative, stimulating and challenging lessons;
- provide planned opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning;
- involve pupils in peer marking, self and group evaluation;
- set interesting and challenging homework;
- ensure pupils have frequent opportunities to write at length;
- ask questions which make learners think and require them to give extended answers;
- use 'wait time' effectively to promote higher quality answers to oral questions;
- make effective use of ICT;
- encourage learners with effective use of praise, including 'two stars and a wish';
- make good use of pupils' own experiences or of relevant contemporary issues; and
- identify and use opportunities to integrate assessments and to plan for next steps in pupils' learning.

How might business education contribute more to successful learning?

As we continue to adjust our approaches, as teachers of business education we could usefully consider the following questions.

- Do we ensure that sufficient attention is paid to learners' previous experience in primary schools and during their first two years in secondary school?

- Do we evaluate the quality, quantity and frequency of homework to ensure consistency and appropriateness for all pupils?
- Do we teach lessons in such a way as to ensure retention of previously learned knowledge and understanding?
- Do we ensure that pupils' and our own aspirations of attainment are understood and appropriately high?
- Are able pupils sufficiently challenged? How do we know?
- Are knowledge, understanding and evaluation skills demonstrated consistently in extended written answers?
- Are pupils shown how to improve the quality of their work prior to submitting it for marking?

In one department pupils were each given a particular topic to research as part of their Higher business management course. Each then gave an informative and helpful presentation to the whole class to highlight their findings. Class members were then able to question the presenter who finished by issuing each member of a class with a printed copy of their presentation plus extended notes.

Confident individuals

What do we do well in business education to develop confident individuals?

Signpost to confident individuals

Effective teaching in business education will help to develop confident individuals. Confident individuals may display the following characteristics.

- *They are clear about what is expected of them within the classroom situation.*
- *They can express personal views on current economic and business events both locally and nationally.*
- *They engage effectively in class debates and can justify and explain their decisions.*

Opportunities for learners to develop as confident individuals can be seen in business education classes when:

- teachers provide pupils with helpful feedback, sufficiently detailed and appropriately focused to support them in taking steps to improve future work;
- effective teachers and departments support pupils in developing a keen awareness of the skills they are developing in information technology, accounting and management aspects of technology and of their progress in generating creative solutions, solving financial problems and applying management techniques to solve economic problems;

- displays in departments give recognition to pupils' achievements, contributing to their growing confidence as future managers and administrators;
- teachers make full use of school-wide incentive and reward schemes to ensure that pupils' achievements and progress in business education receive due recognition; and
- departments make judicious use of vocational relevance, taking particular care to build on pupils' enjoyment of the subject.

A group of S5 pupils participated in setting up an enterprise activity and were able to reflect on the factors that contributed to the financial success of the exercise and to the importance of marketing.

How might business education contribute more to developing confident individuals?

Good quality experiences in business education departments make a significant contribution to developing learners' confidence. As we continue to adjust our approaches, as teachers of business education we could usefully consider the following questions.

- Do we encourage learners to learn how to learn independently?
- Do learners have regular opportunities to work collaboratively in both large and small groups?
- Are our course materials fully appropriate for individuals from a wide range of backgrounds?
- Do homework tasks help learners to build upon prior learning and increase their confidence in learning?
- Do teachers ensure tasks are differentiated and set at appropriate levels to ensure success for all learners at their own stage of learning?
- Do teachers use praise regularly to recognise achievement and to raise confidence levels?

Responsible Citizens

What do we do well presently in business education to develop responsible citizens?

Signpost to responsible citizens

Effective teaching in business education will help to develop responsible citizens. Responsible citizens may display the following characteristics.

- *They interpret financial and business data and translate the information gained to the benefit of their local community.*
- *They are well informed about consumer matters and are able to use the knowledge and skills they have acquired to make informed decisions about financial choices.*
- *They engage with complex political, financial, economic and social issues relating both to the local and wider community.*

Business education departments can make a vital contribution to developing young people as responsible citizens. In particular, business education can ensure learners can engage in debate and discussion of political dimensions and issues competently and with well-informed views. It can also enable them to display an understanding of financial and economic matters that will be relevant to them as consumers and as members of the work force. Some of the key characteristics of business education which are presently developing responsible citizens include the following.

Effective departments ensure that all pupils:

- participate responsibly in the work of the class and show informed views on subject matter being taught or in discussions;
 - take on organisational tasks willingly including those which involve real-life events and activities in the school and community;
 - have enhanced self esteem through high quality feedback and the use of praise;
 - develop the confidence necessary to identify and tackle new challenges and demonstrate a 'can do' attitude; and
- follow programmes and courses which enable them to contribute fully within their local community and to take on roles that allow them to make full use of the skills and knowledge they have acquired within the business education department.

An S4 Intermediate 2 Accounting class was able to produce an extended report that detailed the different ways in which organisations could raise money, pay for goods and services and outline the advantages and disadvantages of the methods they had identified.

How can business education ensure pupils develop fully as responsible citizens?

As we continue to adjust our approaches, as teachers of business education we could usefully consider the following questions.

- Do we ensure that programmes of study prepare pupils fully to understand and relate to current financial, political and economic issues including those associated with enterprise and entrepreneurship, and starting and growing businesses?
- Do we ensure that we link activities and tasks to learners' other subjects and real-life contexts?
- Do we ensure that learners fully understand the role of business education subjects in the world in which they will live and work as adults?
- Do we make sure that learners have frequent opportunities to relate to others through collaborative activities or active citizenship?

Pupils in an S3 business management class had looked at local and national government and gave informed talks on the main sources of income and areas of expenditure. They looked at how income raised could provide an alternative to the Council Tax.

For further information about citizenship, you may wish to refer to HMIE's recently published portrait on Education for Citizenship.

Effective Contributors

What do we do well presently in business education to develop effective contributors?

Signpost to effective contributors

Effective teaching in business education will help to develop effective contributors. Effective contributors may display the following characteristics. They:

- *work well with each other and teachers;*
- *show they can take the lead in tasks;*
- *welcome challenges and work effectively to solve problems;*
- *apply previously gained knowledge and skills to new situations; and*
- *show informed views on relevant topics and contribute to class and group discussions.*

Many teachers take every opportunity to encourage learners to transfer the knowledge and skills they acquire in the department to the communities in which they live. Learning about effective contributions to society takes place in a variety of ways. Informed views with regard to financial, business and information technology allow learners to contribute to the local community and, importantly, to experience the difference their contributions can make. Some of the approaches which teachers are presently using to help pupils develop as effective contributors include the following.

- Asking pupils to share and justify their findings orally and encouraging others in the class to challenge the views expressed.
- Ensuring that all pupils take a full part in discussions and tasks and by not allowing any to withdraw from the class experience.
- Continually setting interesting and challenging tasks which stretch pupils.

- Giving pupils opportunities to use ICT to develop their understanding of and skills in financial techniques in relation to the roles of parent, citizen, consumer and worker.

Groups of pupils worked together to research the internet with each group extracting details of flights, hotels, pictures, excursions and prices relating to different European countries. These were then put together into one extended document and published as a holiday brochure which was used to 'price and sell' holidays to other classes as part of a mock enterprise activity.

How can business education ensure pupils develop more fully as effective contributors?

- By encouraging peer support where pupils who demonstrate strengths in a particular skill are enabled to work with and support other pupils.
- By encouraging pupils to distribute examples of their work which demonstrate good practice to the class.
- By ensuring group activities are structured to encourage pupils to demonstrate their different talents and roles.
- By encouraging pupils to use their knowledge and skills in different settings such as contributing to the school web page or being part of the administration team for a school event.
- By ensuring programmes of work include challenging group tasks. These tasks should provide opportunities for pupils to take a lead role in organising the task or in reporting back.
- By embedding enterprising activities within courses at all levels.
- By ensuring that contexts for teaching are kept up-to-date and relevant to young people.
- By providing opportunities for pupils to be creative, such as in suggesting new products for niche markets.
- By allowing pupils to communicate in different ways within the classroom, for example through preparing wall displays, presentations to class, or by designing leaflets and handouts to share with other pupils.

Conclusion

Business education plays a key role in the learning experiences of young people. Scotland has a long tradition of inventiveness and excellence in the economic, financial, administrative and business fields and in innovative and pioneering developments in enterprise and entrepreneurship. The knowledge and skills developed within business education departments can equip pupils for entry into the world of work and provide the hard-edge skills which are a necessary complement to innovation and creativity, in growing and

developing businesses. Pupils can leave school with ambition, creativity and the determination to succeed. Many teachers of business education have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and involve them fully as successful learners. By using a variety of teaching approaches they encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. By ensuring pupils are clear of what is expected of them and by giving detailed feedback, they help to produce confident individuals who are focused on success. By instilling in pupils an understanding of current financial, political and economic issues business education teachers are equipping them to play a full and responsible role within their local communities. They can ensure pupils develop fully as effective contributors by giving them relevant problems to solve which involve independent thought rather than by following step by step guidance. However, departments need to continue to address the issues of pace and challenge which are especially apparent in progression from S3/S4 programmes to Higher and Advanced Higher and beyond. The key attributes and achievements of business education are exemplified in effective departments across the country, and were reflected at the Good Practice Conference held in November 2006 within the seminars detailed below.

APPENDIX 1: HMIE Good Practice in Business Education Conference November 2006:

The conference took place at The Business, Learning and Conference Centre, Dunfermline and featured examples of good practice in business education. The following brief case studies highlight good practice as seen during inspections over the period 2001 to 2006.

1. Formative assessment techniques *Liz Heron, Glasgow City Council*

This workshop gave participants the opportunity to consider formative assessment techniques across the range of business education subjects. Stimulus for discussion was provided in a paper 'A Starter for Ten' which included a variety of easily applied formative assessment techniques including *marking less to achieve more*. The workshop showed how Assessment is for Learning (AifL) can help teachers to assess more effectively and shake off the "must mark it" mindset. Effective marking gives good feedback to learners about how well they did against a specific learning intention and suggestions/ideas for improvement. Less time can be devoted to marking within the classroom by working with groups. Verbal feedback or short written comments allow the learner to spend more time responding to the teachers' marking than the teacher spends on the marking process. A prompt sheet given to the learner allows them to respond better to the question so that they can improve their answer.

2. Achieving success in Higher Administration *Lesley Cameron and Eileen McHugh, St Ninian's High School, East Renfrewshire*

This session considered the teaching and learning approaches used in Higher Administration and the changes that had been necessary. The school looked at preparing pupils for the final exam and suggested ways for pupils to tackle each of the papers to ensure that they approached tasks with greater confidence and achieved success. Past paper questions were changed to take account of command words (understanding standards). Pupils were encouraged to read the assigned text book and then to undertake closed book questioning to

test understanding. Lessons were predominately teacher led with built-in written tasks. These were completed by encouraging pupils to work in pairs, research tasks on the internet and report back to the whole class. The ICT element was covered by devoting a double period exclusively to the development of IT skills, initially through demonstrations by the teacher followed up by practical work.

3. S1/S2 ICT – an opportunity for excellence

Anne-Marie Struthers and John Mason, Balwearie High School, Kirkcaldy, Fife

The business education and computing departments at Balwearie High School explained how they went about preparing for the implementation of a new S1/S2 ICT course in session 2007/8. They provided an insight into the rationale, planning, structure and content of the new course, stressing how they were using this opportunity to create a course which addressed the four capacities of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Improving pupil confidence, choice and flexibility are at the heart of their new course. The course has been split into two sections – Core Skills and Using ICT. Core skills are taught from August to Easter in S1 with pupils developing essential ICT skills such as File Management, Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Internet and E-mail. Materials are resource-based rather than teacher-led and include opportunities for both individual and group work. Contexts are more relevant and designed to engage and stimulate pupil interest with greater emphasis on environmental issues, enterprise and citizenship. To support all levels of ability there are three levels of tasks with pupils able to move freely from one level to another. The second part of the course, Using ICT, runs from Easter in S1 until the end of S2. During this period the pupils work on a series of projects which incorporate core skills. Some projects are individual whilst others require the pupils to work together for part of or for an entire project. In addition, pupils are introduced to new ICT skills such as web design which is supported through self-help guides. The project period is intended to develop greater confidence in using ICT and provide choice and flexibility for pupils. Pupils might be doing the same project but choose a different format for presenting their final piece of work, for example a poster, a website or a PowerPoint presentation. For manageability, in the first instance, pupils are given around three projects to choose from and each project incorporates a similar set of skills. A report is prepared, clearly recording each pupil's development as a Successful Learner, Confident Individual, Responsible Citizen and Effective Contributor together with their achievements in ICT skills. The emphasis shifts from marks and grades to qualitative feedback on progress made.

4. Accounting for success at all levels

Anne Stewart, PT Business Education, Oban High School, Argyll and Bute

This session had two aims, namely:

- to provide an insight into the methodologies used to raise attainment in accounting at all course levels; and
- to apply a critical skills approach to improving pupils' abilities to answer theory questions in the final examinations, particularly at Higher level.

Accounting for Success in Oban High School begins with ensuring learners see the big picture with an emphasis on teacher exemplification, followed by them undertaking a series of exercises backed up with homework using formative assessment and peer marking. Each

day's work is consolidated by homework that evening coupled with formal weekend homework concentrating on HI and KU. End of topic tests and past paper questions allow the teacher to be on top of each pupil's progress and understanding. Lessons begin with the teacher clearly outlining what pupils will learn – WALT/WILF. Following on from this, pupils will complete exercises, test their knowledge through peer discussion and then cross mark against model answers. Another approach adopted in the school is the Theory Carousel when the class is divided up into four groups with each group allocated a writer and reporter. Each group is given five minutes to write as much as they can answer to a given question. After five minutes they take their pens and move to the next table. They read the question given to that group, tick each answer with which they agree, mark with an x any they do not agree with and add any other points. This exercise is repeated until pupils get back to their original starting point. The reporter then presents the collated response for their question to the whole class. The presentation is then discussed with the class and marks are awarded with teacher input. Each group then word processes their agreed answer and a copy is distributed to each member of the class.

5. Teaching Administration to pupils with additional support needs

Patricia McGowan, Abercorn School, Glasgow

Abercorn School is a Glasgow secondary school for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties. These difficulties are compounded by a number of additional support needs which include ADHD, dyslexia, autism and challenging behaviour. The school has had a very successful record in presenting pupils for a range of courses. All pupils have been presented for and achieved success in the following national qualifications:

- Access 1 Business
- Access 2 Business
- Access 3 Administration
- Standard Grade Administration
- Intermediate 1 Administration
- Intermediate 2 Administration

A key ingredient as part of the department's drive towards success is the continual reinforcing of pupils' self-confidence. As part of this, teachers frequently assess pupils' performance through question and answer sessions, learning diaries, end of unit tests and formative assessment homework. The learning diaries list the topics covered within each unit and each student is required to say what they did well and what they felt they could have done better. Within the department there is a high emphasis on teacher-led practical examples with pupils replicating the work undertaken by the teacher and then moving on to new exercises. Peer support is encouraged and formative assessment strategies are used to progress areas for development.

6. Bi-level teaching

Genia Cotter and Angie Ross, Lockerbie Academy, Dumfries and Galloway

Bi-level teaching and sharing of classes has increased the uptake of business education subjects in Lockerbie Academy, including the European Computer Driving Licence and Oracle. Both teachers explained how they went about preparing classes for bi-level teaching and how they overcame the problems involved in sharing of classes and meeting the needs of all pupils, irrespective of level being offered. Input from a senior pupil exemplified the benefits gained from the teaching approaches adopted and the exemplary relationships between staff and pupils.

7. Quality assurance

June Greig, PT Curriculum, Viewforth High School, Kirkcaldy, Fife

Within this department, staff had worked hard at tracking pupils throughout each year group, using assessment materials to target learning and teaching and to set targets for individual pupils. Staff demonstrated how they used both paper-based and electronic end-of-unit evaluations to provide pupils with feedback from their teachers to ensure pupils had the most effective learning experience. Each course had an 'end of unit' evaluation sheet which encouraged pupils to reflect on work undertaken and to assess their performance. This was followed up in a meeting between the pupil and their teacher to identify 'targets for next block of work'. This approach allowed both pupils and teacher to be clear about next steps. The final element within the department revolved around classroom observations whereby individual members of the department visited each others classes to comment upon classroom organisation, procedures, pace and feedback to pupils. Elements of teaching practice were evaluated and feedback given to individual teachers. These evaluations were then used to evaluate whole department performance. Elements of evaluation included patience, confidence, adaptability, physical presence and movement and ability to address pupil needs whilst keeping the lesson on track.

8. Making learning fun

Rhona Sivewright, Aboyne Academy, Aberdeenshire

This workshop showed alternative ways of delivering business education in the classroom with particular reference to practical activities which had been used successfully within the classroom. Examples included:

- advantages and disadvantages of partnership (Standard Grade accounting);
- organisation charts (Standard Grade administration);
- operations management (Higher business management); and
- handling PC Passport multiple choice (PC Passport).

Within S4 accounting and finance lessons, pupils are encouraged to work together to solve problems. A list of tasks is set out on cards and a number of pupils are allowed to pick one card at random. These pupils then form a group which works together to complete the task. In one example pupils produced a booklet about a partnership they set up. The teacher led the lesson by talking about the need for capital, interest on capital, drawings, interest on

drawings and the need for a partnership agreement. After the pupils had completed the task, they presented their findings and answered questions from other groups.

Another approach adopted aimed to ensure pupils had an understanding of the procedures and documents associated with making travel arrangements. Working in pairs, they arranged a class trip within a budget of £600 per person. They prepared a booklet detailing the trip including the itinerary, details of the hotel, details of flight, any activities and visits. Each booklet was then displayed within the classroom and discussed with the whole class.

9. Assessment is for Learning (AifL), Personal Learning Plans (PLP), critical thinking – ‘how to’ ideas for developing learning and teaching

Alison Drever, Papdale Primary School, Orkney

Teachers were introduced to a selection of practical ideas which encouraged pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Strategies were shared to enable teachers to take forward Assessment is for Learning, critical thinking and Personal Learning Planning in their own learning and teaching approaches. These were tried and tested ideas from a very effective classroom practitioner.

10. Enterprise workshop

Justin Sinclair, Kinross High School, Perth and Kinross

This session asked the questions: ‘What is Enterprise?’ What approaches can I use in my classroom to make my business education lessons more enterprising? Could I set up an enterprise course for S2?

The presentation aimed to answer these questions through exemplification, by giving teachers a quick tour of successful enterprise lessons, topics and courses and some extra-curricular examples. Teachers were reminded that it was part of their job to encourage enterprising values – a ‘can do, will do’ attitude within their class. Learning and teaching approaches should be used which encourage positive attitudes and developed skills such as problem solving, decision making, creativity and risk evaluating.

Standard Grade business management classes were involved in ‘crispy cakes production’, which involved marketing, operations, finance and human resource management with the teacher acting as facilitator. This was followed up with a ‘town walk’ which involved pupils in mapping the range of business enterprises within their town and presenting their findings. The final enterprise activity involved work with a mini company which brought together all the skills developed through the earlier activities. Pupils were able to gain certification in Enterprise Activity – Access 3/Intermediate 1 and Establishing your Business – Intermediate 1.

11. Enterprise: the foundation for a successful Business Education Department

Margaret-Anne Costello, St Margaret’s Sports Comprehensive, Airdrie, North Lanarkshire

This presentation successfully encouraged delegates to:

- recognise the role of enterprise in education in business education courses today;

- realise how they could use case studies and examples in their own classroom situation;
and
- place enterprise in education in business education in the context of the National Priorities and Curriculum for Excellence.

APPENDIX 2: Overview of business education inspections 2000 to 2007

At the time of the last report on business education, based on inspections up to 2000, most departments offered, or contributed to, a course in ICT which built upon work begun in primary schools through the implementation of National Guidelines for Environmental Studies 5–14 and Information and Communications Technology 5-14. In general, the effective rate of implementation of the national guidelines had been slow although there had been signs of improvement in schools inspected in sessions 2000 and 2001. By the summer of 2006 the numbers of departments involved in delivering these courses had fallen significantly. A small number of departments still offered taster courses comprising elements of the different Standard Grade courses taught within their department. Many of these still lacked coherence and were of limited value or interest to some of the pupils undertaking them. Some departments which had begun to take account of *Curriculum for Excellence* were working well to promote the four capacities for all young learners.

During the period covered by this portrait, S3/S4 pupils could choose to follow Standard Grade or Access 3, Intermediate 1 or 2 courses in one or more of administration, economics, business management and accounting and finance. Most of the pupils who chose to study a business education subject opted for administration and/or business management. Accounting and finance was taught in less than 20% of the departments inspected whilst the number offering economics was considerably lower.

The curriculum in S5/S6 included courses leading to SQA Highers and Advanced Highers in administration, economics, business management and accounting and finance. Departments also offered courses based on NQs at Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 in all four subjects for pupils who were unlikely to attain Higher Grade in S5.

Quality of teaching, learning and meeting pupils' needs 2000 to 2007

This section draws together HMI evaluations on three major aspects of learning and teaching. Each is covered by a separate published performance indicator.

PI/QI 3.2 - quality of the teaching process: the variety of activities; presenting ideas; explaining; questioning; giving instructions; interacting with the class, groups and individual pupils.

PI/QI 3.3 - quality of pupils' learning experience: motivation and engagement; progress in learning; independent thought and activity; collaboration with other pupils.

PI/QI 3.4 - meeting pupils' needs: the appropriateness of tasks for pupils' interests and abilities; pace of work; and the quality of support to develop strengths and to overcome difficulties.

The four-point scale of evaluation (used up until June 2005 – shown as Performance Indicator PI)

4	very good	major strengths
3	good	strengths outweigh weaknesses
2	fair	important weaknesses
1	unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

The six-point scale of evaluation (used from September 2005 onwards – shown as Quality Indicator QI)

6	excellent	outstanding/sector leading
5	very good	major strengths
4	good	important strengths with areas for improvement
3	adequate	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
2	weak	important weaknesses
1	unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

Up until July 2003, the PIs used for each of the above were broken down into stages. From August 2003 onwards the appropriate QIs covered all stages under one evaluation.

In the schools inspected between August 2000 and July 2003, the quality of teaching from S1/S2 was very good in 5% of departments and was good in 65%. There were some important weaknesses in 30% of departments. The quality of teaching from S3/S4 was very good in 10% of departments and was good in 60%. There were some important weaknesses in 30% of departments. The quality of teaching from S5/S6 was very good in 15% of departments and was good in 60%. There were some important weaknesses in 30% of departments.

In the schools inspected between August 2000 and July 2003, the quality of pupils learning from S1/S2 was good in 43% of departments. There were some important weaknesses in 57% of departments. The quality of pupils learning from S3/S4 was very good in 14% of departments and was good in 50%. There were some important weaknesses in 36% of departments. The quality of pupils learning from S5/S6 was very good in 15% of departments and was good in 54%. There were some important weaknesses in 31% of departments.

In the schools inspected between August 2000 and July 2003, meeting pupils' needs from S1/S2 was good in 54% of departments. There were some important weaknesses in 46% of departments. Meeting pupils' needs from S3/S4 was very good in 15% of departments and was good in 35%. There were some important weaknesses in 50% of departments. Meeting pupil's needs from S5/S6 was very good in 15% of departments and was good in 57%. There were some important weaknesses in 28% of departments.

In the schools inspected between August 2003 and July 2005, the overall quality of teaching from S1/S6 was very good in 33% of departments and was good in 67%. There were no important weaknesses in six of the departments inspected. The quality of pupils learning experiences from S1/S6 was good in 100% of departments. Meeting pupils' needs was good in 67% of departments. There were important weaknesses in 33% of departments.

In the schools inspected between August 2005 and January 2007, using the six-point scale, the overall quality of teaching from S1/S6 was very good in 22% of departments, was good in 67% and weak in 11%. The overall quality of pupils learning experiences from S1/S6 was very good in 11% of departments, good in 67%, adequate in 11% and weak in 11%. The overall quality of meeting pupils' needs from S1/S6 was very good in 11% of departments, good in 45%, adequate in 33% and weak in 11%.

Subject Statistics 2001 – 2008

Table 1

Subject	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
S.G. Administration	8,771	14,346	14,500	14,354	13,118	14,321	11,576	10,019
Intermediate 1	986	1,002	1,048	1,033	976	1,371	1,838	2,196
Intermediate 2	2,830	3,491	3,568	3,498	3,578	2,879	3,245	3,945
Total	12,587	18,839	18,176	18,885	17,672	18,571	16,659	16,160

Table 2

Subject	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
S.G. Business Management	4,357	4,974	5,056	5,692	5,698	6,618	6,462	6,437
Intermediate 1	122	91	163	193	258	338	365	638
Intermediate 2	1,035	1,267	1,466	1,701	1,872	1,971	2,481	2,803
Total	5,514	6,332	6,685	7,586	7,828	8,927	9,308	9,878

Table 3

Subject	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
S.G. Accounting	4,003	3,570	3,268	2,753	2,482	2,363	2,225	1,972
Intermediate 1	423	394	313	190	125	119	85	100
Intermediate 2	510	597	593	515	394	365	372	364
Total	4936	4561	4174	3458	3001	2847	2,682	2,436

Table 4

Subject	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
S.G. Economics	722	813	592	358	241	289	243	182
Intermediate 1	3	8	2	6	4	10	42	11
Intermediate 2	146	139	183	188	254	307	343	294
Total	871	960	777	552	499	606	628	487

Whilst presentations in Standard Grade administration peaked at 14,500 in 2003 they only rose by 14% overall during the period 2001 to 2008. Presentations for Intermediate 1 more than doubled whilst those for Intermediate 2 rose by 40% [table 1]. Over the eight-year period presentations for Standard Grade business management rose by 48% to 6,437 and by over 500% and almost 300% respectively for intermediate 1 and 2 business management [table 2]. Numbers of pupils being presented for standard grade accounting continued to fall with 49% less candidates being presented in 2008 than in 2001. The numbers being presented for both Intermediate 1 and 2 had also fallen [table 3]. Numbers of pupils presented for Standard Grade economics had fallen by 75% from 2001 to 2008 whilst the numbers presented for Intermediate 2 economics had more than doubled [table 4].

Presentations at Higher Grade - Table 5

Subject	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Administration	2,991	3,827	4,054	4,216	3,998	3,192	2,866	2,872
Accounting	2,726	2,427	2,435	2,316	1,885	1,630	1,457	1,459
Business Management	5,833	5,908	5,977	5,845	5,977	5,795	5,730	6,021
Economics	1,160	1,042	972	847	715	687	651	621
Total	12,710	13,204	13,438	13,224	12,575	11,304	11,768	10,973

Overall, the number of presentations at Higher Grade within business education departments had fluctuated over the eight years covered by this report. Total numbers of pupils being presented had fallen by 13%. Presentations had peaked in 2003. During the period 1996 to 2001 the numbers presented for economics had fallen by 44% and this trend had continued with numbers falling by a further 47% from 2001 to 2008. Presentations for accounting had fallen by 47% over the period covered by this report whilst those for administration and business management had remained fairly constant [table 5].

Performance in Advanced Higher - Table 6

Subject	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Administration		1	10	17	11	12	13	15
Upper A		0	2	4	0	0	0	0
A					0	1	1	2
B		0	2	5	7	7	6	2
C		0	3	2	4	4	4	4
Accounting	42	130	135	170	157	112	77	74
Upper A	15	33	37	44	26	1	1	1
A						11	9	15
B	12	21	31	46	39	19	9	12
C	7	26	33	27	34	20	13	20
Business Management	19	187	238	303	255	296	213	233
Upper A	4	51	24	32	2	0	0	0
A					30	7	3	4
B	4	58	61	60	49	32	29	19
C	10	46	88	85	79	79	73	65
Economics	44	66	63	63	79	56	62	92
Upper A					1	1	3	2
A	12	20	18	21	18	12	13	30
B	14	21	13	13	16	16	19	35
C	16	10	17	16	23	19	17	16

Overall the number of presentations in administration, accounting, business management and economics at Advanced Higher Grade increased significantly over the period 2001-2008. Of particular note is the large increase in the number of pupils presented for business

management where numbers increased from 19 in 2001 to 233 in 2008. Presentations in economics doubled from 44 in 2001 to 92 in 2008.

No candidates gained an Upper A pass at Advanced Higher in administration over the period of this report. The numbers of candidates gaining an A pass fell significantly in Accounting from a high of 44 in 2004 to only 1 in 2008.

Presenting Centres

During the period 2001-2007 there has been a marked change in the number of centres offering the range of subjects within business education. The number of centres presenting for Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 administration doubled over the period whilst those presenting for Higher Grade administration rose by 600%. [table 7] The number of centres presenting Standard Grade accounting almost halved between 2000 and 2007. The number of centres presenting for Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 also decreased, especially at Intermediate 1 level. There was a slight decrease at Higher and Advanced Higher between 2004 and 2007. [table 8] The number of centres presenting Standard Grade, Intermediate 1 and 2 business management doubled between 2000 and 2007. The number of centres presenting for Higher Grade rose by 20%. Centres presenting Advance Higher remained fairly constant [table 9]. The number of centres presenting Standard Grade economics fell by almost 70% from a high of 53 in 2000 to 15 in 2007. The number of centres presenting for Higher roughly halved over the same period. [table 10]

Table 7 - Administration

	Number of Presenting Centres		
	2000	2004	2007
Standard Grade	0	351	304
Intermediate 1	66	167	203
Intermediate 2	98	342	332
Higher	50	338	306
Advanced Higher	0	8	8

Table 8 - Accounting

	Number of Presenting Centres		
	2000	2004	2007
Standard Grade	265	181	147
Intermediate 1	60	27	17
Intermediate 2	108	143	108
Higher	233	253	201
Advanced Higher	0	58	32

Table 9 – Business Management

	Number of Presenting Centres		
	2000	2004	2007
Standard Grade	103	351	212
Intermediate 1	16	35	66
Intermediate 2	126	226	272
Higher	271	328	342
Advanced Higher	0	62	56

Table 10 - Economics

	Number of Presenting Centres		
	2000	2004	2007
Standard Grade	53	23	15
Intermediate 1	0	1	5
Intermediate 2	32	29	34
Higher	101	74	61
Advanced Higher	0	12	11