KELSO HIGH SCHOOL

No Wrong Pathway – Future Choices

Information Booklet for our S3/4/5

PARTICIPATION
RESPECT
INCLUDED
DETERMINATION
EXCELLENCE

Introduction

To listen to a podcast based on the information within this booklet please use the link below:

https://notebooklm.google.com/notebook/24bfedd9-0cea-4bbd-9124-e9287ee3d635/audio

This booklet is designed to help you and your child make informed choices about the courses your child will study in S4 and beyond. The booklet should be used in conjunction with the recent Reports that include recommendations and advice at our Parent Engagement evenings. At Kelso High School, we pride ourselves on working to meet the needs of all our pupils. We do this by providing quality education and support at a level appropriate to learner' needs to allow them to make successful progression through school and into positive destinations beyond. We look forward to working with you and your child in this course choice process and throughout the Senior Phase.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

Curriculum for Excellence sets out clear strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Scottish schools including

- Learning is an active process with clear learner experiences and outcomes.
- Pupils experience a broad general education in the junior phase (S1-3) of high school.
- Key skills of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are addressed by all teachers across all subjects throughout a pupil's time at school.
- 'Joined-up' and relevant learning is further promoted through interdisciplinary learning between departments.
- Learner personalisation and choice in the learning process is a main driver in raising learner motivation and attainment.

Curriculum for Excellence Levels

Level Achieved	Stage
Second Level	**By the end of p7**
Third Level	**By the end of S3 although many achieve this level throughout S2 and S3.**
Fourth Level	**Broadly equivalent to SCQF Level 4 – S3 Learners**

March 2025

National Qualification Equivalences

SCQF level (Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework)	Qualifications	Qualification Grading
3	National 3	Pass/Fail
4	National 4	Pass/Fail
5	National 5 (exam)	A/B/C/D or No Award

Important Dates	Whole School Activity
Throughout this term	• S2 – S5 will have input in their PSE lessons from Pastoral staff on the course choice process. • S4/S5 Leavers are also being provided with 1:1 support from SDS/Pastoral staff to complete college and/or employment applications
	Skills Development Scotland (SDS) have been delivering lessons within PSE for S3
	S3 pupils will all have 1-1 interviews with careers advisor (ongoing from this date until end of February)
Monday 27th January	S2 Report shared with home
Wednesday 12th February	S2 Parent/Carer Engagement Evening
Tuesday 25th February	S3 Report with recommendation shared with home
Wednesday 26th February	S4-S6 Report with recommendation shared with home
Thursday 27th February	S4/5/6 Surgery Evening - (an additional parent/carer meeting with teachers for identified young people)
Thursday 27th February	Careers Fair (along with Faculty Information stalls explaining course being offered). Open to all S1-S6
Wednesday 12th March	S3 Parent/Carer Engagement Evening
Wednesday 12th March	S2 into S3 interviews to allow subject choices to be finalised during 1:1 meeting with Pastoral PT or SLT
Wednesday 19th March	S4 into S5 and S5 into S6 interviews to allow subject choices to be finalised during 1:1 meeting with Pastoral PT or SLT

Wednesday 26th March	S3 into S4 interviews to allow subject choices to be finalised during 1:1 meeting with Pastoral PT or SLT
Thursday 3rd March	S4-S6 Tracking report
Ongoing throughout this term	S4-S6 assessments
Key:	
S2	These are key dates for our learners within S2
S3	These are key dates for our learners within S3
S4/5	These are key dates for our learners within S4 and S5

CHOICES PROCESS – SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS 2024

Between January and March, all S3, S4 and S5 learners are supported in the course choice process. Pupil Support PTs provide information and advice on making the most appropriate course choice. This is delivered through our Personal and Social Education programme (PSE). This support is also complimented by class teachers' expertise and knowledge of each learner along with advice from Skills Development Scotland (SDS). **It is important when making a choice of courses that career options, ability and interests are considered. Care should be taken to keep options open by having a broad, balanced and coherent timetable of courses.**

Careers Support

Our Careers Adviser is Julie Pollock. She will speak to our learners via PSE lessons along with 1:1 consultation meeting for every learner within S3.

Skills Development Scotland and My World of Work

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is the national skills body supporting the people and businesses of Scotland to develop and apply their skills. SDS's role in school is to provide careers support to the pupils to ensure every one of them is working towards a positive post school destination.

SDS offers a session to all S2, S4, S5 and S6 pupils during PSE lessons offering advice that supports their decision-making dependant on their stage.

www.myworldofwork.co.uk offers advice and support for pupils, teachers and parents. Please take time to look at this. All our learners have been given the opportunity to familiarise themselves and access MyWOW.

National Progression Awards (NPA)
Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

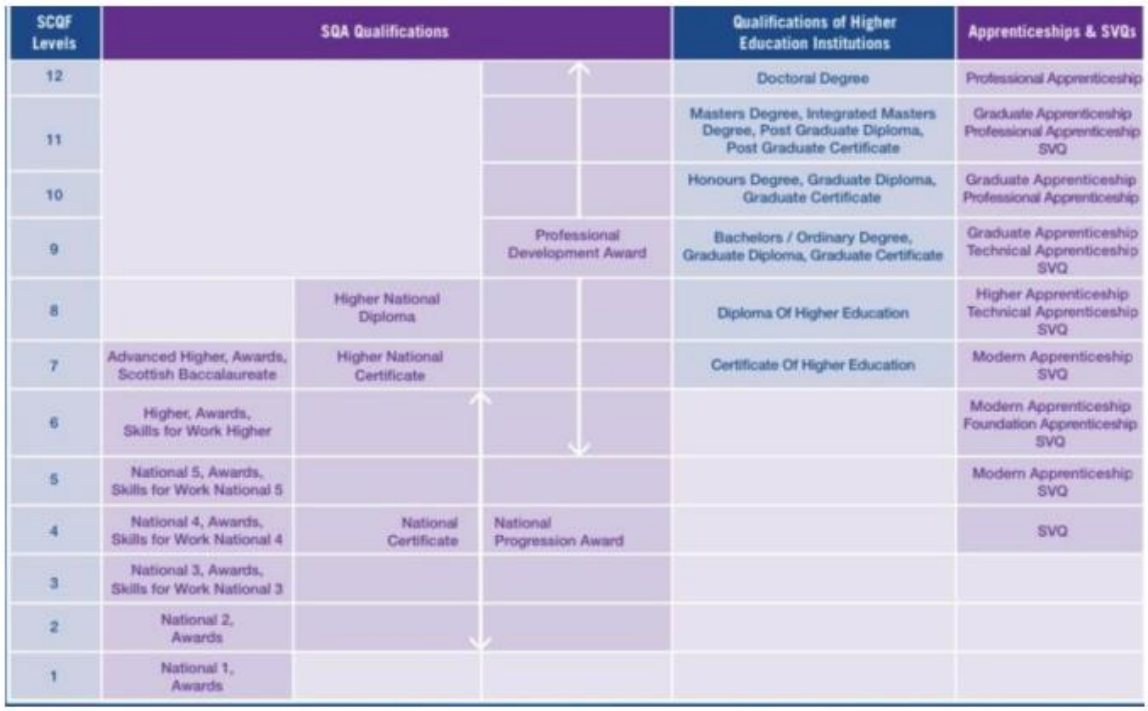
In S4 our learners will engage with SCQF Level 2, 3, 4 and 5 courses and there are a variety of SQA qualifications available. We offer SCQF National 2,3 4 and 5, NPA Level 3, 4 and 5 courses in some subjects.

In S5/6 we continue to offer the same range of SCQF Level 2,3, 4 and 5 courses as our S4. However, within S5 and S6 our learners can progress onto SCQF Level 6 (Highers) and SCQF Level 7 (Advanced Highers).

The SCQF is a way of comparing Scottish qualifications and helps to show how qualifications relate to each other and to other forms of learning. Each qualification has a level and a number of credit points. The level of qualification shows how difficult the learning is. The credit points show how much time it takes to achieve the qualification. The SCQF supports the development of progression routes between qualifications.

scqf-parent-leaflet-updated-2022-final-web.pdf

March 2025



SCQF Levels	SQA Qualifications			Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	Apprenticeships & SVQs
12				Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship
11				Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post Graduate Diploma, Post Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship SVQ
10				Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Professional Apprenticeship
9			Professional Development Award	Bachelors / Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
8		Higher National Diploma		Diploma Of Higher Education	Higher Apprenticeship Technical Apprenticeship SVQ
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate		Certificate Of Higher Education	Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher				Modern Apprenticeship Foundation Apprenticeship SVQ
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5				Modern Apprenticeship SVQ
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate	National Progression Award		SVQ
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3				
2	National 2, Awards				
1	National 1, Awards				

What pathways might I choose?

One of the great advantages of the Scottish system is the flexibility and variety of courses. We encourage learners to think about where they want to go next and to choose courses that help them get there.

In partnership with Borders College, we are able to offer a great range of courses at many different levels. Some of the typical 'pathways' that students might take are described below and in this link reproduced from the National Parent Forum of Scotland::
https://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/National_Parent_forum_nutshells_pathways.pdf

Pathway 1: 'Keeping options open'

- S4: Takes a mixture of National 4s and National 5s
- S5: Studies a college course, some Highers and a National 5 in English to prepare for…
- S6: a Higher in English, two different Highers, and a further college course
- After: college HND to prepare for…
- Career or university

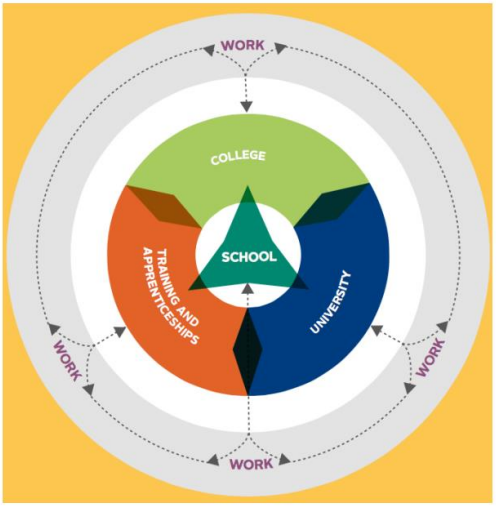
Pathway 2: 'Focussed outcome'

- S4: Takes National 5s
- S5: Re-takes one National 5 and does Highers
- S6: Another 2 Highers and one Advanced Highers
- University to train for a particular career

March 2025

Pathway 3: ‘Taking time to get it right’

- S4: Aims for National 5s and some National 4s



- S5: Completes some National 5s, chooses some different ones, progresses to a Higher
- S6: Prefers study in the college environment. Changes direction with a different Higher course, adds an NPA to try out something different leading to…
- Many different options: Modern Apprenticeship, college, university, work…

Post School Pathways

This diagram has been reproduced from the National Parent Forum Scotland (NPFS) publication called Career Education: A World of Possibilities. The National Parent Forum produces a wide range of documents written in learner and parent friendly language without jargon. This diagram reminds us that the ultimate goal for our learners is for them to find fulfilment and success in the world of work and that there are many different routes open to young people post school to continue their journeys as learners. There are many ways to enter the workplace, get a good job and have a successful career.

MythBusters!

College is for less academic learners…

False!

Colleges offer a huge range of courses at a wide range of levels. They offer a range of vocational training and skills development that is not possible in a school. They have very specialised facilities that a school could never offer. The courses on offer are suitable for learners with a range of qualifications from school from National 3/4 qualifications to Higher grades.

March 2025

They may offer qualifications you do not recognise, but these qualifications will be recognised and valued by employers. Colleges work closely with employers and universities to make sure their courses prepare young people well for the workplace or further study.

Some college places are very competitive with high calibre candidates applying for them.

I need to go to straight to university to get a degree…

False!

For some learners, moving to university straight from school is a step too far. They struggle with the workload; they do not cope very well with the level of independent study required or they can choose the wrong course. The dropout rate at university is higher than it should be.

You can go to college first, study for an HNC/HND and gain entry into University (sometimes straight into second year). This can be a very positive experience as learners gain confidence as the work is at a more appropriate level and progresses at a more suitable rate. The nature of the work can be more relevant and motivating. The skills developed will be of direct relevance to the employment sector you are working within, making you an attractive candidate for employers.

There is always the option to move into employment or further study. There may be the opportunity to move into employment with further training being supported by an employer.

I need to study three sciences to be a doctor/vet/etc….

False!

You will need five very good Highers usually including Biology and two from Chemistry / Physics / Maths. If you have a specific university in mind, you should check with their admissions office for details. Some universities are happy for you to 'top up' with any missing subjects (eg Physics) in S6 providing you get the necessary grades in any subjects in S5.

I will increase my chances of getting a job if I stay until the end of S6….

Perhaps.

If you come back to school because you didn't know what else to do and it is what all your friends were doing, you might not improve your chances of getting a job. A significant number of senior of pupils, particularly in S6, have poor attendance patterns and some do not complete the year.

It is important to continue to develop a strong work ethic and attendance and punctuality are important along with gaining additional qualifications. Remember you will be completing a CV or personal statement this year and will require references!

If you have a clear plan about what you want to get from S5/6, work closely and openly with your teachers and Pastoral PT and keep an open mind about your future then you will increase your chances of getting a job.

Apprenticeships are only relevant if I want to go into one of the 'trades'….

False!

There is a huge range of apprenticeships available to young people. Apprenticeships do cover the traditional 'trades' but much more besides.

March 2025

General Information - Apprenticeships - Skills Development Scotland

A foundation Apprenticeship is a low level, basic qualification…

Very false!

A foundation apprenticeship (FA) blurs the boundaries between work and school. Successful completion of a foundation apprenticeship can be worth up to 2 Highers. Those who complete the FA also gain invaluable skills developed in a real life work context. They may be called 'Foundation' but they certainly are not basic.

Foundation Apprenticeships - Foundation Apprenticeships | Apprentices

Taking an apprenticeship will limit my opportunities….

False!

Apprenticeships can cover a huge range in terms of the demand they place on individuals. A Professional Apprenticeship at SVQ level 5 is equivalent to a Post Graduate Qualification or Masters Degree. You can see the equivalence of different qualifications if at https://scqf.org.uk/interactive-framework/

Modern Apprenticeships - Modern Apprenticeships | Apprentices

Graduate Apprenticeships - Graduate Apprenticeships | Apprentices

Employers only value academic qualifications…

False!

Obviously, employers value academic qualifications as this shows a level of commitment, ability and resilience. However, they are only part of the story. Employers also value the following:

- Flexibility
- Resourcefulness and a problem-solving attitude
- Reliability and punctuality
- Communication skills
- Team workers
- Determination
- Positive attitude, cheerfulness and energy

These qualities are not measured by exams. How could you develop these skills and be able to demonstrate to an employer that you have them? On many occasions, the best person for the job isn't the one with the best grades, it's the one with the good grades and the best set of employability skills.

There is nothing at school for 'Christmas Leavers'…

False!

If you are a 'Christmas Leaver' (you are 16 after 30 Sept 2024) you must stay on the school roll until December 2024. If you want to leave school before May 2025, we would like to work closely with you to help you reach your goal. There are a number of people we can work with to make you better

prepared for a college placement or getting a job. Speak to your Pastoral PT for advice, the earlier you do this, the better we can support you.

S4 Information

Almost all our learners will be committed to following a full timetable of 33 periods per week. Their timetable will be constructed as follows:

- **7 choices (each subject will be allocated 4 periods per week).**

- **One of these 7 choices could be Schools Academy delivered by Borders College.**
    - **Following the success of 2024-25, Schools Academy will continue to be delivered on a Friday (leaving school at 9am and returning approx. 3.30pm**
      Find out about the course you are interested in and apply online.
      1 Visit https://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/courses and search for the course of your choice.
      2 You can also visit https://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/courses and select Schools Academy from the 'Type of study' search filter.
      KEY: **SBC** – Borders College Scottish Borders Campus. **NSB** – Borders College Newtown St Boswells Campus.
- **Health & Wellbeing periods: 2 periods of Core PE and 1 period of PSE per week.**

- **Employability periods: 2 periods per week. This is an opportunity to add to the learner's portfolio of achievements.**

Learners will continue with their courses of study from August 2025 through to the examinations in May 2026.

S5 Information

March 2025

The majority of our learners returning to S5 should be committed to following a full timetable of 33 periods per week. In some **exceptional circumstances** some our learners may do fewer.

Learners who will not be 16 before the end of September must either return to school or investigate college courses which run from August-December. Pastoral PTs will assist with completing application forms.

Within S5, our learners may select from a wide range of options and for some it will be a combination of Level 4 and Level 5 qualifications or Level 5 and Level 6 qualifications:

- **Level 4 and Level 5 courses will be delivered via 4 periods per week.**
- **Level 6 (Highers) will be delivered via 6 periods per week.**
- **One of their choices could be Schools Academy delivered by Borders College.**
  - **Schools Academy will be delivered on a Friday (leaving school at 9am and returning approx. 3pm**
  - **Find out about the course you are interested in and apply online.**
    - 1 Visit https://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/courses and search for the course of your choice.
    - 2 You can also visit https://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/courses and select Schools Academy from the 'Type of study' search filter.
  - KEY: **SBC** – Borders College Scottish Borders Campus. **NSB** – Borders College Newtown St Boswells Campus.
- **Health & Wellbeing periods: 1 period of Core PE and 1 period of PSE per week and 1 self-study period.**
- **Wider Achievement will also be encouraged within their timetable eg work placement, school service etc.**

Progression

National 4 Pass → National 5 Courses or NPA Level 5

National 5 A, B or C Pass → Higher or Level 6 NPA Courses

All learners in general should try to avoid taking a subject at Higher level which they have not studied at National 5.

Once the SQA results are published in August re-coursing will take place with the Pastoral PTs/SLT

Learners will continue with their courses of study from August 2025 through to the examinations in May 2026.

March 2025

Entry into S6

S6 provision will help our learners who need to improve on their existing qualifications in order to have a realistic chance of gaining entry to University / College / Employment or a Modern Apprenticeship.

A number of our S5 learners may find that employment or full-time college courses at Higher National level are more appropriate than returning to S6.

Learners returning will be given support and advice on an appropriate pathway within school. This will be subject to change following the SQA results that will be available in August 25.

The majority of our learners who return to S6 will be expected to select a combination of qualifications along with wider achievement opportunities.

Academic Achievement

Employers will generally want a range of qualifications depending on the nature of the job.

1st year university courses (Level 7 SCQF) are generally looking for minimum of 4 Highers (SCQF level 6) at B grade. (Including Nat 5 Maths and English at C or above)

College courses at the same level will generally ask for 2 Higher qualifications.

Depending of each individual learner, the number and level of qualifications will be different although it is expected that learners have:

- **A minimum of 4 subjects.**
- **Health & Wellbeing: 1 period of PSE, 1 optional period of PE**
- **Wider Achievement: 1 period of Leadership along with opportunities for school service, work based learning and volunteering**
- **Self-Study: All S6 will be allocated 4 periods week**

Progression

National 5 at A, B or C Pass	→	Higher or Level 6 NPA Courses
Higher Pass at A or B	→	Advanced Higher Course or L6 NPA

Learners will continue with their courses of study from August 2025 through to the examinations in May 2026.

March 2025

March 2025