

@South-West Connects AH hub

Interim Evaluation January 2022



Executive Summary

1. Rationale – why pilot an AH hub across the SWEIC?

- ✓ To expand and improve the curricular offer at SCQF 7 across the SWEIC
- ✓ To ensure equity of opportunity to access AH courses across the SWEIC
- ✓ To ensure students studying at this level have a high quality learning experience
- ✓ To develop skills and competencies in learning virtually as a preparation for next steps in employment, college or university in the post Covid world
- ✓ To help manage staffing resources efficiently and equitably and to address areas of teacher shortage
- ✓ To create capacity for schools to diversify their curricular offer by freeing up teacher time

2. Context – @SW Connects launched in August 2021 in the midst of significant restrictions due to the Covid pandemic. Delivering 9 AH courses virtually has allowed uninterrupted delivery of the qualifications and this has been a godsend for schools and young people. However, it should be acknowledged that the high level vision for the model was impacted as a result of restrictions on face-to-face meeting and mixing e.g. plans for face-to-face induction / team building could not be delivered.

3.1 Interim Evaluation of the model is based on

- analysis of current data (Dec 21) – including attainment, attendance, retention rates, engagement etc
- deep dive surveys – pupils, @SW teachers, base schools and parents
- feedback from focus groups – pupils, @SW teachers, base schools and parents

3.2 Positives

- ✓ Engagement and participation measures are very positive – 95% excellent or good for attendance, engagement, homework on Dec tracking reports
- ✓ Working grades in Dec 2021 – indicate 94% pass rate
- ✓ Feedback from stakeholders very positive – see detailed survey results and focus group feedback

3.3 Areas for further development next steps

Once strategic vision for the project and funding model has been agreed we...

- Need to confirm and share the offer and associated prospectus/ materials etc for 2022-23 earlier than last year – ideally by end Jan
- Need to resolve aligned timetable slots and publicise with schools (the anticipated move to 21 hour a week contact time may have an impact)
- Need to resolve issues for sciences / practical lab work, plan alternative approach or omit from the offer
- Need to revisit communication strategy for parents – required from the outset during option choice and ongoing throughout delivery
- Need to clarify expectations re roles and responsibilities with base schools (including designated workspace/ICT requirements for pupils)
- Need to ensure the digital infrastructure and associated software issues are resolved including development of clear protocols around recording lessons
- Need to provide training for teachers delivering – linked to reports on effective digital pedagogy
- Need to plan induction event for June 2022 including pupils, delivering teachers / base school contacts/ parents
- Need to plan robust application process / selection process /associated timelines for pupils and agree process for teachers to apply to deliver / selection process etc

4. Planning the 2022 offer – our request

- Continue to develop and pilot this model – increase number/range of subjects and add up to 3 higher courses
- Consider addition of vocational options and short courses/opportunities for wider achievement using the same infrastructure
- Consider funding model and what a “value added” partnership with Glasgow Caledonian could offer across the 4 local authorities

Detailed Evaluation results

Quantitative data...Some facts and figures Dec 21 – current cohort – 98 pupils from 4 authorities

Subject	Cohort	D&G	EAC	NAC	SAC	@SW Teacher/ Local Authority
Chemistry	11	7	1	0	3	Mr Higgins NAC
English	8	7	0	0	1	Dr J Gordon D&G
French	6	0	1	1	4	Mrs Richards SAC
Graphic Comm	14	7	3	2	2	Mr Dodds EAC
History	20	16	0	4	0	Mr W McGair D&G
Maths	8	7	0	1	0	Mrs J Drife D&G
PE	8	5	2	1	0	Mr McCulloch EAC
Physics	13	7	2	3	1	Mr Smith NAC
Spanish	10	2	1	2	5	Mr Alexander SAC
Total	98	58	10	14	16	

Attainment Data

Based on working grades from December tracking report ... overall pass rate is 94%

Subject breakdown

Subject	Cohort	A	B	C	D	NA
Chemistry	11	5	3	1	2	-
English	8	-	4	4	-	-
French	6	-	2	4	-	-
Graphic Comm	14	-	9	4	1	-
History	20	-	20	-	-	-
Maths	8	1	3	1	1	2
PE	8	-	4	4	-	-
Physics	13	2	7	4	-	-
Spanish	10	6	4	-	-	-
Total	98	14	56	22	4	2

Participation and Engagement levels - Summary from Dec tracking report

	Attendance	Engagement	Homework	Overall Progress
Excellent	85%	79%	71%	63%
Good	12%	17%	22%	26%
Satisfactory	3%	3%	6%	8%
Concern	0%	1%	0%	3%

Retention rates

Pupils dropping out by Dec 2021: 9 in total

Chemistry 5 French 1 PE 1 Spanish 2

Half of the drop out numbers were as a result of a school deciding to run an inhouse class instead.

Qualitative Data... Stakeholder voice – feedback from pupils

a) Pupil surveys – in order of approval/ RAG status

100% of pupils agreed with questions...

17. I have access to a laptop/ PC and am able to engage in the live sessions.
20. I can access the Teams site when I am at home

Almost all pupils (91-99%) agreed with questions ...

1. I am enjoying the course
5. I feel I can approach my teacher to ask questions
7. I know how to ask for help if I need it
13. I know what to work on outwith the live lessons in terms of independent study/
19. I can fully engage in the lessons as I have access to headphones and microphone facility
21. I am confident in using the Teams site to access resources, upload work, request help etc

Most pupils (75-90%) agreed with questions ...

2. I feel I am making good progress in the course
3. I am able to cope with the level of difficulty and with the demands of the course
4. I am confident I can achieve a pass in this course
6. I get feedback from my teacher on how I am doing
8. I know who to go to in my base school if I am worried about anything to do with this course
12. I feel the balance of time between live classes and independent work is about right
16. I am able to work from home if I want to
18. My internet connection / speed is suitable for what I have to do
25. I feel I have improved my skills in working independently and managing my time / work
26. I feel I have improved my skills in working remotely/digitally
28. I think the experience of taking an AH through @SW Connects will help prepare me for my next steps into employment, college or university

The majority of pupils (50-74%) agreed with questions...

10. My base school ensures I can sit formal assessments when required
11. My classes fit with in my timetable and I can attend live lessons
14. I have had a one to one discussion with my AH teacher to discuss progress
15. I have a suitable quiet space to work in at my school.
22. I have had opportunities to meet or work with others on the course through events or through planned group activities or break out rooms (54% agree)
23. I am confident in engaging with other AH pupils through group activities or in break out rooms (67% agree)
24. I am comfortable having my camera on during live lessons
27. I feel I have developed confidence in working in this way
29. If asked I would recommend others in my school to engage with a course via @SW Connects
30. I have only been able to access this course because of @SW Connects – it would not have run in my school otherwise (16% not sure)

A minority / (less than half) agreed with question...

9. My base school checks in with me to see how I am doing (only 40% agreed)

Stakeholder voice – feedback from pupils during focus group discussions

Positives	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prepared them for university. ✓ Made them take more responsibility for their own learning. ✓ Gave them more control over their learning. ✓ Improved their social skills in working with unfamiliar people (teachers and other students they did not know). ✓ Improved skills e.g. research skills / university referencing etc. ✓ Improved confidence in using digital platforms to learn. ✓ Becoming familiar with a university setting / lecture theatre etc (this was in English where the campus days at GCU were highlighted as a real positive). ✓ Increased flexibility to decide on when/ where to work – to suit individual preference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not so much interaction with the teacher for some. • IT – some issues with internet speed (in specific schools). • Can take time to get logged on - Wi-fi connection. • Some using school laptops – getting old / slow. • Lack of dedicated space in school – some using S6 study room (with others in the room) some in IT rooms but have to vacate if a teacher has booked the room? Some use the library/ common rooms. • Some engage via their phone - limits interaction. • Break out rooms – did not work so well on occasion.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Able to catch up more easily if absent or unwell. ✓ Less stressful – can work from home. ✓ Some said more opportunity for 1:1 with the teacher (although others said less). ✓ Teams platform seems to work fairly well – able to upload material / work. ✓ Pupils have set up social media chats with one another to collaborate about the work outside of the lessons. ✓ Avoids having to network – impact on time needed to travel between schools. ✓ Meeting people / making friendships from other schools. ✓ Opportunities for groupwork. ✓ Improved time management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is a large group studying the course within the base school there is limited interaction from these pupils with pupils from other schools. • A clash with the timetable for some meant missed slots or need to access recorded lessons. • Motivation to do the work (sometimes).
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Stakeholder voice – feedback from @South-West teachers

Link to survey responses

Positives	Challenges/ Things to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The chance to work with other learners from different schools and authorities who have all had different experiences of the subject at prior levels - allows for very rich discussions and peer-to-peer support opportunities. ✓ As a practitioner it has allowed me to enhance my use of digital technologies that I have then been able to utilise in my own setting and share with colleagues. ✓ Bringing together a number of young people from different settings and previous experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT based issues must be resolved prior to learners embarking on the course. The length of time that it has taken to get some of the IT based issues resolved has been hugely problematic, both from the perspective of the class teacher and particularly from the perspective of some learners. • Some aspects of the reporting through OneNote were clunky - much preferring the move across to OneDrive Word document format.

<p>enriches that opportunity for sharing and growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A larger group lends itself to more collegiate working and allows us to replicate the 'seminar' and 'lecture' styles they will experience at university. ✓ Access to the course in schools where this would not otherwise be possible - due to timetabling issues, availability of teaching staff or non-viable class sizes. ✓ Prepares them for work/ study outside school setting. ✓ Cuts down on travel time if consortia in play ✓ To help them build up confidence and to allow them to meet other students across schools/ regions. ✓ Courses available online when pupils are not physically in school. ✓ Pupils get to work with others across four local authorities -encourages independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to have some input on numbers of learners undertaking the course next session. As previously referenced, I think there could be scope for learners to make a digital application that the class teachers can have some feedback and input on suitability. • Streamline communications to one form - either school email glow or teams but not all three as I struggle to find where messages have gone to after teaching 6/7 periods in a row. • Double periods only as single periods are too short by the time everyone logs on etc. • An opportunity to meet in June prior to delivery would allow relationships to be built from the outset. Clear expectations about space and devices for pupils and their schools would ensure everyone could access the lessons. • I think the model is fine, but I am not convinced of its effectiveness for my subject. (maths) • Early induction course face to face - particularly relating to basic use of IT. • Expectations of course – the vetting process of some schools in terms of allowing students to join the online course. Perhaps from the school side this needs to be tightened up.
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Stakeholder voice – feedback from participating schools (only 4 schools returned surveys)

Surveys – all positive

Positives	Challenges / things to consider going forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The digital offer has allowed learners to study a course that they otherwise would not have been able to study. ✓ The digital offer has added a degree of breadth to the curriculum of small school. ✓ There has been great communication / support from the @South-West team. ✓ There is a sense of confidence from the leadership teams within school and with the learners that they are getting access to effective and experienced teachers. ✓ The offer of two languages is really helpful because it caters for those learners who want to specialise in languages which can be sometimes difficult for individual school to accommodate. ✓ It has been noted around the school how the independence and ICT skills have developed in the youngsters who have taken part in the course. ✓ If there are any issues, then learners have been quick to bring these up and staff within the learner's base school are able to resolve those issues. ✓ The digital offer has allowed for additional options to be added to the BGE courses because the teacher does not have to deliver an advanced higher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When scaling up the offer there may be challenges with providing the ICT and quiet spaces that are required due to the nature of the new build schools where there is more of an open plan dimension to the schools. • There are some difficulties in getting privacy for students in new builds and working from home is not an option due to transport issues. • Communication to parents should be made earlier although it is acknowledged that the Covid 19 pandemic made this more difficult. • Could some thought be given to the teacher delivering a lecture type lesson for one period and then pupils being asked to work on their own for the other lesson as this may free up staffing? • Could the offer be made across three columns? • There have been some issues with morale in teachers in a few schools where they have felt they have lost out to teaching advanced higher which was an area of their work they really enjoyed. • Ensure there are face to face meeting opportunities for learners. The college offer is a more blended approach, and this seems to work well for those learners who take this type of course.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Some teachers have recorded lessons – this has meant that learners who are absent/ isolating do not miss out on the learning. ✓ Where there is a clash in the options because two courses are running in the same column the digital offer provides a solution as it means that learners can get to do all the courses they want. 	
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Stakeholder voice – feedback from Parents (only 3 surveys returned)

Positives	Challenges / things to consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Positive relationships with teachers ✓ Allows access to courses that may not have run ✓ Progress being made by pupils ✓ Reports have been received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial face to face induction to meet the teacher / classmates would be useful • Communication with parents re assessment plans / roles and responsibilities – how it all works would be helpful • Some issues re internet connection at home / need to be in school - timing issues for some pupils may be an issue

Plans for 2022-23 - draft

All SWEIC schools were canvassed about subjects they would be interested in at AH and H level.

Rationale for inclusion

- ✓ Subjects required for identified skill shortage pathways (linked to regional skills assessments and LMI data)
- ✓ Subjects not currently offering progression from Higher to Advanced Higher
- ✓ Subjects not offered in a significant number of schools
- ✓ Subjects that ensure curricular pathways are available for broad curricular areas (Creative and aesthetic/ social subjects/ Technology based subjects etc.)
- ✓ Subjects with minimal requirement for face to face / lab work i.e. well suited to virtual delivery
- ✓ “New” subjects linked to IT / green technologies etc
- ✓ Subjects outwith AH – Highers / HNC/ NPAs?

Draft offer (currently under review)

Following consultation across all 4 authorities the following list of potential subjects was agreed – we are aiming for around 12 to run. Final decisions will be based on teacher availability and viability.

Advanced Highers: Business Management, Computing Science, English, French, Graphic Communication, History, Maths, Modern Studies, Physical Education, Spanish

Highers: Accounting, Computing Science, Politics, Psychology, Childcare & Development, Creative & Digital Media, Engineering Science, Music Technology, Sociology

NB- concerns re approaches to sciences / need for practical lab time etc resulted in agreement not to table offers in chemistry and physics this time

Applications are being sought for teachers willing to deliver – closing date 18 Feb 20