

Introduction post-Llandudno

The Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (Area) seeks to awaken a sense of wonder, fire the imagination and inspire learners to grow in knowledge, understanding and wisdom. This Area encourages learners to engage with the most important issues facing humanity, including sustainability and social change, and help to develop the skills necessary to interpret and articulate the past and the present.

The Area encompasses geography, history, religious education, business studies and social studies. These disciplines share many common themes, concepts and transferable skills, while having their own discrete body of knowledge and skills. Learners may also be introduced to other complementary disciplines, such as classics, economics, law, philosophy, politics, psychology and sociology, if and where appropriate.

What matters in this Area has been expressed in five statements which support and complement one another, and should not be viewed in isolation. Together they contribute to realising the four purposes of the curriculum.

Humanities is central to learners becoming **ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world**. In contemporary and historical contexts, investigation and exploration of the human experience in their own localities and elsewhere in Wales, as well as in the wider world, can help learners discover their heritage and develop a sense of place and ***cynefin***. It can also promote an understanding of how the people of Wales, its communities, history, culture, landscape, resources and industries, interrelate with the rest of the world. Contemplating different perspectives will in turn help promote an understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity within Wales. Taken together, these experiences will help learners appreciate the extent to which they are part of a wider international community, fostering a sense of belonging that can encourage them to contribute positively to their communities.

It is important that learners reflect upon the impact of their actions and those of others, and how such actions are influenced by interpretations of human rights, values, ethics, philosophies, religious and non-religious views. Through being encouraged to engage with, respect and challenge a variety of worldviews, as well as to understand how to

exercise their democratic rights, learners can imagine possible futures and take social action. Such critical engagement with local, national and global challenges and opportunities past and present will help learners become **enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work.**

As they explore their locality and Wales, as well as the wider world, learners can establish a solid base of knowledge and understanding of geographical, historical, religious, non-religious, business and social studies concepts. This exploration will encourage learners to participate in different methods of enquiry, evaluate the evidence that they find, and apply and communicate their findings effectively. These experiences, in and outside the classroom, will help them become **ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives.**

It is important that learners have opportunities to discuss and explore their personal perspectives on religious and non-religious worldviews, ethical challenges and social inclusion issues. Likewise, opportunities to explore the natural world, locally, within and beyond Wales, will help foster in them a sense of place and of well-being. These experiences will help develop learners' resilience, build independence, and increase self-confidence and self-esteem. This will support the development of **healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.**

Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.

The learners' journey through this Area will encourage enquiry and discovery, as they are challenged to be curious and to question, to think critically and to reflect upon evidence. An enquiring mind stimulates new and creative thinking, through which learners can gain a deeper understanding of the concepts underpinning humanities, and their application in local, national and global contexts. Such thinking can help learners to understand human experiences and the natural world better.

Appropriate disciplinary approaches, including **digital humanities** will help learners gather, justify, present, analyse, and evaluate a range of evidence. Interpreting and synthesising information will help learners build upon what they have already learned and further inform their understanding of the world. By thinking critically about their discoveries, learners can then draw informed conclusions, but also understand that some conclusions can only be partial or inconclusive and open to different interpretations. They will need to reflect carefully in order to improve their methodology and extend or deepen their enquiry.

Enquiry is more than an academic exercise: it enables reflection, which can help learners understand the human condition. This, in turn, can add meaning to learners' own lives and contribute to their sense of place and worldview.

This aspect of the Area will encourage the exploration of concepts, including questioning, evidence, evaluation, ethics and judgements.

Events and human experiences are complex, and are perceived, interpreted and represented in different ways.

We encounter and make sense of the world through a variety of events and experiences. Humanities encourages learners to critically review the ways these events and experiences are perceived, interpreted and represented. As they form their own informed viewpoints and recognise those of others, learners can also develop self-awareness.

Learning how various worldviews and factors can influence their own and others' perceptions and interpretations will encourage learners to develop an appreciation of how contexts influence the constructions of narratives and representations. By exploring how and why interpretations may differ and by critical understanding of a range of interpretations and representations derived from a variety of evidence, they will be better placed to evaluate their validity.

This aspect of the Area will encourage the exploration of concepts, including seeking meaning, making judgements, **ultimate** and philosophical questions, representations, perspectives, interpretations, significance and validity.

Our natural world is diverse and dynamic, influenced by processes and human actions.

Experiencing the wonder of the natural world can contribute to learners' spiritual development and well-being, and can help to cultivate in them a sense of place and sense of belonging, as embodied in the Welsh word ***cynefin***.

Nurturing curiosity can help learners understand and appreciate how and why places, landscapes and environments in their locality and elsewhere in Wales, as well as in the wider world, are changing. This in turn will enable learners to identify what makes places and spaces distinct, and to develop an awareness of the interconnections between humans and their environment in both contemporary and historical contexts. Consequently, learners will be in a better position to make connections between the past and present, and to consider possible futures.

Developing an understanding of how human actions in the past and present can affect interrelationships between the natural world and people will heighten learners' awareness of how the future sustainability of our world is influenced by the impact of those actions. It will also encourage learners to understand, as producers and consumers, their own impact on the natural world. In addition, an exploration of a range of beliefs, philosophies and worldviews about the natural world can help learners realise how these influence people's interactions with the world.

This aspect of the Area encourages learners to explore concepts, including the interrelationships between humans and the natural world, cause and effect, change and continuity, significance, place, space and physical processes.

Human societies are complex and diverse, and shaped by human actions and beliefs.

An appreciation of identity, heritage and ***cynefin*** can influence learners emotionally and spiritually, and help build their sense of self and of belonging. Through an understanding of themselves, learners develop their own identity and an awareness of how they, as individuals, can shape the communities in which they live. Consequently, learners will come to realise that the choices we all make, individually and collectively, can have major impacts on society.

Through consistent exposure to the story of their locality and the story of Wales, as well as to the story of the wider world, learners can develop an understanding of the complex, **pluralistic** and diverse nature of societies, past and present.

Over time, places, communities and societies evolve, experiencing continuity and change that has affected, and continues to affect, their own and other people's lives. As they explore this, learners can come to appreciate how this evolution is driven by the interplay between a range of factors, including environmental, economic, social, political and cultural processes, human actions and religious and non-religious beliefs and worldviews. It will also help them build an understanding of the causes, consequences and significance of the changes and interrelationships that have shaped societies at different levels of development.

Experiences in this Area can encourage a critical understanding of how societies are and have been organised, structured and led, in the learners' own locality and in Wales, as well as in the wider world. Societies are characterised by a range of cultural, linguistic, economic, legal and political norms and values. They are also dynamic, both driving and reacting to changes on a local, national and global scale. Learners can explore the connections and interdependence between such societies in the past and present, in the context of a globalised world. Further engagement will also encourage them to explore – and develop a tolerant and empathetic understanding of – the varied beliefs, values, traditions and ethics that underpin and shape human society.

This aspect of the Area encourages learners to explore concepts, including chronology, change and continuity, diversity, cause and effect, interconnectedness, community, identity and belonging, authority and **governance**.

Informed, self-aware citizens engage with the challenges and opportunities that face humanity, and are able to take considered, ethical and sustainable action.

Experiences in this Area can help learners develop an understanding of their responsibilities as citizens of Wales and the wider interconnected world, and of the importance of creating a just and sustainable future for themselves and their local, national and global communities. Exploration of the humanities encourages learners to be active, informed, and responsible citizens and consumers, who can identify with and contribute to their communities, and who can engage with the past, contemporary and anticipated challenges and opportunities facing them, their communities and Wales, as well as the wider world.

This Area will encourage learners to understand the interconnected nature of economic, environmental and social sustainability; justice and authority; and the need to live in and contribute to a fair and inclusive society. Experiences in this Area will also help learners develop an awareness of their own rights, needs, concerns and feelings, and those of others, and of the role such an awareness plays in the creation of a sustainable and interconnected world.

Questioning and evaluating existing responses to challenges and opportunities can encourage learners to develop as self-aware, informed, ethical global citizens, who critically reflect on their own and others' beliefs, values and attitudes. Experiences in this Area will also help learners to consider the impact of their actions when making choices and exercising their democratic rights and responsibilities. These experiences will also underline the need for learners to be able to justify their decisions when acting socially, politically, economically and entrepreneurially. This can enable learners to take committed social action as caring, participative citizens of their local, national and global communities, showing an understanding of and commitment to justice, diversity and the protection of the environment. By responding to challenges, and taking opportunities for social and sustainable action, they can create meaning and purpose in their own lives.

This aspect of the Area encourages learners to explore concepts, including citizenship, authority and governance, interconnectedness, justice and equality, enterprise, rights, and **social action** and responsibility.