



SCOTLAND IS

**Scholarship Impact
Report 2024**



Message from the CEO

Karen Meechan
Chief Executive of ScotlandIS



Not enough young people in Scotland are choosing a career or study pathway in the digital sector.

The ScotlandIS Scholarship has been designed to address this issue and pave the way for young people across all backgrounds and demographics to enter this area of STEM, to see it as a viable future pathway for them, letting them experience the exciting and rewarding opportunities that working and studying in digital holds for them.

The goal for us is to make sure that our Scholars are fully supported in a range of ways. We will ensure that as they progress through high school, college, or university, and even after they finish their courses, they will know the pathway to graduate apprenticeships or to our E-placement programme where we can help them secure placements within the industry.

ScotlandIS, working in partnership with The Education Academy Scotland (formerly known as Saturday School Ltd) and the associated colleges, is proud to provide an opportunity for all young people that is genuinely addressing and bridging the digital skills gap.

75% of ScotlandIS Scholars strongly agree, and 25% agree, that the scholarship is positively changing perceptions on who can study and work in digital/cyber/technologies.

Message from the Partner

Graeme Rough
*Director of The Education Academy
Scotland*



It's true that simply not enough people are choosing STEM careers. We see this in a general sense across the STEM landscape, but we are also seeing the problem amplified in specific STEM sectors and the computing/digital profession is one of these.

We are proud to have designed this innovative and unique scholarship in partnership with ScotlandIS. We have created not just an offer for young people, but a solution - or at least in part - to the skills and talent pipeline shortage. For many years I have believed that our curriculum is strong, but that it badly lacks context. We are delivering high-quality learning and teaching in Scotland, but it is with limited real-world links to the content outside of the classroom. At the Education Academy Scotland, we change and challenge this issue. Yes, this scholarship is about supporting our young people to firstly secure the key National Qualifications they need to enter the sector, but it is also about putting them in a room, as often as possible, with positive role models who work in digital careers. It is these engagements that are having the desired impact, showing our scholars what this industry really is about and what it offers them. Ideally, it will inspire our scholars to choose a future in this industry.

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Scholarship overview

At the start of academic year 2023/24 The Education Academy Scotland was awarded £6,000 of funding from ScotlandIS to create a bespoke, unique education scholarship for young people in the senior phase of secondary school.

The ScotlandIS Scholarship offered applicants a comprehensive programme of educational support with added value engagements, including:

- Attendance at six Weekly Lessons covering key areas and skills in National 5 Maths at The Education Academy Scotland
- Attendance at The National 5 Maths Grade Booster Day to prepare for the final exam
- Unlimited online support via Google Classroom from fully qualified maths teachers
- A series of engagements and activities with a group of inspirational role models from Scotland's digital sector, including senior leaders in companies, college and university staff, and award-winning experts in the field
- Offer of fast-track entry to a range of digital courses at Glasgow Clyde College, City of Glasgow College or West College Scotland when they leave secondary school in the coming years.

100% of ScotlandIS Scholars say the programme has made them more interested in a digital/cyber/technologies career, with 75% now planning to work in STEM, 40% specifically now choosing this field.

Our Scholars

ScotlandIS Scholarship applicants were made aware of the opportunity via a range of outreach and engagement activities led by The Education Academy Scotland, ScotlandIS and other individuals, groups or organisations who were keen to support and promote the offer.

Interested young people applied online, providing some key data on their demographic and current educational status. Applications were supported by a personal statement, supporting commentary from parents and carers, and a teacher reference from their centre.

A final group of fourteen Scholars were chosen to join the programme.



The Scholarship Group of 2024 with Karen Meechan and Nicola Taylor of ScotlandIS, alongside Jill Barlow, Maths Teacher

75% of ScotlandIS Scholars say their knowledge and understanding in maths is increasing, the other 25% say it is remarkably increasing.

Scholarship demographics and results

Local authority where the scholar lives	SIMD Quintile in which scholar lives	Student gender identity	Student ethnic identity	Pre-scholarship working grade in N5 Maths	Final grade in SQA N5 Maths exam
Glasgow	1	Female	White	B	A
Glasgow	1	Female	Sudanese	C	B
West Dunbartonshire	1	Female	Scottish White	B	A
Glasgow	1	Female	African	D	D
Glasgow	1	Male	Scottish Pakistani	D	B
Glasgow	1	Female	White Scottish	D	C
Glasgow	1	Female	White Scottish	NA	NA*
Inverclyde	3	Female	White - British	D	C*
Glasgow	4	Female	Scottish Pakistani	D	C
West Dunbartonshire	5	Male	British	D	B
Inverclyde	5	Female	White	D	D*
Glasgow	5	Female	White	C	A
Inverclyde	Not found	Male	White	D	C
Inverclyde	Not found	Female	White Scottish	D	C*

The results above show that **every scholar taking part improved their grade** in N5 Maths, with an **average upturn of over two grade bands** across the full cohort.

The programme also shows a **100% pass rate** in the final exam.

90% of scholars gained A-C grades, versus a national average of 68%.

It should be noted that **over 60% of scholars reside in the lowest SIMD quintile** and that this data shows strong positive challenge of the link between attainment and deprivation.

(*denotes 4 scholars who withdrew from the programme after week 1 and whose data is therefore neglected.).

*88% of ScotlandIS Scholars say their problem-solving skills are increasing, with 38% saying it is **remarkably increasing**.*

Next steps

ScotlandIS and The Education Academy Scotland aims to grow this offer for the new academic year in 2024 and into 2025.

Our inaugural cohort we are linked on a fundamental level by their study of N5 Maths and many of them will ideally move on to study Maths at Higher level. We aim to extend our Maths support offer to them and to continue to link them with inspirational role models in Scotland's digital sector.

Key aspirations:

- continued support for cohort 1 as they progress into Higher Mathematics, offering them “year 2”
- fresh funding and recruitment leading to the creation of cohort 2 to enter the programme
- increased engagements and hands-on activities for new/existing scholars with more industry role models
- site visits, activities and experiences with organisations in the sector
- additional support with maths and other school subjects such as physics
- addition of an online offer via The Education Academy Scotland's Monthly Masterclass programme, thus broadening the reach of the offer across all of Scotland
- continued support for our scholars to utilise the fast-track entry agreements with colleges in Scotland.

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