

IN BRIEF

STUDENT AGENCY FOR 2030

The concept of student agency, as understood in the context of the OECD Learning Compass 2030, is rooted in the principle that students have the ability and the will to positively influence their own lives and the world around them. Student agency is thus defined as the capacity to set a goal, reflect and act responsibly to effect change. It is about acting rather than being acted upon; shaping rather than being shaped; and making responsible decisions and choices rather than accepting those determined by others.

When students are agents in their learning, that is, when they play an active role in deciding what and how they will learn, they tend to show greater motivation to learn and are more likely to define objectives for their learning. These students are also more likely to have “learned how to learn” – an invaluable skill that they can and will use throughout their lives.

Agency can be exercised in nearly every context: moral, social, economic, creative. For example, students need to use moral agency to help them make decisions that recognise the rights and needs of others. While a well-developed sense of agency can help individuals achieve long-term goals and overcome adversity, students need foundational cognitive, social and emotional skills so that they can apply agency to their own – and society’s – benefit.

Agency is perceived and interpreted differently around the world. Some languages have no direct translation for the term “student agency” as it is used in the OECD Learning Compass 2030; interpretations will vary across different societies and contexts.

Nonetheless, the notion of students playing an active role in their education is central to the Learning Compass and is being emphasised in a growing number of countries.

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In education systems that encourage student agency, learning involves not only instruction and evaluation but also co-construction. Co-agency is when teachers and students become co-creators in the teaching-and-learning process. The concept of co-agency recognises that students, teachers, parents and communities work together to help students progress towards their shared goals.

KEY POINTS

- Agency implies having the ability and the will to positively influence one’s own life and the world around them.
- In order to exercise agency to the full potential, students need to build foundation skills.
- The concept of student agency varies across cultures and develops over a lifetime.
- Co-agency is defined as interactive, mutually supportive relationships—with parents, teachers, the community, and with each other— that help students progress towards their shared goals.



For the full concept note, click [here](#).

More content at: www.oecd.org/education/2030-project