

Majority of Scots pupils denied the subject choice they want

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More than half of Scottish pupils can't take the subjects they want because of teacher shortages and school restrictions, a survey has revealed.

The nationwide study found that 56 per cent of youngsters were denied in their bids to study their chosen topics from National 4 level onwards.

The findings will be presented to MSPs at tomorrow's Scottish Parliament Education Committee as they probe the issue of narrowing subject choice in Scotland.

A range of education experts have already blasted the SNP's Curriculum for Excellence for restricting the choice of subjects young people can take at school.

Traditionally children at s4 level would sit eight subjects, but researchers say this is now commonly being reduced to just six.

And tomorrow the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) document will reveal the scale of the problem.

Modern Studies was the subject most often cited by respondents as the one they couldn't take, with the problem impacting Higher pupils more than any other.

Among other subjects frequently denied were French, History, Human Biology and Politics.

One survey respondent said: "I wasn't allowed to take Modern Studies and another social subject so I had to take art instead, which I hated."

Another added: "I was forced to take Spanish (a course I have no interest in) and miss a class I really enjoy."

And one child even said they were "unable to study all the subjects I wished to due to my school only offering six choices over one year instead of eight, leaving me worse off in my future".

One youngster warned: "I think it's going to really impact my future study as I might not be able to take the subjects I need to get to university."

Scottish Conservative shadow education secretary Liz Smith said:

"No-one would expect every single pupil to be able to take every single subject they wanted.

"But this survey shows more than half of pupils are denied this opportunity.

"That speaks volumes about the narrowing choice of subjects being offered to Scotland's pupils under this SNP government.

"Scotland used to be world-renowned for the breadth of education on offer in school.

"Now it's more likely than not that our children will be denied the opportunities for learning they both need and deserve."