# The Expanded Core Curriculum

## Definitions

All students receive instruction in the general education core curriculum. These include your core subjects, like English and Math. In addition to the core curriculum, students who are blind or have low vision benefit from instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). The ECC is made up of nine concept areas. These areas include compensatory access, sensory efficiency, assistive technology, orientation & mobility, independent living, social interaction, recreation and leisure, career education, and self-determination.

Many of the nine areas of the ECC represent skills that are learned by individuals with full use of their vision through observation. You may hear your teacher, or other professionals refer to this learning through observation as incidental learning. An example would be learning how to shake someone’s hand in greeting from watching others do it. This is a social skill that may need to be taught to someone with a visual impairment who doesn’t have the same opportunities to observe others shaking hands.

The nine areas of the ECC address skills that can support you in transitioning successfully from high school to adulthood. The skills you develop from instruction in the ECC can be applied in school, at home, and in the community, including in future settings like in college or at work.

## Guiding Questions

* What are some ways you access information? Do you use any technology to access information?
* How do you take notes?
* How do you use your sense of touch to gain access to information in your environment?
* How do you move about in different environments safely and independently?
* What kind of supports help you to complete chores at home?
* Is there a sport or exercise that you enjoy?
* Is there a sport or activity you aren’t participating in but would like to?
* Have you done any career interest assessments in school?
* Are you involved in any clubs or social activities?
* What kind of transportation might you need to use to get to work now or in the future?

## Resources

To learn more about this topic, we encourage you to take EMPOWER VI’s short course: Introduction to The Expanded Core Curriculum for Students. You will access this course by visiting: [Introduction to the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)- for Students](https://bit.ly/intro-ECC-student). We also offer this course to family members and professionals. Through this student course you will be able to:

1. Understand what the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is.
2. Identify the nine components of the ECC.
3. Explore resources to help you build ECC skills.

[ECC - ConnectCenter (aphconnectcenter.org)](https://aphconnectcenter.org/familyconnect/education/ecc/) The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Connect Center offers ECC activities, ideas, and resources for developing all ECC skills. Each of the nine ECC areas are covered.

[The ECC: A Student’s Perspective Introduction – Perkins School for the Blind](https://www.perkins.org/resource/ecc-students-perspective-introduction/)  This resource introduces each area of the ECC with the addition of short videos in which a student, Emma, provides her perspective and experiences as a student with a visual impairment.

[Five Minute Independent Living Skills.pdf (mdelio.org)](https://mdelio.org/sites/default/files/documents/BVI/ECC/ILS/Five_Minute_ILS.pdf) [Independent Living Skills | MDE-LIO (mdelio.org)](https://mdelio.org/blind-visually-impaired/expanded-core-curriculum/independent-living-skills)  This screen-reader accessible PDF (NVDA and JAWS) outlines some quick activities you can do at home or in the community to help you practice independent living skills.