Equalities Action Plan
For Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland
A summary

As Scotland’s skills body, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) aims to support the development of fairer and more diverse workplaces that deliver the very best outcomes for every individual.

A Modern Apprenticeship (MA) is a job with industry designed and recognised training. MAs offer individuals the opportunity to work towards an industry-approved qualification, to learn on-the-job, and to earn a wage.

The Equalities Action Plan for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland outlines the challenges to be addressed, and the actions SDS will undertake with partners to improve the participation of young people in MAs from four target groups:

- Disability
- Gender
- Minority Ethnic
- Care Leavers

The recommendations set out in the Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce report, and the Scottish Government’s Developing the Young Workforce: Scotland’s Youth Employment Strategy made recommendations in relation to young people in the above target groups and for Modern Apprenticeships over all.

The focus and the challenge

Modern Apprenticeships are not delivered by SDS alone; appeal, uptake and delivery is a shared responsibility and Modern Apprentices have employed status. Key partners are employers, education and training providers, careers information advice and guidance staff, and other agencies. The aim of the Equalities Action Plan is to facilitate partnership working between SDS and these organisations to deliver equality and diversity within Modern Apprenticeships and for the young workforce in Scotland generally.

Improving equality of access across from early years to sustained employment

Whilst some specific objectives exist for the four target groups (see overleaf) the plan also embraces the wider goal of improving equality of access for all. Activities in the MA Action Plan map against the SDS regional partnership pipeline, in which all partners in a region work together to maximise the chances and opportunities available to young people from early years through to the workplace. This pipeline approach is built around equality of access to support work-based learning pathways:
Many of the issues that create inequality are society-wide. Stakeholders agree that no single agency has all the answers or responsibility. SDS is engaging in dialogue and workshop activity with stakeholder organisations to develop creative ideas to find innovative solutions to what are longstanding problems.

There are a number of cross-cutting actions related to MAs to tackle under-representation across the four client groups to achieve the following objectives:

**Disability Objectives**
- Support young disabled people through transition periods in their education and into employment
- Improve the successful uptake of Modern Apprenticeships by young disabled people

**Gender Objectives**
- Reduce gender stereotyping and gender segregation in career choices and occupational routes chosen by young people in education
- Reduce gender segregation in Modern Apprenticeship frameworks

**Minority Ethnic Groups Objectives**
- Broaden the range of career pathways taken by young people from Scotland’s Minority Ethnic communities
- Improve the successful uptake of Modern Apprenticeships by individuals from Minority Ethnic communities

**Care Leavers Objectives**
- Support young people in care and leaving care through transition periods in their education and into employment
- Improve the successful uptake of Modern Apprenticeships by young people in care and leaving care