

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

Equality Action Plan 2019-21



Contents

1. Introduction	2	4. Cross-cutting activity	10
2. The Ambition	4	5. Key performance indicators	11
3. Framing the challenge	5	6. Action Plan	16
Additional support needs and disability	5	Cross-cutting activities	16
Age	5	Additional support needs and disability	19
Care experience	6	Age	20
Ethnic minority	6	Care experience	20
Gender	6	Ethnic minority	21
Poverty	7	Gender	21
Pregnancy and maternity	8	Poverty	22
Religion and belief	8	Pregnancy and maternity	23
Sexual orientation	8	Religion and belief	23
Transgender	9	Sexual orientation	23
Differentiation and intersectionality	9	Transgender	24

1 Introduction

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is Scotland's national skills body. We work with our partners to provide services that support Scotland's people, businesses and the economy.

We provide career information, advice and guidance (CIAG) services in schools and our SDS centres across the country. Through a coaching approach to guidance and employability, we support individuals to develop the Career Management Skills (CMS) they will need to manage their own careers and achieve their potential.

The design and delivery of our CIAG service offers is informed by the [Career Information, Advice and Guidance in Scotland: A Framework for Service Redesign and Improvement](#)⁽ⁱ⁾, the [Career Management Skills Framework for Scotland](#)⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ and the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce final report [Education Working For All!](#)⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ and subsequent [Career Education Standard \(3 to 18\)](#)^(iv).

Valuing diversity and a commitment to equality for all is at the heart of our CIAG

services. Equality colleagues in the national CIAG team, led by our CIAG policy and professional practice manager, are responsible for ensuring that CIAG colleagues have the professional training, resources and support to work effectively with customers from equality groups and support them to develop their Career Management Skills.

They also work collaboratively with the other two distinct equality teams within SDS: our HR equality team who are responsible for the implementation of mainstreaming within SDS and our national training programmes (NTP) equality team who focus on ensuring that underrepresented groups can participate and achieve within apprenticeships in Scotland.

This equality action plan sits alongside three other equality-focused publications for SDS:

[Equality & Diversity Mainstreaming Report 2017-2021](#)^(v)

[Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021](#)^(vi)

[Equalities action plan for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland](#)^(vii)

This plan focuses on the following key equality groups:

- additional support needs and disability
- age (older workers, 50+ years)
- care experience
- ethnic minority
- gender
- poverty
- pregnancy and maternity
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- transgender.

These identified groups align with our responsibilities under relevant equality legislation, specifically the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004), Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Young People Act (2014).

This plan outlines continuing challenges for each identified equality group and the specific actions we will take to address them. Actions which are common to all

groups or which deal with intersectionality between groups are set out separately.

All actions have been based on available evidence from internal and external sources. This includes a review of equality evidence for Scotland and the UK, SDS performance measures and evaluation and research findings.

We would particularly like to thank the following partners and customers who gave us invaluable input to the development of this plan:

- Age Scotland
- Association for Real Change (ARC) & the National Involvement Network
- Close the Gap
- MECOPP
- STEP
- Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities (SCLD)
- Skills Recognition, Glasgow Caledonian University.

2 The ambition

Our ambition is that all customers, including those from defined equality groups, can develop and use Career Management Skills (CMS) throughout their lives and are aware of all their career options. We aim to ensure that all customers:

- experience an inclusive CIAG service
- get appropriate support that meets their individual needs
- can make well informed career decisions based on their interests, strengths and ambitions and not influenced or restricted by stereotypes or anticipated barriers.

This equality action plan will build upon our current service delivery models and a range of recent developments to our CIAG service offers.

We understand that individuals, particularly those from equality groups, may need different levels of support to develop their CMS. As such, a key principle of our service is that our advisers provide a personalised service to each customer that is determined by their specific needs.

In 2016, we extended our CIAG service offer for senior phase (S4-6) pupils to include support for young people at an earlier age. We now provide:

- a digital offer for P5-7 pupils through My World of Work and group work sessions to support the P7-S1 transition
- group work and the offer of a careers interview for young people and their parents/carers at S2/3 subject choice
- enhanced support for those who require it most from S3 and throughout their senior phase.

This extended service offer has given us greater opportunity to support young people who leave school earlier and those who take longer to develop their CMS and to encourage young people and their parents/carers to consider earlier the full range of post-school options. It has also allowed us to challenge stereotypes and the concept of 'realistic' career aspirations at an earlier age and to highlight initiatives that support access to opportunities.

In 2017, we introduced Next Steps, an enhanced and targeted service offer for unemployed young people to support them to access a positive destination. This targeted support is available to young people aged 15 to 18½ years (up to 26

years for care experienced young people). All customers continue to access support on a needs basis irrespective of their age. This has allowed us to provide a smoother transition from school to post-school CIAG services and extended support for those who need it.

We acknowledge that individuals from equality groups continue to face disadvantage in education, training and the labour market. Our aim, through this plan, is to identify activities that we can take as a national CIAG service to address this disadvantage and improve the outcomes of equality groups in Scotland.

Improvement in long term participation in education, training and employment requires a partnership approach. Actions and outcomes in this plan include those that we are individually responsible for and those where we make a contribution alongside our national and local partners.

3 Framing the challenge

This section outlines the key challenges and context relating to each of the defined equality groups in the plan.

Additional support needs and disability

As overarching terms, both disability and additional support needs (ASN) refer to a wide range of conditions and circumstances, within and across which the associated needs and outcomes of individuals vary greatly. This poses a challenge to organisations to ensure that we are equipped to provide appropriate support to all individuals.

A [review of equality evidence](#)^(viii) by SDS notes that it is widely acknowledged that disabled people and those with ASN often have lower levels of qualifications and poorer employment outcomes than the general population.

Consultation with partners and our own colleagues' experiences of working with disabled customers and those with additional support needs also tells us that

disabled people and those with ASN may lack confidence, fear discrimination or feel that their condition or circumstances will limit their options. This is often based on their own or others' experiences.

The [Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Employment Action Plan](#)^(ix) identified a need to address the lack of awareness of the initiatives that are available to support access to education, training and employment opportunities.

We recognise that disabled customers and those with ASN may require more intensive support to develop their CMS. We understand they may benefit from a career pathway with a series of smaller steps and additional time to complete steps along the way.

Actions in this plan aim to ensure that we have the resources in place to effectively support disabled customers and those with ASN to develop their CMS and to access the information they need to progress in their careers.

Age

It is those at the younger (16 to 24 years) and older (generally categorised as 50 years and over) ends of the age spectrum

who face inequalities and disadvantage in the labour market, as identified by SDS's [Equality Evidence Review](#)^(viii).

Reducing youth unemployment remains a focus for society and the recent enhancements to our CIAG service offers, earlier intervention in secondary schools and the introduction of our Next Steps offer forms the basis of our action to address this issue. As young people form our largest customer group, the actions in this plan will apply to them.

However, with the increase in the retirement age and the ageing nature of Scotland's population, the proportion of older people in the workforce is increasing.

Our evidence review suggests that long-term unemployment is one of the most significant challenges facing the over 50s. Reasons that older people may find it difficult to get back into work include age discrimination, outdated interview skills and lack of confidence. A lack of formal qualifications or being over qualified are also factors.

Consultation with partners also identified that men in this age bracket may be less inclined to seek help and access services than women.

The actions in this plan will focus on promoting our services to the over 50s and ensuring that they can access the support they require to re-enter employment or change career at this stage in their lives.

Care experience

The annual publication, [Education outcomes for Scotland's Looked After Children](#)^(x), highlights that those who are care experienced persistently have some of the poorest outcomes in society. They are often less likely to secure and sustain an education, training or employment opportunity after school and far less likely to enter higher education.

The experiences and needs of young care experienced people vary by placement type and an understanding of these different experiences is needed to better support them. The range of people taking on the role of parent/carer for care experienced young people is also wide and varied and it is important that parental engagement activity accounts for this.

SDS are a corporate parent under the Children and Young People Act (2014). As such, we have a duty to publish a Corporate Parenting Plan and in August

2018, we published our second plan. This [2018-21 Corporate Parenting Plan](#)^(vi) addresses the challenges identified above and relates to all parts of the organisation.

The actions in this plan will feed into our Corporate Parenting Plan and will include exploring enhancements to our service delivery and promotion of it that acknowledges our role as a corporate parent to this customer group.

Ethnic minority

Our [Equality Evidence Review](#)^(viii) highlights that people from ethnic minority communities tend to do well at school and progress to higher education in larger numbers than the rest of the population. However, these achievements are often not reflected in labour market outcomes.

For some, cultural barriers or language and literacy issues may be a reason for this. However, consultation with partners in the development of this plan, identified discrimination as the main explanation. This was in relation to both recruitment and potentially negative experiences in the workplace.

Some ethnic groups are more likely to face discrimination and poor outcomes than

others. The complex needs of Refugees/Asylum Seekers and Gypsies/Travellers are recognised in our CIAG service offers and they are offered more intensive support.

The Gypsy/Traveller community have particularly low educational attainment and some of the poorest labour market outcomes.

Employment of refugees is also low, particularly for women, and is often in low skilled and low paid sectors. This is still the case when individuals have a wide range of transferable skills and good levels of English. Consultation with refugees found that they are often unaware of the services available to support them and their rights in relation to education, training and employment.

Actions in this plan are focused on promoting our services to ethnic minority communities and signposting to the information they need to understand their rights and enter and sustain education, employment or training.

Gender

In our [review of equality evidence](#)^(viii) it was clear that there are still gender differences

in both subject and course choice in school, further and higher education and within the labour market, including apprenticeships.

On leaving school, young women are more likely to go to university and young men are much more likely to consider, and start, an apprenticeship or enter employment.

Women remain under-represented in higher paid science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) sectors and senior positions across all sectors. Under-employment of women on leaving higher education is more common than it is for men and more women with degrees in STEM subjects do not pursue careers in related occupations.

Underrepresentation of men tends to be focussed in sectors that are incorrectly perceived to be jobs only for women (at times described as 'women's work'). This includes the care sector. Jobs in these sectors are often undervalued and underpaid in comparison to low skill, low pay jobs in male-dominated sectors.

SDS's [Review of Improving Gender Balance Scotland](#)^(xi) acknowledges agreement amongst stakeholders that cultural norms and out-of-date value

systems contribute to gender inequality. These views were also highlighted to impact employers' attitudes regarding recruitment or promotion and behaviours in the workplace.

Consultation with partners in the development of this plan highlighted that women's own negative experiences and those of others within the labour market also impact their likelihood to pursue non-traditional pathways.

Currently through our engagements with young people and their parents/ carers, our CIAG colleagues challenge stereotypes and the concept of "male/ female" jobs. We have also contributed to the Scottish Government's Gender Pay Gap Action Plan and will align any assigned actions with our work under this CIAG Equality Action Plan.

The actions in this plan will focus on reviewing, and promoting, our messaging to ensure that we are addressing the range of issues that stop young people pursuing non-traditional careers and promote work-based learning pathways to young women and their key influencers to address the inequalities in labour market outcomes.

Poverty

After housing costs, around one fifth (19%) of people in Scotland were living in relative poverty in 2014-17, as outlined in the Scottish Government's briefing, [Poverty & Income Inequality in Scotland: 2014-17](#)^(xii). Income inequality continued to rise over this period, with those in the lowest income households falling further behind those in the middle and highest.

People who are disabled, care experienced and from ethnic minority communities are more likely to be living in poverty. Women also have higher levels of poverty than men which increases child poverty. The poorer labour market outcomes of these groups contribute to this.

However, poverty can be a barrier itself to people progressing their careers, for example not having access to the resources they need to research and apply for opportunities, feeling that they can't afford to pursue certain pathways and not having access to the same networks as others to support their career. Consultation with SDS CIAG colleagues identified challenges in relation to engagement with our services for unemployed young men from disadvantaged backgrounds.

We already consider poverty when determining the level of support customers may require from us since developing their CMS and overcoming barriers to employment will in turn help to move them out of poverty.

Actions in this plan will focus on engagement with partners to promote our services to those living in poverty and signposting customers to the information and advice that will support them.

Pregnancy and maternity

The evidence outlined in [SDS's Equality Evidence Review](#)^(viii) suggests that starting a family can have negative, long-term consequences on women's participation in the labour market.

This is due, in part, to women returning from maternity requiring part-time work to allow them to balance caring responsibilities for their young children. Part-time opportunities in high-skilled employment are limited which means that many women may be "underemployed" on their return to work. Part-time work is often low skilled with little training or prospects of progression.

The [Life chances of young people in Scotland: evidence review](#)^(xiii) outlines that young mothers (those under 20-years-old) face particular disadvantages. They often have fewer qualifications and are less likely to be employed. They are more likely to be in the lowest income quintile and live in the most deprived areas. They are also more likely to experience mental health issues.

Actions in this plan will focus on ensuring that we incorporate relevant messaging on women's rights in relation to pregnancy and maternity into other gender-based messaging and to ensure that young mothers are aware of SDS and can access our CIAG services.

Religion and belief

SDS's [review of equality evidence](#)^(viii) found that Muslim people face the greatest economic disadvantages of any group in society, with unemployment rates more than twice that of the general population. The disadvantage is particularly high for Muslim women.

Reasons for this include discrimination and Islamophobia, stereotyping and insufficient role models across education and employment.

Actions in this plan will focus on promoting our services to Muslim communities and signposting customers to their rights in education, training and employment to help address discrimination.

Sexual orientation

Although attitudes towards lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people have become more positive in Scotland over the years, discrimination still exists. This can result in individuals feeling unsure about engagement with services and their employment prospects.

There has been limited evidence on the employment, training and education outcomes of the LGB community. In 2017, the Scottish Government published a [Summary of the Evidence Base for Sexual Orientation in Scotland](#)^(xiv). The summary highlighted that those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other were three times more likely to be unemployed than those who identify as heterosexual. This is despite LGB people being more likely to have a degree or professional qualification.

As an organisation, we are committed to equality for LGBT people. This commitment was recognised by our placement at

number 18 in the 2019 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, receiving the award for top public-sector organisation in Scotland. This index takes account of our work with customers as well as staff.

Actions in this plan will focus on engaging with LGBTI+ partners and ensuring that LGB customers find us a welcoming and inclusive organisation.

Transgender (Trans)

The Scottish Trans Alliance outlines the challenges for trans people in employment, including high levels of unemployment and self-employment and below average incomes. They report that trans people often experience transphobic comments in the workplace and fear people finding out in case it threatens their job security.

Our [Equality Evidence Review](#)^(viii) identified that bullying and harassment at school is a significant issue for trans young people. While this appears to decrease for lesbian, gay and bisexual young people once in further or higher education, it remains an issue for transgender people throughout the education system and into employment.

As an organisation, we are committed to equality for trans people and were recognised as a Top Trans Employer in the 2019 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.

Trans is also an umbrella term used to include those who would describe themselves as having a non-binary gender/being gender neutral. This has become more widely acknowledged as a gender identity in recent years and those who would describe themselves in this way are currently facing a lack of understanding and acknowledgement of their identity.

Actions in this plan will focus on ensuring inclusion of trans identities in our processes and policies, further building understanding of colleagues of these identities and appropriate language and increasing engagement with LGBTI+ and trans partners and communities to promote our services.

Differentiation and intersectionality

In taking forward the actions in this plan, we understand that there are different levels of need within each of the equality groups outlined in this section. We also acknowledge that where equality factors

intersect, people often face additional barriers and poorer outcomes.

Therefore, differentiation and intersectionality will be considered across all actions in this plan to ensure that the needs of all customers are accounted for when taking forward activity.

This will be reflected by consideration of this within all Equality Impact Assessments undertaken for any developments, products and services within our CIAG operations directorate.

4 Cross-cutting activity

Development of this plan identified actions that would apply to all our defined equality groups. In taking forward these cross-cutting actions, specific consideration will be given to each equality group. They can be grouped under the four key themes, as outlined throughout this section.

Further build the capacity of CIAG colleagues to support equality groups

We regularly consult with colleagues to identify their needs in relation supporting equality groups. Recently this led to the development of a customised section on our intranet relating to additional support needs, disability and care experience.

Actions in this plan will expand this resource to include other equality groups and ensure that learning from it is embedded in practice as part of a programme of equality-focused CPD.

Present SDS as inclusive and committed to equality

Our [Equality & Diversity Mainstreaming Report 2017 – 2021](#)^(v) outlines our

aspiration to be a fairer, more diverse organisation. We understand that greater diversity of our workforce would present SDS as a more inclusive organisation to our customers from equality groups.

In addition, consultation with partners and customers in the development of this plan highlighted that some equality groups do not understand the support they can expect from us.

Actions in this plan will focus on efforts to increase diversity in our CIAG workforce and on ensuring our marketing and physical spaces are accessible and promote equality.

I am Me and Police Scotland launched a national network of Keep Safe Places for anyone who feels vulnerable when out in the community. It includes police stations, libraries, and shopping centres. Across 2019, we will sign all SDS centres up to the network.

Promote the apprenticeship family to those from defined equality groups

Our [Equality Action Plan for Modern Apprenticeships](#)^(vii) aims to address the under-representation of people from defined equality groups in apprenticeships.

This plan will focus on raising awareness of these pathways to those from defined equality groups and collaborating with our national training programmes colleagues to support access to opportunities.

Use equality data and evidence to replicate good practice and drive continuous improvement

Over recent years we have improved our mechanisms for recording in relation to equality groups. We have streamlined equality factors in our customer records system, expanded equality monitoring in our research and embedded a system to record our equality activity. We acknowledge that there are gaps in our data, particularly in relation to pregnancy/maternity, religion/belief, sexual orientation and transgender. Data currently held for sexual orientation and transgender are currently reported as LGBTI+. The intention for future analysis will be to report on the protected characteristics separately.

Actions in this plan will focus on filling any gaps in our data and ensuring that the evidence and data we now have available to us is both understood and used to drive future activity and continuous improvement.

5 Key performance indicators

The sections below outline the measures that we will use to monitor our progress against our actions and outcomes.

CIAG employee profile

The profile of CIAG staff, by equality factors, is reported in the update to our [Equality & Diversity Mainstreaming Report^{\(v\)}](#), published in Aug 2019. The data in this report shows that SDS’s workforce is largely female (72%). Low percentages of colleagues declared themselves to be:

- disabled (4.2%)
- lesbian, gay or bisexual (2.4%), or
- of an ethnicity other than White Scottish/British/Irish (2.6%).

The percentage of colleagues reporting as Trans was too small to report.

Ambition: to increase the percentage of colleagues from under-represented groups in our CIAG workforce, through our new apprenticeship route, to be more representative of the population.

Capacity of CIAG colleagues

Through our annual staff survey, we will measure CIAG colleagues’ understanding of, and confidence in promoting, equality and diversity, completion of mandatory learning and their awareness and use of resources.

2018/19 baseline figures for measures

Table 1: CIAG colleagues’ awareness and use of equality-related resources in our 2018 staff survey

	% aware	% used
ASN resources on intranet	99	63
CPD on equality and diversity issues	98	68
LGBTI+ Allies Network Group	80	17

Table 2: CIAG colleagues’ views on equality and diversity in our 2018 staff survey

In relation to their role, % who agree that they:	%
understand importance of equality and diversity	99
feel confident in promoting equality and diversity	98

Ambition: to increase use of equality resources and develop measures to monitor the impact of our equality-related CPD.

Engagement with our CIAG services

Through our customer record system, we will measure overall engagement with our CIAG services by comparing the proportion of customers from equality groups who access any support from us with the profile of relevant populations.

We will also measure engagement of our targeted senior phase pupils and Next Steps customers by the percentage of customers

from each equality group identified to receive our enhanced service offers who access coaching guidance.

2018/19 baseline figures for measures

Table 3: Percentage of targeted senior phase pupils & Next Steps customers receiving coaching guidance in 2018/19, by equality group

	% targeted senior phase pupils	% Next Steps customers
All customers	96	77
Disabled	96	79
Care experienced	97	75
Ethnic minority	97	78
Female	96	76
Male	96	78
Most deprived SIMD quintile	95	80

Ambition: to ensure that where levels of engagement for customers from equality groups are lower than for all customers that they increase to become at least equal.

Customer experience of our CIAG services

Through our senior phase (S4-6) survey, we will measure satisfaction overall and specifically with the range of support available, ability to access it and amount of support received.

We will also measure their agreement that their careers adviser understood them and the support they needed, listened and valued their ideas, encouraged them to aim high for their future career and challenged them to explore a wide range of career options.

The first year of data available for Next Steps and universal post-school customers will be 2018/19. We will measure their agreement that their careers adviser understood them and the support they needed, their overall satisfaction and their likelihood to recommend our CIAG services will be measured.

2018/19 baseline figures for measures

Table 4: Percentage of senior phase pupils in 2018 senior phase survey who were satisfied with the following factors:

	Range of support available	Ability to access support	Amount of support received	CIAG services overall
All customers	71	71	72	68
ASN/disabled	71	71	72	70
Care experienced	74	81	77	73
Ethnic minority	74	77	78	76
LGBTI+	65	67	68	70
Female	69	69	70	66
Male	74	75	75	73

Table 5: Percentage of senior phase pupils in 2018 senior phase survey who agreed that their careers adviser:

	understood them & support they needed	listened & valued their ideas	encouraged them to aim high for their future career	challenged them to explore a wide range of career options
All customers	82	86	81	69
ASN / disability	84	89	84	72
Care experience	88	90	85	78
Ethnic minority	88	91	85	79
LGBTI+	79	82	76	64
Female	79	84	79	64
Male	87	88	84	73

Ambition: to improve satisfaction of female and LGBTI+ customers with our CIAG services and their experience of our services to the same level as, or greater than, all customers.

Outcomes for customers

We will measure the development of CMS for targeted senior phase pupils and Next Steps customers. For Next Steps customers we will

measure progression into learning, training or work. We will also measure reported outcomes through our senior phase survey.

The support we provide through our CIAG services contribute to the post-school outcomes of young people, within a partnership approach. To reflect this, we will also measure post-school outcomes of young people through the School Leavers Destination Returns (SLDR) and SDS's Participation Measure.

2018/19 baseline figures for measures

Table 6: Percentage of customers who received coaching guidance and had 2 or more CMS assessments showing CMS improvement, 2018/19

	% targeted senior phase pupils	% Next Steps customers
All customers	85	66
Disabled	84	62
Care experienced	84	65
Ethnic minority	87	68
Female	86	69
Male	85	64
Most deprived SIMD quintile	85	65

Ambition: to improve CMS of customers from equality groups to be equal to, or greater than, all customers.

Table 7: Percentage of Next Steps customers progressing to and sustaining learning, training or work, for 2018/19

	% progressing	% progressing & sustaining for 6 months
All customers	66	59
Disabled	74	54
Care experienced	75	50
Ethnic minority	65	60
Female	67	60
Male	66	58
Most deprived SIMD quintile	64	54

Ambition: to improve progression of Next Steps customers from equality groups to be equal to, or greater than, all customers.

Table 8: Percentage of senior phase pupils in 2018 Senior Phase Survey who reported outcomes and benefits

	% reporting at least 1 outcome/benefit	% reporting 3 or more outcomes/benefits	% reporting we were effective in helping them challenge stereotypes
All customers	87	77	63
ASN / disabled	87	77	65
Care experienced	90	83	69
Ethnic minority	94	86	71
LGBTI+	84	73	62
Female	85	74	65
Male	89	80	61

Ambition: to increase percentage of customers from equality groups reporting outcomes/benefits, to the same level as all customers

Table 9: Overall participation measure rate 2019 (proportion of 16 to19-year-olds participating in education, training or employment)

	Overall Participation Measure rate
All 16 to19-year-olds	91.6
Disability	87.0
Ethnic minority	95.1
Female	92.2
Male	90.9
Most deprived SIMD quintile	85.8

The most recent figures for the Attainment and Leaver Destinations Supplementary Data covers the 2017/18 school year.

Table 10: Initial and follow-up destinations in SLDR, 2017/18

	% school leavers in positive initial destination	% school leavers in positive follow-up destination
All 16 to19-year-olds	94	93
ASN	90	88
Ethnic minority	96	94
Female	96	94
Male	93	92
Most deprived SIMD quintile	90	88
Looked after (full year)*	83	76
Looked after (part year)*	74	69

*Available figures for care experienced young people include those recorded as looked after for either the full year or part of the year prior to leaving school.

Ambition: to reduce the gap in participation rates in education, employment or training between customers from equality groups and all customers. As outlined in Section 1, improvement in the participation of equality groups in education, training and employment requires a partnership approach. We will aim to use these measures to guide our contribution to this partnership.

6 Action Plan

The actions in this plan aim to ensure that:

- SDS is considered welcoming to those from equality groups and that they increase their engagement with our CIAG services
- customers from equality groups develop their Career Management Skills, make informed career decisions and have positive transitions from school to post-school
- the influence of preconceptions and stereotypes, including traditional gender norms, on career decisions is reduced, the choices of customers from equality groups is widened and aspirations of them and their parents/carers and key influencers are raised
- customers understand their rights and have the Career Management Skills required to challenge any potential discrimination and navigate non-traditional career pathways.

Cross-cutting activity

Further build the capacity of CIAG colleagues to support equality groups

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Expand current ASN section of our intranet with content for age, gender, LGBTI+, poverty, ethnic minority (inc. Gypsies/Travellers), differentiation & intersectionality and correct/current terminology	Colleagues have access to enhanced equality-related learning and development resources	SDS CIAG colleagues	MECOPP Close the Gap	By end March 2020
Link expanded ASN section of our intranet to our internal Academy for Continued Professional Development to formalise this as a key resource for CPD and embed learning in practice	Colleagues feel equality-related learning helped improve their performance, comparable to other learning	SDS CIAG colleagues	N/A	By end March 2021

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Roll out programme of mandatory learning on equality topics, including gender competence and webinars by Scottish Trans Alliance and Scottish Refugee Council	Colleagues feel equality-related learning helped improve their performance, comparable to other learning	SDS CIAG colleagues	Close the Gap Scottish Trans Alliance Scottish Refugee Council	August 2019 to March 2021
Develop networks within SDS to provide opportunities for collaboration, reflective practice and to share good practice, drive future activity and continuous improvement	Increase in focus on equality and diversity in continuous improvement action plans	SDS CIAG colleagues	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021

Present SDS as inclusive and committed to equality

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Pursue alternative routes to a career in careers guidance within SDS and promote these to customers from equality groups, aligned to our ambition to be a more diverse organisation in our Equality & Diversity Mainstreaming Report	Increased diversity in our CIAG workforce to reflect the profile of Scotland's population	Individuals from equality groups	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021
Ensure that our SDS offices, allocated space in schools and marketing promote SDS as welcoming to customers from equality groups	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Customers	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021
Join Keep Safe Places network to provide safe spaces for vulnerable people in our communities, in line with our commitment to protection and safeguarding the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Customers	Police Scotland I am Me	August 2019 to March 2021

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Clarify CIAG service offers and their inclusiveness across our marketing and web services; providing information in different languages and appropriate to different groups, e.g. Gypsies/Travellers, those with ASN and young women	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Customers	Equality Advisory Group STEP / TENET	By end March 2020

Promote the Apprenticeship Family to those from defined equality group

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Work with foundation apprenticeship team to promote pathway to under-represented groups	Increase in customers from equality groups who agree we challenged them to explore a wide range of career options, to the same level as all customers	Customers	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021
Capitalise on engagements with young people and parents/carers to promote modern and graduate apprenticeships and initiatives to support access to under-represented groups	Increase in customers from equality groups who agree we challenged them to explore a wide range of career options, to the same level as all customers	Customers Parents/carers	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021
Promote the apprenticeship family to young women intending to pursue higher education, particularly STEM subjects, to improve labour market outcomes	Increase in customers from equality groups who agree we challenged them to explore a wide range of career options, to the same level as all customers	Female school pupils	Schools	August 2019 to March 2021
Collaborate with our national training programmes equality executives to support under-represented groups to access modern apprenticeships	Increase in customers from equality groups who agree we challenged them to explore a wide range of career options, to the same level as all customers	Customers	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021

Use equality data and evidence to replicate good practice and drive continuous improvement

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Establish, with colleagues, an understanding of all performance and research data available for equality and how to use this to inform future activity	Increase in focus on equality and diversity in continuous improvement action plans	SDS CIAG colleagues	N/A	By end March 2021
Review our existing data and evidence to identify and address any gaps, working with partners to consider appropriate ways to capture some data	Increase in available data and evidence for equality groups	SDS CIAG colleagues	N/A	By end March 2021

Specific equality groups

Additional support needs and disability

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Enhance our existing range of resources that support disabled customers and those with ASN to develop their CMS, ensuring accessible formats, easy read content and recognisable visual aids	Improved CMS of customers from equality groups to be equal to, or greater than, all customers	Disabled customers and those with ASN	ARC/National Involvement Network Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities	By end March 2020
Work with SDS's partner development and integration team to embed My World of Work throughout our resources and use of it across ASN schools	Increased awareness and use of My World of Work in ASN schools to align with mainstream schools	Disabled school pupils and those with ASN	ASN Schools	By end March 2020
Signpost customers and their key influencers to information on initiatives that support access to education, training and employment, including through our face to face engagements	Increased participation in education, training or employment to reduce the gap between customers from equality groups and all customers	Disabled customers and those with ASN Parents/carers	Partners for initiatives to support access to opportunities	August 2019 to March 2021.

Age

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Develop local and national partnerships with those who support older people (over 50s) to promote our CIAG services and My World of Work	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Older people (over 50s)	Age Scotland	August 2019 to March 2021
Review our resources for CMS development to ensure we have age-appropriate materials	Improved CMS of customers from equality groups to be equal to, or greater than, all customers	Older people (over 50s)	Age Scotland	By end March 2020

Care experience

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Take forward the commitments in our 2018-21 Corporate Parenting Plan	Increased participation in education, training or employment to reduce the gap between customers from equality groups and all customers	Care experienced customers	CELCIS STAF Who Cares? Scotland	August 2019 to March 2021
Create an interactive explanation of our service offer to support care experienced customers, as their corporate parent, to understand and explore what we can offer them throughout their learning and career journey	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Care experienced customers	N/A	By end March 2020
Explore options to enhance support for care experienced customers, for example in relation to post-school transitions and exam results, to reflect our role as a corporate parent to them	Increased participation in education, training or employment to reduce gap between customers from equality groups and all customers	Care experienced customers	N/A	By end March 2020

Ethnic minority

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Develop local and national partnerships with those who support ethnic minority communities (inc. refugees/asylum seekers and Gypsies/Travellers) to promote our CIAG services and web services	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Ethnic minority communities	Partners who work with all ethnic minority communities Step/TENET; Scottish Refugee Council	August 2019 to March 2021
Share information from Glasgow Caledonian University's Skills Recognition Unit to support those who have migrated to Scotland to gain recognition and validation for the skills/qualifications they have gained out with the UK and to access opportunities	Increased participation in education, training or employment to reduce the gap between customers from equality groups and all customers	Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	Skills Recognition Project Glasgow Caledonian University	August 2019 to March 2021
Signpost migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to information on their rights in education, training and employment	Increased participation in education, training or employment to reduce the gap between customers from equality groups and all customers	Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	Scottish Refugee Council	August 2019 to March 2021

Gender

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Explore reasons for the lower percentage of female senior phase pupils receiving coaching guidance and seek opportunities to address this	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Female school pupils	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Promote our CIAG services to young men from disadvantaged backgrounds with low levels of qualifications, including Next Steps customers, and support them to engage with us	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Young men from disadvantaged backgrounds	Poverty organisations	August 2019 to March 2021
Review our group work activities and content on My World of Work to ensure they address the key factors that impact young people's career decisions and demonstrate appropriate behaviours to support gender equality, including signposting young women to information on their employment rights	Increased ability of customers to challenge stereotypes, to the same level as all customers	School pupils	Close the Gap	By end March 2021
Capitalise on opportunities to engage with schools and parents/carers to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes and encourage consideration of all pathways	Increased ability of customers to challenge stereotypes, to the same level as all customers	Parents/carers Partners	Schools	August 2019 to March 2021

Poverty

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Engage further with poverty organisations nationally and locally to promote our services to those living in poverty	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Partners	Poverty organisations	August 2019 to March 2021
Signpost customers to initiatives that support access to opportunities for those living in poverty, e.g. funding available	Increased participation in education, training or employment to reduce the gap between customers from equality groups and all customers	Customers	Poverty organisations	August 2019 to March 2021

Pregnancy and maternity

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Incorporate in My World of Work relevant messages on employment rights in relation to pregnancy and maternity	Increased ability of customers to challenge stereotypes, to the same level as all customers	Customers	Close the Gap Maternity Action	By end March 2020
Engage with organisations who support young mothers to promote our Next Steps and universal post-school services to them, particularly those living in poverty	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Young mothers	Organisations supporting young mothers Poverty organisations	By end March 2020

Religion and belief

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Engage with communities to promote SDS as an organisation that is welcoming to and inclusive of Muslim people; outlining support we can provide	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	Customers	Partners working with Muslim communities	August 2019 to March 2021
Signpost Muslim customers who have experienced, or fear experiencing, discrimination to information on their rights in education, training and employment	Increased participation in education, training or employment to reduce the gap between customers from equality groups and all customers	Muslim customers	N/A	August 2019 to March 2021

Sexual orientation

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Engage with LGBTI+ organisations, youth groups and school groups to promote SDS as an organisation that is welcoming to LGB individuals	Increased engagement with our CIAG services by equality groups to align with all customers	LGB customers	LGBTI+ partners LGBTI+ youth groups Pride organisations	August 2019 to March 2021

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Review process to record customer information to ensure representation of sexual orientation in equality monitoring	Increased satisfaction with our CIAG services	LGB customers	Stonewall	By end March 2020

Transgender

Action	Long-term outcomes	Targeted groups	Partner involvement	Timeframe
Review process to record customer information to ensure proper representation of transgender and non-binary gender identities and pronouns	Increased satisfaction with our CIAG services	Trans customers Those with non-binary gender identities	N/A	By end March 2020
Ensure use of current terminology in relation to trans and non-binary gender identities to provide a welcoming, inclusive environment	Increased satisfaction with our CIAG services	Trans customers Those with non-binary gender identities	Scottish Trans Alliance	August 2019 to March 2021

References

ⁱ Career Information, Advice and Guidance in Scotland: A Framework for Service Redesign and Improvement, <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/344766/0114737.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Career Management Skills Framework for Scotland, https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/34749/career_management_skills_framework_scotland.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Education Working For All! <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/report/2014/06/education-working-commission-developing-scotlands-young-workforce-final-report/documents/00451746-pdf/00451746-pdf/govscot%3Adocument>

^{iv} Career Education Standard (3 to 18), <https://education.gov.scot/documents/dyw2-career-education-standard-0915.pdf>

-
- ^v Equality & Diversity Mainstreaming Report 2017-2021, https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/43248/0597_update-to_0357-equality-mainstreaming-report.pdf
- ^{vi} Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021, https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/44846/updated_final_13-08-18_corporate-parenting-plan.pdf
- ^{vii} Equalities action plan for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland, https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/40691/2869_sds_equalities_action_plan_digital_v7.pdf
- ^{viii} SDS Equality Evidence Review, https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/43248/0597_update-to_0357-equality-mainstreaming-report.pdf
- ^{ix} Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Employment Action Plan, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-disabled-people-delivery-plan-2021-united-nations-convention/>
- ^x Education outcomes for Scotland's Looked After Children, <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/EducOutcomesLAC>
- ^{xi} Review of Improving Gender Balance Scotland, <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/44705/review-of-improving-gender-balance-2018.pdf>
- ^{xii} Poverty & Income Inequality in Scotland: 2014-17, <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics-publication/2018/03/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2014-17/documents/00533112-pdf/00533112-pdf/govscot%3Adocument>
- ^{xiii} Life chances of young people in Scotland: evidence review, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/life-chances-young-people-scotland-evidence-review-first-ministers-independent/pages/5/>
- ^{xiv} Summary of the Evidence Base for Sexual Orientation in Scotland, https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/28209/1/00513240_Redacted.pdf