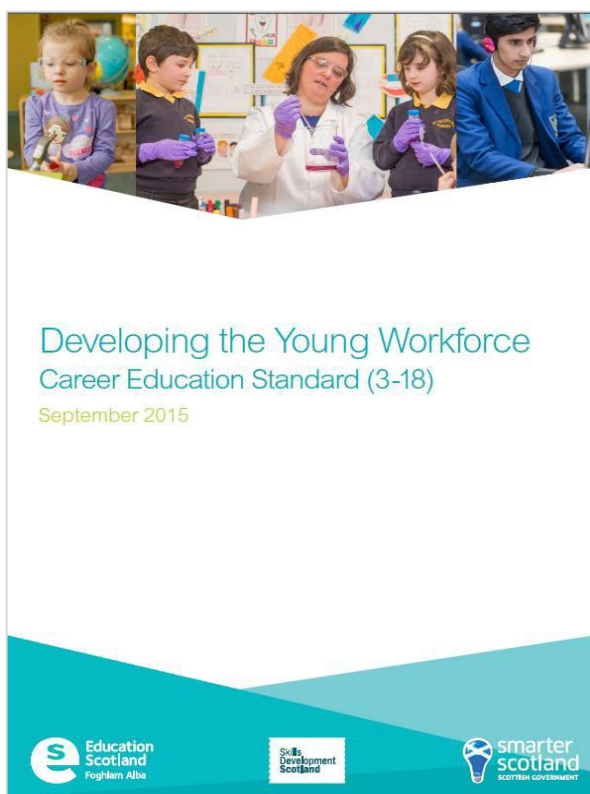


## Professional Learning Activity

# Introduction to the Career Education Standard (3-18)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please note this resource can be printed out or completed electronically and used in conjunction with [‘Developing the Young Workforce Career Education Standard \(3-18\)’ \(September 2015\)](#).*

August 2025

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## Purpose

This resource forms part of a series of learning which will provide support to develop your practice related to career education. It will help you to understand the educational context of the Career Education Standard and what it means for learners and your existing practice in the classroom. It will also introduce you to why career education is even more important for learners now.

## Learning outcomes

You will have an understanding of:

- the purpose and aim of the Career Education Standard (3 – 18) (CES) and the part you and partners are expected to play
- the CES entitlements for children and young people
- the CES expectations in relation to your current practice
- how to use the CES self-evaluation tool
- strengths and areas for improvement of the CES expectations
- a plan to take forward manageable changes to your practice

## Who is this learning for?

This learning is for practitioners at all levels working with children and young people within early learning, schools, colleges, third sector providers, and other partners.

## An introduction to the Career Education Standard (3-18)

*‘Career education – is a process of learning, designed to help young people to develop the knowledge, confidence and skills they need to make well informed, relevant choices and plans for their future, so they can progress smoothly into further learning and work.’*

[Education Scotland/Skills Development Scotland/Scottish Government \(2015\), Developing the Young Workforce, Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#)



The Career Education Standard was developed in response to a recommendation from the Developing Young Workforce commission. The recommendation outlined the need for career education and careers advice and guidance to start earlier in schools. The aim is to help young people understand their capabilities and aspirations better and as a result be able to make more informed learning and careers choices as they progress through their learning journey.

The Career Education Standard sets out what children and young people will learn and what parents/carers, teachers/practitioners, employers and Skills Development Scotland will do to support their learning. Implementation of the Standard will improve the quality and consistency of learning about work and careers. It will improve young people's ability to make informed decisions about future pathways.

Recent research has reinforced the aim of the Career Education Standard and outlines that young people who participate more in career development activities and start these earlier in their learner journey tend to have clearer career plans and better employment outcomes. [OECD \(2025\), The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation, OECD Publishing, Paris](#)

### Resources

- Read the Introduction on page 3 of the [Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#)
- Watch the [What is career education video](#)

## Reflective questions

- 1) To what extent can you see career education happening in your school or in your classroom? Can you think of examples?

- 2) How can the school's career adviser support young people with career information, advice and guidance?

- 3) Is career education included in the school improvement plan and/or curriculum plans?

## Career Education Standard (CES) – Learner journeys

The Career Education Standard recognises the journeys that children and young people make as they progress from age 3-18 and the potential and role of key influencers in these journeys. It recognises that all young people will not progress in the same way and that not all face the same challenges and will require appropriate support and interventions as required.



### Resources

- Look at the career education journeys graphic on page 6 of the [Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#)

### Reflective questions

- 1) What does the journey in the graphic suggest to me about the CES and implications for my practice? (For example: transitions, progression, partnership working, skills development, potential challenges and opportunities).

- 2) How can I contribute to the career education experience for young people?

## Entitlements for children and young people

There are 10 entitlements for Children and Young people outlined in the career education standard, these include areas such as, access to a curriculum that explores the world of work, development of skills for learning, life, and work, and opportunities for meaningful encounters with employers and the workplace. These entitlements ensure that young people are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to make informed decisions about their future careers and navigate the world of work

### Resources

- Read pages 7 and 8 of the [Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#) for details of the entitlements for children and young people.

### Reflective questions

1) What key messages do I draw from these entitlements?

2) To what extent does my practice provide children and young people with these entitlements?

3) Which areas do I consider to be strengths?

4) Which areas do I think will require further development?

## Expectations of teachers, practitioners, and partners

The Career Education Standard outlines expectations for partners involved in career education, emphasising collaboration, personalised learning, and promoting equality. Partners, including schools, employers, and community organisations, are expected to work together to design and deliver a curriculum that equips young people with the knowledge, skills, and attributes needed for learning, life, and work. This includes fostering self-awareness, career management skills, and an understanding of the labour market.

### Resources

- Read pages 9 - 12 of the [Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#) for details of the expectations of partners within the delivery of the career education standard.

### Reflective Questions

Consider the expectations of teachers and practitioners outlined on page 10 of the Career Education Standard.

1) What am I currently doing to deliver the entitlements for children and young people?

2) Within my own practice:

a) Which areas do I consider to be strengths? (note examples)

b) Which areas do I consider require further development? (note examples)

3) What am I currently doing to support other partners to deliver the entitlements for children and young people?

4) In what ways do the expectations of other partners support me in delivering the entitlements for children and young people?

5) In which areas might these partnerships be strengthened?

## **‘I can’ statements**

The entitlements for children and young people are supported by illustrative ‘I can’ statements. These are not exhaustive and can be used by all partners to support the development of a progressive and inclusive approach to career education. These statements can be used as a basis for dialogue with children and young people to agree what success could look like.

## **Resources**

- Read through the all the ‘I can’ statements detailed on pages 15 - 17 of the [Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#) so that you can develop a full understanding of how a progressive approach to career education can be developed.

## **Reflective Questions**

- 1) Thinking about the children and young people you are currently working with. How can you use these statements to influence activities and discussions?

## Activity: Self-evaluation of teacher/practitioner expectations

This self-evaluation activity allows you to consider career education in a more focused way either individually or with your team or faculty. This process will enable you to identify any professional learning, needs and action(s) you could take forward in your own practice.

The self-evaluation wheel shown on the next page uses statements based on the expectations for teachers/practitioners set out in the Career Education Standard (page 10).

### Task 1 – Reflection

In relation to your own role and context, reflect on each of the statements shown on the Expectations for teachers/practitioners in the Career Education Standard self-evaluation wheel (page 12).

Think about where you might plot yourself on the wheel against each statement using the following guide.

- 0 - 4 = not at all confident/accomplished in this area
- 5 - 7 = confident but with areas to develop or work on
- 8 - 10 = Feel very confident/accomplished in this area

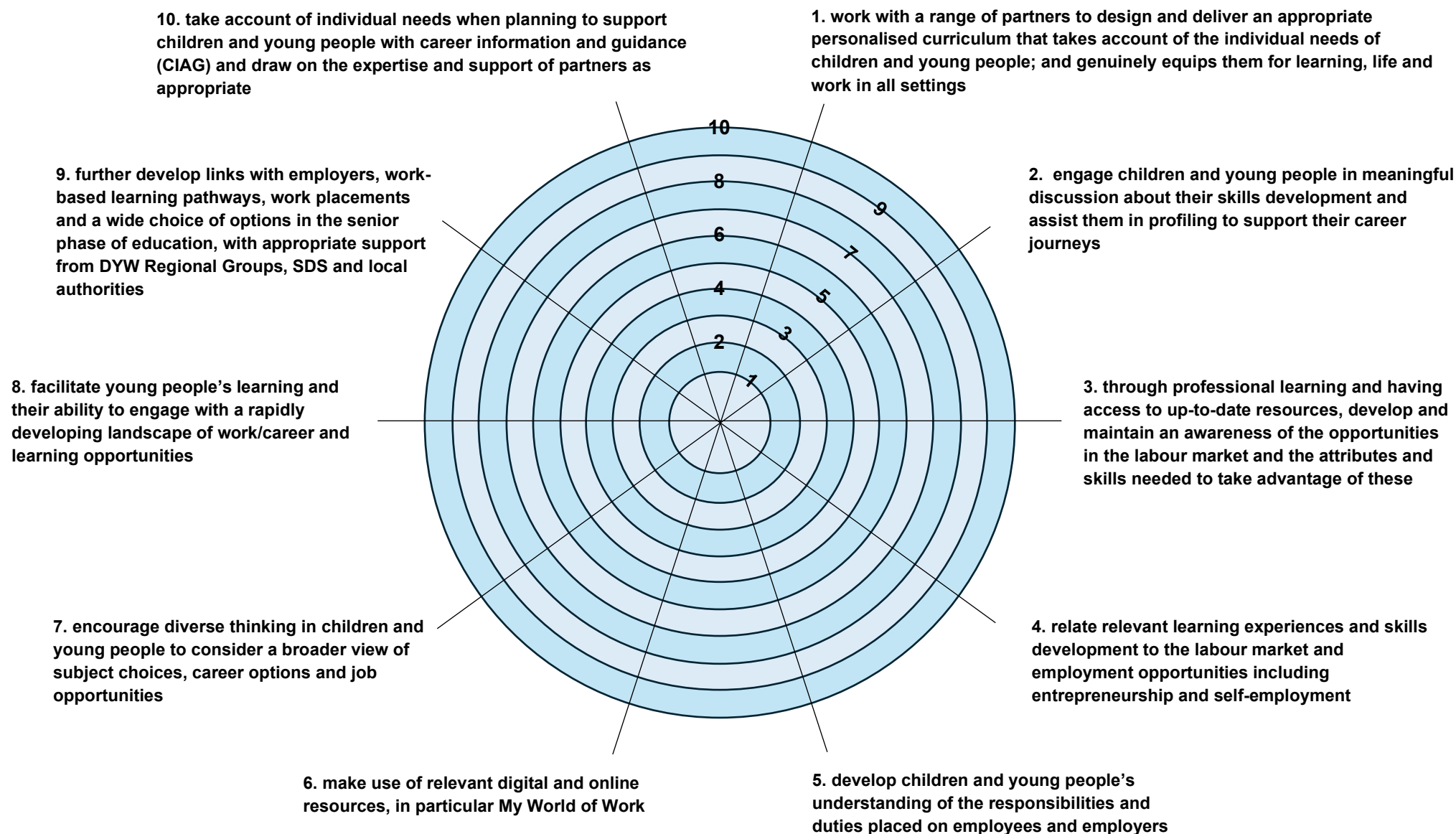
### Task 2 – Identifying Strengths and Areas for development

Use your completed self-evaluation wheel to complete the table below.

Key strengths	How do I know?
Areas for development	How do I know?

## Expectations for teachers/practitioners in the Career Education Standard (3-18)

To what extent do I .....?



### Task 3 – Prioritisation and putting improvements into action

Now look at the points you have identified in task 2 as areas for development. Select two of these where you could undertake a small test of change. Focus on 'trying out' one action with one pupil/one group/one class. You can then reflect and refine this action before using across all of your practice.

Use the table below to capture the small tests of changes you will try out.

Which CES expectation will I focus on	Action I will take as small test of change	Who can support me with this?	When will I review the impact/outcome of this action

### Summary and next steps

This learning resource has provided you with an opportunity to engage with and reflect on implementing the Career Education Standard (3-18) in relation to your current practice.

You should now have several ideas for taking forward your professional learning.

### Additional learning

You can find additional resources to support with the embedding of career education within your practice and your establishment via the SDS Education team webpage.

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/scotlands-careers-services/education-team>