



Careers By Design

The Career Review: what it means for Scotland's universities

May 2022



Skills
Development
Scotland

Young
Person's
Guarantee

This review would not have been possible without the **insights, experiences and deep engagement of young people and stakeholders.**

The review recommendations have been designed with over 80 young people whose **experiences and ideas are captured in the pages that follow.**

David Scott is one of the young people who fed into the Career Review. In a short video, **he shares their hopes for an accessible and inspiring career system.**



Watch it here:





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Introduction

The Career Review presents a unique opportunity for all parts of the career system in Scotland to work together to ensure everyone can access high quality and appropriate career support when they need it.

It is vital that all parts of the system, including Higher Education, work together to understand the needs of all who access the system. We all need to play our part in making the changes needed to realise the potential identified through the evidence building, design principles and recommendations.

Higher Education career services are well established across Scottish universities. The highly professionalised career workforce in universities is noted as a strength of current service provision.

Universities play a vital role in the career ecosystem, both through the extensive services offered, and importantly, through embedding employability into our learning and teaching strategies.

The Career Review presents an opportunity for Higher Education to consider more systemically embedding career education, and work related experiences in university curricula.

For the potential of the Career Review to be realised, we need stakeholders from all parts of the Higher Education sector to consider the findings and recommendations of the review.

As we move to implement the recommendations, we as a sector will have the opportunity to establish what the Career Review could and should mean for Higher Education.

I would encourage colleagues from universities across Scotland to come together to be part of the conversation and inform the approach we as a sector take to implementing the Career Review recommendations.

Tracey Innes
Head of Careers and Employability, University of Aberdeen and Convener for AGCAS Scotland

What is the Career Review?

The Scottish Government commissioned the national skills agency Skills Development Scotland to lead the most comprehensive review of Scotland's career services in a generation.

An independent programme board worked with a wide range of young people, employers, parents and carers, teachers, careers advisers and other organisations, listening to their experiences of current services and how they could be improved.

Why is it needed?



COVID-19

COVID-19 has impacted education and career development and highlighted and exacerbated a range of existing inequalities driven by skills and access to work.



Educational reform

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has recently completed a review of Scotland's education system, which has signalled significant reform. Progress toward change is already underway. The Scottish Funding Council has also undertaken a review of Coherence and Sustainability in Further and Higher Education.



Poverty and inequality

Despite relatively high rates of participation in the labour market, poverty and inequality remain a significant issue. Two thirds of children living in poverty are members of working households. The Black Lives Matter movement continues to shine a light on persistent and systemic racism in society.

The climate emergency



This Scottish Government was the first in the world to formally recognise a climate emergency and has committed to a just and fair transition to net zero, requiring transformation in all areas of our society and economy.

Industry 4.0 and disruptive technologies



Advances in technology continue to change the demand for skills and create new ways of working. This is likely to result in frequent disruption in the labour market that requires recurring occupational change and a need to significantly and regularly retrain and upskill.

A dynamic labour market



Skills shortages in Scotland are being mirrored around the world, resulting in a global war for talent in many sectors. Scotland has a shrinking working age population and there is a critical requirement to maximise all the talent and skills available.

The nature of work



These changes and more are driving fundamental shifts in the nature of work and where it takes place. There is a need to place increased emphasis on career management skills, meta skills and wellbeing, as part of a wider approach to fair work. Non-traditional working models highlight both advantages and risks. There is a need to ensure young people are supported to work safely, free of discrimination and harassment.



What the evidence told us

- Scottish universities have dedicated and well established career services with a professional workforce: sixteen out of 19 universities in Scotland are members of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS).
- The National Student Survey and the Graduate Outcomes Survey are used to compile various rankings and influential comparison sites are important to the recruitment of new students.
- This strong institutional driver has contributed to universities' engagement in, and willingness to fund, institutional career services.
- Each Scottish university has employability embedded in their learning and teaching strategies and has a set of graduate attributes that they seek to support students to develop.
- Career support is typically provided through the curriculum, co-curriculum and through university career services.
- Career information, advice and guidance is provided via institutional career services, with additional services such as the provision of placements and more general forms of employer brokerage, employability programmes and education.
- Career guidance in universities is provided by qualified members of staff, with a sector specific qualification available.

Career education is not systemically embedded in university curricula:

- Employability is often embedded in learning and teaching strategies.
- Career provision embedded in the curriculum varies in response to subject of study and institution.
- There is no consistent entitlement to work-related experiences within the system.
- There is significant location and institutional variation.

The Scottish Funding Council's Review of Coherence and Sustainability presents a unique opportunity:

- Ensuring provision in post-school education has greater industry involvement and meets the needs of students, employers and broader economic and social drivers.



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What needs to change?

- **Greater industry involvement**, ensuring provision in post-school education meets the needs of students, employers and broader economic and social drivers
- **Strong performance data** providing career intelligence that informs students' choice of pathway
- **Experiential work-related learning** becomes part of the fabric of university curriculum design and delivery
- **Skills are prioritised:** education and services develop, recognise and accredit the skills and habits essential for the future world of work
- **Practitioner support:** those delivering the curriculum are supported to make connections to the world of work
- **Workplace delivery:** elements of the curriculum are delivered in the practical setting of the workplace
- **Building consistency and alignment** of services with those delivered in schools and colleges

How we can make things better: Our design principles



Meeting the dynamic aspirations and different needs of all young people



Building agency and equipping young people with the skills to thrive in a changing world



Enabling young people to expand their knowledge and experience of Fair Work



Integrating career experiences into curricula, practice and culture of the education system



An 'ecosystem' of assets delivering coherent and impactful career services for Scotland

How we'll do it: Our recommendations

Working with young people, employers, parents and carers, teachers, career practitioners and other stakeholders, the Career Review has co-designed ten recommendations.

These recommendations are summarised below. For more detail on the recommendations visit the [Career Review microsite](#).



Experiential career education

There should be dedicated curriculum time for experiential work-related learning in all settings.



Community based services

Career services should be delivered within communities in a way that is aligned to social justice values and provides access to consistent national services.



Exposure to fair work

People should have a right to have a wide range of meaningful opportunities to experience work and understand what fair work is.



Digital enablement, empowerment and engagement

Enhanced digital services and online tools should be developed that present information about the world of work in an inspiring and accurate way.



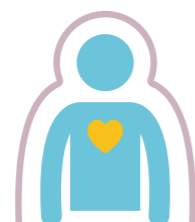
A new career development model

A simple model should be established that defines career services, bringing definition to the variety of career services across Scotland.



Developing skills and habits essential for the future world of work

Career education and services should be designed to develop, recognise and accredit the skills and habits essential for the future world of work.



Creating person centred career services

Individuals should be involved in identifying what they need from career services based on their own circumstances and context, which leads to a flexible and personalised service offer.

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Clear roles for the delivery of career services

Where appropriate, the roles across career services should be defined to deliver the career development model in a coherent way.



Strengthening evaluation and continuous improvement

The effectiveness and impact of the whole career system should be measured using a suite of outcome-based measures that are integrated in all settings, supporting the delivery of responsive and flexible services.



Creating a career services coalition

A coalition should be established that ensures the implementation of the review's recommendations and the coherence of career services across Scotland, where young people, practitioners, employers and stakeholders are represented.



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What will this mean for universities?

- **Better informed school leavers**
School-leavers are more informed about their learning and training pathways and career choices
- **More opportunities for students to experience fair work**
A wider range of offers for university students which help them develop skills needed to manage careers and thrive through change, and aligns with their aspirations
- **A familiar career framework**
Students from the Scottish education system have experienced the career development model throughout their school education
- **Access to innovative and impactful assets**
Tools, resources and services that help students develop skills and make informed choices
- **Access to immersive and engaging career experiences**
Innovative and impactful tools, resources and services that provide high quality career experiences
- **Understanding the impact of career provision**
Using joined up data to improve services and secure the best possible future for students
- **A direct say in how career services are provided**
Ensuring strong teacher and Higher Education voice on the career services coalition

What will it require from universities?

- **Significantly greater emphasis on consistent career education** within the university curriculum at all levels across the system
- **Consistent work-related learning** with industry involvement in the curriculum
- **Building capacity within universities** to provide enhanced career support
- **Shared ownership** for the career system through the career services coalition
- **Clear leadership**, empowerment and accountability to deliver changes required
- **Ensuring alignment and consistency** with the rest of the ecosystem through adoption of the career development model

What happens now?

The Scottish Government has welcomed the findings of the Career Review and has accepted all of its recommendations.

Ministers have asked the independent Career Review Programme Board to lead the development and design of implementation plans to make them happen.

These plans will be co-designed with those delivering and experiencing career services. This will include the strong voice of universities in developing:

- an overarching ‘target operating model’ which outlines the overall vision for the career system
- a ‘service blueprint’ for university career services which outlines the relationships between services, processes, structures and how they engage with customers
- implementation plans that detail what needs to be done, by whom and when

The programme board recognises that the Scottish Funding Council’s Review of Coherence and Sustainability in Further and Higher Education is a fundamental condition of success, given the links between education and career choices, the importance of career education and the opportunity to marshal the combined resources of our education system and career services.

Universities interested in finding out more about this work, or getting involved in helping the Programme Board in its work should visit www.CareerReview.scot or express interest by emailing CareerReview@sds.co.uk

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