



# Careers By Design

The Career Review: what it means for local services and communities

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:**





# Introduction

This review of Scotland's career services offers a unique opportunity to reform and reframe the careers ecosystem to ensure it supports young people today and the economy of tomorrow.

As a member of the independent programme board, I am glad to have been involved in this process as I believe that historically the career system has been too narrowly defined. Greater appreciation of community and third sector services could address many challenges faced by young people, especially those for whom the education and social system has failed.

In responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, community services delivered by local authorities and the voluntary sector have stepped up to deliver in so many ways for so many people. This has strengthened the bonds of trust and relationship that are at the heart of all good youth and community work.

Youth workers play a key role in delivering opportunities for skills development, career support and career related learning, in school and community settings.

Evidence shows that a non-formal, youth work approach can be particularly effective in engaging and supporting those furthest from the labour market, adapting to their lived experience.

This review has recognised that many young people, including those facing disadvantage or who have protected characteristics, don't see themselves represented in formal career services.

It is vital that we respond and ensure that every young person has the right to career services designed to meet their individual needs.

With the right resource, reshaping, and realignment that is captured in the recommendations of this review, youth work and other community-based services have a key role to play in delivering this entitlement. We can only do this through genuine collaboration, locally and nationally. I would encourage practitioners to read the review and consider what the recommendations mean for local services and communities – and to understand the other roles within the system.

As we move to further co-design and implement the recommendations in this report, I believe youth work and related community-based services can play a vital role in considering:

- enabling greater access to career services within communities, both geographic and thematic, that young people identify with and trust
- with the right support, co-delivering, connecting and facilitating access to broader career services
- supporting young people not following traditional academic pathways.

For our part, YouthLink Scotland will support the youth work sector to engage with the review and its implementation. We will work collectively and collaboratively to ensure that youth work supports delivery of the aims for a rights-based, coherent system of career services in Scotland.

Tim Frew  
**Chief Executive, YouthLink and Career Review Programme Board member**

# 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

## Local partnerships and organisations play a vital role in supporting young people:

- Local partnerships, including the third sector, have proven effective at connecting individuals with services in areas where there is greatest need for those who are furthest from the labour market.
- Local authorities play a key role in planning, coordinating and delivering employability activities via Community Planning Partnerships which are linked to Local Outcome Improvement plans and include Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs).
- LEPs ensure that relevant partners are involved, services are integrated, and investment meets the needs of individuals and the economy.
- The third sector is critical to the delivery of career services in Scotland, including those based in Scotland and those providing services to Scotland from elsewhere.

## Fragmentation of support across the country leads to inequitable and inconsistent provision:

- Fragmentation and regional variation mean that not all young people have equal access to career services.
- A lack of clarity on funding streams and high diversity in localised activities creates a challenge for devising effective forms of national collaboration and effective implementation.
- Third sector funding is used for the public good and often results in the delivery of similar services to those funded from the public purse.
- There are problems in achieving good and useful integration between local, national and international data on the education and employment system.
- Some countries have built a more effective set of structures to foster co-operation and collaboration at an operational level. These include both local and national structures.
- Fragmentation of career services and the requirement for their greater integration is a consistent theme of many recent Scottish policies and strategies.



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- This fragmentation leads to a complex delivery landscape. Young people, particularly those at risk, face confusion as the career support they receive is determined by wide-ranging policy, programmes and funding arrangements
- In many cases the net effect is that some young people 'cycle' through initiative upon initiative with no oversight from any one party

**There are persistent challenges for those who are disengaged with traditional education:**

- Young people not in traditional education are unlikely to approach or benefit from many formal services
- It is also clear that these people are among those likely to need the most support. The right support at the right time can make a big difference to their life chances
- Many don't see themselves represented in career services and are more likely to talk to people who understand them, their community, and their lived experience



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# What needs to change?

- **Career services are delivered within communities** in a way that is aligned to social justice values and the principles of fair work, providing access to consistent national services
- **Young people have access to people who understand them,** their community, and their lived experience
- **Career services are available within and through the communities with which young people identify** and those involved in delivery are trusted by their community
- **Local Employability Partnerships ensure that relevant partners are involved,** services are integrated, and investment meets the needs of individuals and the economy
- **Formal career services work in strong collaboration with LEPs and Community Learning and Development** to deliver career information, advice and guidance leading to an improved learner journey
- **Digital technology connects people to the right support** at the right time, in ways which are highly personalised, relevant and engage local communities
- **Ongoing evaluation leads quickly and directly to changes** at a national and local level meaning services are always improving and kept up to date with changes in industry
- **Greater coordination amongst national and local partners,** with clearer roles and responsibilities, more integrated services, common standards and measurement frameworks

# 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.



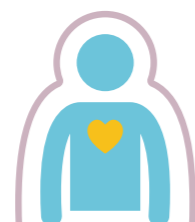
## A new career development model

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.

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### **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.

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### **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 local services and communities?

- **Greater access to career services within communities**  
Services delivered in a way that is consistent with social justice values and the principles of fair work, providing access to consistent national services
- **Career services that meet the needs of those with lived experience**  
Ensuring local career services meet the needs of those with protected characteristics and other equality factors
- **Support for those that need it most**  
Services are accessible and approachable and able to relate to the situation and needs of those who may otherwise be disengaged
- **More joined up services**  
Greater coherence and consistency in the delivery of career services, with clear roles and responsibilities
- **Access to better information**  
The right data to support and monitor career decision making
- **More connection to support**  
With clear roles and responsibilities across national and local partners
- **Developing the local workforce**  
Building on the existing skill sets in third sector organisations to provide and enhance career related services

- **Learning from local delivery**  
Insight and innovation from community service provision is fed back into the development of all future career services
- **Co-delivery of career services**  
Local and national partners work together to broaden career services, meeting the needs of young people, consistent with the career development model

### What will it require from local services and communities?

- **Aligning provision** to consistent and clearly defined learning experiences as outlined in the career development model
- **Enhanced data sharing** in line with relevant legislation and regulations
- **Ensuring integration** and investment meets the needs of individuals and the economy through Local Employability Partnerships
- **Shared learning and development activities** that help make connections between local and national services
- **Shared ownership** for the career system through the career services coalition
- **Clear leadership**, empowerment and accountability to deliver changes required



# 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 local communities in developing:

- an overarching ‘target operating model’ which outlines the overall vision for the career system
- a ‘service blueprint’ for community 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

Local and third sector organisations interested in finding out more about this work, or getting involved in helping the Programme Board in its work should visit [www.CareerReview.scot](http://www.CareerReview.scot) or express interest by emailing [CareerReview@sds.co.uk](mailto:CareerReview@sds.co.uk)

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