

SG POLICY UPDATE

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Access Delivery Group with regular updates on related policy developments within the Scottish Government. ADG members should notify SG officials of any additional policy areas that they would like to see covered within the update going forward.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF STUDENT SUPPORT

The Scottish Government responded to the independently chaired Student Support Review in June 2018 with commitments for improvements across FE and HE. This included, in 2018/19, investment of over £5 million to support an increase in the care-experience bursary to £8,100 per year for students across Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE). In 2019/20, we will increase bursaries for students from the lowest income families across FE and HE; deliver a guaranteed bursary for eligible students in FE and increase the HE bursary income threshold to support access.

We recognise that there are a number of recommendations made by the Review which require further work and have committed to progressing those. These include a commitment that SG will work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to explore the recommendation for a 'Special Support' system for students eligible for social security benefits whilst studying, further consider the recommendation that loans should be introduced to FE with external focus group research having taken place in colleges across Scotland, and consider the recommendation that students should have more choice on the timing of their payments, particularly in HE.

We are also conducting a review of non-core and discretionary support which will include support for part-time students, disabled students and student carers. A consultation will be launched to inform this work.

15-24 LEARNER JOURNEY REVIEW

We have recently completed a programme of work to scope each of the 17 recommendations and have drafted an initial plan and timeline of work. We are now in early stages of implementation however we continue to work with relevant stakeholders to refine and develop these plans as work progresses.

In the year ahead we will be starting work to: ensure every pupil in Scotland has access to an online account to collate their skills and experiences; enhance the personalised support available when choosing courses and planning a career; deliver a new careers strategy to set the vision for high quality career information, advice and guidance services accessible to all; and improve choice through the expansion of Graduate Apprenticeships to provide new higher level technical skills.

In taking the Review recommendations forward, we are committed to improving the experience for the learner and setting a clear expectation for more purposeful collaboration between schools, colleges, universities and employers.

We are clear that in doing so we require strong joint leadership, supported by the right evidence base, to ensure we continue to invest in the right qualifications and right types of learning to deliver the best outcomes for our young people and for the Scottish economy.

DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE (DYW)

The most recent Developing the Young Workforce Programme Board meeting was held on 14 November 2018 at the Prince's Trust, with Young Scot and young people from the DYW and Learner Journey Advisory group in attendance. These young people facilitated the three discussion sessions by reflecting on their own experience; School Experience, Employer Groups and Equalities.

The sixth session of the DYW National Advisory Group took place on 23 October 2018, chaired by the Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills. The group reflected on the progress of the programme and the continuous achievement of the headline target. The Minister advised that he had attended the Education and Skills Committee, on 3 October, as part of the Inquiry into the progress of DYW recommendations 1 and 2. Members received a presentation on improving outcomes for pupils who do not follow an academic pathway and those who leave school without Highers. The group requested a more detailed assessment of the DYW Regional Groups.

On 27 November 2018, the Education and Skills Committee published its [report](#) following an Inquiry into young people's pathways. The Committee recognises the significant amount of progress made since the DYW programme commenced in 2014 but also highlights 30 recommendations for Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland and other agencies to consider. The Committee's report recommends additional focus on Careers Information and Guidance provision, more work experience opportunities and the need to support businesses seeking to engage with schools and provide apprenticeships as well as expanding our support to care experienced and disabled young people.

[Developing the Young Workforce's Fourth Annual Progress Report](#) was published on 21 December 2018.