ENTERPRISE AND SKILLS REVIEW:
REPORT ON PHASE 2

15-24 LEARNER JOURNEY REVIEW

All learners are on the right route to the right career through the right course via the right information

Contents

1. Introduction

The Scottish Government's ambition is for a world-class learning and skills system.

This system should deliver the best value to the learner, whereby all learners are on the right route to the right career, through the right course via the right information.

The Scottish Government wants the learning and skills system to make the most effective contribution to productivity and inclusive growth, and support the achievement of the Scottish Economic Strategy (2015).

The Scottish Government also wants the system to provide an excellent learning experience which meets the needs and aspirations of all young people and equips them with skills for learning, life and work. This requires a focus on delivering equity, raising attainment, promoting equality, tackling inequalities and supporting those with additional support needs.

In response, the Scottish Government has commenced a review of the education provision for all 15-24 year olds to ensure their learning journey is as efficient and effective as possible, removes unnecessary duplication and provides stepping stones to success for those needing most support.

In defining the scope of this review, the Scottish Government is aware that the concept of the 'learner journey' extends to include the factors affecting a child's learning capacity pre and post birth and includes the formal stages of learning from the ages of 3-14 years (the Broad General Education) and from 24 years and beyond. The Scottish Government has in place a range of existing strategy and policy addressing the learner's journey.

Building on this existing work, this review specifically focuses on the 15-24 stage of learning. This is in recognition that this is a critical point for young people in their journey, being the point of greatest choice – and potentially, therefore, overlap – in provision. This review, therefore, should be considered as just one part of the Scottish Government's approach to developing education and skills provision for children, young people and adults.

2. Purpose, Vision and Benefits

Vision

We want our learning and skills system to make the most effective contribution to productivity and inclusive growth and provide a post 15 learning experience which meets the needs and aspirations of all young people, equipping them with skills for learning, life and work.

With the learner at the centre, the Scottish Government's vision is for a learning and skills system which enables efficient and effective learning journeys through:

• Informed decision making by the learner.

• High quality learning opportunities.

• Straightforward, seamless efficient connections between different parts of the system, including using existing qualifications and experiences to move more quickly through the system.

• Equality of access to these opportunities, including suitable learner funding.

Objectives

To develop policy proposals on improving the 15-24 Learner Journey, the Scottish Government is taking forward a review, building on the core values and approaches set out in Get It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and Developing the Young Workforce. The aim is to enhance the learning and skills system and:

• *Put the learner at the centre* – delivering the full range of opportunities learners need at the right level and the right quality.

• *Prioritise equity of access, so that non-traditional and part-time journeys are supported and joined up*: It is important – not least to provide for the stepping stones for those that need them – that the journeys remain flexible to best support learner needs and preferences. We need also to give learners the time they need as part of a commitment to life-long learning and future up-skilling and re-skilling.

• *Ensure a straightforward and connected system designed for the learner and flexible for change* – learners should easily be able to identify the best journey for them and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and cost.

Outcomes

The 15-24 Learner Journey Review, whilst being integral to the broader aims of the Enterprise and Skills Review and closely connected to its other work-streams, will deliver a programme of activity extending well beyond the close of the of the Enterprise and Skills Review.

It is currently in Stage 1, in which we are gathering the evidence and engaging stakeholders including young people, reporting in autumn 2017. During Phase 2 of the E&S Review, the 15-24 Learner Journey Review programme governance has been put in place, there has been extensive engagement with stakeholders at national and regional level and there has been a focus on gathering the views of young people. Key areas of focus have been agreed with stakeholders, and the review is being taken forward through five projects:

- Improving information, advice and application processes – This will include an options appraisal of a learner choices and applications service which brings together student support information and the careers, advice and information system on My World of Work with UCAS, Apprenticeship on line and a new college application process.

- Improving understanding and connectivity of the careers service in colleges and universities – This will include a review of current careers advice and guidance services for learners in college and university.

- Improving the ease and equity with which young people can apply to college – Recognising the work already being taken forward as part of the Commission for Widening Access, this will focus specifically on evaluating the benefits and costs/ of a common application process for colleges.

- Improving the design, alignment and coherence of the 15-24 learning journey and the ease with which all young people move through their learning, regardless of where they are studying – This will include evaluating the opportunities and learner journey choices in and across schools, colleges and community / third sector based learning. Identify and consider any unnecessary duplication of learning. We will establish options for removing unnecessary repetition and maximising progression through levels of study in or between school, community, college, training and university.

- Improving the system and removing unnecessary duplication – We will develop a system wide analysis of unit cost and rate of return across school, community, college, training (including employability programmes), and university. We will use this to inform options for the future balance and method of investment. We will consider the future strategic direction of the learning system in Scotland

Benefits
- Improved ease with which all young people can move through their learning, regardless of where they are studying.

- Improved design, alignment and coherence of the 15-24 learning journey.

- Improved ease and equity with which young people can apply to college.

3. Delivering Better Outcomes

The Review will take forward a series of recommendations that build on key Scottish Government strategies and policies already in place in relation to the 15-24 learning system: for example, Curriculum for Excellence, Developing Young Workforce, Widening Access, and Raising Attainment.

In particular, the Review takes at its starting point:

- Work that impacts upon the 15-24 Learner Journey that is already underway and which we need to **continue** (for example, the work of the Developing Young Workforce Programme).

- Work that impacts upon the 15-24 Learner Journey that is already underway and which we need to further **enhance** (for example, the work of the Commission on Widening Access, Student Support Review).

Building on this, the review will focus on new strategy, policy and activity which we need to **develop** in order to achieve the desired improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the 15-24 Learner Journey. This will be achieved through the following projects:

Project	Outcome
1 LEARNER CHOICE AND APPLICATION	• **Improved information, advice and application processes** This will include evaluating the cost/benefit of a learner choices and applications service which brings together student support information and the careers, advice and information system on My World of Work with UCAS, Apprenticeship on line and a new college application process.
2 LEARNER CHOICE AND APPLICATION: COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES	• **Improved information and advice in colleges and universities** This will include a review of current careers, advice and guidance services for learners in college and university.
3 ACCESS & APPLICATION	• **Improvement to the ease and equity with which young people can apply to college** Recognising the work already being taken forward as part of the Commission for Widening Access, this will focus specifically on evaluating the benefits and costs/of a common application process for colleges.
4 PROVISION TRANSITION/ PROGRESSION	• **Improvement to the design, alignment and coherence of the 15-24 learning journey** • **Improvement to the ease with which all young people move through their learning, regardless of where they are studying**. This will include evaluating the opportunities and 15-24 Learner Journey choices in and across schools, colleges and community/third-sector-based learning. Identify and consider any unnecessary duplication of learning. We will establish options for removing unnecessary repetition and maximising progression through levels of study in or between school, community, college, training and university.
5 FUNDING, STRUCTURES, LEGISLATION	• **Improvement to the learning and skills system including removing unnecessary duplication** We will develop a system-wide analysis of unit cost and rate of return across school, community, college, training (including employability programmes), and university. This will include agreement on a set of principles underpinning the learning and skills system, in relation, for example, to the value added from dual investment at different stages of learning. We will use this to inform options for the future balance and method of investment and consider the future strategic direction of the learning system in Scotland. If successful this will tell us more about whole life/whole system costs, including, for example, the experience and outcomes of those with ASN, disabilities and health conditions. However, given the complexity and breadth of this work, it will not be fully concluded in the time of this review. This work will, though, be an on-going Scottish Government commitment as we continue to pursue a more joined-up system.

Drawing this all together from a system perspective, and taking stock of what already works well, the review, has identified a number of emerging options that could be pursued to remove unnecessary duplication and to shorten learner journeys to make the best contribution to improving the productivity of public investment.

These options include, for example:

- Increased progression from community and employability provision back into learning and employment.

- Increased progression from school to employment.

- Increased progression from school to higher education in college.

- Increased progression from S5 to HNC in college/year one of university.

- Increased progression from S6 to HND in college/year 2 of university.

- Increased articulation from an HNC in college to year 2 of university.

- Increased articulation from an HND in college to year 3 of university.

- Strengthening the links between employment and education, for example, through Graduate level apprenticeships and clearer pathways to skills.

- Structural changes in relation to the recognition of level and volume of academic credit within the SCQF.

To help better scope these options, the review has begun to consider the implications that differing levels of collaboration and scale of change might have on the efficiency of the journeys of the learning and skills system. **These are summarised in the table overleaf.**

Each option presents the opportunity for a blend of different learner journeys appropriate to different learners' needs, building on what already works well and which make the best use of the strengths of partners.

1. Maintain existing activity

Driving **value from the existing system**, through improvement plans based on existing structures, levers and arrangements.

Some pros/cons of this approach:

- Could be more easily accepted by the system; straightforward to implement.
- Lowest risk, however presentational risk in relation to the impact of the review.
- Impact is slow to realise, prospect of limited change to the experience of learners in the medium term.
- Risk of failure to keep pace with future learner and system needs and failure to deliver greater efficiency.
- Maintains diversity challenges that are already in the system for longer (although doesn't create new unintended consequences).

Illustrative options:

1. Continued growth in school-college collaboration to broaden school choices and to make more pathways available to young people in the senior phase.
2. Continued initiatives to support some growth in S5-yr 1 university progression.
3. Continued initiatives to support some growth in S6-yr 2 university progression.
4. Continued initiatives to support some growth in college to university articulation.
5. Growth in college franchised degrees.
6. Growth of university summer school programmes.

2. Do more with existing partnerships

Strengthening and creating new levels of deeper collaboration to deliver and **configure existing provision in new ways**.

Some pros/cons of this approach:

- Strengthens and deepens existing partnership working.
- Easier to implement.
- More acceptable levels of risk.
- Improved efficiency without the significant costs of reconfiguration of the learner system.
- Harder to realise savings and likely to fail to keep pace with future learner and system needs.

Illustrative options:

1. A strengthening of the senior phase with greater and deeper college and university involvement in school.
2. Greater articulation from college through an expansion of associate student models and development of new models.
3. Increased college delivery of franchised degrees, especially in industries where the recognised qualification for entry is a degree.
4. Increased school, college and employer collaboration to deliver a greater volume of foundation apprenticeships/National Certificates/VQ and HN qualifications in S4 to S6.

3. Collaborate in new ways with greater agility and flexibility in the system

Make some changes to parts of the existing system, including the possibility of better purposing and establishing new expectations of parts of the system.

Some pros/cons of this approach:

- Since change is not whole system wide there is lower cost and risk associated.
- There is a risk that pace of change is slow, and impact can be unpredictable given that change occurs in pockets and not across the system as whole.

Illustrative options:

Some additional routes could be explored as part of building a more flexible and efficient learner journey, such as:

- Repurposing existing collaboration between schools, colleges and universities and employers to create new regional partnerships, whereby the senior phase is co-designed and co-delivered.
- New accelerated degree programmes.
- Significant expansion of Graduate Apprenticeships with more significant engagement with and leadership from employers.

4. Reconfigure

The most ambitious approach, **making significant changes to the learning system** to do new things in new ways.

Some pros/cons of this approach

- Future looking.
- Designed with the learner at the centre, likely to yield most significant benefits for them.
- Leads change and delivers innovation in collaboration.
- Greatest complexity and high risk in the short term, potential for greatest impact on Scotland's economic strategy and, if the right safeguards are in place, has the greatest potential for efficiency and effectiveness savings for both the learner and the state.

Illustrative options:

1. No duplication of SCQF levels at school, college or university; with consistently applied exceptions based on individual need.
2. New Technical Education System with streamlined pathways to skilled employment.

4. Implementation

Focusing Support On The User

The review has engaged with young people from the outset through a commissioned piece of research undertaken by SQW Consultancy in partnership with Young Scot. Young Scot is the national youth information and citizenship charity.

The research by SQW involved the establishment of an Insights Panel – a panel of 12 young people aged between 17 and 23 – set up to co-design the research and provide input and guidance throughout. This group has led a total of 14 workshops, engaging 145 young people aged 15-24 from across Scotland.

Young people involved in the research also participated in a discussion with Shirley-Anne Somerville, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science. This discussion was part of a workshop event to test out the Scottish Government's emerging thinking alongside the views expressed by young people.

SQW's final report will be available in early June 2017. This will be considered alongside what we already know about the learning and skills system through our learner destination system managed by Skills Development Scotland.

Specific and targeted employer engagement is planned over the coming months. It is intended that this will involve three workshops across Scotland, building on the findings of the Enterprise and Skills Review and developed in partnership with Skills Development Scotland.

Engagement with Partners

Successful implementation requires significant collaboration, including across parts of Government, and so the programme is led in partnership with the directorates of Economic Development, Learning, Fair Work, Employability and Skills, Children and Families and Advanced Learning and Science, OCEA and through collaboration with external partners, and local government.

At a project level, the review will and is engaging with the multiple stakeholders involved. This includes between providers of education and training including local authorities, schools, colleges, universities, private training companies; the third sector; employers; our major public bodies responsible for commissioning learning provision, delivering career information, advice and guidance, and improving the performance of the system (Scottish Funding Council, Skills Development Scotland and Education Scotland); and other educational bodies responsible for qualifications, in particular the Scottish Qualification Authority. The Scottish Credit & Qualification Framework Programme is also a key partner, providing opportunities for illustrating the levels of different types of qualifications offered by providers to support progression planning.

Implementation is, therefore, planned to include engagement from:

Internal interested parties

- Student Awards Agency for Scotland.
- Digital services – Ensuring we maximise the use of technology and digital systems to support the accessibility and flexibility and choice.
- Communications – Ensuring we build awareness among parents, carers, employers and stakeholders.
- Equality & Diversity – Ensuring we improve the equality of participation and outcome for children and parents from different protected characteristic groups and those residing in Scotland's most deprived communities.

External

- Young people aged 15 to 24 years – engaged through user research.
- Parents/Carers – Engaged through user research and parent forum network.
- Employers – Engaged primarily through representative bodies, for example, the regional employer groups, Chambers of Commerce and the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board.
- Career guidance staff.
- School teachers, guidance staff and support staff.
- Community Learning and development staff in local authorities and third sector.
- Opportunity for All coordinators.
- College lecturers, guidance staff and support staff.
- University lecturers, guidance staff and support staff.
- Directors of Education.
- Unions.

Key Stakeholders

- Schools
- Employability
- College sector
- University sector
- Apprenticeships
- Professional associations
- Public Bodies/representative groups
  - Education Scotland
  - Scottish Qualifications Authority
  - Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework Partnership
  - Scottish Funding Council
  - National Union of Students
  - Skills Development Scotland
  - Apprenticeship Advisory Board
  - Developing Young Workforce National Group
  - Universities Scotland
  - COSLA/ADES/SLAED

Wider Policy Alignment

The review aligns with existing and planned activity across the education and training system (Education Delivery Plan, Curriculum for Excellence, Developing Young Workforce, STEM Strategy, National Youth Work Strategy, Student Support Review, Commission on Widening Access implementation and the work of Naomi Eisenstadt, Scotland's Poverty Advisor); and will take account of other relevant strategic and policy contexts (e.g. Scotland's Economic Strategy, the Labour Market Strategy, the Enterprise and Skills Review, the developing Fairer Scotland Action Plan).

The Scottish Government will ensure alignment between this review and the Scottish Government's School Governance Review which is to consider the roles and responsibilities of local and national partners in the delivery of education, including the establishment of a fair and transparent needs-based funding formula for schools.

Looking At Digital and Workforce Development

Noting the important key underpinnings of digital and gender equality within the overall learning and skills system, the review will consider both through the lens of two curriculum areas; software development and childcare. This will enable a consideration of a range of cross-cutting themes, including qualification alignment, types of learning experiences and the extent of progression planning, within the two subject areas. Both will enable a consideration of the actual experiences of curriculum planning and its design and delivery to respond to workforce and skills planning needs.

Actions For Change

Reflecting on the options available to the review, it is clear that outcomes of the review will need to be developed and implemented across schools, colleges and universities over time. Academic and planning cycles, will need to be considered. This will require further engagement, detailed planning and design, and likely significant and on-going work in relation to:

- Qualification design/joined up approaches to learning experiences.
- Joint curriculum design and planning.
- Transition planning for learners.
- Resource sharing and logistical planning.
- Shared measurements and integrated quality standards.

The review, therefore, acknowledges that implementation will take time and that recommendations for the short, medium and long term will be necessary.

On concluding the review in September 2017, the Scottish Government will move to implementation. In doing so, it recognises that some projects may require further review and development, further evidence gathering and consultation before implementation can fully take place.

As part of implementation, the Scottish Government working with the Strategic Board will organise a programme of work to take forward each of the approved policy propositions. Scope, budgetary considerations and oversight/governance arrangements will be reviewed at this point.

The Scottish Government recognises the likely complexity involved in this work and accepts its phased implementation, commencing in academic year 2017-18 and stretching over the lifetime of this Parliament – until 2021.

An important early step will be to work with the new strategic board on the implementation timeline and plan to help provide the requisite leadership and support needed to align the ambition between local, regional and national interests.

This engagement will involve alignment with the work on the data work-stream, and the work on skills alignment. This will be to ensure that our system of skills procurement maximises efficient learner journeys and that suitable metrics are developed, aligned with Scotland's strategic performance indicators, to measure the effectiveness of the learning and skills system as a whole and to inform investment across it.

The emerging metrics, and implementation plans will form part of the work overseen by the new strategic board as part of the effort to support an aligned and purposed single learning and skills system.