

Response ID ANON-RJB4-3CPE-W

Submitted to Skills delivery independent review: call for evidence
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Part 1 - Scotland's Skills Delivery Landscape

1 If there was one thing you would like to see change in how our skills landscape is structured and delivering, what would it be?

Please give us your views:

General

- Better communication and collaboration are needed across the skills landscape from schools and beyond.
- National agencies should play a more decisive role in developing a coherent landscape, recognising the different roles.
- While delivering structured approaches to skills that lead directly to employability is essential. We need to recognise better the everyday foundational skills learned through the development of youth work.
- We need more appreciation of the difference youth work makes in young people gaining and sustaining employment and going on to other positive destinations through the unique skills and traits learned and harnessed to best effect through youth work.

There needs to be a better acknowledgement that the skills landscape covers education too. As two examples, Developing Young Workforce (DYW) and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) are about developing skills and capacities. Our vision for education is that every child and young person can experience their right to an education which helps them to develop their personality, talents and abilities to their fullest potential (UNCRC Article 29). We believe a rights-based approach must include a strengthened role for youth work within a more collaborative and enhanced system – including creating a landscape that understands, recognises and resources youth work.

<https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/media/7365/yw-employability-audit-2022-final-002.pdf>

2 Thinking about the vision in the Terms of Reference for a system that is simple, people-focused and built on collaboration, how well are we doing against that vision just now?

Please give us your views:

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Please provide specific examples of success in the work of public agencies or the private/third sector.:

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Please provide specific examples of elements that don't work, are confusing or need to be improved.:

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3 Thinking about the different national agencies and partners involved in skills delivery, are there areas where more clarity is required about roles and responsibilities or where you think the balance of responsibilities should be changed?

Please give us your views:

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4 Thinking about how our economy and society is changing and the Scottish Government's ambitions for a skilled workforce as set out in the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, do you have any evidence on where the current skills and education landscape needs to adapt or change and how it could be improved?

Please give us your views. Please provide evidence to support your answer.:

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5 Can you provide any evidence of skills structures in other places that are delivering outcomes in line with Scotland's ambitions which Scottish Government should look to in achieving its ambitions?

Please give us your views:

Young people and youth workers often need to be able to pivot between different terminology. Core skills are transferable and essential for life and work. The National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework is a structure developed by the youth work sector in Scotland and articulates critical key differences that youth work makes to young people. They combine as valuable tools in planning and evaluating youth work and, most importantly, providing a structure for reflective learning and conversations with young people on their youth work and skills development journey.

Part 2 - Apprenticeships

6 Do you have any evidence relating to the outcomes of the current funding and delivery of apprenticeship programmes (Modern Apprenticeships, Foundation Apprenticeships and Graduate Apprenticeships) in terms of either outcomes for learners and/or the needs of employers?

Please give us your views:

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7 Do you have any views or evidence on how changes to the operation of apprenticeship programmes could support the ambition for apprenticeship programmes to be an embedded part of the wider education system?

Please give us your views:

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8 Apprenticeships are often described as being 'demand-led'. Do you have any evidence about how process for developing and approving apprenticeship frameworks responds to skills priorities? Please include suggestions of how the development process could be enhanced.

Please give us your views. Please include suggestions of how the development process could be enhanced.:

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9 Do you have evidence on the benefits or risks of employer leadership in apprenticeship development or the impact it has on outcomes for apprentices and/or employers?

Please give us your views. Please include suggestions for how the governance of apprenticeship design and delivery could be strengthened.:

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Part 3 - National Occupational Standards

10 Do you have any evidence on how the current arrangements for National Occupational Standards are delivering against the intended ambitions of the National Occupational Standards Strategy?

Please give us your views:

The Youth Work National Occupational Standards (NOS) aim to define the competencies required to carry out the functions carried out by the youth work workforce. The NOS are intended to describe the competencies required to fulfil the tasks required in the youth sector. The NOS are not designed to describe any specific youth work role. The NOS for Youth Work does not equate directly to qualifications but are used to derive relevant competency-based qualifications for the youth work sector. They are the agreed standards of performance and knowledge required in youth work practice across the UK and used by employers to inform job descriptions to consider skills needs and identify areas of improvement. Further, they can also support an individual's professional and continuous development. The different contexts in which youth work is practised will affect how these NOS are applied.

The relevant national, regional, local and political context and other applicable standards of performance or competence should be considered when reading and applying the Youth Work NOS. It should be noted that the approach to youth work differs across the four nations of the UK. The NOS have been written to accommodate the differences and enable different terminology to be applied appropriately. However, regardless of the national context, the Values for Youth Work are at the core of all youth work practices developed in conjunction with the sector. The Values describe an approach to youth work, and all those working with young people are expected to work within the values.

Further, the broader Community Learning Development (CLD) Competency Framework combines the knowledge, skills and personal characteristics that makeup competence in CLD practice. Practitioners use the framework, training providers and employers to reflect on, develop and strengthen practice. The Competent Practitioner Framework has been developed by the CLD Standards Council Scotland (CLDSCS) as a tool to help develop practice. It can build capacity for effective partnership working, enable outcome-focused practice and link professional development to learner aspirations. It can be seen that youth work and the wider CLD family are anchored in building up skills of those young people practitioners support. This is particularly effective when working with the most marginalised young people.

Central to the practice is challenging discrimination and its consequences and working with individuals and communities to shape learning and development activities that enhance their quality of life and sphere of influence. They have good interpersonal and listening skills, and their practice demonstrates that they value and respect the knowledge, experience and aspirations of those involved. The non-formal nature of the practice helps initiate, develop and maintain relationships with local people and groups. They are covered through the SCQF framework and National Occupational Standards. As such, CLD practitioners need to be clear about the intention of any intervention they undertake, how it will support social change and how it relates to the skills they want to achieve.

11 Do you have any evidence to support how changes to the delivery landscape for developing and championing National Occupational Standards could support the ambition for National Occupational Standards to be the foundation of vocational training and learning in Scotland?

Please give us your views:

Part 4 - Upskilling and Reskilling

12 Do you have any evidence to demonstrate how the existing delivery arrangements for upskilling and reskilling, including the specific funding programmes, are impacting on outcomes for learners and/or industry and sectors?

Please give us your views:

13 Do you have any evidence about what measures, if any, should be in place to understand the quality of national skills programme delivery funded by public investment through independent training providers?

Please give us your views:

14 Thinking about the government's ambition to optimise the existing system for upskilling and reskilling throughout life, do you have any evidence to support how changes to the delivery landscape could help to achieve this ambition?

Please give us your views:

This consultation should be considered within the broader context of Education Reform in Scotland. Young people, consulted by youth workers on behalf of YouthLink Scotland, told us that youth work is part of education. It helps them feel safe, respected and included, access the support they need, learn and develop skills through individualised experiences and pathways, and gain accreditation and other forms of achievement. A renewed vision for Scottish education must reinforce a shared understanding of Scottish education, recognising that young people learn through different approaches across settings, supported by various educators. e support they need, learn and develop skills through individualised experiences and pathways and gain accreditation and other forms of achievement. They value their learning, skills development and achievements through youth work and want this valued equally alongside formal learning and qualifications.

Youth work also supports young people to develop, recognise and articulate their skills. In our consultation, 83% of young people said their skills, qualities, experiences and achievements gained through youth work were very important or essential to their future. They described their skills development through youth work as being 'life relevant' - now and for their future. Importantly, young people also expressed that youth work supports them in developing skills through practical, experiential opportunities and understanding their relevance and application to their future. This is seen as an essential element of what they need from education.

The Youth Work Skills Framework supports young people to recognise and articulate the essential skills developed through youth work.

Part 5 - Sector and Regional Skills Planning

15 Thinking about the overall ambition to ensure that the skills and education system is aligned to local, regional and national skills priorities, what aspects of the current delivery landscape are working well to support this ambition?

Please give us your views:

Youth work creates opportunities for young people to progress towards employment in the local area. This includes the possibility of a career as a youth worker. We have many examples of youth work delivering national priorities around skills and experiential learning through youth work alongside local employers. This helps build young people's skills and work readiness. In Stirling, as just one example, youth work provided a non-formal option for a group of young boys in school. They worked on vocational qualifications while building their skills in practical ways, e.g. paving. They have achieved qualifications and demonstrated the ability to align skills and education.

16 The Auditor General recommended that the Scottish Government take urgent action to deliver improved governance on skills alignment. Do you have any evidence to support whether the current arrangements are likely to deliver progress?

Please give us your views:

17 Do you have any evidence to indicate how changes to the delivery landscape could better deliver the vision for a system which is agile and responsive to future needs and where labour market insights can inform strategic provision planning?

Please give us your views:

18 Do you have any evidence to demonstrate the success of Skills Investment Plans or Regional Skills Investment Plans on sector and regional skills outcomes?

Please give us your views:

Young people tell us that the core/transferable skills should be included within a sector and regional skills planning approach. The system should, therefore, consider the balance between supporting career aspirations and realistic possibilities within a region.

19 Thinking about the current delivery landscape, how well is it structured to deliver the Scottish Government's ambitions for a just transition to net zero?

Please give us your views:

Part 6 - Careers and Young People

20 Do you have any evidence to inform how the new Careers by Design Collaborative could be embedded within the wider education and skills system and delivery landscape to enable the recommendations of the Careers Review to be taken forward to ensure people can access the advice, information and guidance that they need?

Please give us your views:

21 Alongside Careers information, advice and guidance, do you have any evidence to demonstrate what additional support young people, including those from marginalised groups, might need to develop their skills and experience to prepare them for the world of work?

Please give us your views. Please include details about who you think should be responsible for providing this support.:

Young people participating in youth work told us that qualifications were essential to help them progress to college, university and employment. Some young people said that it felt like working towards qualifications was the focus of formal education. Alongside formal qualifications, young people value their skills and achievements, including those from non-formal approaches such as youth work (82% of respondents to our consultation with young people said they were more important or just as necessary as their achievements in formal settings. As such, they felt they should be recorded and valued alongside formal qualifications and other measures of progress through education (88%). Youth work is positioned to inform future strategic decision-making across the education and skills system, assist young people in positive life destinations, and shape their future careers. Many schools partner with youth work and youth award providers to deliver recognition for non-formal learning that complements and supplements that from formal education. This helps to raise attainment and achievement¹². Several youth awards are on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), but a systems change is needed to value all youth awards.

Part 7 - Employer engagement and support

22 Do you have any evidence about how the current arrangements for employer engagement in skills and education are supporting delivery of Scottish Government's ambitions and outcomes?

Please give us your views:

Youth work is integral to the education workforce in schools and beyond. However, this requires significant and consistent investment if youth work is to be utilised to the best effect and contribute further to developing the skills of young people alongside formal educators.

23 Thinking about the different aspects of the system in which employers have an interest, and the existing mechanisms for feeding into policy and delivery, do you have any evidence to support how changes in the delivery landscape could improve the partnership working between Scottish Government, its public bodies and employers?

Please give us your views:

When developing the young workforce, there is a need for greater coherence across the skills landscape among critical partners (including youth work) to support employer engagement. This was seen as vital during engagement with youth workers and young people as part of the careers review.

About you

What is your name?

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Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:
YouthLink Scotland

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Do not publish response

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.

I consent