

# Careers By Design

The Career Review: what it means for employers and Developing the Young Workforce

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

Every business in Scotland relies on fresh talent to support its growth.

The need for a high-performing, on-the-pulse careers service which keeps people informed of the jobs and industries in Scotland, and helps them develop the skills to thrive in the world of work, is crucial to ensure the supply of talent to Scotland's businesses.

Employers have a critical role to play in designing and delivering the services that support career choices. Whether it's through graduate recruitment, work experience, apprenticeships or other forms of employment, tens of thousands of Scottish employers actively support young people's career aspirations.

Historically, employers have too often been passive 'consumers' of our education system, rather than a core or fundamental part of informing and influencing it.

The feedback from employers has consistently noted the system as complex and challenging to navigate, preventing many ambitious businesses from engaging with new talent. Strides have been made in recent years.

Initiatives such as Developing the Young Workforce have made significant progress locally and nationally in strengthening the links between industry and education. And through the Young Person's Guarantee, Scottish Government has highlighted the importance of an employer-led approach to supporting economic recovery for young people.

From Scottish Chambers of Commerce's perspective, the next stride is clear: it's time to place employers at the heart of career decision making, aligning the future of Scotland's career services with the real world of business and jobs.

The recommendations of the Career Review, to which Scottish Chambers of Commerce contributed, have sought to empower the careers service and employers to take this next step.

By capturing the views of employers and analysing best practice from around the world, these recommendations represent an ambitious redesign of Scotland's career system, identifying employers as a critical and active contributor to young people's education and training.

These are ambitions we can all get behind and I look forward to more employers joining this journey so that, together, we can make these recommendations a reality and significantly improve outcomes for both young people and Scotland's businesses.

Dr Liz Cameron CBE  
**Director & Chief Executive, Scottish Chambers of Commerce**

# 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

## Exposure to the world of work is good for young people, and leads to better outcomes:

- Young people who experience the world of work while in education have better employment outcomes, improved success within education and increased life satisfaction
- Innovative activities (Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships, the work of DYW school coordinators) are bringing young people closer to understanding and experiencing the world of work

## Young people don't have enough exposure to the world of work:

- Young people don't always understand the opportunities in the labour market, they can't relate their education to the world of work and don't know how to prepare for change in the world of work
- This lack of understanding leads to a lack of confidence about entering the labour market and a narrowing of aspirations
- There is demand for more opportunities to explore / experiment between work and education
- Employer engagement in the curriculum is limited and not systemic

## There is misalignment between the education and skills system and the needs of employers:

- There is misalignment between the skills demands of the economy and what our education and skills system provides
- Change in the world of work means a compelling requirement to understand the dynamic needs of employers and help young people respond to those
- Employers don't always understand the expectations of young people around the nature of work
- The education system places an emphasis on qualifications over skills for the world of work
- Many employers continue to prioritise qualifications over skills as job entry requirements

## It can be challenging for employers to engage with education:

- Engaging with education is challenging and complex for employers
- There is duplication in employer engagement across the system
- Employers find it easier to identify their contribution in the senior phase as it is more directly linked to their recruitment of young people
- Many employers lack capacity and capability to engage with education

## What needs to change?

- **Alignment between education and industry:** better alignment between the needs of employers and what our education and skills system provides
- **Universal exposure to the world of work:** ensuring that all young people can interact with employers from an early age
- **Employers co-designing curricula:** to ensure relevancy and currency of provision
- **Skills development:** supporting the development of skills needed to manage careers and thrive through change
- **Labour market insight:** ensuring high quality information and insight, developing and awareness of current and emerging opportunities
- **Making it easier for employers to engage:** building greater coordination amongst career services providers across the system

## 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.



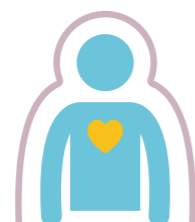
## A new career development model

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 employers and DYW?

- **More opportunities to engage with schools, colleges and universities**  
Broader and more consistent provision of work-related learning, with elements of the curriculum delivered in the practical setting of the workplace
- **It becomes easier to engage with schools, colleges and universities**  
Services are clear, systemic and consistent, with well-defined roles and responsibilities across the ecosystem – there is less duplication
- **Greater access to young talent**  
More young people are better equipped to enter the labour market
- **More young people with a breadth of skills that are in demand**  
Young people leaving education have a greater understanding and expectation of fair work and a broader skillset relevant to the needs of employers and the economy
- **Education and career providers understand the needs of employers**  
Better alignment between the skills demands of employers and what our education and skills system provides, with a wide range of clear routes and pathways

### What do we need from employers and DYW?

- **Greater support for curriculum delivery** and experiential work-related learning
- **Shared ownership** for the career system through the career services coalition
- **Providing career intelligence**, supporting pathways into sustainable employment
- **Greater focus on workplace innovation** to ensure that workers can utilise their skills and attributes
- **More opportunities for workers to access support for skills and career development** throughout their working lives
- **Giving skills greater currency** through recruitment and selection practices that recognise and value skills
- **Adoption of fair work principles and practices**
- **The adoption of principles of equality and anti-discrimination** as per The Equality Act 2010



# 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 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 employers in developing:

- an overarching ‘target operating model’ which outlines the overall vision for the career system
- ‘service blueprints’ which outline 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

Employers 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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