

Scottish Government

15-24 Learner Journey Review

Project 4: Provision, Transitions & Progression

This document provides a summary of key messages emerging as part of work on Project 4 to look at Improving the design, alignment and coherence of the 15-24 learning journey so that all learners are on the right route to the right career, through the right course via the right support and information and Improving the ease with which all young people move through their learning, regardless of where they are studying.

April 2018

Project 4: Provision, Transitions & Progression

Approach:

This paper is a high level summary, based on evidence emerging from an extensive programme of engagement on Project 4, between April and September 2017, in which we:

- Worked with critical friends in scoping and developing thinking.
- Established a Project Group, to help shape this work, to identify and take forward specific priorities. Membership included: schools; local authorities; universities; colleges; youth work; parents; national bodies; and many other organisations involved with education and young people.
- Used feedback from the young people involved in SQW research and engagement.
- Established five sub-projects, to enable us to drill down into key themes emerging from initial engagement. Each sub-project was led by a local or national partner and supported and facilitated by Scottish Government officials.

Scope:

Given the breadth of Project 4, and based on feedback from early discussion sessions with the wider Project Group, it was decided to divide the project into five sub-projects, in order to enable more focused discussions and evidence gathering in the following priority areas:

- Ensuring the learning offer enables all young people to progress in their learning, regardless of their abilities or intended destinations
- Ensuring that young people are fully supported in making key transitions in learning
- Improving knowledge, understanding and parity of existing pathways (qualifications & other experiences)
- Ensuring that the design & delivery of the senior phase curriculum increases opportunity and choice
- Use of data/ measuring success across sectors to improve learner journeys

Key messages:

The evidence emerging from this project, along with that from the other four projects, has formed the basis for the overarching report. There were many common messages emerging across the review as a whole. In terms of this specific project, a high level summary of the key messages and suggested actions emerging from each of the sub-projects is set out below.

Conclusion:

From engagement on this project, it is clear that more coherent learner journey post-15 will be supported by:

- A clear, shared vision about the purpose of post 15/ post compulsory education

- A national communication strategy to increase knowledge and understanding of a range of journeys from 15-24
- More accessible personal support for young people
- Systematic collaboration between all partners involved in post-15 education
- A more co-ordinated use of data across national organisations, to better understand the impact of different learner journeys

1. ENSURING THE LEARNING OFFER ENABLES ALL YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROGRESS IN THEIR LEARNING, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ABILITIES OR INTENDED DESTINATIONS

This focused on key areas including provision at SCQF level 7, the important place of S6 for different types of learners, the value of “non-traditional” routes to HE, the support available for young people most at risk of disengagement and strategies needed to keep them engaged in learning, and the need to raise the aspirations, support and choice for the “middle group” of young people.

Key messages:

- Ensure a better understanding of the currency of different SCQF level 7 qualifications and how these are used to support progression.
- Support young people to make the best subject choices and have support across transition points.
- Encourage partners, including universities, to have a greater involvement in the Senior Phase curriculum.
- Embed more practical elements/ volunteering/ work based learning to help all young people build up a skills portfolio in S6, regardless of pathways.
- Promote articulation routes in schools and colleges and also show the value of these pathways in developing skills levels and supporting young people into employment, as well as further and higher education.
- Improve the offer for statutory leavers across the country, including looking at what more needs to be done to prepare them in advance of their leaving date.

2. ENSURING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE FULLY SUPPORTED IN MAKING KEY TRANSITIONS IN LEARNING

This work identified the key principles behind effective transition between any point in the system, with three distinct stages in planning and ensuring successful transitions: capturing; orientation; and retention (with a particular focus on the last of these). It also focused on the importance of ensuring that the post-school journey for young people from the most deprived parts of Scotland is as stable as it is for those from the least deprived areas.

Key messages:

- Transition support should have an increased focus on the social and emotional, as well as practical aspects of transition, with increased (or better signposted) opportunities for one to one support in schools, college and universities. This should also support families as well as learners.

3. IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND PARITY OF EXISTING PATHWAYS (QUALIFICATIONS & OTHER EXPERIENCES)

This work focused on the importance of schools, learners, parents, carers and employers being aware of and understanding the full range of qualifications and pathways on offer. The contextual information around qualifications and pathways was felt to be important, with clearer information needed on the careers/ opportunities for further learning that they lead to. Communication with learners and parents needs to be clear and specific, and begin as early as possible.

Key points included the importance of greater prominence being given to the SCQF by all partners to underpin messages around qualifications and learning pathways.

4. ENSURING THAT THE DESIGN & DELIVERY OF THE SENIOR PHASE CURRICULUM INCREASES OPPORTUNITY AND CHOICE

This project focused on the implementation of the Senior Phase curriculum, and the importance of supporting personalisation and choice in a flexible three-year programme of learning. Curriculum design in the Senior Phase should be flexible and diverse enough to accommodate the needs and aspirations of all learners. Links between the BGE and Senior Phase should be overt, as young people need to understand the full range of pathways before the end of S3 to enable them to make choices. The value of vocational opportunities need to be fully promoted alongside National Qualifications, with information on all available pathways in order to make informed choices. The importance of partner collaboration in the design and delivery of the Senior Phase was seen as an important factor. The group also discussed the impact of curriculum structures and timetabling and the potential benefits of cross-sector CPD.

Key points included:

- The need for a shared vision and rationale for the post-15 education and skills system, providing clarity about what we want the system to deliver for different cohorts of learners and promoting equity of access and parity of esteem.
- Develop a mechanism to ensure that teachers, parents and young people are fully aware of the different pathways and the range of qualifications and routes available to young people, with regional approaches to curriculum planning to support collaborative planning and delivery of the Senior Phase curriculum.

5. USE OF DATA/ MEASURING SUCCESS ACROSS SECTORS TO IMPROVE LEARNER JOURNEYS

This work recognised that there is a great deal of information and data on young peoples' progress is held by national and local bodies in Scotland, and that this should be as aligned as possible to ensure that all individuals are supported to participate.

Key points included:

- The need for the development of better data and performance framework to improve our understanding of the impact of different learner journeys and the system as a whole. This will help ensure that young people are as well supported as possible through their 15-24 learner journey.