

## 15-24 Learner Journey Review Group – 28/09/17 – Colleges Scotland, Stirling

Following on from the first Learner Review Group meeting in March a second meeting was held on 28 September at Colleges Scotland, Stirling. The purpose of the second meeting was: to report back, discuss and test with the group the outputs of both the research conducted by SQW in partnership with Young Scot, and the work of the Learner Journey Review. The group took part in two discussion sessions and the feedback taken from those sessions is set out below.

### **First Session**

The first session focussed on the content of the research undertaken by SQW/Young Scot and asked three questions for discussion:

1. what does this tell us?
2. what are young people's priorities? And
3. how may we respond to these?

The comments were collated from each group and have been placed under each question.

<b>What does this tell us?</b>	<b>What are young people's priorities?</b>	<b>How may we respond to these?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having considered the findings of the research, the views of young people were consistent with previous such research and the views of many participants in the discussion.</li> <li>• Some participants felt that the feedback was similar to when they were at school.</li> <li>• The findings underlined the Group's thinking of what needs changed.</li> <li>• There is a need to consider an apparent mismatch in parts of the system e.g. – requirement to sit exams compared with young people seeking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choice/Time/Experience</li> <li>• Preparation for the world of work, e.g. a focus on softer skills and support and advice on completing CV's and application forms.</li> <li>• Visible additional support e.g. for young people in poverty and/or advice and/or counselling</li> <li>• To be able to have a career in what they're good at</li> <li>• Awareness and promotion of alternative routes available e.g. F.E. routes may not suit everybody</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the expansion in mentoring – How do we free up staff to do more mentoring?</li> <li>• Look at S1-S3 experience with better involvement of employers, universities, colleges and others.</li> <li>• All-System Approach with improved alignment between teachers' CPD and employers to foster better understanding and better awareness.</li> <li>• Respond collectively and with leadership</li> <li>• Enable curriculum innovation to create work based learning expectations to</li> </ul>

<p>more practical work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the Group felt that the numbers in the research findings are limited</li> <li>• The Group understood from the report that there is limited careers advice and guidance available (and limited resource as a result)</li> <li>• The different messages the learner hears from those out with the education system who can influence their decisions, e.g. friends and families – and the importance of those influencers being well-informed.</li> <li>• Need for better school/employer partnership</li> <li>• The work experience offer doesn't always meet employer's needs.</li> <li>• Careers Fairs are not always easily accessible e.g. for those who live in rural areas.</li> <li>• There is a continued perceived hierarchy between university, colleges and apprenticeships.</li> <li>• The Group recognise the value of work experience to employers as very important but also to young people's confidence.</li> <li>• The importance of 'life skills' to young people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to gain experience to equip them to make informed choices for themselves.</li> <li>• Financial support available to students.</li> <li>• School/Work/life balance</li> <li>• How best to promote alternative/non-linear pathways post school.</li> </ul>	<p>satisfy employer engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplify the response.</li> <li>• Some of the Group suggested taking a regional approach</li> <li>• Engage with employers to find out their needs e.g. do they think young people are job-ready? Is the public sector too influential?</li> <li>• Personal Social Education support -</li> <li>• Exam/Assessment system – Careers/ Aspirations/Abilities need to feature in this.</li> <li>• Consider the landscape and what's on offer</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the importance and value of vocational system.</li> <li>• Review the foundation apprenticeships approach to improve awareness.</li> <li>• Identify minimum standard/expectation for Young People.</li> <li>• Confidence building</li> <li>• Need to change some deeply held perceptions about what constitutes a successful destination.</li> <li>• Metrics of how to measure success? To consider in relation to widening access; too much focus on attainment and not achievement.</li> <li>• The Group suggested looking at the senior phase on career pathways</li> <li>• Seeing vocational qualification as part of</li> </ul>
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		<p>attainment is needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More space needed in secondary schools to allow time to develop life skills.</li><li>• Almost too late at senior phase – need earlier advice and mentoring.</li><li>• Recruit more teachers with life experience / college experience/ industry experience.</li><li>• Improved partnerships between schools and colleges.</li><li>• Provide more advice/ training to school teachers to allow them to give up to date advice on career pathways, including more teacher secondments into colleges/university/industry.</li><li>• Provide a better understanding of the wider education system so young people understand what impact their subject choices have, e.g. what career can you do if you're good at geography?</li><li>• Some of the Group suggested developing an offer to provide a wide range of skills and which draws on experiences – including developing life and soft skills</li><li>• Creating opportunity, the society and the prosperous economy we desire is the responsibility of all – so shift it from “resourcing” education to enabling and encouraging wider engagement and through personal and corporate social responsibility as an investment not a</li></ul>
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		<p>cost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Look to change culture so e.g. mentoring becomes part of normal practice.</li><li>• E.g. corporate social responsibility meaning all/most employers support employees to act as volunteer mentors and offer placements etc. Gender based occupational recreation and barrier impacting other equalities and careers/choices important.</li></ul>
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## Second Session

The second session focussed on priorities and improvement. The groups were asked to look at four journeys, which are set out in the table below, and to discuss some policy ideas around those four journeys. The focus being on the *how* of creating a unified senior phase involving schools, colleges, universities and employers in creating the curriculum and learning experiences young people are coming to expect and the economy needs.

1. The S4 and S5 Statutory winter leavers' journey	2. The school to university journey	3. The college to university journey	4. The apprenticeship journey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability is resulting in perverse incentive to increase attainment – we are not meeting the needs of these young people through the traditional curriculum.</li> <li>• Some families need a network of support from a range of agencies at an earlier stage.</li> <li>• Blurred edges between college, school, third sector, employers etc</li> <li>• Gap in appropriate college courses for this cohort – small but significant minority – difficult for schools to provide suitable curriculum.</li> <li>• Could we change the statutory leaver restriction e.g. statutory leaver dates should be in summer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are some still doing one higher, not a mix of curricular activities?</li> <li>• Fundamental question – what is S6 for? Advanced Highers v personal social skills / employability skills.</li> <li>• For those who stay on until 18 it can be a disadvantage when trying to get work and funding for apprenticeships</li> <li>• Maturity issue – 17yr in university focuses on one route limits reflection.</li> <li>• S6-Y2 – Academic Credit/ experience – range of attributes explained – GCU has excellent practice.</li> <li>• Confidence – graduate attributes – room to change /experiment/explore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing – promote Colleges as attractive destinations to parents/pupils as an alternative pathway.</li> <li>• Qualification structure is perceived as different and complex</li> <li>• Disincentive for schools to send pupils to college where attainment is poor.</li> <li>• The college journey is rarely linear.</li> <li>• Many barriers to learning – Financial/100 % attendance.</li> <li>• Create flexibility around credits and what they count towards.</li> <li>• Support institutions to effectively collaborate and grow relationships</li> <li>• More parity could be achieved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing – clarify the offer Schools need to spend more time educating parents, pupils and teachers about this.</li> <li>• Foundation apprenticeships and Graduate apprenticeships – Universities are inconsistent at the moment with entry levels and recognition of value.</li> <li>• Schools should be the enablers for learner direction and progression – need a clear route forward from schools and partners to look at and understand the pathways and support and steps available.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16+ Transition meetings and process, is this constructed Scotland wide; needs reviewed?</li> <li>• Activity Agreements, designed to enable a school partner integration but not yet consistent and embedded.</li> <li>• EMA Funding - works for some but not the majority - make this more vocational and attractive.</li> <li>• Start the discussion earlier e.g. from 1<sup>st</sup> year onwards schools know who will need that alternative engagement.</li> <li>• Could we have a similar idea to the “baby box” but have standardised apps supplied to all YP at the point of transition planning so that they (and parents/guardian have easy access to information.)</li> <li>• Need better understanding of why these YP are disengaging?</li> <li>• Need to understand needs/circumstances of individuals – flexibility needed to address these.</li> <li>• Relationships and planned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety of university pathways</li> <li>• Leave home/establish independence.</li> <li>• Scottish students “stay at home” - All this limits ambition rather than expansion and enabling choice.</li> <li>• M.A – Not a community in same way as FE/HE</li> <li>• Recognition of foundation apprenticeships by HE/FE.</li> <li>• S2 of University – the learner misses out on social and emotional support etc.? System geared to supportive transition to year 1 e.g. fresher’s week. How might this be extended into year 2?</li> </ul>	<p>through colleges and universities co–creating degrees, so students can transition more smoothly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are we incentivising universities to take on articulation students? Less articulation numbers means there is less priority to support them.</li> <li>• If you don’t get into university, there needs to be advice provided on what other options are available. E.g. careers.</li> <li>• Need to understand the difficulties between universities and what is driving this – Controversy, funding, brand, research scores ( and £)</li> <li>• Would be good to understand the age factors behind success.</li> <li>• EMA payment v bursary. Recurring issues show EMA is not paid till 4 weeks after start date; it’s not paid weekly but distributed over the duration of course due to summer holidays.</li> </ul>	
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transitions key		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The calculation of withdrawal from college and link to subsequent destination provides a skewed picture – need far more true and consistent data set across colleges, HEI's and apprenticeships.</li><li>• Common application process</li><li>• Learner tracking – is SQA number plus NI number sufficient?</li></ul>	
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