



Developing the Young Workforce

School/Employer Partnerships

Guidance for schools

September 2015

An ambition of Developing the Young Workforce is that education and employers work closely together to equip all young people with the skills and knowledge they will need to flourish in work, and to support diversity in the workforce.

This Guidance for School/Employer Partnerships is intended to support the aim of meaningful and productive school/employer partnerships operating in all secondary schools by 2018/19, although it also applies to primary schools and early years. These partnerships should build on good practice and existing links with employers. They should bring mutual benefit and evolve to respond to local circumstances.

The Guidance for School/Employer Partnerships has been published in 3 parts: Guidance for Employers, Guidance for Schools, and Guidance for Developing the Young Workforce Regional Groups and Local Authorities. This part highlights the role of schools. Annex A provides background information.

Also published to support DYW are:

- Career Education Standard (3-18) (September 2015)
- Work Placements Standard (September 2015)

These documents will be revisited in March 2017 in light of experience and use.

How will the partnership support the school and young people?

For schools there's a great opportunity to access the skills, knowledge, experience and support of an employer and their workforce. This resource can enhance learning and teaching across the curriculum and help prepare young people for the world of work. Investing time in building partnerships with employers can provide a range of benefits for young people and the school such as:

- improving learning and teaching by bringing real-life contexts into the classroom (e.g. contributing to learning on STEM, or languages skills)
- a better understanding of the local labour market (helping to ensure that learning is relevant and supports all young people into positive destinations)
- more innovative careers information, advice seminars and workshops within the school
- developing skills for job applications, CV writing and interviews
- providing references and recommendations
- development and recognition of skills and attributes for employment
- high quality work placements, work visits or work shadowing opportunities
- internships in holiday periods
- CLPL for teaching staff to enhance skills through access to employer knowledge
- sharing professional knowledge and experience for mutual benefit
- reducing barriers for young people with additional support needs.

An employer might also be willing to enter a flexible long-term relationship which supports the success of a school in other ways.

How can an employer benefit from the partnership?

Across Scotland many businesses have formed partnerships with schools and colleges. Reasons to be involved include:

- helping young people develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge that they need for their business
- inspiring young people to work for them and securing a talent flow
- promoting a positive awareness of their business in the community and supporting diversity in the workplace
- giving something back to their community
- applying the perspective and skills of young people to their business challenges
- providing development opportunities for their staff.



What does a partnership look like?



The aim of the partnership is to support young people in their understanding and readiness for work. Every partnership will be different and will need to be developed collaboratively, considering the needs and resource constraints of all those involved. It should be expected to adapt to changing needs and circumstances.

Expectations of the partnership should be realistic and, if necessary, start small. It's unlikely that one employer however large, can meet the needs of every learner. Schools could work with a number of partners on specific aspects of learning, or for particular individuals or groups of young people.

An employer might choose to be in partnership with any number of schools or colleges, in any number of regions. This will provide flexibility and an opportunity to share good practice.

Secondary schools and primaries can benefit from working together to organise partnerships through school clusters. This can be by a secondary working

with their associated primaries but also through neighbouring schools working together. Schools are increasingly working with colleges to develop and deliver senior phase vocational pathways and as part of these partnerships, there are also opportunities to establish joint links with employers.

Will schools be supported to set up a partnership?

Your local authority supported by Skills Development Scotland, and the DYW Regional Group (when established), will have a role in helping schools to establish and develop effective partnerships. They may wish to take a coordinated approach to contacting employers. A key contact for schools will be the local authority DYW contact.

Schools should continue to make use of existing links with employers that are working well, and expand or develop these or new partnerships as appropriate.

How do I set up a school/employer partnership?

Planning the partnerships in advance is important to ensure that there is sufficient time available in the school year to get the best contribution from employers, and that a valuable long-term partnership is established. Schools should also consider arranging partnerships with a range of employers to support the needs of all young people. Schools may also wish to consider partnerships for one department which could remain focused or be broadened out to include others, if appropriate.

For the partnerships to be effective by 2018/19, work required to develop the partnership should naturally form part of schools' improvement planning discussions and focus on a manageable number of priorities that clearly show better outcomes for learners. Following discussion, agreed actions should then be incorporated into the schools' agreement on Working Time Arrangements, based on any Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers (LNCT) guidelines and SNCT Code of Practice on Working Time Arrangements.

The following are suggested approaches in planning an employer partnership:

- consider existing partnerships in the community and build on those established relationships
- ensure that you identify a nominated senior staff member and a contingency contact member of staff with protected time to allow discussions with the authority on the development of school/employer partnership
- identify contacts to support and facilitate the employer partnerships i.e. local authority DYW contact, DYW Regional Groups and Skills Development Scotland careers staff
- discuss with Parent Councils and parents/carers the development of the partnerships
- consider the needs of all learners within the school who would benefit from an employer's expertise, and develop an initial plan for discussion with the authority and employer (for example a template of the needs of different learner groups linked to employer opportunities with agreed actions)
- involve associated primaries and local colleges in the development of the partnership, where possible
- develop a shared understanding of what any partnership will deliver, and consider using a local approach/template as the basis for scoping, agreeing, recording and evaluating the detail.

How do we ensure and maintain quality in our partnerships

The development of school/employer partnerships should build on existing good practice and the guidance in Building the Curriculum 4.

School/employer partnerships and the resulting learning activities should evolve and improve. Although there is no need for a signed agreement, there should be clarity on expectations around the roles of partners and the intended outcomes. Over time you should reflect on the partnership, the activities delivered, and if they had the impact that was intended.

Local authorities will have a role in supporting quality. When planning or reviewing a partnership it might be helpful to use a local approach/template where one is available.

Diversity and equality are important issues to consider in relation to employer partnerships. Understanding and skills for work should be developed from the early years onwards, and it is important that employer partnerships encourage diversity and do not reinforce stereotypes.

Where do I find out more?

Contact your local authority DYW contact.

Support materials and examples of successful school/employer partnerships will be shared on the Education Scotland website www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/thecurriculum/dyw/. In particular, there is a new Standard for Work Placements and a Career Education Standard (3-18).

Further information on Developing the Young Workforce can be viewed on the Scottish Government's website.

Background at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/edandtrainingforyoungple/ScottishGovernmentResponse>

Blog at <http://blogs.scotland.gov.uk/developing-the-young-workforce/>

Annex A

Background Information

The Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce report published in June 2014 set out their aims for greater employer engagement in education to the mutual benefit of schools, employers, the economy and most importantly the young people who will be the future workforce.

The Commission made a number of recommendations designed to encourage and support greater employer engagement with education and youth employment. The Commission recommended that 'Businesses across Scotland should be encouraged and supported to enter into 3-5 years partnerships with secondary schools. Every secondary school in Scotland and its feeder primaries should be supported by at least one business in a long-term partnership.'

In December 2014, a joint implementation plan was published as part of Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. This set out a target of reducing youth unemployment by 40% by 2021 through introducing key measures such as:

- increased uptake of work-related learning from 3-18, including vocational qualifications and opportunities, for example in Foundation Apprenticeships in the senior phase
- earlier careers guidance available from 2015/16
- new standard for work experience by 2015/16
- new 'pre-apprenticeship' pilot to help those furthest from the labour market by 2015/16
- all secondary schools to have active partnerships with employers by 2018/19
- all secondary schools to have active partnerships with regional colleges by 2018/19.

The Strategy also stated that guidance would be made available to provide further information on the development of effective school/employer partnerships.



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