

National Transition Training Fund (NTTF)

Year 1 Report

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Ministerial Foreword



The Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted all of our lives over the past two years. The Scottish Government's highest priority has been to lead Scotland safely through this crisis and alleviate the harm that the virus has caused to our health, our society, and our economy. As Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training, I am acutely aware of the challenges that the pandemic has created for individuals and businesses across Scotland, as well as the inequalities in the labour market that it has both highlighted and exacerbated.

In this context, I have been committed to driving the development of skills interventions that address these challenges and inequalities to meet the needs of Scotland's workforce and employers, and ensure a fairer, more equal economic recovery. As we move forward, we must ensure that we develop a culture of lifelong learning that builds on the strong foundations we have established with appropriate support to deliver training opportunities that develop the skills that individuals and businesses need now, and in the future.

We introduced the National Transition Training Fund (NTTF) on 8 October 2020, to respond quickly to changing circumstances at the beginning of the pandemic. In the face of uncertainty about how the labour market would be affected by Covid-19, £25 million was made available to support individuals who had been made redundant, or were at risk of redundancy, to retain their jobs and develop the skills required to move into sectors with the greatest potential for future growth and job opportunities, in line with the ambitions of the Scottish Government's Future Skills Action Plan. Support was also made available for sectors most affected by the pandemic, such as aviation and tourism.

I am delighted that NTTF has been able to support over 9,400 individuals in the past year. From this report, it is evident that the Fund has provided valuable support to individuals facing redundancy across a breadth of industries and has had a considerable impact on the provision of skills within Scotland's hardest hit sectors. It has also targeted the supply of skills in sustainable green jobs supporting Scotland's transition to a net zero economy, and delivering against the ambitions of our Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan.

This positive work is continuing during Year 2 of NTTF which is providing further support to individuals and sectors until July 2022. Skills development is a critical component of Scotland's recovery from the pandemic and future growth. As a key objective of the forthcoming National Strategy for Economic Transformation, our ambition is to ensure our people have the skills they need at every stage of life to meet the demands of the economy and society and to navigate transitions in their careers enabling Scotland to fulfil its enormous economic potential.

Jamie Hepburn

Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training

Executive Summary

The National Transition Training Fund (NTTF) was introduced in response to the unprecedented impact that the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions to combat the virus had on our economy and labour market.ⁱ NTTF aimed to help people take advantage of the jobs available in growth areas of the economy, such as digital and green technologies, as well as support the most exposed sectors, including tourism, oil and gas, and aviation. It has offered a fast track approach to giving people the skills they need to obtain and retain employment opportunities.

In Year 1 (2020/21), NTTF supported **9,482** individuals in sectors impacted by the pandemic, such as tourism and hospitality, and in growth sectors such as aerospace diversification and forestry. Support was split across three Strands, namely individual, sectoral, and tertiary education-led provision. NTTF-funded training enabled a breadth of sectors to respond to the changing circumstances of the pandemic and supported individuals at a time of unprecedented economic change and uncertainty.

1,206 individuals undertook training in Strand 1, against a maximum potential reach of 6,000 places. This Strand aimed to support those who had lost their jobs or were at risk of doing so as a result of the pandemic. The level of uptake for this Strand was lower than anticipated because unemployment did not reach the levels (up to 10%) projected at the outset of the pandemic or when the scheme was launched. This was largely due to the implementation and subsequent extensions of the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), but further restrictions in response to the Delta variant from December 2020 also impacted on the uptake and demand for training. Despite lower than anticipated demand, 70% of those undertaking training in Strand 1 reported that they had entered work 8-11 weeks after completion.

By contrast, engagement with Strand 2, which supported sectors impacted by the downturn or where there were growth opportunities and Strand 3, which funded Tertiary education-led training courses, was higher than anticipated with 8,276 individuals undertaking training across a variety of sectors, against a target of 4,000 opportunities. In particular, there was significant demand for support in the sectors which had been most severely impacted by the crisis. For example, the hospitality and tourism project attracted 1,900 individuals, 98.5% of which were still working in the sector after completion of their training. The flexibility in the NTTF model enabled funding to be redirected to meet the demands of individuals and the labour market during this uncertain period.

Many projects across Strands 2 and 3 attracted a diverse cohort of participants and reached minority communities. For example, the Skillsboost programme delivered through Scotland's colleges, reported that 52.6% of enrolments were from the four most deprived SIMD deciles, 64.8% were female, and 19.5% identified as disabled.

Background

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic required governments across the world to implement measures to contain the spread of the virus. The pandemic has created a challenge for our economy on an unprecedented scale. In April 2020, unemployment in Scotland was anticipated to reach as high as 10%.ⁱⁱ

Throughout the pandemic, the Scottish Government has sought to alleviate the overall harm caused by the virus and is committed to delivering a socially just and equality-focused economic recovery. Skills initiatives have a key role to play in supporting Scotland's businesses and people to adapt to changes in the economy that are happening now and will take place over the next five to ten years. Some of these changes, such as the increased digitalisation of many sectors of the economy, have been accelerated by Covid-19.

The National Transition Training Fund (NTTF) was introduced in October 2020 in response to the projected rise of unemployment as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In Year 1, up to £25 million of funding was made available through NTTF to support and provide training to individuals aged 25+ who had been made unemployed or were threatened with redundancy. Decisive action was taken to support employers and employees impacted by Covid-19 and work was undertaken with partners across the public, private and third sectors to maximise the Scottish Government's support for those facing redundancy to help them move quickly into new jobs.

In Year 1, NTTF was delivered across three strands, namely individual, sectoral and tertiary education provision. Strand 1 was introduced to provide support to up to 6,000 individuals who were recently unemployed or at risk of redundancy. £11 million of funding was made available for Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to deliver person-centred career advice and funded training across a breadth of sectors, although the continuation of the UK Government's Covid Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) meant that unemployment did not rise as expected so this level of funding was not required.

Strand 2 sought to attract individuals whose employment had been affected by Covid-19, and had been made unemployed or were at risk of redundancy, to equip them with the skills to enter into or remain in employment opportunities. Projects were in sectors where there were skills shortages or gaps; tangible job opportunities; or where there was projected to be higher demand as the nature of the labour market continued to evolve. Targeted sectors included tourism and hospitality, aerospace diversification, and 'green' construction.

Strand 3, administered by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), offered individuals access to a wide range of college or university training in sectors relevant to local and regional labour market needs. Colleges delivered training in sectors such as health, digital/cyber security and manufacturing. At university level, individuals have benefitted from training in a wide range of subject areas including decommissioning of offshore Installations, cybersecurity, climate change, sustainability and adaptation.

Unemployment did not reach the levels forecast at the beginning of the pandemic, largely due to the continuation of the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). The highest level of unemployment in Scotland was recorded in June 2020 at 4.9%.ⁱⁱⁱ As such, up-take of the demand-led individual strand of support (Strand 1) was lower than anticipated. Action was taken quickly to shift support to sectors in crisis through the introduction of Strands 2 and 3, where demand for training opportunities was higher than anticipated.

Delivery of projects was impacted by the pandemic. Ongoing restrictions on travel and business closures, as well as physical distancing requirements, have affected institutions' and training providers' ability to safely deliver onsite training. Where training required face-to-face delivery, such as the Aircraft Decommissioning project, numbers have been lower.

Similarly, the delivery timescale initially agreed on presented a challenge for certain delivery bodies, as a result of the quickly changing circumstances of the pandemic. The development of some projects therefore took longer than initially anticipated, which consequently impacted on the amount of time available to deliver the project to the public. For example, the delivery of the Aircraft Electrification project was unable to be completed before July 2021 and was rescheduled to be delivered in the next academic year and will be reported on as a Year 2 project.

Building on the experience gained in Year 1, and with the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, the Scottish Government announced in June 2021 that NTTF would continue for a further year (2021/22). In Year 2, up to £20 million of funding has been allocated across 32 projects to continue to support individuals and sectors affected by Covid-19 but also to address Brexit impacts and support future skills needs, including the transition to net zero.

More information on Year 2 of NTTF can be found at: [My World of Work - National Transition Training Fund](#).

Strand 1 – Individual Support

Strand 1 of NTTF was delivered by SDS. The Scottish Government announced up to £11 million of SDS support to provide support and training for individuals who were recently unemployed or at risk of redundancy as a result of the pandemic.^{iv} However, unemployment did not reach its predicted levels, largely due to the extension of the UK Government's CJRS.

Lower levels of unemployment experienced during the pandemic resulted in less than anticipated uptake of NTTF places. Overall, Strand 1 supported **1,206** individuals in training through October 2020 to June 2021. While Strand 1 did not reach its projected target, feedback from participants indicated that it provided essential support to those who were supported to help them retain their jobs or enter employment.

Across Strand 1, 317 different types of training were recorded for the programme. The highest proportions of starts were in Fife (219 starts, 18%), Highland (117 starts, 10%), Edinburgh (95 starts, 8%), North Lanarkshire (84 starts, 7%), and Aberdeen City (80 starts, 7%).

The training on offer covered a wide range of subjects and skillsets, aiming to provide participants with a strong footing for employment opportunities across a variety of sectors. One of the most popular courses was the Civil Service Sector Based Work Academy. Other sectors supported through the training courses offered include the oil and gas, engineering, renewable energy, and construction sectors.



Survey Data

Survey data^v on Strand 1 collected by SDS throughout 2021 revealed a high satisfaction rate with different aspects of the NTTF training, namely the quality of training provided, the extent to which the training met individuals' expectations, and the level of information provided to participants prior to the training. Overall, 89% of respondents noted a high level of satisfaction with the NTTF training across these aspects.^{vi}

In terms of the skills impact of the training, the survey data indicated that 80% of respondents felt that their work-related skills had improved^{vii}, 77% reported feeling more confident in their abilities^{viii}, and 83% of respondents felt the training had improved their long-term career prospects.^{ix}

The survey found that the NTTF-funded training had a positive impact on the employment status of participants. After completing the training, the proportion of respondents who were unemployed dropped from 85% (prior to the training) to 44%

(at the time of the survey). Among respondents surveyed 8 to 11 weeks after completing the training, 70% had found work.

The survey data reveals that a high proportion of respondents worked in the oil and gas extraction industry prior to completing the training (approximately 33% of respondents). Other sectors that were represented include manufacturing (9%), construction (8%), transportation and storage (8%), and electricity, gas and power (6%).

The survey also recorded the overall characteristics of programme participants. In terms of gender, there was a broadly representative sample, with one in five respondents identifying as female, almost the same as across the programme. However, the rate of responses from those identifying as disabled is less than half of the programme rate at 4.1%. However, there are slightly higher levels of response among BME groups (4.1%) and those who have experienced care (2.1%) compared with the programme levels.

Participant Feedback

Participants were asked what they valued most about the training. The responses fell broadly into the following three categories: practical and vocational skills, employability skills, and improved confidence.

'Everything from start to finish was exemplary - everyone I spoke to at SDS was friendly, very helpful and supportive. The instructors and wider team at (Training provider name) put on a brilliant course that was informative and approachable and gave me confidence to start this next chapter in my life. I'm really grateful for the whole experience, it really changed my life!'

'Looking to start a career in a new sector within banking and this gave me a great foundation of knowledge to display in interview and excel in the job.'

'Insight to the renewables industry and the minimum safety standards.'

'Gave me encouragement and confidence to continue when I felt I was out of my depth and perhaps ready to quit.'

'Increased confidence from interacting with people in a work environment again. I had been furloughed since March and eventually made redundant.'

Strand 2 – Sectoral Support

Strand 2 broadened the scope of NTTF to support a range of sectors affected by Covid-19, with a range of private, third and college training provision offered. While delivery of Strand 1 began in October 2020, Strands 2 and 3 were launched the following month.

The Skills Delivery Team at the Scottish Government worked closely with sectoral policy colleagues, Scottish Enterprise and SDS to ensure that projects under Strand 2 aligned with labour market intelligence and had the potential to contribute to Scotland's economic recovery. Providing flexible training opportunities was a key objective and, as such, many of the courses were deliverable online.

Overall, Strand 2 supported 3,137 individuals across a range of sectors. Take-up was much more positive in Strands 2 and 3 of NTTF, which suggests that when provision is targeted at particular sectors with skills or labour shortages, demand for support increases. Certain sectoral projects, like the tourism and hospitality project, which were driven by an industry body and tailored to the needs of the sector, delivered significantly higher numbers than anticipated.

In Strand 2, the Scottish Government worked with a wide range of delivery partners across sectors, such as LANTRA, Screen Scotland, the Hospitality Industry Trust (HIT) Scotland and the Scottish Tourism Alliance. Delivery partners were responsible for the gathering of statistical data relevant to a wide range of project outcomes. As each project differed in ambition, reach, and outcomes, reporting has been done at a project level, rather than across the whole Strand.

Sectors Impacted by Covid-19

Tourism and Hospitality

To respond to the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the tourism and hospitality sector, the **Tourism & Hospitality Talent Development Programme**, led by SDS and delivered by the Scottish Tourism Alliance and Hospitality Industry Trust (HIT) Scotland, was implemented in Strand 2. This programme aimed to target 'rising stars' within the sector at risk of redundancy or reduced working hours as a result of the pandemic. Overall, **1,900** individuals started the programme. The course was



delivered to tourism employees from across Scotland and across the range of tourism sub-sectors. Provision meant that the sector was able to respond to changing circumstances through delivering training opportunities for in-demand skills. A survey, completed by 1,552 of the participants, found that **98.5%** of respondents were still working in the tourism and hospitality sector after completing the training.^x

Creative Industries

The **Stove Network Creative Place Employability & Start-Up Programme**, managed by SDS, was launched under NTTF to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic on creative practitioners in Dumfries and Galloway. The project consisted of a free digital programme of workshops, panel discussions, and online learning resources to support creative freelancers and small businesses with key skills for creative business development. Overall, **138** individuals were supported in the programme, from a total of 230 sign-ups. Project evaluation showed that the project succeeded in providing digital skills diversification as part of support needed in the Creative Industries during the pandemic. The project recruited a diverse cohort of participants.

In addition, Screen Scotland supported **The Screen New Entrants Training Scheme (NETS) Changing Lanes** project which was implemented to address two issues, namely the impact on the work of recently entered Theatre and Live Events practitioners by the Covid pandemic by assisting them to transfer their skills into the Screen sector through working as a trainee, and the demand for crew created by increasing production levels. Overall, **98** individuals have been engaged in various training programmes facilitated by the Changing Lanes project and supported at a time when the sector faced considerable challenges. In addition, NTTF supported 8 additional places on the long standing and highly respected NETS programme offering training and a paid work placement for participants on a high-end production for 6 months.

Aviation

To respond to the crisis that the pandemic sparked within the aviation industry, the **Aviation Workforce Retention Project** was established under NTTF, managed by Unite The Union through Scottish Union Learning. This project enabled employees within the aviation industry to upskill and protect their current job roles. Companies within the aviation sector whose employees were supported through the project included ICTS, FALCK, and Loganair. Overall, there were a total of **418** enrolments across a variety of courses.^{xi} Participants received valuable training across a variety of subjects, including Sign Language, Employability Skills, and Customer Care. The project report confirmed that the training helped to reduce the risk of further redundancies in the sector.



Sectors with Opportunities for Growth

Digital Skills

To promote growth in the digital sector, the **Digital Start Fund Digital Expansion** project was launched, led by SDS. This programme aimed to assist those on low incomes or in receipt of benefits to gain digital qualifications and enter the labour

market. Overall, **18** individuals commenced training and **14** completed with **9** proceeding to interview for a digital role. The programme has generated numerous examples of people moving from universal credit to jobs as junior software developers in major companies in the financial services sector.

The **Digital Skills Catalyst Fund**, delivered by a range of public sector bodies and led by SDS, aimed to support inward investment and globally trading businesses to develop and implement bespoke advancing digital skills training, where mainstream provision does not exist elsewhere. It also aimed to support the workforce to increase their advancing digital skills capability to align with emerging digital technologies. Overall, **4** employers and **38** individuals benefitted from valuable training during the pilot in 2021/22. All 38 individuals remain in employment. While 24 companies noted interest in the project during the pilot, indicating employer need, they were unable to engage and continue with the project in the timeline in which the fund operated.

Manufacturing



The 2020/21 **Aerospace Diversification Training Support Programme**, led by Scottish Enterprise, enabled 8 companies to respond to the immediate impact and longer-term risks brought about by the pandemic. The aim of the programme was to safeguard employment in Scotland by diversifying into neighbouring markets. The NTTF-funded course resulted in the up-skilling/cross-skilling of **355** employees. The success of the programme has led to the allocation of phase II NTTF funding.

Rural Industries

Seafood Transformation: Management Development: 4.0 Food & Drink was a collaborative project with Seafood Scotland, SDS, Scottish Enterprise, and Opportunity North East, which aimed to upskill and re-skill the workforce in the seafood sector with a focus on building the leadership capability of individuals across the industry with an ambition to grow their businesses and lead on transformational change. The project supported a total of **26** individuals, who benefitted from a management and leadership programme and support with 360-degree feedback and coaching. All 26 participants remain in employment. The project was delayed due the impact of Covid-19 and Brexit, however once underway, it exceeded the original project outputs.

Another project targeting rural industries was the **Springboard for Rural Skills**, led by Lantra Scotland. The project aimed to increase and diversify Scotland's training instructor network for land-based, aquaculture and other rural industries, supporting a safe, skilled and vibrant rural workforce and economy. At project closure, there were **30** active participants. The NTTF-funded project enabled the upskilling and reskilling of new entrants and career changers, including those impacted by redundancy, which has become increasingly common as a result of Covid-19, as

well as helping support rural business diversification and resilience, Scotland's 'green recovery' and climate emergency response objectives. All gender, age, geographic distribution and diversity of 'skill set' targets were met or exceeded. The project also highlighted the potential for new instructors to help facilitate Women in Scottish Agriculture and Women in the Rural Economy Practical Training Fund investments (or similar skills interventions in the future).

A second project run by LANTRA was the **Rural Springboard for Simulator**. This involved the purchase of two forestry simulators placed in Dumfries and Galloway College and Inverness College School of Forestry. Overall, this project succeeded in supporting **102** individuals through training and will continue to increase training capacity in the two colleges in the future, with Inverness College School of Forestry noting it had doubled their training capacity.

A final project focussing on rural industries across Scotland, delivered by Scottish Enterprise, was the **Redesigning Rural** programme. This was a short-term pilot scheme for rural leaders who had completed the Scottish Enterprise Rural Leadership Programme. This project implemented a total of **14** work placements supporting individuals who had been negatively impacted by the pandemic, helping **13** rural SMEs progress new business and employment opportunities. In addition, **9** participants have been kept on in their placement for further employment. In terms of diversity, 42% of participants were female and one participant employed was deaf. These placements were an opportunity for individuals to retrain into a new industry, gaining experience and skills for their future careers.

Springboard for Rural Skills

Case Study: Don and Cara Cameron

For Don and Cara Cameron, crofters from Lairg in Sutherland, help from the Springboard project came at just the right time. Cara had been working as a youth development officer while Don was running his own agricultural contracting business. The couple also look after nearly 200 hectares, covering three crofts and two shares in a common grazing area.

Don had already been approached by Lantra to become a certified ATV/tractor instructor, but taking time away from work and pay for the instructor training was a risk. The Springboard project provided much needed funding to cover the costs, as well as professional development support. Both were keen to launch the area's first agricultural skills centre, so the additional mentorship and training provided came in handy. Don said: "I lost my arm a little over eight years ago in a farming accident, and although I can still work pretty much as I did before, it made me think a lot more about the future."

"The Springboard project was a lifeline, as I got professional development skills and funding for Lantra certified ATV and tractor instructor technical verifications." Don is also relishing being able to pass on his skills and knowledge to the younger generation. He said: "The great thing about being an instructor is that you're sharing your learning with someone else, so it isn't wasted."

Cara said: “The Springboard project has given us the push we needed to get the skills centre up and running to provide accredited rural skills qualifications. There’s a real issue locally in keeping young people here, as limited employment opportunities mean many of them end up leaving the area to go to college or university and don’t return. We hope the skills centre will give them a reason to stay.”

The Springboard project enabled the upskilling and reskilling of new entrants and career changers, including those impacted by redundancy, which has become an increasingly common result of Covid-19. It also aimed to increase rural business resilience, adaptation and diversification through a more skilled workforce and help support Scotland’s ‘green recovery’ and climate emergency response objectives.

Stove Network Creative Place Employability & Start-Up Programme

Case Study: Hagen Paterson

Hagen Paterson is part of the Dumfries Music Conference Team (DMC) and also runs his own D.I.Y. music management company, Big Red Management. Amidst the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic, Hagen decided to engage with the Stove Network’s Soap Box project. Hagen said the good-hype surrounding this programme led him to find out more: “As far as I’m concerned, it came at the right time as I personally felt a little vulnerable and wanted to see if I could work on developing some skills (amid pandemic) and potentially find new ones. Also due to the fact that it was run by The Stove, so I knew it was going to be executed well.”

The Stove Network’s project proved to be incredibly useful for Hagen, providing a valuable opportunity to increase his skillset: “I have learned so many new skills and it has brought to light new knowledge that will help develop my own progression in both a working life and general living.”

Hagen noted a significant change in his approach to work following completion of the course. Hagen said: “I am much more aware on issues such as accessibility and inclusivity, something that I believe everyone should be working towards. It also gave me great confidence living in a freelance world and encouragement having survived a global pandemic. It has taught me that I am never alone and that our community is very much grass root, no matter what level they are within their career.”

Aerospace Diversification: Business Feedback

“At Belcan, we faced the catastrophic impact to the aerospace sector and welcomed the lifeline enabled by the Aerospace Training Aid support from the NTTf initiative. This enabled the re-skilling of our engineers to allow re-deployment to sectors such as Marine, Cyber Security and Automotive, which retained and enhanced our capabilities, secured the future of our graduate engineers and ensured stability for Belcan as we enter the post-covid world as a leading provider of engineering services in Scotland, enhancing the overall reputation of the Scottish Engineering sector at home and abroad.”

Tourism & Hospitality Talent Development Programme: Project Profile

This project was a 10-week online training programme funded by the Scottish Government. Three courses were offered on the programme, namely supervisor, management & leadership. Overall, twenty-four tutors provided over 3,000 hours of training. Applications were received from over **700 tourism and hospitality businesses** across Scotland and **2,000** people were offered a place on the programme. Before taking part in the course 65% felt positive about their career in hospitality. This rose to 92% at the end of the programme.

In years to come people will talk about the effect of this course and the impact it had on our industry.

HIT Scotland has made a difference to so many of us in the hospitality sector and we all feel so fortunate to have been given a place.

Redesigning Rural: Participant & Business Feedback

Participant: “The last 8 weeks have been an absolute game changer for me, I was really not feeling great during my period of unemployment, and I was really trying to stay motivated, getting involved with as many volunteer projects as I could, but I was finding it very disheartening. This has been such an injection of hope for me, and it’s been really powerful.”

Business: “In a small community, you’re very aware of people who have lost jobs or businesses that have folded during this time, and therefore you know of a friend or someone’s uncle who has lost their job. This was an opportunity to firstly help our business within a busy period, but also help somebody else get back on their feet and into work.”

Strand 3 – Tertiary Education Support

In Strand 3, individuals were able to access a wide range of college or university training in sectors relevant to local and regional labour market needs. Colleges across Scotland provided training in sectors such as health, digital/cyber security and manufacturing.

This was delivered through the provision of short higher education micro courses and longer Skillsboost college courses, as well as projects to support at risk and growth industries. These courses were centred around job opportunities and were aligned to the Scottish Government's labour market priorities. Individuals have benefitted from university level training in a wide range of subject areas including decommissioning of offshore installations, cybersecurity, climate change, sustainability and adaptation.

Overall, **5,139** individuals were supported in Strand 3. As with Strand 2, due to the diverse nature of projects under Strand 3, reporting has been summarised at project level. SFC managed the projects and the collection of statistical data on behalf of the Scottish Government. As noted previously, uptake was significantly higher in Strand 3, confirming the findings in Strand 2 that suggest that when targeted at particular sectors with skills or labour shortages, demand for support increases.

Sectors Impacted by Covid-19

Micro-credentials

NTTF funded a series of **Micro-credential Upskilling** Courses for universities. This built on their existing sector-wide Upskilling Fund allocations, with a view to developing sector-wide Micro-credentials in the longer term. Over 120 micro-credential courses were developed and offered by Universities in this academic year.



Courses covered a variety of sectors, many of which were impacted by Covid-19, such as the creative industries. Other courses focussed on areas with significant opportunity for growth, including delivering courses with a sustainability focus within the energy sector. Overall, **1,800** students were supported in NTTF-funded Micro-credentials Upskilling Courses.

Skillsboost

To support NTTF at vocational level, Scotland's colleges delivered a programme called **Skillsboost**. Courses were aligned to local labour market needs and offered sector based skills and employability support which was mirrored under the Young Person's Guarantee so that students of all ages could take part. Skillsboost was aimed at providing individuals who had identified barriers to employment such as IT



skills, interview skills, entry level qualifications with a tailored approach to helping them back into jobs where there were emerging skills gaps in the local economy.

As with the Micro-credentials Upskilling programme, Skillsboost targeted both sectors that had been impacted by Covid-19, such as

hospitality, as well as areas with opportunity for growth, including cyber and digital technologies. Overall, **1,942** students aged 25 and over undertook training courses through Skillsboost funded by NTTF. 52.6% of enrolments were from the 4 most deprived SIMD deciles, 64.8% were recorded as female, and 19.5% identified as disabled.

Sectors with Opportunity for Growth

Aerospace

To promote growth within the aerospace sector, the **Aircraft Decommissioning** project was introduced under NTTF and administered by SFC. This was a 6 week training course developed in partnership with Ayrshire College, Chevron Technical Services and 4 other training providers. To date, around **30** students have completed the training. This course has received significant interest from employers, which would suggest a strong demand for training within the aerospace sector. The final course is currently underway, as it experienced some delays in its development as a result of the pandemic.



Another NTTF-funded project was the **Aircraft Electrification** project. This project invested in equipment and developed four of the electrification courses, building a good mix of training content that encompasses presentation material and innovative practical exercises that reinforce learning. These courses were offered and warmly welcomed by the sector. However, unfortunately it became apparent that the challenges being experienced by the sector were impacting on the availability of Scottish delegates to join the planned multi-day courses. As such, the courses are now being delivered in the 2021/22 academic year.

Construction

Targeting the construction sector, the **Energy Efficiency Transition Support and Heat Pump Training** was introduced. This programme aimed to enhance construction workers and support substantial employment opportunities, as well as reposition those who had been made redundant or were under threat of redundancy into growth sectors creating good quality, green jobs and ensure a fair and just transition to net-zero. Overall, **60** individuals benefitted from training under this

programme, supporting skills development within the energy, engineering, and construction sectors. Initial demand was estimated at 250 individuals, however Covid-19 restrictions impacted on delivery capacity.

In addition, the **Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (CSIC) Transition Training** was developed in response to the Scottish Government's Net Zero emissions ambitions. It aimed to upskill and reskill the current workforce who had been made redundant or were at risk of redundancy with the ambition to increase the adoption of Passivhaus standards, and secure a long-term, sustainable, and inclusive pipeline of work for the industry, and improve supply chain capability and resilience.

The programme reached over **800** online participants and practical training was delivered to **100** participants in the CSIC factory. The project also upskilled **70** educators. The project succeeded in reaching a much wider audience than anticipated, attracting a broad range of disciplines within the industry, upskilling the current workforce and helping people transition into new roles. To promote diversity and inclusion, CSIC worked with Equate Scotland to deliver dedicated workshop sessions online and in person to support women in construction to upskill in Passivhaus standards.

Manufacturing

To support growth within the manufacturing sector, the **Supporting Skills 4.0** project by the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland was introduced under NTTF, which consisted of a series of sub-projects.^{xii} The main sub projects were to support upskilling to adopt industry 4.0 manufacturing techniques and processes, and a pilot graduate trainee programme which placed 30 graduates with employers for six months, offering practical experience in relevant areas. Other sub projects involved establishing capability in net zero carbon skills with partners, and creating content targeted at both individuals and SMEs to increase awareness of new manufacturing techniques and UK funding landscape respectively.

Overall, **30** graduates were successfully placed within training programmes in 11 businesses across Scotland and **307** engagements via registration were received, with **61%** going on to complete the training. For the NTTF graduate trainee programme, the post code analysis on the first 24 placements revealed that 54% were SIMD 0-40. Training programmes helped individuals, the majority of whom faced the risk of redundancy, to upskill and supported them to gain new employment or retain their jobs.

Skillsboost Gateway to Health and Social Care: Project Profile

West Lothian College teamed up with the Scottish Ambulance Service to promote a new national Skills Boost - Gateway to Health and Social Care for key staff working at their Mobile Testing Units (MTUs) and who were at risk of unemployment when their temporary contracts came to an end.

West Lothian College provided initial feedback on the training programme:

“Working closely with the Scottish Ambulance Service we saw a perfect opportunity to develop a training course for the MTU Operatives to formally demonstrate their current skills and knowledge which they have developed over the past year.

“The brief we followed was to produce a course that was relevant to their current role, consolidated knowledge and skills, provided opportunity to develop knowledge and engage with further learning. The use of SVQ units would also enable an opportunity to progress on to the full SVQ award and gain a registerable qualification with the Scottish Social Services Council which is attractive to recruiting employers.

“Due to current Covid restrictions and the demographic of the students which included full time workers with family commitments, we developed the course as online delivery via Workshops on Microsoft Teams at a range of days and times to fit around working shifts.

“Thanks to excellent work by both the college marketing team and the Scottish Ambulance Service Communications team the course was advertised out to the MTU Operatives and we have had 90 new students commence the course on the 15th June 21 with a another cohort due to commence in August. At the end stages of the course we will provide further opportunities for them to step into employment in the care sector through input with CV development, interview preparation and look at ways to introduce them to employers looking to recruit.

“We are absolutely delighted to be involved in such an innovative project to help support individuals who have stepped up during the Covid pandemic to provide a key service to the Scottish population. We look forward to supporting them with their continuing professional development and learning, see them secure care sector employment and gain their full SVQ award in the future.”

Construction Scotland Innovation Centre: Transition Training

Project Profile: Passivhaus in Practice

Passivhaus in Practice is a programme developed in response to the Scottish Government's net-zero emissions targets set out in The Climate Change Act (2019), that commits **Scotland to net-zero emissions** of all greenhouse gases by 2045.

Training for a Low Carbon Career in Construction

The Passivhaus in Practice programme aimed to upskill and reskill the current work force who have been made redundant or are at risk of redundancy with the ambition to increase the adoption of Passivhaus standards (which seek to cut energy use in buildings), and secure a long-term, sustainable and inclusive pipeline of work for the industry, and improve supply chain capability and resilience.

Funded by the National Transition Training Funding, Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (CSIC) have created Scotland's first National Passivhaus standards training programme. Working in collaboration with industry partners and educational experts, the programme has delivered training to **over 800 people**, including 600 industry, 80 students, 70 educators.

Highlights

5 Rigs: Design and manufacture of 5 travelling Passivhaus rigs which can be made available to colleges and universities for use within curriculum delivery.

100+ introduced: Building Research Establishment (BRE): Introduction to Passivhaus.

120 working towards accreditation: Association for Environmental Conscious Building (AECB) Carbon Lite Contractor Training.

600 trained: A webinar series in Passivhaus running from April to July.

100 hands-on: Practical hands-on training in Passivhaus at CSIC's innovation factory to educators and industry.

Building Diversity: Collaborating with Equate Scotland we delivered a dedicated 3-day course at the end of July 2021 for women working on Passivhaus projects.

3 online modules + augmented reality: Creation of 3 interactive online learning modules in Passivhaus Standards and an Augmented Reality learning experience in Passivhaus.

"The rig will allow us to build on our commitment to **upskill our local supply chain and individuals.**" - Morrison Construction

Conclusions

The NTTF was introduced at a point in the pandemic when there was limited information on what the impact of the crisis would be on unemployment, or which areas of the economy and labour market would be most affected in the short and medium term. It was designed principally to respond to rising levels of unemployment in line with labour market projections.

When unemployment levels did not rise as anticipated, largely as a result of UK and Scottish Government interventions, the Fund pivoted its focus to take a flexible, sectoral approach to support, including through upskilling and in-work provision. With sectors such as manufacturing, culture, tourism and hospitality effectively shut down from March 2020, labour market concerns centred around how businesses could retain talent or to ensure markets would not be lost through a lack of skills.

Key to the success of the interventions in these sectors has been the project-based nature of the Fund which has allowed for training for different purposes to be developed and delivered, often in partnership with the sector. For example, in tourism and hospitality, the core aim has been to support the retention of talented and experienced staff while in aerospace, training for new markets, such as de-commissioning, has helped businesses' future sustainability.

These changing labour market conditions, and the rapidly evolving circumstances of the pandemic throughout the Fund's first year has meant that delivery of Year 1 of the NTTF was not without its challenges. The Fund was set up at pace and providers had to move quickly to adapt their training courses for online provision while remaining flexible to changing national and local restrictions.

Despite these challenges, the report on Year 1 shows that the combination of tailored support for sectors, alongside employability support, and college and university-based training for individuals, has had a positive impact on the skills and training of people and businesses across Scotland, making an important contribution to supporting our recovery.

Looking ahead

In June 2021, the First Minister announced that NTTF would be extended for a second year to ensure continued support for individuals and businesses while we moved through the Covid-19 crisis. Early findings from Year 1 have helped to inform the focus of the Fund's second year, which has maintained its stronger sectoral approach to training provision, continuing to provide tailored and flexible support to help sectors overcome the skills and labour market issues that they face – be that recovering from the pandemic, mitigating the impacts of Brexit, or supporting growth to aid future skills transitions.

Year 2 has expanded its reach to support a broader range of sectors and has placed a greater emphasis on the provision of green skills with a package of projects delivered through the Scottish Government's Green Jobs Workforce Academy, launched in August 2021, as one the key commitments in our Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan.

With a forward commitment in the Covid Recovery Strategy, published in October 2021, to simplify and strengthen our support for adult upskilling and retraining, the Scottish Government is now working to incorporate the learnings from NTTF, together with evidence from evaluations of our Individual Training Accounts and Flexible Workforce Development Fund programmes to inform the development of a coherent, forward-looking lifetime skills offer. This work is being taken forward as part of the second phase of the Future Skills Action Plan aligned to the ambitions of the forthcoming National Strategy for Economic Transformation.

Endnotes

ⁱ Note:- The data in this report is based on management information and is released in line with guidance produced by the UK Statistics Authority. Management Information is defined in the Code of Practice for Statistics as 'aggregate information collated and used in the normal course of business to inform operational delivery, policy development, or the management of organisation performance. It is usually based on administrative data but can also be a product of survey data.

ⁱⁱ Source: [State of the Economy: April 2020 \(Scottish Government website\)](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: [Office for National Statistics - LFS: ILO unemployment rate: Scotland](#)

^{iv} For more information on the Employability Fund: [Skills Development Scotland - Employability Fund](#)

^v SDS implemented a Leavers' Survey in February 2021 to gather feedback from trainees who had left NTTf funded training. The overall response rate to the survey was 35% (426 participants).

^{vi} This percentage (89%) was derived from a survey which asked respondents to note their level of satisfaction on a rating of 1 to 10. The percentage quoted (89%) related to scores ranging from 7 to 10. 344 participants responded and 307 gave a score between 7 and 10.

^{vii} This percentage (80%) relates to scores ranging from 7 and 10. 304 participants responded and 242 scored between 7 and 10.

^{viii} This percentage (77%) relates to scores ranging from 7 and 10. 303 participants responded and 232 scored between 7 and 10.

^{ix} This percentage (83%) relates to scores ranging from 7 and 10. 298 participants responded and 248 scored between 7 and 10.

^x A survey was conducted by The Tourism and Hospitality Talent Development Programme and was completed by 1,552 participants. 1,517 participants responded to the question 'Are you still working in tourism or hospitality?' Of these participants, 98.5% responded 'yes' to this question.

^{xi} Note: not the overall number of participants – participants may have enrolled on multiple courses.

^{xii} For more information on Skills 4.0: [Skills Development Scotland - Skills 4.0](#)



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