

# No One Left Behind

## Employability Strategic Plan 2024-2027

Jobs Self Confidence People  
Commitment In-work Support  
Support Local Disabled People  
Equity  
Continuous-Improvement  
Volunteering  
Tackling Inequalities  
Scotland  
Learning  
Devolution  
Improve  
No-Wrong-Door Approach  
Skills  
Fairness  
Growth  
Awareness  
Long Term Health Conditions  
Principles  
Employability  
Key Workers  
Evidence  
All age  
System  
Respect  
Training  
Increasing  
Journey  
Public Services  
Motivation  
Participation  
Employers  
Co-Design  
Outcomes

Local Government  
Tackling Child Poverty  
Aligned  
Helping  
Integrated  
Responsive  
Inclusive  
Scottish Government  
Education  
Parental Income  
Straightforward  
Third Sector  
Partnership  
Jointly  
Consistency  
Public-sector  
Person Centred  
Net Zero  
Evaluation  
Services  
Collaborative  
Better health  
Sustainable  
Just Transition  
Private Sector  
Labour Market  
Mixed Economy  
Flexible  
COSLA  
Lived Experience  
Work  
Dignity  
Opportunities



# Joint Foreword

We have been through an important period for devolved employability services in recent years, and we are pleased with the progress made to simplify the landscape in Scotland. Since April 2024 all new referrals to devolved employability services have been supported through our No One Left Behind approach and we have welcomed the commitment from all involved to continue driving improvements to support better outcomes for the people and communities across Scotland.

Since the Scottish and Local Government Partnership Working Agreement for Employability was signed in December 2018, we have worked in partnership to deliver our shared ambitions for place-based, person-centred employability support in Scotland. This has seen us move from a collection of discrete national and local programmes, to a single, all-age offer of support.

It is clear that we continue to experience challenges, including levels of child poverty that are too high, rising economic inactivity, and lower rates of employment for disabled people. We are confident that employability services have a crucial role to play in addressing labour market challenges.

We have set out in this plan our strategic priorities between now and 2027. Through these priorities we are committing to work together to continue to improve Scotland's employability services, to deliver for those facing structural barriers to employment, and to work across boundaries in supporting people to access sustainable fair work.

We are also determined to learn from the evidence generated from previous employability provision delivered by both spheres of Government and to

drive activity forward in relation to our joint priorities. As part of this, we are pleased to use this plan to announce that delivery of specialist employability support for disabled people will continue to be a part of our employability offer, with provision to be in place across the country by Summer 2025.

In developing this plan, we have welcomed the input from partners across the wider public, third and private sectors through our National Discussion events held in 2023. As we move forward, effective partnership working will continue to be a critical element of the Scottish approach to employability at both a national and local level, and our commitment to leveraging expertise across sectors through a mixed economy of provision remains crucial to our overall approach.

We have committed to refresh the Partnership Working Agreement for Employability in the coming months, which will reflect the progress under No One Left Behind, as well as wider developments in the relationship between Scottish and Local Government. The principle of mutual trust and respect at the heart of the Verity House Agreement and the maxim of 'local by default, national by agreement' will continue to inform our work around employability. To date, we have implemented a delivery model which empowers Local Employability Partnerships to plan and commission services, allowing decisions to be taken closer to participants, and enabling local labour market conditions to more closely shape the provision on offer.

With a focus on continued joint working at a strategic and political level, we can create the environment for service redesign that makes a lasting impact for those who face inequalities and remain furthest from Scotland's labour market.



**Tom Arthur**  
Minister for Employment and Investment



**Councillor Maureen Chalmers**  
COSLA Community Wellbeing Spokesperson


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# 1. Plan on a page

**Employability policy contributes to national outcomes focussed on.....**

Children and Young People 

Economy 


Communities 

Fair Work and Business 

Poverty 

Human Rights 

Health 

Education 

Strategic Context - National Strategy for Economic Transformation; Fair Work Action plan; Best Start, Bright Futures; Verity House Agreement and COSLA Plan

Our Policy Vision - To deliver an employability system that tackles inequalities in Scotland's labour market, creating a responsive and aligned approach that helps people of all ages who face the greatest barriers to progress towards, into and to sustain work.

## Our strategic priorities

- Continuing to improve the employability system
- Increasing awareness and uptake of employability support
- Tackling child poverty by increasing parental income from employment
- Supporting disabled people and those with a long term health condition
- Delivering jointly with wider public services
- Working with employers to improve outcomes
- Supporting a just transition and net zero

## Outcomes

- Supporting the creation of a labour market that is fair, inclusive and provides sustainable and well-paid jobs
- Enabling equal access to an increased range of opportunities whilst challenging bias, structural and personal barriers
- Helping people into fair and sustainable jobs to deliver inclusive growth, tackle child poverty and support better health
- Providing person-centred support to people who wish to work but face barriers to do so

## Our Values

Dignity and Respect

Continuous Improvement

Fairness and Equality

## Our Principles

Provide flexible and person-centred support

Straightforward for people to navigate

Integrated and aligned with other services

Provide pathways into sustainable and fair work

Driven by evidence, including data and the experience of users

Support more people to move into the right job, at the right time

Shared Measurement Framework

Customer Charter

Service Standards

## 2. Introduction

### Our Vision

To deliver an employability system that tackles inequalities in Scotland's labour market, creating a responsive and aligned approach that helps people of all ages who face the greatest barriers to progress towards, into and to sustain work.

Since devolution of employment support powers, we have been clear on our desire to shape an employability system for Scotland that delivers better outcomes for people who experience barriers to accessing the labour market.

We have been clear that the employability system must centre on the people that access it. This requires support to be tailored to an individual's circumstances, and a recognition that progress towards employment may not be linear. We want employability services to be seen as an opportunity by those accessing them, which is why participation is entirely voluntary.

At the outset of devolution, we established the need for Scotland's employability services to treat people with dignity and respect, to have fairness and equality at their heart, and to continuously improve – we remain committed to these values.

### Why publish this plan?

Employability services are critical to creating a more inclusive labour market in Scotland, and are well placed to play a role in addressing a range of prevailing labour market challenges:

- Child poverty rates remain too high, with parents continuing to experience barriers to entering and increasing their income from employment<sup>1</sup>. There is a strong gendered element to this, with women more likely to be employed in low-paid, part time work<sup>2</sup>.

- Despite relatively low unemployment rates, economic inactivity rates remain a concern, with a large contributor of this group being more people reporting as long-term sick or disabled<sup>3</sup>.
- Although there has been steady progress in reducing the disability employment rate gap<sup>4</sup>, there is more to be done to meet our target to at least halve the gap by 2038 (from 2016 baseline) and Scotland continues to lag behind some other countries<sup>5</sup>.
- Significant barriers to accessing fair work in the labour market persist for women, disabled people, unpaid carers, people with convictions and individuals from racialised minorities who continue to experience lower employment rates than others<sup>6</sup>.
- There is local variation with areas of high unemployment also tending to have high economic inactivity<sup>7</sup>.
- It is estimated that unpaid carers leaving employment cost the UK public purse £2.9 billion a year in welfare payments and lost tax revenue. The impact of women reducing hours, not taking or applying for promotions, or leaving the labour market altogether in order to provide unpaid care contributes towards Scotland's gender pay gap<sup>8</sup>.

These challenges represent lost opportunities for people, for employers, and for Scotland as a whole. Although Scotland's labour market has been more resilient than anticipated post-Covid-19, addressing these challenges is a central element of creating the Scotland we want to see.

Employability will not be able to do this on its own, and partnership working between organisations and services will be essential. That is why Scottish and Local Government embarked on a programme of transformational change through No One Left Behind – to design and implement a delivery model which has partnership at its heart and that actively drives alignment and integration of the services people may need to support their journey towards and into employment.

This plan is being published at a crucial time for Scotland's devolved employability services as we move fully to a local delivery model. In supporting this move, we have engaged with partners and stakeholders through a series of [national discussion events](#), and conducted evaluations of previous activity to generate learning. We have also considered broader policy ambitions, including those set out in the [National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#), [Fair Work Action Plan](#), [Best Start, Bright Futures](#), the [Verity House Agreement](#), and those in the [COSLA Plan 2022-27](#), to shape the areas of priority for employability services over the lifetime of this plan.

Throughout this plan, we will:

- **Set out the delivery model for Scotland's employability system, recognising that there have been notable changes since April 2018;**
- **Establish areas of priorities over the lifetime of this plan, based on evidence of labour market challenges and feedback from partners; and**
- **Set actions Scottish and Local Government will jointly take to deliver on these priorities**

## The Journey so far

Employability services in Scotland have been on a journey since devolution of further powers under the Scotland Act 2016. Prior to this, evidence identified an employability landscape which was cluttered, complex for people to navigate, and which contained duplication of effort across a range of key actors.

In 2018, the Scottish Government published [No One Left Behind: Next Steps for the Integration and Alignment of Employability Support in Scotland](#), which set out the evidence for change and the principles that must guide activity moving forward.

Action to deliver on the ambitions of No One Left Behind have been shaped by the [Partnership Working Agreement for Employability](#), signed between Scottish Ministers and COSLA spokespersons in 2018.

We have come a significant distance since. Following the end of referrals to Fair Start Scotland in March 2024, Scottish Government funded employability provision is now commissioned through Local Employability Partnerships, under the No One Left Behind approach. This has seen the consolidation of a variety of national and local funding into a single, all-age offer of support, with delivery shifting from national to local models. Not only has this simplified the landscape for people, but it has created greater scope for partners to inform provision through Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs), supported decisions to be taken closer to participants, and enabled local labour market conditions to shape the focus of services more closely.

However, as we move forward, it is important to recognise the learning from Fair Start Scotland provision over its six years. Some key points noted in the range of evaluations include:

- People accessing Fair Start Scotland were generally positive about the type of support they received, although often this related to wrap-around support rather than traditional employability interventions, such as help with an addiction or specialist support for a mental health condition<sup>9</sup>.
- Support tailored to the individual was highly valued<sup>10</sup>, with the flexible pace of the service noted as a key benefit<sup>11</sup>.
- Specialist employability support varied in terms of availability and quality across Scotland<sup>12</sup>.
- Development of in-work support action plans and on-going engagement with key workers during this time were found to be useful by participants.<sup>13</sup>

# Participant Experience

Evaluation evidence found that:

Around 9 out of every 10 service users thought the support they received had met their needs

69% of employability staff thought No One Left Behind had made employability services easier for people to navigate

Around 9 out of every 10 service users agreed the services treated them with dignity and respect

87% of service users were satisfied with the support they received

## Reach

Overall, 19% of participants reported being disabled. This increased from 18% in Year 1 to 25% in Year 5



**61,930**

people have received support through No One Left Behind since April 2019

In year 5, 39% of participants reported a Long-term Health Condition, with 23% of all participants reporting a mental health condition

Overall, 3% of participants reported being a refugee

Overall, 6% of participants reported a criminal conviction

Since April 2020, 28% of all people who started to receive support were parents

Overall, 23% of participants report having one or more long term health condition

## Outcomes

Of all parents receiving support since April 2020 – 19% were disabled, 57% lone parents, 12% aged under 25, 24% with 3+ children, 8% had a child under 1 year and 15% had a disabled child or adult within the family

A total of 2,527 (22%) participants with a disability entered employment, 1,710 (15%) gained a qualification, and 1,494 (13%) entered further/higher education and/or training

From April 2019 to March 2024, of the 61,930 people receiving support on No One Left Behind, 19,146 (31%) have entered employment

Overall, 8,783 (14%) entered further or higher education or training

### 3. Defining employability

Employability is the combination of factors and processes which enable people to progress towards employment, to stay in employment and to progress in the workplace.

It is affected by both personal circumstances (such as individual confidence, qualifications, health conditions and caring responsibilities) and external factors (including local labour market conditions and availability of wider public services).

Employability services must be about more than getting people into any job at any cost. Utilising a person-centred approach can have profoundly positive impacts on people's wellbeing, improve their ability to access fair work, and ultimately drive progress towards tackling labour market inequalities.

That is why our approach to devolved employability provision takes a wide view of the support that must be provided. Broadly, we want our services to be set up to:

- Provide person-centred support which develops and enhances an individual's skills (both soft and vocational) and accounts for their personal circumstances
- Address structural barriers that prevent people moving towards employment through integrated and aligned working with other services, and
- Work with employers to ensure the best chance of people sustaining employment

#### Our offer to participants

Our offer to participants is clear: regardless of personal circumstances or characteristics, people will receive support tailored to their needs, including access to wider public services as required, on their journey towards employment.

We will strive to ensure people are supported into work that meets their needs and aspirations, and that aligns to their personal circumstances. The support delivered under our devolved employability offer will align with commitments we co-designed with experts with lived experience in our [Customer Charter](#).

## What does Employability support mean to you?

I can't thank the team enough. They supported me with interview clothes and new workwear and provided with travel costs, alongside offering me an in-work payment which has helped get school uniforms for the kids without the fear. Thanks for believing in me and now I can work with children and offer peer support. I came into the programme 5 years ago and it changed my life.

I saw an improvement in my confidence, particularly with group work and with interviews. Learning about things like the STAR technique was very helpful. Group work also boosted my confidence and helped me realise I'm a likable member of a group.

If it hadn't been for this opportunity, I don't know how I'd have got back to full time work.... I'm super grateful.

Thank you for all of your help over the last couple of years, especially the last year. You have been a really great support to me and my daughter when I was in a bad place. I am glad my work coach referred me or I wouldn't be in the position I am now, graduating from college and working towards becoming a Nursery Teacher, which is my dream job.

I am so grateful for all of my keyworker's support and help throughout all my journey. From the time of getting the SQA qualification, to finally now securing a full-time position, which I wouldn't have got if she had not encouraged me.

The course was amazing and I learned so much particularly about interview skills.. I would never have got through the application process or interview without the help I got.

Very good service, very helpful and understanding support worker. Doing work at last, little steps to being in work full time.

I couldn't have done all this myself at all. I thought at my age I wouldn't be able to get into work again, but here I am three months later about to start a new job, with no plans to retire at 67!

## 4. The No One Left Behind approach

No One Left Behind is the approach to devolved employability support between Scottish and Local Government. It builds on the values established at the outset of devolution, and introduced principles that underpin our policy and delivery:

- provides flexible and person-centred support;
- is more straightforward for people to navigate;
- is better integrated and aligned with other services;
- provides pathways into sustainable and fair work;
- is driven by evidence, including data and the experience of participants; and
- supports more people – particularly those facing multiple barriers – to move into the right job, at the right time.

These principles are intended to maintain the focus on the need to build a system that works for those accessing services above all. Through the partnership working agreement, Scottish and Local Government have established a commitment to deliver on these principles through employability support in Scotland and to work together to positively shape the direction of travel.

A critical aspect of a person-centred service is ensuring that those accessing it have a voice in shaping it. We are committed to embedding the **Scottish Approach to Service Design**, meaning services are designed with, and not for, people accessing provision and that they have a say over the support that they need.

The No One Left Behind approach sees a move away from nationally contracted provision to a model which empowers Local Employability Partnerships to lead the design and delivery of services in each Local Authority area. More information on Local Employability Partnerships and our delivery model is set out below.

We have been clear that a mixed economy of provision is absolutely essential. This ensures that expertise from the third, private and wider public sector supports the effectiveness of the employability sector as a whole. The delivery of the principles underpinning No One Left Behind, and the broader success of Scotland's employability system, relies on collaborative working across a diverse range of partners.

### Local by default, national by agreement

A local model provides significant opportunities to embed our principles, and to provide more effective support for people. However, it also requires careful consideration as to how the flexibility afforded to local employability partnerships is balanced with coherent expectations and approaches across the country. This is particularly the case for elements of the employability system that require consistency, such as standards of service, measurement of outcomes and evaluation of impact.

To support this, partners have co-produced a range of national products, to guide and support delivery. These include [The Employability Service Standards](#), [The Customer Charter](#), [The Shared Measurement Framework](#), as well as a number of toolkits to support activity around [Continuous Improvement](#) and [Service Design](#).

## Working in partnership

The No One Left Behind approach recognises that the Scottish Government contribution to the employability landscape is only part of the picture. There is a wide range of expertise and investment brought to bear from across Local Authorities, UK Government Departments, agencies, and other public bodies.

We are committed to working in partnership across organisations involved in delivering employability support in Scotland to achieve the best outcomes possible for participants. Working collaboratively and aligning activity delivered from national and local budgets can offer significant benefits through more effective planning of provision. For example: a reduction of duplication and complexity in the employability system; the creation of a no-wrong door approach ensures partners support people to access the right support at the right time; and better value for public money.

As the UK Government works to deliver on the planned reforms to employment support, our ongoing partnership working across the three spheres of Government will continue to be critical. We have shared ambitions around increasing participation in the labour market, and employability services will continue to have an important role in supporting us to achieve this.

Feedback received at the national discussion events in 2023<sup>15</sup> showed that the No One Left Behind approach was already helping to improve partnership working in the design of services.

Principles of No One Left Behind are in the right place

Promotes local solutions to local problems

Greater ability to design services to meet local differences in need

Not just about employability - it's more holistic - housing, justice, health etc

Great partnerships have been created with local government and third sector

**What difference has the No One Left Behind approach made?**

LEP encourages partnership working and brings stakeholders round the table

No One Left Behind has allowed for more partnership working opportunities

No One Left Behind shines a light on the importance of alignment and integration of services in general

Lighter touch compliance leads to more creative and delivery focused provision

The idea/concept and execution of "shared" resources/delivery has come a long way

## 5. No One Left Behind delivery model

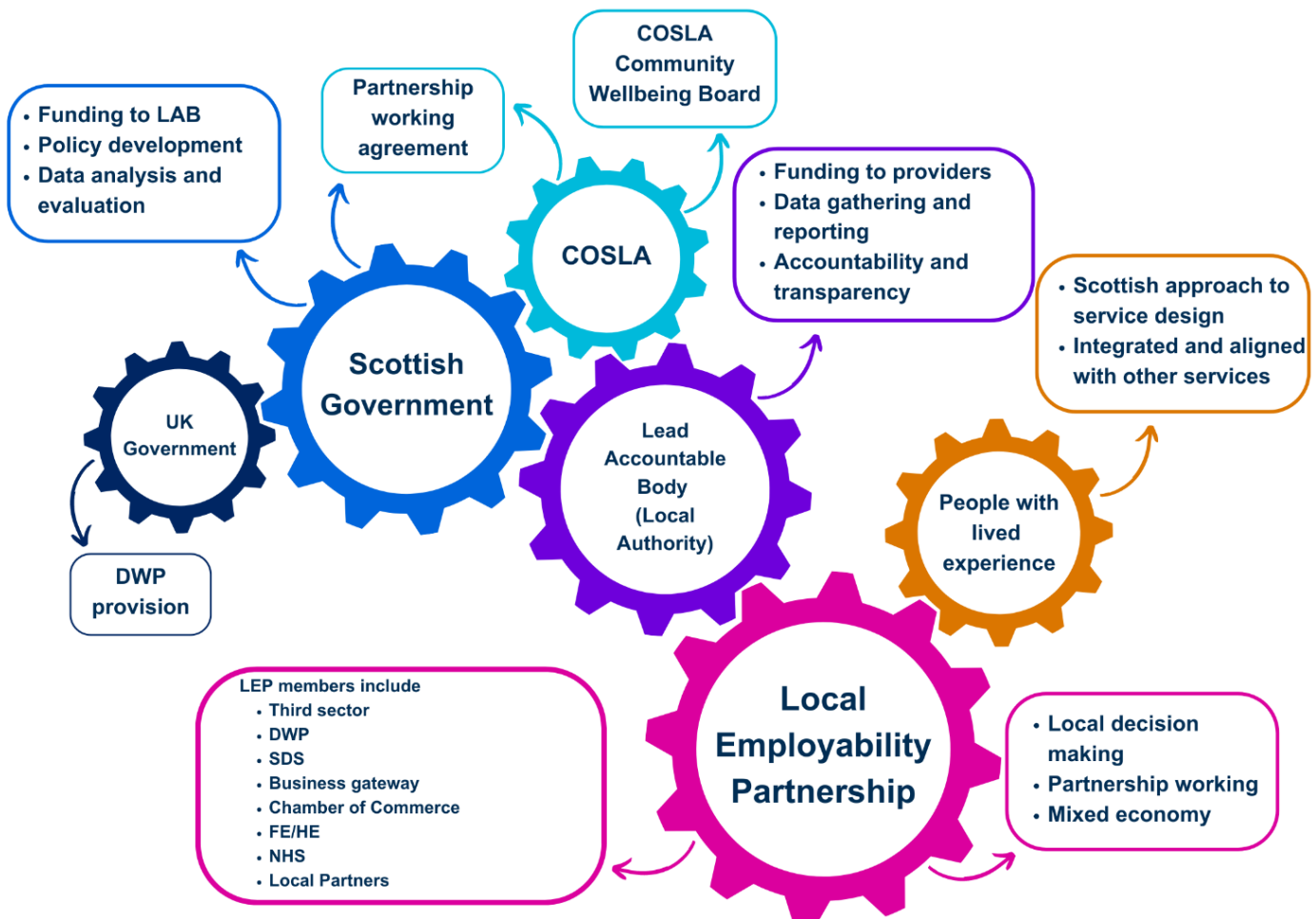
No One Left Behind seeks to drive closer working at a national level on policy issues which often cut across different spheres of Government, whilst facilitating greater scope for decisions to be made closer to the people they impact.

National level activity is supported primarily between a partnership working agreement with COSLA and Scottish Government, which ensures joint political oversight between Scottish Ministers and the COSLA Community Wellbeing Spokesperson (including the COSLA Community Wellbeing Board).

Our delivery model has been designed to strengthen alignment between national and local funding, and to support the leveraging of investment from a range of organisations to better deliver on ambitions, which are often shared. The Local Employability Partnership is the keystone of this, bringing together a range of agencies, organisations, and partners to plan and implement provision in their area.

As set out under priority 1 below, there is a planned review of the supporting documentation for the delivery model, including the Local Employability Partnership Framework. This review will be informed by the [No One Left Behind and the Young Person's Guarantee: implementation evaluation](#), and feedback from partners to date that states this should explicitly recognise the Local Authority's role as lead accountable body.

### The moving parts of the No One Left Behind delivery model



## Lead Accountable Body

The Scottish Government awards funding for employability to local authorities, which act as the Lead Accountable Body in the funding relationship.

Local Authorities manage funding on behalf of the Local Employability Partnership and are responsible for reporting on the use of funding, both in terms of data (in line with the Shared Measurement Framework) and qualitative narrative on delivery (aligned to Service Standards and policy intent).

## Local Employability Partnerships

Local Employability Partnerships play a critical role in the planning and commissioning of employability services locally. Partners around the table also have a role to play in strategically guiding employability provision locally, including thorough evidencing and prioritising local need based on their knowledge, experience, resources and data.

There is a [Framework](#) in place to guide the operations of Local Employability Partnerships and to establish a degree of commonality in membership. This framework allows for minor variations in approach locally, and will be strengthened through a review, as set out in the actions below. The Employability Service Standards also set out expectations of Local Employability Partnerships more broadly.

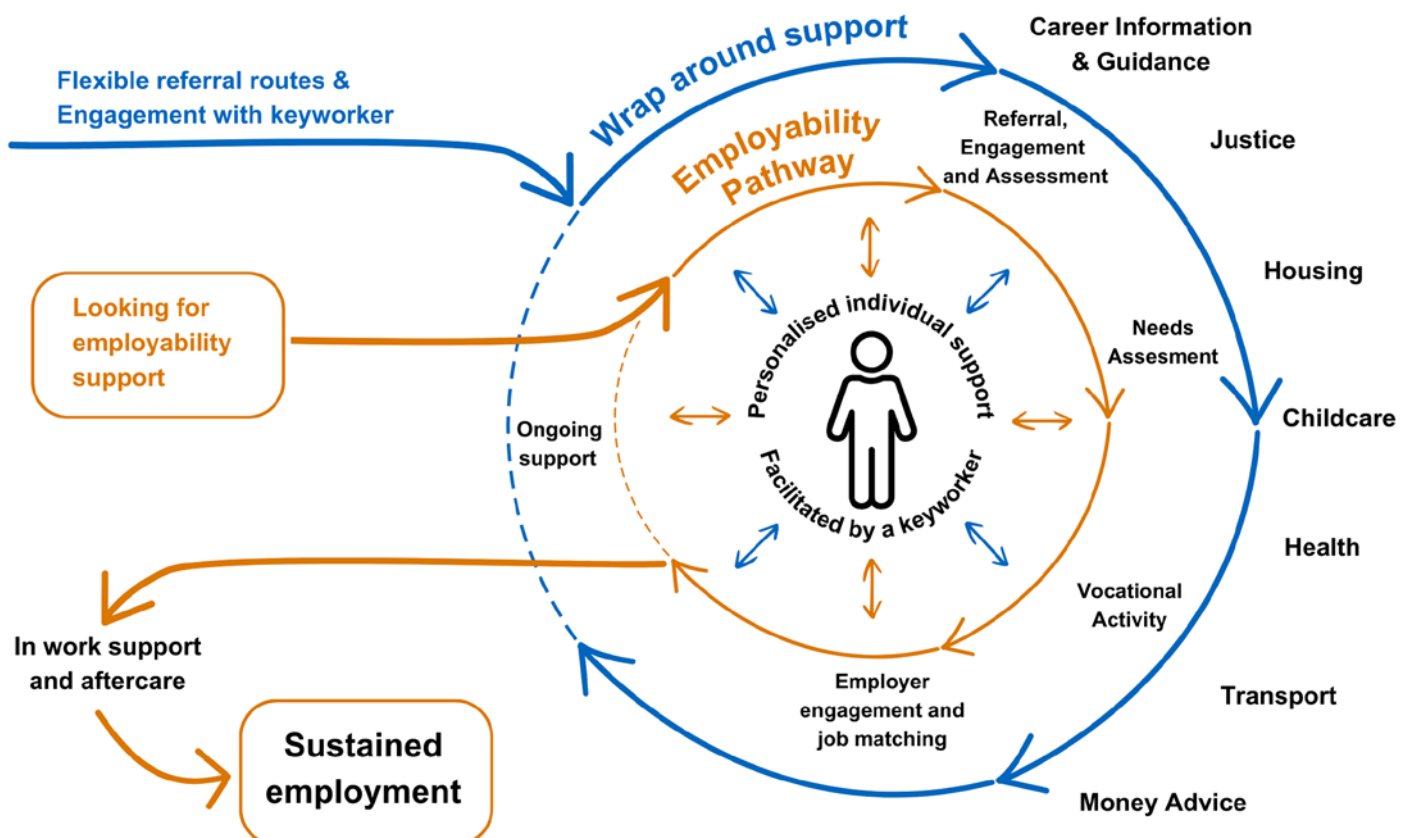
## Participant Experience

Moving into employment is not always straightforward. To align with our definition of employability, services must be set up in a way which recognises that successfully supporting people to access sustainable and fair work, or progress within work, requires a more holistic approach to service provision and more inclusive definitions of success. Although we want to ultimately support people into jobs, it's also important that we recognise the significance of outcomes, other than employment, that our services support people to achieve. For example, participating in volunteering can be an important part of someone's journey by offering an opportunity to gain experience, build skills and confidence.

We know public services are complex, and how people navigate them can impact significantly on the outcomes they experience. This is why a relational key worker model is central to the No One Left Behind approach. As set out in our [service standards](#), everyone accessing our services should have a single point of contact to act in a trusted professional role.

Participant journeys are based on the [5-stage employability pathway model](#), which has been widely adopted and should be used flexibly based on people's circumstances. This pathway is not linear, and it must be recognised that people may move backwards as well as forwards. Employability services must be flexible enough to accommodate this, and continue to provide support.

## The Employability Customer Journey model



## Case Study

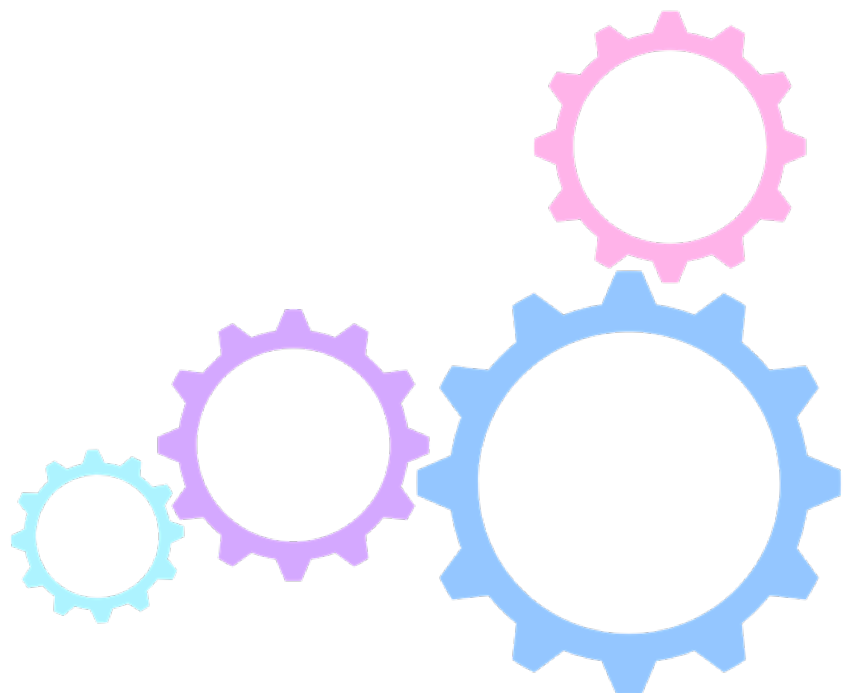
### Third sector partnership approach

Enable Work's 'All in' partnership model has been operational since 2015, beginning with All in Edinburgh and expanding into Dundee in 2019, Glasgow in 2022, Moray in 2023 and Aberdeenshire in 2024. Comprising of 26 Third Sector providers across Scotland, the partnerships recognise the unique specialisms and expertise of each organisation and that by working together they can offer services that respond to a range of barriers and acknowledge intersectionality.

Enable Works "All In" partnerships were created to deliver the principles of No One Left Behind, providing person-centred services, that simplify the employability landscape while connecting partners to better work together to deliver high quality services that offer a lasting impact for our participants and commissioners.

Enable Works said:

"Our partnerships deliver genuine collaboration over competition, bringing together organisations who have historically been seen as competitors, to pool together our expertise, reach, skills and knowledge to deliver services that are values driven, flexible to local need and provide a lasting impact. We design partnerships that bring together third sector providers with demonstrable strengths in the priority areas for our customers, meeting local and national priorities."

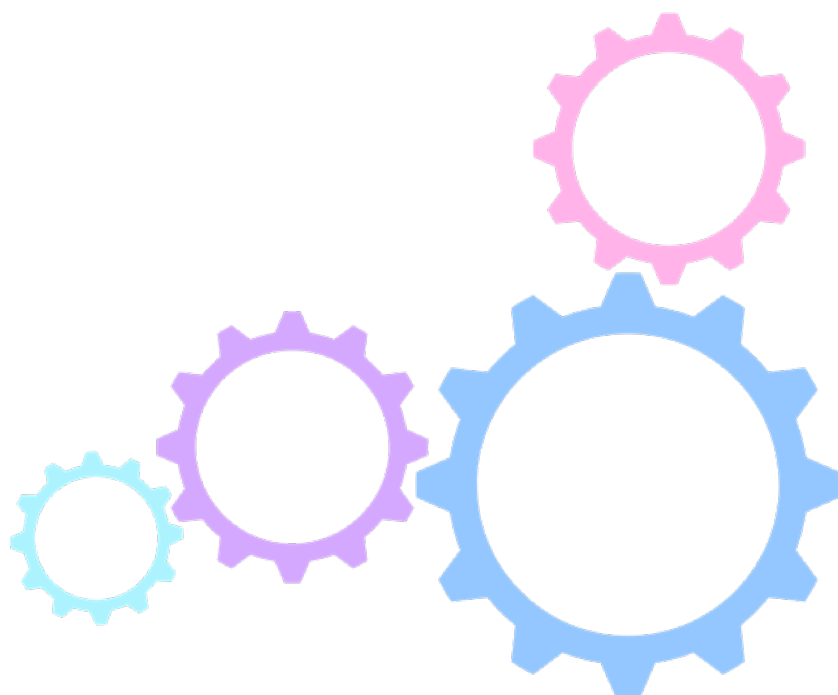


## 6. Priorities for employability services

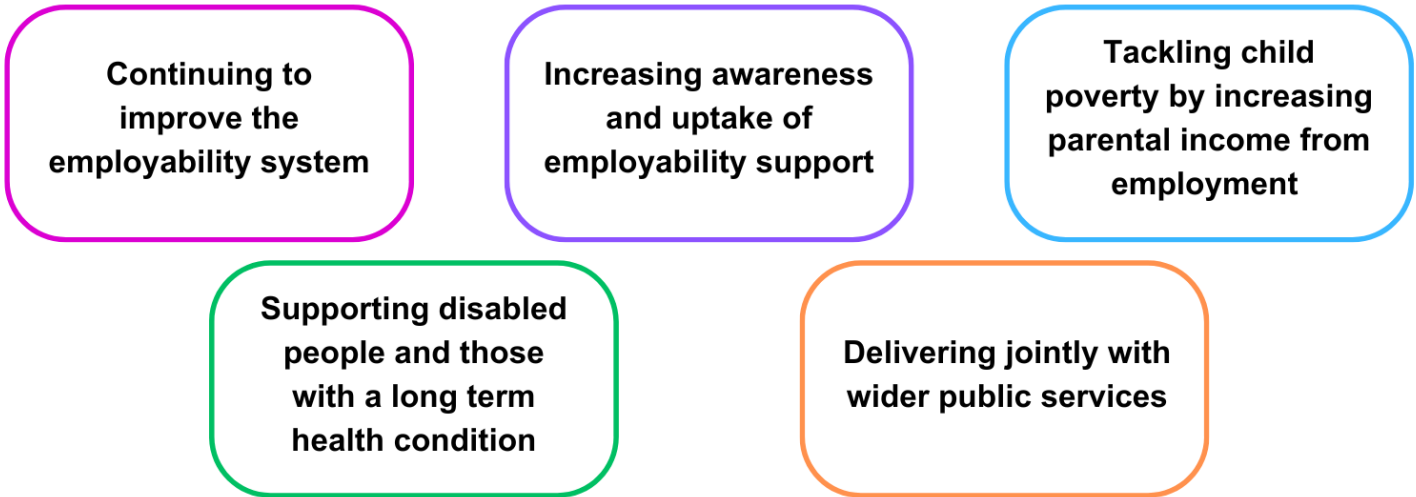
Through the [National Discussion Events](#) and the [No One Left Behind and the Young Person's Guarantee: implementation evaluation](#), published in August 2023, Four themes have been identified as central to improving Scotland's devolved employability system:

1. **Communication** - People in Scotland know how and where to get support and training to help them find a job.
2. **Service User Engagement** - Local people and communities are involved in shaping services to ensure they provide the right support towards and into jobs.
3. **Partnership** - Local and National organisations share their resources and work together to improve job opportunities for people living in Scotland.
4. **Data and Reporting** - Employability services use data trends and local knowledge to understand what support is needed locally to help people and communities thrive.

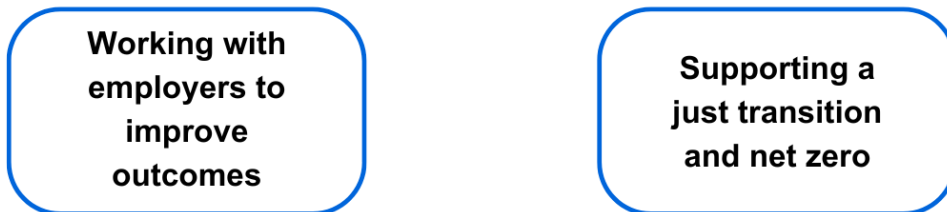
These themes, alongside broader and shared policy ambitions, including those set out in the [National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#), [Fair Work Action Plan](#), [Best Start, Bright Futures](#), the [Verity House Agreement](#), and those in the [COSLA Plan 2022-27](#), have been used to shape the areas of priority for employability services, and the actions we will take to deliver on them over the lifetime of this plan.



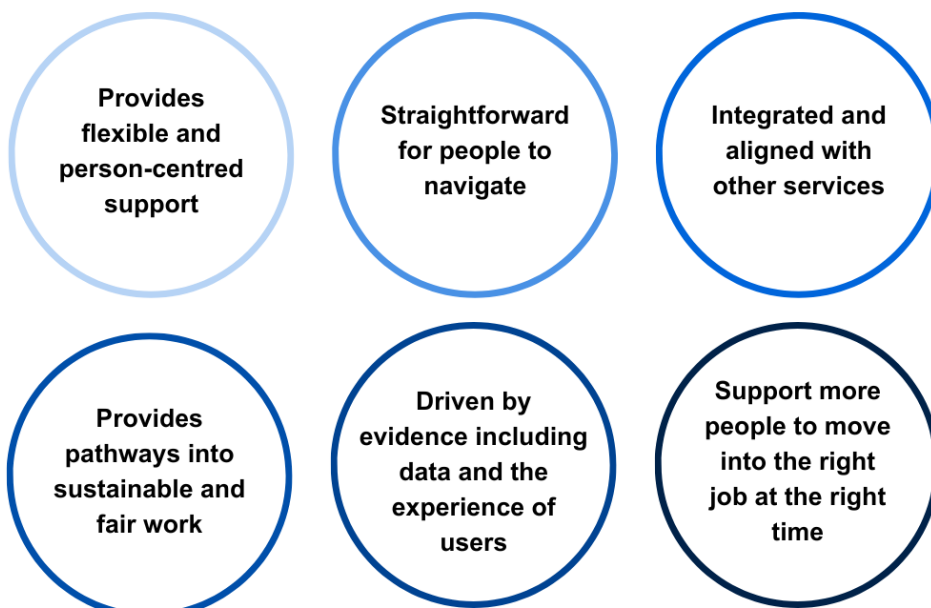
# Priorities



## Emerging Priorities



## Underpinned by the No One Left Behind Principles



It is important to note that some of these priorities will overlap with each other, either due to intersectionality between priority groups, or because activity cuts across several aspects of our delivery model. This overlap is something we must embrace to effectively deliver in a complex landscape.

These priorities will also be underpinned by the principles of No One Left Behind. In everything we take forward, we must ensure we are driving towards creating an employability system which reflects these.

Finally, a shared element across each of these priorities is the need to be bold and innovative in how we approach the activity set out in this plan. This is true even where that means re-assessing aspects of current practice, or taking steps to do something different with the aim of achieving better outcomes for people accessing support.

We have set out actions to take under each priority area and set their anticipated timescales for delivery; short, medium, and long-term. We will begin the implementation of some of the longer-term actions within the next one to three years but acknowledge they will take longer to fully deliver.



#### Short Term

– delivery within one year



#### Medium Term

– delivery within one to three years



#### Long Term

– delivery within three years or more

# Priority 1 – Continuing to improve the employability system

Continuous Improvement has been a value of devolved employability services since 2015, and as we move forward, we remain committed to ensuring that we are driving improvements across the employability system.

Feedback from the national discussion events highlighted that partners would like to see more best practice shared across LEPs and it would be helpful to share information on the role of the LEP within the wider employability sector. We have sought to deliver clearer communication of how LEPs fit into the employability delivery model above and we will work with partners to refresh the LEP framework. We will also set out case studies of innovative practice below, and consider how to utilise wider communication channels to support this on an ongoing basis.

We have heard that improving the employability system requires a stable foundation. Through both the national discussion events and the [implementation evaluation](#), the point was made that certainty of funding is required if partners are to deliver effectively on policy intent, retain dedicated and talented staff, and ultimately deliver innovatively to support more people achieve positive outcomes.

There is a key role for public sector funding to address this, both national funding from Scottish Government, and further investment through the supply chain at a local level. The 2024/25 budget sets out a commitment to deliver future multi-year funding for the employability sector: we will continue to prioritise activity to progress this. Furthermore, we will ensure greater transparency by publishing budget allocation breakdowns as a matter of course from this financial year onwards.

Finally, improving the employability system requires strong input from the people who access our support – whether in shaping future policy at a national level, or designing services at a local level. User voice has formed a strong part of the co-produced guidance issued for No One Left Behind to date, and we remain committed to ensuring that this is central to our entire approach at both a national and local level.

Over the lifetime of this plan, we will take forward the following actions to support this priority:

## Actions

### Short Term

- We will continue to explore future multi-year funding options for employability.
- We will work collectively to review the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) Framework to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities, supporting further capacity building and strengthening of representation across communities and sectors.

### Medium Term

- Scottish Government, Local Government and COSLA will work together with partners to ensure that local commissioning frameworks and funding models are open and inclusive supporting a mixed economy of provision
- We will work collectively to further refine the Shared Measurement Framework to improve ease of use and ensure a clearer focus on the wider impact of our support.
- We will work together to develop a national evaluation plan and effective ways to ensure the voice of lived experience informs continuous improvement at national and local levels.

## Priority 2 - Increasing awareness and uptake of employability support

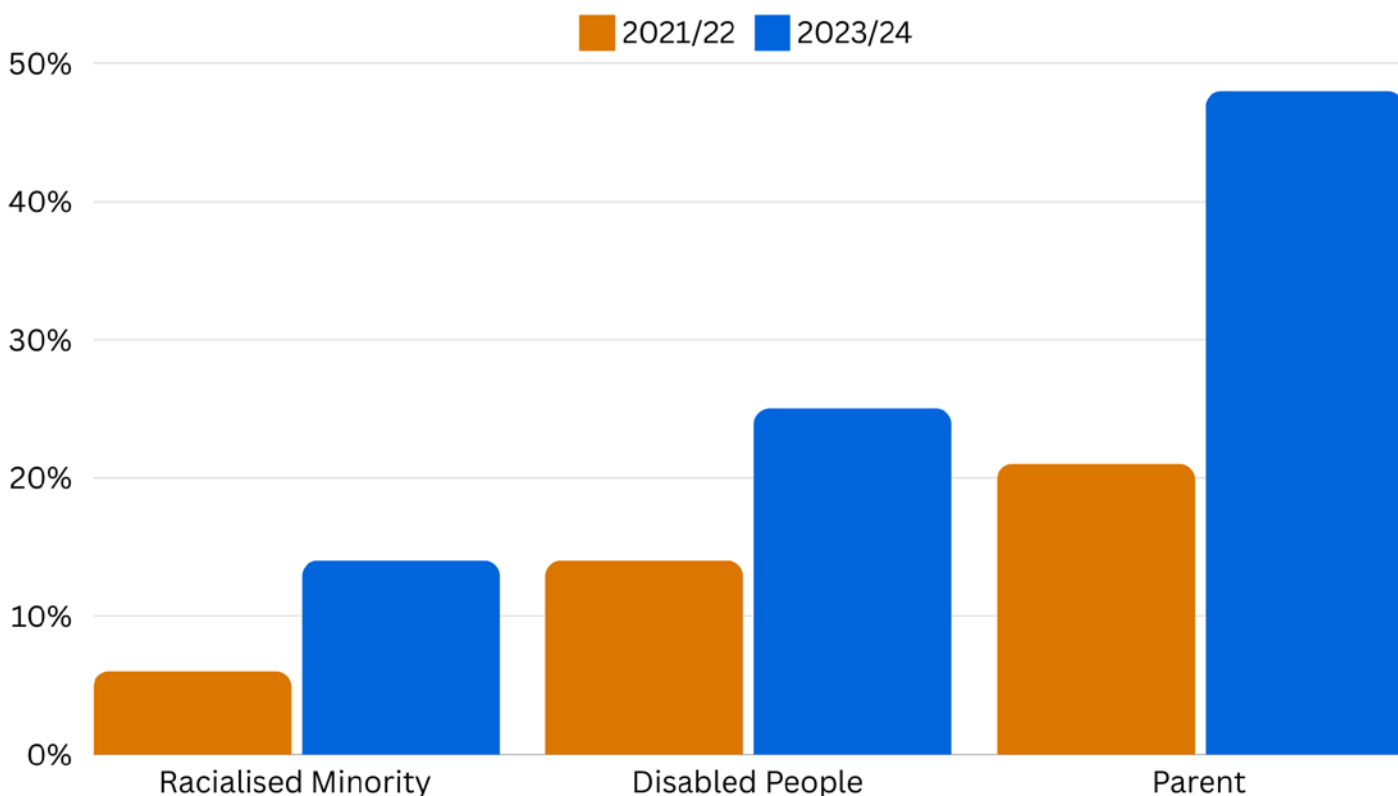
### [The No One Left Behind and the Young Person's Guarantee: implementation evaluation](#)

recommended that more should be done to raise awareness of employability support, and consideration should be given to local and national communication approaches.

With the implementation of the local delivery model, we have seen positive trends around reach of employability services to groups we know face broader structural barriers to entering the labour market.

In striving to become a leading Fair Work nation, we are seeking to realise fundamental rights for all, consistent with the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Integral to this, is taking action to improve labour market outcomes for those groups who experience the most disadvantage and inequality – especially disabled people, women, unpaid carers and people from racialised minorities.

### Proportion of No One Left Behind Participants by Specific Groups



Source: Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: Statistical Summary July 2024

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-devolved-employment-services-statistical-summary-july-2024/>

1 The data collection approach for disability data changed in October 2022, however, both approaches were based on the definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010.

2 Data on parents was first collected in year 2 (2020/21). Small changes to parental data have occurred across the collection period.

For more details, see Background and Methodology Paper:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-devolved-employment-services-statistical-summary-july-2024/documents>

However, there is more to do to ensure people who could benefit from employability support are aware of the offer and able to access services, and this remains a critical focus of our activity.

We know that to reach people who stand to benefit the most from the support on offer, we need to be creative. Building on the recommendation made in the [implementation evaluation](#), we want to see more effective alignment between services to increase awareness of employability for those accessing wider public services. We also want to see better use of key partners in increasing awareness and uptake, particularly third sector organisations who are already embedded in communities. This outreach activity must take place prior to services being designed to ensure that that consideration is given to the experience of communities and groups who most require our support.

## Case Study

### Parents Engagement programme

The Falkirk Local Employability Partnership (LEP) identified the need to increase community engagement resources to reach more isolated, low-income parents. Falkirk Council's Employment and Training Unit (ETU) worked with local organisations, Aberlour, Barnardos, One Parent Families Scotland and Home Start, to develop a Parents Engagement Programme targeting the four priority areas across Falkirk.

"This collaboration has been hugely successful, with many of our attendees progressing to the ETU to explore their development opportunities.

100% of those who completed feedback questionnaires said that they would recommend our services. A testimony to the success of this programme, and the importance of building connected and trusting relationships within local communities."

Aberlour Family Support Worker

Over the lifetime of this plan, we will collectively take forward the following actions to support this priority:

## Actions

### Short Term

- We will lead a collective approach including the development of a communication plan to ensure information on employment support is communicated in a clear, consistent and accessible way, so that people are fully aware how to access the range of support and advice available.
- We will raise awareness of No One Left Behind tools and products amongst strategic, funding and delivery partners by developing a handbook to ensure that standards are upheld and a consistent approach to planning, data and reporting.

### Medium Term

- We will work with partners across our communities to ensure provision is diverse, inclusive and responsive to community need and to raise awareness of employability services and improve access for those who are currently not engaged, including those who are economically inactive.
- We will work in partnership to review, improve and if necessary, develop communication tools and platforms to ensure a consistent and effective approach to sharing information and good practice.
- We will work with partners to ensure that services are co-designed with people with lived experience to maximise impact and uptake.

## Priority 3 - Tackling child poverty by increasing parental income from employment

Employability support is a central aspect of our approach across Scottish and Local Government to eradicating child poverty. If services are to contribute effectively, they must be set up to enable parents to increase their income by supporting them to enter or progress in work, and ensure that wider systems and services are aligned to provide holistic support.

We know that parents can face significant structural barriers to entering the labour market<sup>16</sup>, and even when parents are in work, statistics show that there is still a very real risk of experiencing poverty. At present, 7 in 10 children in poverty in Scotland live in a working household<sup>17</sup>.

We are clear that employability services should contribute to reducing poverty, by focusing on enabling people to access fair work opportunities with the conditions, and support, required for sustained employment.

Since April 2020, specific funding has been available for the delivery of Parental Employability Support across Scotland, focusing on parents who are unemployed or facing in-work poverty. Furthermore, since April 2023, the role of the Employability Child Poverty Coordinator was introduced at a local level to drive alignment and integration between employability support and the wrap-around services required to support parents to increase their income from employment.

All parents on low incomes are eligible to receive support. However, there is a focus on the six priority family groups identified as being at highest risk of experiencing poverty: Lone parent families, the large majority of which are headed by women; Families which include a disabled adult or child; Families with three or more children; racialised minority families; Families with a child under one year old; and Families where the mother is under 25 years of age.

Recognising the financial barriers faced by parents to access employment, the Scottish Child Payment is seen as a key driver to lift families out of poverty<sup>18</sup>. Reliability and affordability of transport and childcare is also seen as a barrier for parents to access and sustain work within the labour market<sup>19</sup>, which is why we will continue to work to enhance the delivery of a 'no-wrong-door' approach for parents accessing our support. For example, by providing 'better-off in work' calculations and benefit entitlement checks to parents, employability services can support parents to maximise income in the short term, demonstrate the benefit of work in cash terms to them, and identify wider services that may support their journey towards employment.<sup>20</sup>

Employability statistics show that progress has been made since April 2020 with the reach of our services to parents broadly increasing over time. They also show that this reach is translating into outcomes, with 25% of parents supported having entered employment as reported in July 2024.<sup>21</sup>

### 7 in 10 children in poverty live in a working household



Although this is encouraging, we recognise that more needs to be done to enhance the impact of our support for parents. For example, recent research carried out by One Parent Families Scotland highlights the significance of peer-to-peer approaches for building confidence, and enabling parents to see support is out there that will work for them.<sup>22</sup> This will be true for many user groups, but it is an example of an approach that could be scaled in current structures and has the potential to have positive impacts for individuals quickly. We are also of the view that more could be done to make certain that we are effectively utilising existing public service touchpoints with parents to ensure that people who could benefit from employability support are aware of it.

We also want to see greater impact of employability services for parents who are in low-income employment. We know that time constraints and the pressure of childcare responsibilities will be even more challenging for those who are currently employed, and our approaches moving forward must reflect this more directly.

Access to affordable, good quality childcare is vital to supporting parents and carers who wish to move into work, and is a critical element of an integrated employment offer to parents. Scotland is the only part of the UK to offer 1,140 hours a year of funded ELC to all 3 and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds regardless of their parents' working status – putting children first. This offer has been in place since 2021 and, if families paid for this themselves, it would cost them more than £5,500 per eligible child per year<sup>23</sup>.

However, in 2023/24 18%, of those accessing No One Left Behind identified childcare as a barrier to employment<sup>24</sup>. Employability services, then, must play a role in signposting parents to different sources of help available around childcare costs, and support awareness of childcare provision available locally as part of the employability offer.

## Case Study

### Supporting flexible working opportunities for parents in North Ayrshire

The North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership's Care at Home team supports people to continue to live in their communities and employ over 800 Care at Home Assistants. This dedicated team works tirelessly, offering round-the-clock care services and new entrants are required to work shifts and varied hours, making this career choice a challenge for parents. Following a focus group with Parents and the Care at Home team, a pilot initiative was designed introducing flexible working hours, enabling parents to secure employment from 10am to 2pm.

Stephanie was referred to Your Next Move, Working North Ayrshire by her Health Visitor and working with her keyworker, she was successful in securing one of these positions. Stephanie describes her new job as 'life-changing,' as well as improving her household income, her confidence increased, she feels less isolated, has met new people and is working flexible hours during the school day.

Over the lifetime of this plan, collectively we will take forward the following actions to support this priority:

## Actions

### Short Term

- We will work together with partners including the public and third sector to take a targeted approach to engaging parents, exploring peer to peer approaches and utilising existing touch-points.

### Medium Term

- We will work with partners and employer engagement colleagues to enhance the offer to parents who are in-work, to effectively support them to increase income from employment.

### Long Term

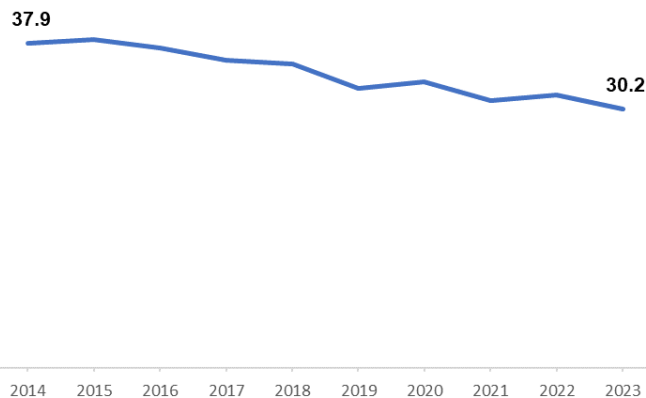
- We will work with partners to lever employability resources to address workforce challenges in sectors which impact on parents' ability to enter employment, such as childcare.

## Priority 4 – Supporting disabled people and those with a long term health condition

No One Left Behind has a key role to play in meeting the Scottish Government’s commitment to halving the Disability Employment Gap by 2038, and supporting those who are economically inactive into employment.

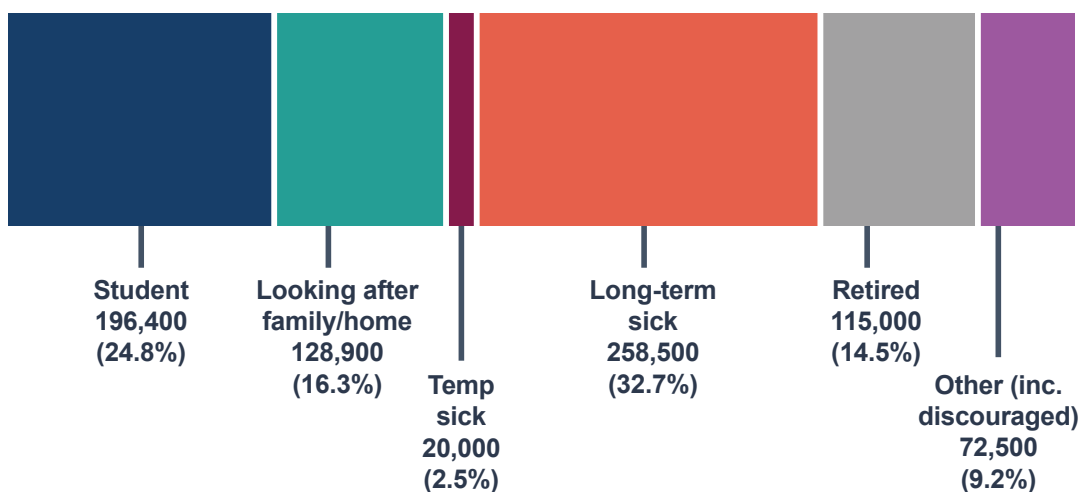
The Scottish Government has committed to halving the disability employment gap by 2038 (from the 2016 baseline of 37.4%). Although there has been steady progress reducing the gap (to 30.2% in 2023)<sup>25</sup>, data around labour market participation clearly shows the need for continued collective action to meet this commitment. We know that economic inactivity remains a concern, largely due to long-term ill-health or disability, and that disabled people are less likely to be employed than non-disabled people<sup>26</sup>. On top of this, disabled people who are employed are more likely to be in part time work, more likely to be underemployed, and less likely to be in contractually secure work than non-disabled people<sup>27</sup>.

Disability Employment Rate Gap, Scotland, Jan-Dec 2014 to Jan-Dec 2023<sup>29</sup>



We are committed to addressing the inequalities experienced by disabled people, and an approach that respects the individual and offers support to progress into sustainable and fair work of the person’s choosing, at a pace which reflects their needs and capabilities. We have heard from service users and disabled people’s organisations that this support must be flexible and integrated. This vision reflects the approach and principles of No One Left Behind, and our work to ensure employability provision delivers for disabled people will continue to be informed by this.

Economic Inactivity for those aged 16-64 by reason, Scotland, April 2023-March 2024<sup>28</sup>



## Case Study

### Reducing the Disability Employment Gap

Dumfries and Galloway LEP (DGLEP) recognised the significance of the Disability Employment Gap in the region and in 2023 took decisive action to address the issue using the influence and resource they had at their disposal.

Building on work undertaken by partners, an independent expert reviewed how the DGLEP No One Left Behind funding might be more effectively invested to enhance employability support for disabled people. The second phase was to develop a more strategic approach considering partners including education, employers and the NHS and using various funding sources available including No One Left Behind to commission a wide range of support in the region.

This includes:

- The opening of a second Project Search site in Stranraer
- Region-wide early engagement and barrier removal support for 180 individuals
- Supported Employment for 120 Individuals
- 15 paid placement opportunities ringfenced within Dumfries and Galloway Council
- Whole family support for those with a disabled family member
- Family support for young people with disabilities at risk of not progressing to a post school destination
- Dedicated Employer Recruitment Incentives for those with disabilities
- Condition Management help for individuals to progress to and sustain employment

Employability services in Scotland currently require person-centred support to be in place for disabled people across the country, and statistics show positive trends since we implemented the local delivery model in April 2022, with a continued increase in disabled people accessing services. Statistics show that 2023/24 saw the highest total number (5,280), and highest proportion of overall starts (25%), of disabled people accessing No One Left Behind support to date<sup>30</sup>. Compared to previous devolved delivery, No One Left Behind support has also seen an increased number (and proportion) of people with Learning Disabilities and Developmental Disorders being reached by services.<sup>31</sup> Improved data collection now allows us to follow the progress of those with conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder which was not possible for previous devolved support.

However, there is more to do and we recognise that for some disabled people and those managing health conditions, more specialist delivery models may better meet their needs. As such, our focus over the lifetime of this plan will be two-fold:

- Ensuring local services are reaching and supporting disabled people effectively; and
- Ensuring a specialist employability offer is in place across Scotland which is all age and pan-disability for those who require it.

As we move forward and build on the positive trends seen to date, learning from previous delivery under Fair Start Scotland will continue to be important. This is why the reviews of Individual Placement and Support<sup>32</sup> and Supported Employment<sup>33</sup> have been used to inform our approach to responding to this priority under the No One Left Behind approach. We are also committed to working with partners, people with lived experience, stakeholders, and employers to support further progress, particularly around service delivery, national guidance, and data reporting in relation to disabled people and those with a long-term health condition.

Whilst this plan is focused on devolved employability services, it is important to reflect a range of other activity related to labour market participation, including support in place to prevent people from falling out of the labour market in the first place, such as [Healthy Working Lives](#) and [Mentally Flourishing Workplaces](#), led by Public Health Scotland. Priority 5 below explores our intention to work across organisational and policy boundaries to deliver on our priorities in more detail.

Over the lifetime of this plan, collectively we will take forward the following actions to support this priority:

## Actions

### Short Term

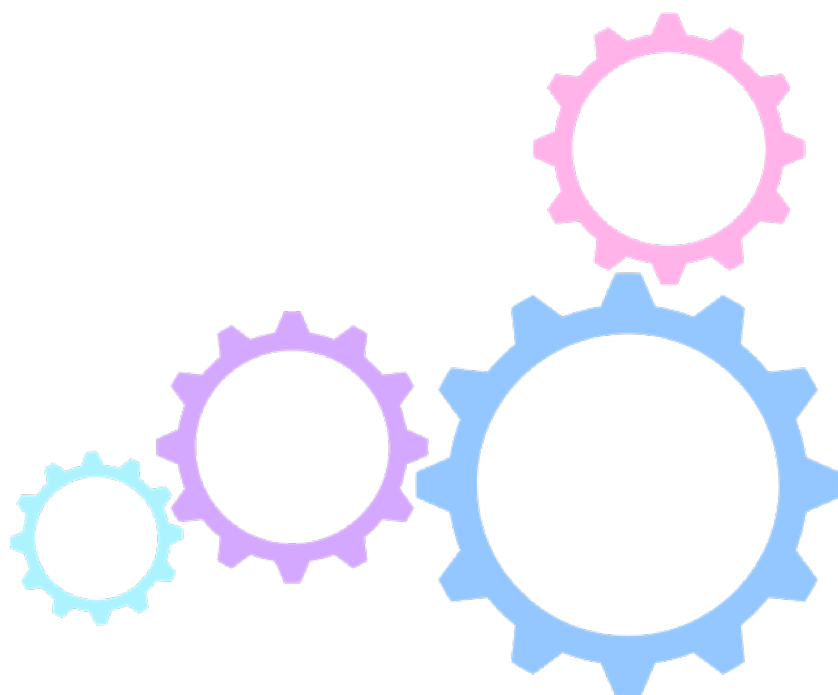


- We will work collectively to deliver specialist employability support across all Local Authority areas for disabled people in line with our commitment to at least halve the Disability Employment Gap by 2038.

### Long Term



- We will work collectively to reduce economic inactivity by strengthening connections with disabled people's organisations, third sector and health services as well as those who are using services to ensure we effectively respond to the employability needs and aspirations of disabled people and those with health conditions.
- We will continue to work with internal and external stakeholders to contribute to the actions from the review of Scottish Government's Health and Work Strategy.



## Priority 5 – Delivering jointly with wider public services

People's journey towards work will rarely be linear and often support will be required from a range of public services. We view a no-wrong-door approach to be central to delivering more effectively for participants, and have established expectations that Employability services be viewed as part of a wider public service landscape.

Through the move to a local delivery model, we have taken steps to support joint delivery across public services by embedding a key role for related public services in the planning and delivery of employability support through Local Employability Partnerships. Through the Employability Service Standards, we have also jointly agreed that our services must have partnership at their heart, which requires working across boundaries.

There are already examples of good practice, such as employability and health working closely to align NHS workforce activity with employability structures locally, and referrals from DWP continuing into devolved services. That said, more can be done in terms of alignment across services and policy with a view to improving outcomes for people.

We will have three principal areas of focus:

- Building stronger referral pathways between public services with the aim of delivering a no-wrong door approach;
- Recognising the enabling role of other public services and working with them to support people into work; and
- Leveraging investment in employability to support workforce challenges across other public services.

For many public services, there are mutual benefits for enabling those they support to access employability services, and national policy often already recognises the importance of joining up. However, delivering a **no-wrong-door approach** will require concerted efforts if we are to ensure people are supported to access wider services they may need, regardless of which touchpoints they are currently engaging with.

We want to engage constructively across a range of areas to identify and establish referral processes between employability and other public services, with the aim of supporting delivery of other priorities in this plan – for example, improved referral processes with **Health** has the potential to increase the number of people with a disability and those with long-term health conditions accessing employability support at a time that is right for them. We also want to make links where we think impact may be able to be achieved quickly.

Furthermore, **Social Security Scotland** already engages with several groups who could benefit from employability services (including parents, disabled people, and unpaid carers) and could quickly increase reach to people experiencing structural barriers to accessing the labour market in a way that reflects our joint desire to ensure people do not feel mandated to take the offer up.

We also have to recognise the enabling roles that other public services play in supporting people to access and sustain employment, such as Transport, Childcare and Social Care. Whilst this is not an exhaustive list, continuing to work across areas to identify and address barriers is a critical aspect of our strategy.

## Case Study

### Employability, Skills and CLD working together to support Young People in Orkney

A partnership initiative to support young people to gain confidence, skills and knowledge was held in Orkney at The Hub for Skills, Work and Employability over the summer.

Delivered jointly by Orkney Islands Council's Community Learning, Development and Employability team (CLDE); Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Orkney, the programme was introduced to help young people develop the skills they would need as they move on from mainstream education into further education, training or work.

CLDE's activities focused on development of life skills, personal finance, money management and online safety. Participants were supported to gain accredited qualifications through Dynamic Youth Awards and the Digital College.

SDS and DYW Orkney's sessions focused on employability skills, with participants supported to identify their skills, learn more about searching and applying for a job, preparing a CV and getting ready for a job or college interview.

Participants were also given the opportunity to explore their options with visits to UHI Orkney's Hospitality Department and the Balfour Hospital to learn more about careers in Hospitality and work-based learning opportunities offered by NHS Orkney.

The programme concluded with a mock interview session where local employers attended the group to ask participants the types of questions they could expect at an interview.

"The Hub group was a great example of collaborative working from members of Orkney's Local Employability Partnership. Youth Workers from the CLDE team worked with Kirkwall Grammar School to identify young people who would benefit from this summer programme, and developed activities to help them gain soft skills such as teamwork, timekeeping and communication skills."

CLDE Team Manager

"It was fantastic to work with CLDE and SDS to deliver this programme, and we definitely saw the young people gaining confidence as the programme progressed. The workplace visit and mock interview session were great opportunities for them to meet employers in a more relaxed setting and we hope it will make the prospect of a real interview much less daunting for them in the future."

DYW Project Manager

We are also aware of activity underway to review **skills, careers and community learning and development provision**. This presents opportunities to ensure that alignment between services supports more learners to achieve positive outcomes, with employability services playing their part for those who require more intensive support, for example those who require support with literacy and numeracy. Working in a more joined-up manner may also support more people to access opportunities across the post-school training and education landscape to progress their career aspirations.

Employability services are also uniquely positioned to support workforce challenges across the wider public sector, particularly where anchor institutions are working to consider how they can more positively impact on their local area through widening access to quality work. Through promoting inclusive recruitment and employment practices (such as committing to paying the real living wage, offering flexible working, and

supporting progression routes for employees), these anchor institutions can have a profoundly positive effect on the employment prospects and incomes of local people.

There are already examples of emerging practice here. For example, in the **health sector**, Public Health Scotland have recently established a pilot to demonstrate how health boards can leverage their position as anchor institutions to create flexible, family friendly work that supports parents to enter the workforce and develop skills that will support them in the future.

Furthermore, in the **childcare sector**, we are funding the Scottish Childminding Association to deliver the Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future over three years, building on their earlier pilots to support more people to establish new childminding businesses, with support from LEPs locally. Not only will this create job opportunities, but it will help increase the capacity of the childcare sector locally which in turn can enable more parents to enter or sustain work.

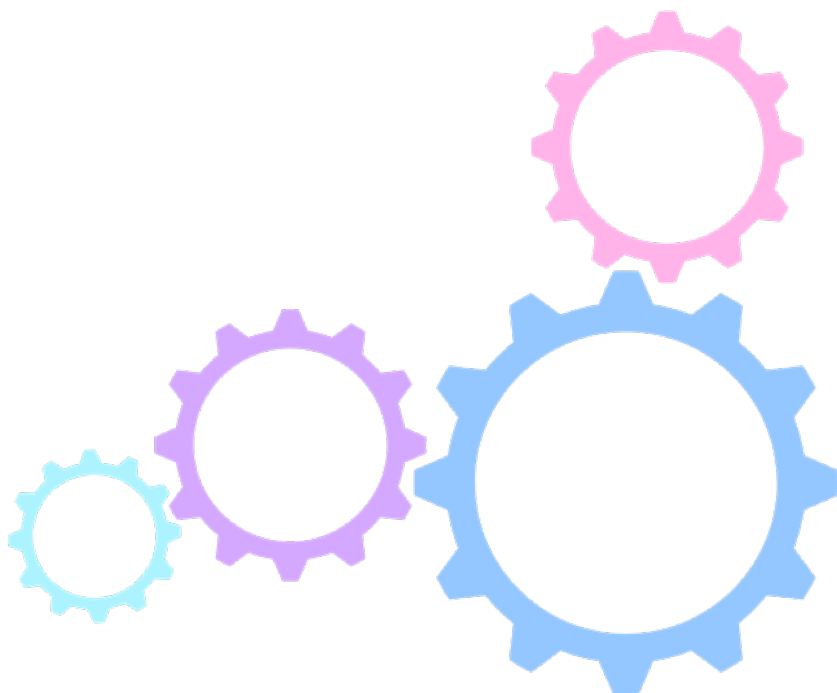
Over the lifetime of this plan, we will take forward the following actions to support this priority:

## Actions

### Medium Term



- Scottish Government, Local Government, COSLA, Public Health Scotland and sponsored bodies will work together to align public policy priorities.
- We will explore training, development and qualification requirements for key workers and other frontline employability staff to ensure core standards of knowledge and skills for those supporting individuals.
- We will work in partnership to support and influence the role of Community Wealth Building Anchor Institutions in providing greater access to employment opportunities for those who are out of work.
- We will work with partners to improve reporting on progress and the wider support provided to individuals on their journey towards positive outcomes, particularly for those further from the labour market.
- We will work in partnership at a national and local level to deliver a no-wrong-door approach to individuals both within and beyond No One Left Behind funded employability services.



# Emerging priority 1 – Working with Employers to improve outcomes

To date, No One Left Behind policy has focused largely on the needs of people seeking support on their journey to work and transforming our delivery model. But it is important to recognise that employers are not passive recipients of people who have “come through” employability services. They are key partners, both as users of services i.e. working with providers to employ people, and in setting requirements for employability services i.e. articulating skills needs for their business that employability services and support should be responsive to.

Yet, recent UK-wide research has highlighted that employers can view support as inconsistent, with low awareness of what is available,<sup>34</sup> and less than positive perceptions of what employability services can offer them.<sup>35</sup> Whilst the perception of business support has been found to be more positive in Scotland (such as that provided through Scottish Enterprise), support for recruitment has been noted as limited through these structures.<sup>36</sup> There is an opportunity here. If we can engage employers actively in the process of supporting people to gain employment, then we will be better placed to deliver more positive outcomes for everyone.

Our employability services engage with motivated individuals that can offer a lot to employers every day, and are able to support employers across Scotland with the recruitment and retention of workers. There has been extensive work with employers at a local level to date. For instance, the creation of employer forums as LEP sub-groups to drive constructive working between businesses and services locally. We also know that LEPs have worked hard to provide support to employers to fill vacancies, including exploring how different shift patterns can meet employer and service user needs.

## Case Study

### Invest in Renfrewshire

The Employability Service at Invest in Renfrewshire has a specific employer engagement team of 5 staff, working with local businesses and employers to support recruitment, fill vacancies and, in turn, get more employability clients into work. The remit of the team varies from job brokerage and recruitment to more general advice and support to employers on living wage accreditation and supporting hard to fill roles.

One recent example was a local firm with real recruitment challenges to fill multiple 9-5pm roles. The team suggested a more flexible approach, knowing the number of unemployed parents looking for 10-2pm opportunities (to fit around school hours) and students looking for early evening work. The nature of the current labour market is such that employers do have to consider different options for recruitment and the employer engagement team is there to help.

We wish to see this local activity continue. But we are also keen that it is supplemented by national level action to support awareness of what is on offer for employers and ensuring future policy work reflects the views of employers. In doing so, we will seek to align with existing Scottish Government activity, such as the [New Deal for Business](#).

Whilst employability support can assist employers, there is a requirement of employers to offer fair and inclusive work environments. The Scottish Government’s vision is for Scotland to be a leading Fair Work Nation by 2025, one which drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and society.

While employment law remains reserved to the UK Parliament, we will use our policy to promote fair working practices across the labour market in Scotland. Through our Fair Work First approach we are leveraging employers' commitment by applying these principles to public sector grants, other funding, and contracts where it is relevant and proportionate to do so.

The Scottish Government's [Fair Work First Guidance](#) explains our approach, provides good practice examples to guide employers' practice and, importantly, explains the benefits of fair work for workers and organisations. The guidance has been developed with the input of the STUC, the Fair Work Convention, Flexibility Works, CIPD Scotland, and business, public and third sector partners.

The [Fair Work Employer Support Tool](#) offers tailored advice and resources on Fair Work. We recognise the challenges being faced by employers at this time and would encourage them to use the tool to help identify fair work priorities and inform future plans.

Over the lifetime of this plan, we will take forward the following actions to support this priority:

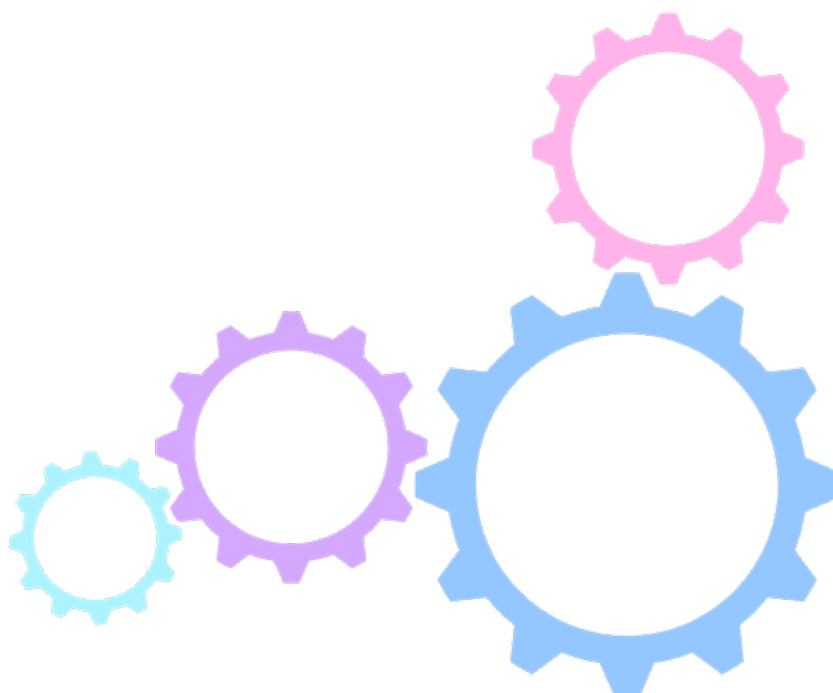
## Actions

### Short Term

- We will work in partnership with employers and representative organisations to influence both the design and delivery of our services, ensuring they align with labour market needs, support flexible and inclusive working practices, supporting sustainable employment progression and Fair Work principles.

### Medium Term

- We will work across national, regional and local structures to identify levers which can be used to encourage employers to recruit people accessing employability support services into fair work.



# Emerging priority 2 – Just transition to net zero

We are clear that employability services have an important role to play in achieving a **Just Transition to a Net Zero** carbon economy, given most people accessing our support will face an element of structural inequality, particularly around socio-economic disadvantage.

There are two broad routeways from employability services into green jobs which should be further considered and developed; either direct support to access entry level green job opportunities, or support to enter higher or further education related to green jobs.

Analysis of the Green Workforce Academy highlights the importance of academic routes, or even volunteering, to accessing work in priority green industries<sup>37</sup>. The recognition of wider positive outcomes as part of our progression measures through No One Left Behind, such as entering higher or further education, enables our services to contribute effectively here.

Whether direct entry to a green job or support to access higher or further education, the appropriateness of each routeway for the individual would have to be considered jointly between them and their employability key worker.

We will work collectively across Scottish Government, Local Government and wider partners to develop our position, and better understand our impact here.

Over the lifetime of this plan, we will take forward the following actions to support this priority:

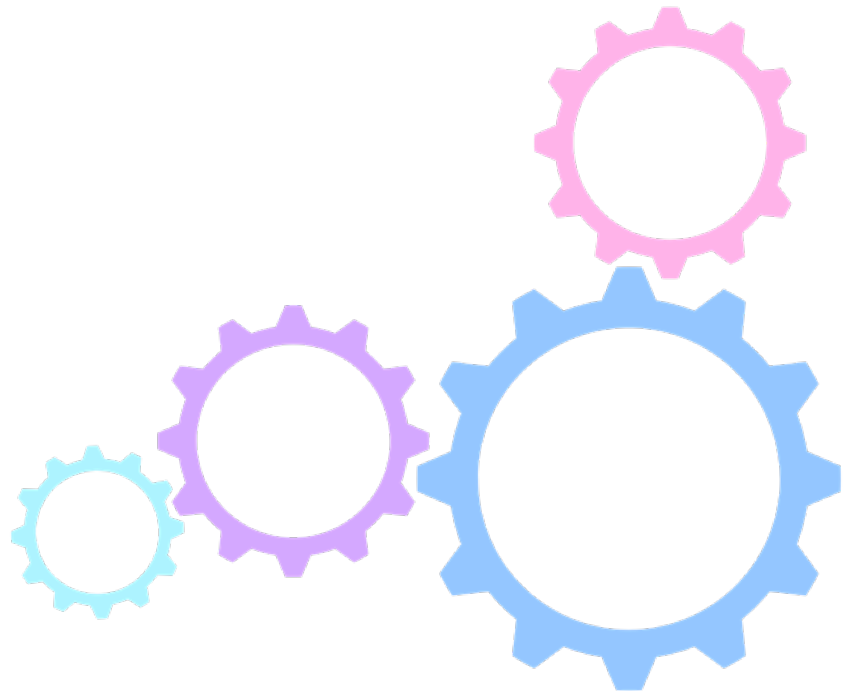
## Actions

### Medium Term

- Recognising the role of green skills in future job roles, we will ensure employability training is aligned where relevant/possible.

### Long Term

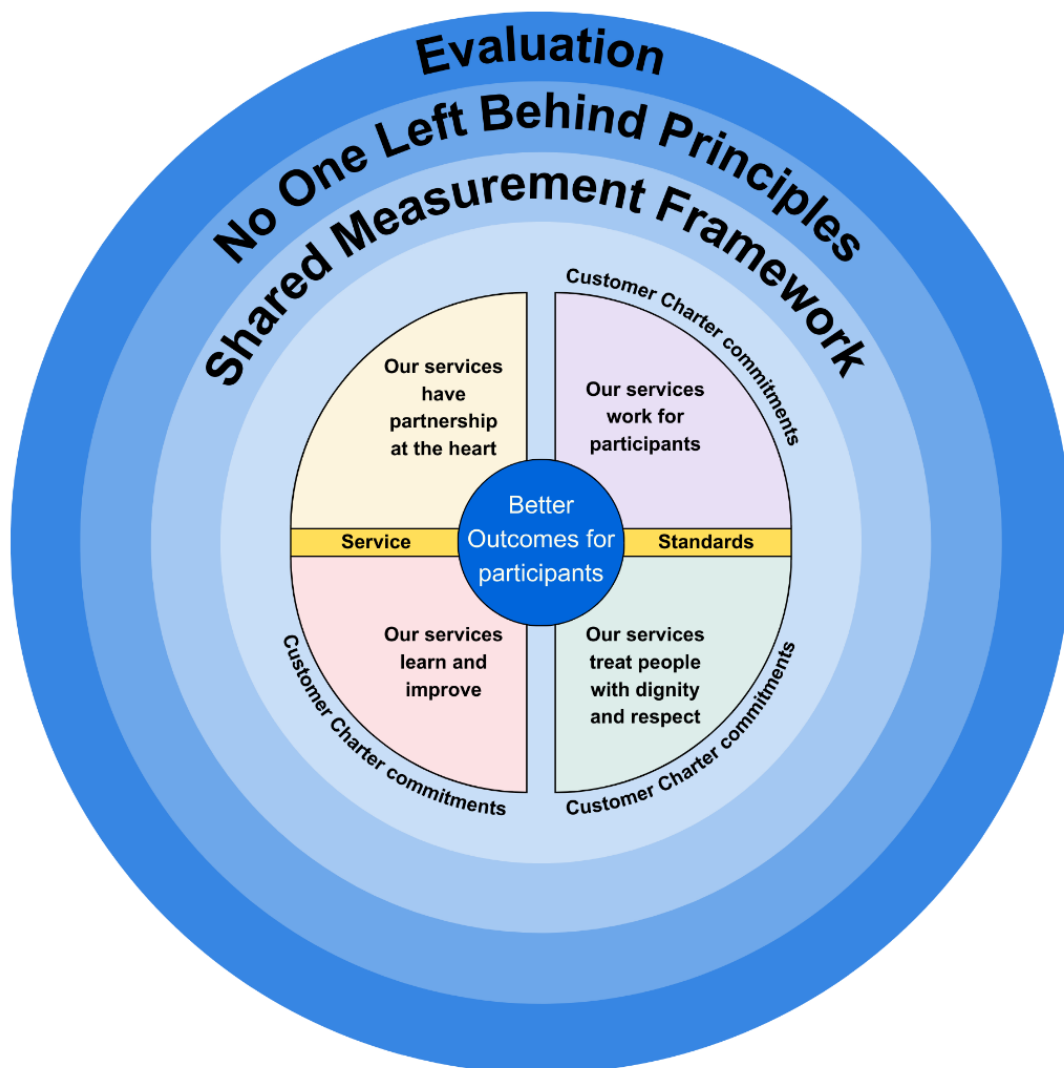
- We will work collectively to understand how employability support can be leveraged to provide opportunity and entry into green jobs for those on our services. This will recognise that broader positive destinations, such as entering higher and further education, will be critical to achieving this.



## 7. Measuring and evaluating progress

Data and evidence, including the experience of people accessing our services, is central to understanding whether we are achieving the ambitions of No One Left Behind. It drives our assurance processes and supports decisions on necessary actions for employability services to deliver better outcomes.

The current approach is based on the national products developed to support No One Left Behind. The Service Standards and the Customer Charter sit at the centre as the basis of our definition of a “good” service. The Shared Measurement Framework wraps around this, providing us with a shared understanding of how we measure the impact of employability services. Evaluation activity helps us understand the experiences of people accessing services, how these align with the “good” service set out in the standards and charter, and provides evidence of the impact and value of employability services.

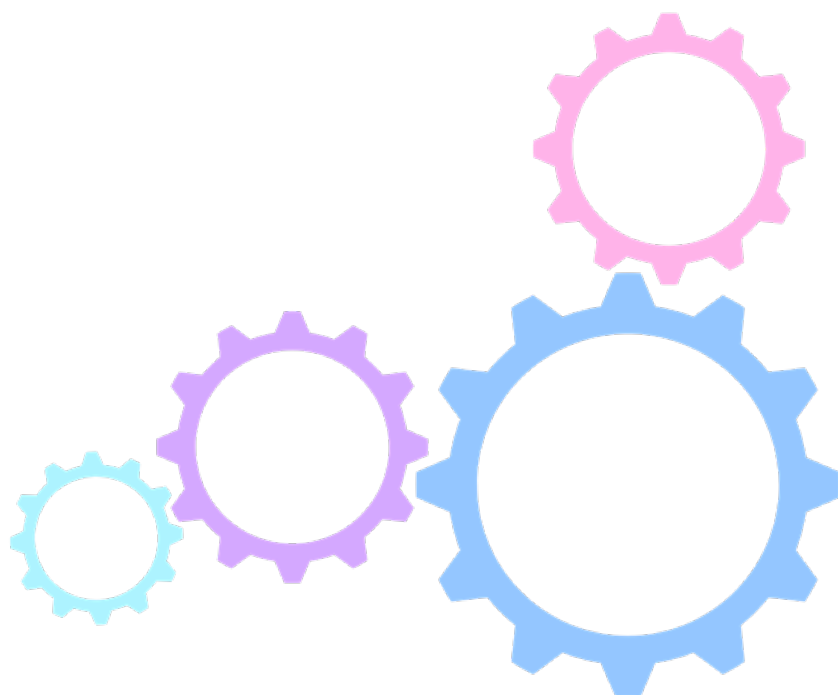


Whilst we have already seen positive developments, which are resulting in more detailed public statistics being available each quarter, we know there is more to do. The [Implementation evaluation](#) highlighted that further work is needed to embed and develop the Shared Measurement Framework and address challenges faced by some local authorities and providers around data collection and reporting.

It is also important to build a holistic evidence base on the wider outcomes being achieved through No One Left Behind, including around improvements in participants' skills, income, and wellbeing. As set out in the actions above, we will work with partners to explore these areas and develop our understanding of the support provided.

In the next phase of evaluation, we will work in partnership to:

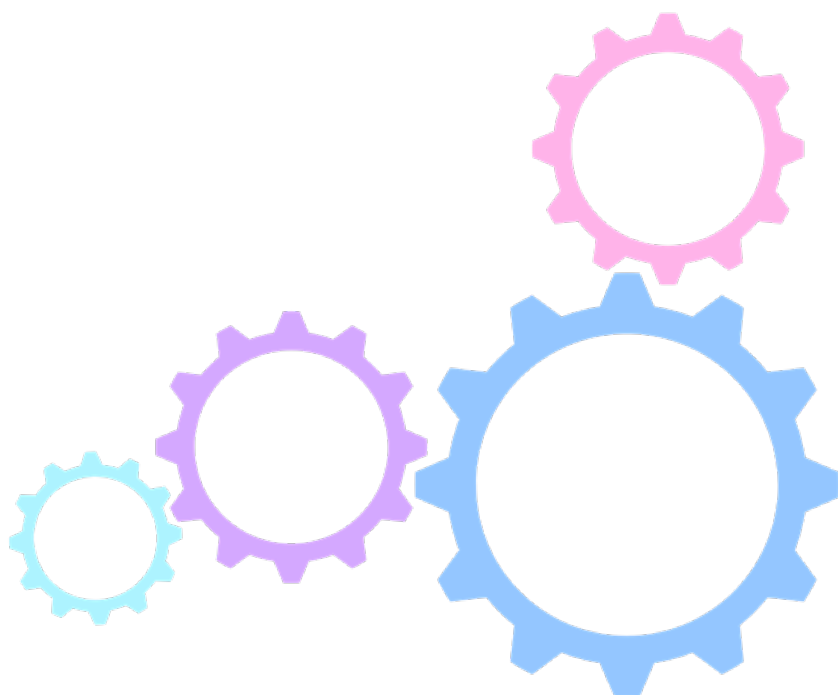
- Continue to enhance our understanding and approach to demonstrating impact, working with partners to develop an approach to assessing value for money in line with the Shared Measurement Framework theme.
- Inform ongoing performance improvement through understanding people's experiences of employability support and building on the findings of the [implementation evaluation](#).
- Focus on national priorities, such as reducing child poverty and reducing economic inactivity.
- Continue to focus on the voices of participants as an indication of how well employability services are delivering on the principles of No One Left Behind.



## 8. Conclusion

This plan has been set out to be ambitious in building on established policy aims, the recommendations presented through previous evaluations and the findings of the national discussion events. However, this plan will not be delivered by a single organisation, policy or service. In order to deliver on the priorities outlined here, we need to ensure broad buy-in from a range of partners, and focus our actions on achieving tangible improvements over the lifetime of the plan.

We are committed to transparency when it comes to the priorities and actions set out in this plan. To support this, we will commit to publish annual updates which will share progress, highlight good practice across the employability system, present the benefits realised by people accessing services, and address challenges that arise head on.



## Endnotes

- 1 [Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2020-23 \(data.gov.scot\)](#)
- 2 [Scotland's Labour Market Insights: July 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 3 [Scotland's Labour Market Insights: July 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 4 [Scotland's Labour Market Insights: April 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 5 [Measuring Scotland's Performance as a Leading Fair Work Nation \(fairworkconvention.scot\)](#)
- 6 [Scotland's Labour Market Insights: April 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 7 [Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions – Protected Characteristics. Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 8 London School of Economics (2018). [Supporting unpaid carers to remain in employment.](#)
- 9 [Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 3: Overview of year 2 \(November 2020\) \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 10 [Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 4: Overview of Year 3 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 11 [Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 5 \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 12 [Fair Start Scotland - individual placement and support review: findings - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 13 [Fair Start Scotland Evaluation Report 3: Overview of year 2 \(November 2020\) \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 14 Internal quarterly management information provided by local authorities
- 15 Feedback gathered on post it notes at the national discussion events in 2023
- 16 [Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 17 [Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2020-23 \(data.gov.scot\)](#)
- 18 [Scottish Child Payment extension a “watershed” - already showing that poverty can be tackled with political will | Joseph Rowntree Foundation \(jrf.org.uk\)](#)
- 19 [Delivering for families? | Joseph Rowntree Foundation \(jrf.org.uk\)](#)
- 20 Although not specific to parents, this broader holistic support is particularly critical for those at risk of, and experiencing poverty.
- 21 [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: Statistical Summary July 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 22 <https://opfs.org.uk/policy-and-campaigns/policy-research/employment-employability-and-education/thriving-not-just-surviving/>
- 23 [Celebrating three years of funded childcare - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 24 [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: Statistical Summary July 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 25 ONS Annual Population Survey (Jan – Dec 2023).
- 26 [Scotland's Labour Market Insights: April 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 27 [Labour Market Statistics for Scotland by Disability: January to December 2022 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 28 Source: Annual Population Survey, April 2023-March 2024, ONS. Notes:
  1. Levels rounded to the nearest hundred.
  2. Proportions calculated on unrounded estimates.
- 29 Source: Annual Population Survey, January to December datasets, ONS. Notes:
  1. The disability employment rate gap is calculated as the Employment rate for non-disabled people aged 16-64 minus the Employment rate for disabled people aged 16-64
  2. The gap is expressed in terms of percentage points and has been calculated using the unrounded employment rate estimates.
- 30 [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: Statistical Summary July 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 31 [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: Statistical Summary July 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 32 [Fair Start Scotland - individual placement and support review: findings - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 33 [Review of Supported Employment within Scotland: Findings and Recommendations \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 34 [The Commission on the Future of Employment Support: Interim Report](#)
- 35 [The Commission on the Future of Employment Support: Launch Report](#)
- 36 [The Commission on the Future of Employment Support: Launch Report](#)
- 37 [Industries | My World of Work \(greenjobs.scot\)](#)



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