

## Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - UK / Scotland

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### Introduction

In February 2020, the Scottish Government published '[Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward](#)'. This new Careers Strategy highlights the role that career education, information, advice and guidance (CIAG) services in Scotland can play in helping to address future skills demands and deliver inclusive growth. It builds upon an earlier [framework for the redesign and improvement of CIAG](#) (Career Information, Advice and Guidance) services (March 2011).

The new Careers Strategy sets out how career services are delivered by a number of key partners in a variety of settings. As a collective they are regarded as the 'careers system', for which there is stated vision: 'For a world-class, professionally-led, aligned and flexible system of CIAG services which delivers for every citizen, regardless of where they live in Scotland, their age or circumstance. A system through which citizens can expect a high standard of support that meets their needs when they need it most, a system that is fully interconnected to ensure citizens access the right people and services which includes employability and skills support' (Executive Summary).

The Careers Strategy highlights the following overarching aims and principles:

- a national model for career education, information, advice and guidance services with shared principles adopted across education, training and employability services for young people and adults;
- a focus on strengthening collaborative partnerships and working more closely with target groups to co-create more CIAG designed to meet the needs of young people and adults;
- a sharing of knowledge and expertise in professional development for the CIAG workforce, quality assurance, and improved outcomes;
- a pan-sectoral leadership body focused on all-age CIAG provision and continuous improvement (p. 11)

These shared high-level principles and ambitions for those delivering career services are designed to ensure that every individual in Scotland has access to high quality and beneficial CIAG. The main goal is for a fully aligned lifelong careers system to help people build an understanding of their strengths and aspirations, make informed choices about learning and employment options throughout their lives and know how to find out about future opportunities so they can fulfil their potential.

According to *Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward* (2020a:15):

'Scotland has an all-age, inclusive national careers service delivered by [Skills Development Scotland](#) (SDS) which operates alongside services delivered by other partners. The organisation has careers advisers based in every state secondary school in Scotland, including additional support need (ASN) schools. For those not in school, including adults, there are centres in every local authority area throughout Scotland, in addition to an online presence and a telephone helpline. Skills Development Scotland provides a tailored service focused on individuals' needs, taking into account vulnerable groups and tailoring the service to best support them. No groups are excluded from access to the Skills Development Scotland careers service. This includes those in employment who are seeking to change or progress in their career.'

The service is implemented through an integrated all-age careers service involving face-to-face and groupwork sessions with young people and adults, communication through a national Contact Centre and an online career management skills (CMS) environment, [My World of Work](#).

There are at least three categories of careers service providers (Scottish Government, 2020a:12). This includes:

- those organisations whose primary function is career education, information, advice and guidance, for example Skills Development Scotland, employability providers;
- those organisations for whom career education, information, advice and guidance is an important part of their services, for example schools, colleges, universities, Department for Work and Pensions and local authorities;
- those organisations with an interest in CIAG provision, including trade unions, charities, and local community groups.

These services are delivered by a variety of providers through formal partnerships and/or informal arrangements. 'They cut across the responsibilities of different parts of the Scottish Government and local government and touch upon some elements of the services delivered by the UK Government's Department for Work and Pensions and the agency which delivers its working-age support service, Jobcentre Plus' (op.cit).

The [Fairer Scotland Duty](#) came into force on 1 April 2018, enacting part 1 of the Equality Act 2010, in Scotland. It places a duty on certain public bodies in Scotland to consider how to reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage. In April 2020, Scottish Government published [The Fairer Scotland Duty: Impact Assessment Careers Strategy Scotland: Moving Forward](#) (Scottish Government, 2020b). The '[No One Left Behind: Review of Employability Services](#)' (Scottish Government 2018c) report outlined a wide range of partners will explore how to make best use of the information available to design, deliver and monitor CIAG services and understand better what works, and in what set of circumstances.

[Work First and Work Able Scotland](#) (2018) includes voluntary services that aim to provide tailored and coherent employment support to people with disabilities and health conditions, via access to a range of specialist services that respond flexibly to the needs of both individuals and their employers.

[Scotland's Future Skills Plan](#) (2019e) affirms the importance of skills development in helping individuals reach their potential. Key themes include: increase system agility and employer responsiveness; more opportunities to upskill and retrain, ensure financial sustainability of the system, and accelerate learner journey recommendations.

A refreshed '[Curriculum for Excellence](#)' (2019b) was published by Scottish Government. [Education Scotland](#) is a Scottish Government executive agency charged with supporting quality and improvement in Scottish education and thereby securing the delivery of better learning experiences and outcomes for Scottish learners of all ages.

The Scottish Government conducts [Equality Impact Assessments](#) (EQIA's) to inform the policy making process and service design and delivery. Legislation means that Skills Development Scotland (SDS) must impact assess new or revised policies and publish the results. The [Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment](#) (CRWIA) is also a key policy driver.

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## Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders

The new Careers Strategy (Scottish Government, 2020a:12) highlights: 'The career sector is surprisingly broad with interests in CIAG and work-focused experiences ranging from primary school to post-graduate level, and with career information, advice and guidance, skills assessment and job placement covering the age range from early teens to retirement.'

A leadership pan-sectoral body is due to be formally established to focus on strengthening and improving all-age CIAG provision across Scotland. The strategy states: "CIAG practitioners in Scotland will collaborate effectively by sharing learning, resources and effective policies and practices. From the outset, it will actively identify opportunities for building capacity and capability within and across the system, and provide a leadership strategic focus to deliver the ambitions of this new strategy." (Scottish Government, 2020a: 33). By the end of 2020, a partnership Implementation Plan should be in place to strengthen coordination and collaboration among national, regional and local stakeholders.

The **Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013** placed a duty on key partners such as Local Authorities, Colleges and the Scottish Funding Council to share information, with Skills Development Scotland, on all 16-24 year old in Scotland. Since the inception of the Act strong partnership working between Skills Development Scotland, Education Departments and secondary schools, has led to improvements in data such as: anticipated school leaving date and young people with a preferred destination and preferred occupation. This is designed to support the progression and transition stages of a young person's career journey.

**Skills Development Scotland** (SDS) co-operates with a wide range of state and voluntary sector agencies involved in supporting young people. Agencies labelled as 'youth work' would represent only a small element within this action. Provision to promote the employability of unemployed young people is an important focus of SDS action. In doing this SDS work closely with the Department of Work and Pensions, as employment and benefits relating to helping people get into work remain reserved responsibilities for the UK Government, and have developed a referral model to support front line delivery.

SDS maintains and updates the **16+ Data Hub**. This is a secure online portal which allows a range of partners including SDS to input and access a combined database of information (on individuals across Scotland aged between 16 and 24). Underpinning SDS service delivery is a commitment to work with partners in schools, local authorities and **Education Scotland** to build capacity to deliver the ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence - Building the Curriculum 4, in particular development of career management skills (CMS).

The **Annual Participation Measure** is underpinned by a Customer Support System (CSS), updated by Skills Development Scotland and by partners (including local authorities/schools, colleges, Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It allows all partners to better understand the impact of interventions and the outcomes they deliver at every transition point for 16-19-year olds. Local authorities and colleges can access their own data via the 16+ Data Hub at any time. As agreed by Scottish Ministers the Annual Participation Measure has been adopted in the Scottish Government's **National Performance Framework** as the measure of young people's participation.

A national network of 21 industry-led **Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Regional Groups** covers the whole of Scotland. The creation and development of the Groups is designed to ensure that all of Scotland's young people are fully and fairly supported into employment by bridging the gap between education and employers.

The Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group, NHS Health Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, and the Scottish Prison Service, are working in partnership with the Scottish Government to develop and deliver the ambitions in the '**No-one Left Behind**' strategic plan (Scottish Government, 2018d). They are exploring ways of a more joined up approach to employability support for people of all-ages. In December 2019, the Scottish Government published a formal statement on '**Working in Partnership to Deliver No-one Left Behind**'.

There are existing examples of strong **Regional Improvement Collaboratives** in areas including Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire.

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## Access to guidance

Scotland's new Careers Strategy (Scottish Government, Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward, 2020a: 1) highlights: 'Career services in Scotland are delivered by a multitude of different individuals and organisations. It is a strength of the system that different forms of guidance respond to the different needs of users, whatever their age, in or out of work. However, there is a risk of inconsistency of support and of people missing out on the help they need.' The vision states: 'We want to see a system through which citizens can expect a high standard of support that meets their needs when they need it most, a system that is fully interconnected to ensure citizens access the right people and services which include employability and skills support' (op. cit: 8).

The Careers Strategy indicates: 'A critical aspect of this inclusive growth is ensuring that every individual, especially those who face the most complex and challenging barriers, have access to career education, information, advice and guidance. This should start early in primary schools and continue throughout life to support individuals to make informed choices about their futures' (p.9).

It also highlights: 'Scotland has an all-age, inclusive national careers service delivered by Skills Development Scotland which operates alongside services delivered by other partners. The organisation has careers advisers based in every state secondary school in Scotland, including additional support need (ASN) schools. For those not in school, including adults, there are centres in every local authority area throughout Scotland, in addition to an online presence and a telephone helpline. Skills Development Scotland provides a tailored service focused on individuals' needs, taking into account vulnerable groups and tailoring the service to best support them. No groups are excluded from access to the Skills Development Scotland careers service. This includes those in employment who are seeking to change or progress in their career.' (p.15). The service offer in schools is aimed at all pupils in primary (aged 8 to 12 years) and secondary years (aged 12 to 18 years), but also in career centres at adults wishing to access their services.

Education Scotland (January 2020:17) provides a brief overview of the background to CIAG policies and practices for young people 'In December 2014, the Scottish Government published the *Developing the Young Workforce - Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy*'. The recommendations of this strategy set out further changes to CIAG services, specifically in relation to the collaborative design and implementation of the *Career Education Standard (3 to 18)* with Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Scottish Government and Education Scotland. These changes have resulted in earlier intervention with school young people through Skills Development Scotland CIAG services and focused support around key transition points for young people. The CES builds on advice and guidance in *Curriculum for Excellence* and in particular, *Building the Curriculum 4: skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work*.' (para. 4)

The *Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013* and two Government Frameworks (*Data Practice, Policy and Practice*) placed a duty on key partners such as Local Authorities, Colleges and the *Scottish Funding Council* to share information, with SDS, on all 16 to 24 year olds in Scotland. Since the inception of the Post-16 Education Act and the Government Frameworks, strong partnership working between SDS, Education Departments and secondary schools, has led to improvements in data such as: Anticipated School Leaving Date and young people with a Preferred Destination and Preferred Occupation.

Skills Development Scotland's (SDS's) work is central to the re-engagement of unemployed young people, particularly those aged 16 to 19 (and up to 26th birthday for those with care experience). SDS continues to embed and improve its 'Next Steps' services to meet the needs of those requiring support to make a successful and sustained post-school transition, ensuring that this aligns with other delivery partners. The service continues to work with *DYW* Regional Groups to develop 'Marketplace', providing teacher access to offers for pupils and further developing this functionality to allow young people (Nextsteps, college, secondary and primary) direct access.

Skills Development Scotland has launched a new website, *My Kids Career*, providing information for parents and careers to support and help their children. The website gives factual information and useful statistics on topics relating to further education, apprenticeships or going straight into the world of work. My Kids Career is a campaign site to support parents understand the world of work and engage in career conversations with their children, involved a number of parents and parental interest groups Research shows that the most influential figures in children's career choices are parents and carers, and to achieve the best outcomes, it's important to start conversations early. The Careers Strategy highlights 'more can be achieved through a multi-agency outreach approach' (p.27)

Also, another example of innovative practice is the *Veteran and Service Leaver Landing* page on My World of Work (MyWoW) co-developed with military personnel and veterans. SDS has developed a qualifications calculator housed on the *veterans landing page* on MyWoW to help armed forces leavers translate their military qualifications into civilian/open market equivalents.

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## Quality assurance

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) works closely with [Education Scotland](#) to support quality assurance and improvement across the delivery of careers education information, advice and guidance (CIAG). In 2013, Education Scotland began a six-year cycle of external assessment of CIAG provision, with an aim to inspect delivery in each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas by March 2020. The process of inspection and the content from the external review process and examples of excellence covers:

- customer progression and achievement of relevant high-quality outcomes;
- meeting the needs of stakeholders;
- delivery of key services;
- management of service delivery;
- strategic leadership.

The fourth edition of '[How good is our school?](#)' (HGIOS4, 2015) explicitly embedded employability in one of the Quality Indicators for the first time. This self-evaluation and improvement guide now shapes the school inspection model, recognising that career education, supported by SDS, contributes to the overall performance of individual schools.

The [Career Education Standard \(3-18\)](#) sets out what children and young people will learn and what parents and carers, teachers, employers and Skills Development Scotland will do to support their learning. See also: career management skills (CMS).

A [quality framework](#) supports Skills Development Scotland's (SDS's) internal self-assessment processes and underpins the external review of provision. Internally, evaluation and research take a central position in the development and delivery of service offers. Individual customer evaluation is undertaken including surveys, focus groups and consultations e.g. pupil surveys, centre users' feedback, headteacher consultations. A central team supports this work.

The [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#) (QAA) adopts a thematic approach to work with Universities in Scotland to ensure career services are meeting the needs of learners.

The new [Careers Strategy](#) (Scottish Government, Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward, 2020a: 31) indicates: 'Our first step will be through the collaborative review and development of a commonly agreed set of CIAG inspection and evaluation approaches to inform and support all providers. The approaches will clearly articulate how existing and new methods can be used to focus specifically on assessing the quality and impact of CIAG services. By doing so, we will work towards greater consistency in quality assurance and the assessment of impact, including areas of strength on which to build. We will consider how this complements existing approaches to benchmarking, enhancement-led Institutional Reviews (ELIRs) and other peer review processes.'

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## Career management skills

In Scotland, [career management skills](#) (CMS) is specifically linked to self, strengths, horizons and networks as a framework for career guidance / coaches working with individuals individually and in groups. A more detailed description of the competencies within the framework are described below:

- Self – competencies that enable individuals to develop their sense of self within society.
- Strengths – competencies that enable individuals to acquire and build on their strengths and to pursue rewarding learning and work opportunities.
- Horizons – competencies that enable individuals to visualise, plan and achieve their career aspirations throughout life.
- Networks – competencies that enable individuals to develop relationships and networks of support.

In 2018, [Industry 4.0 meta-skills](#) were classified by Skills Development Scotland under three headings:

- Self-management: Manage the now
- Social intelligence: Connect with the world
- Innovation: Create our own change.

For policymakers, managers and practitioners: 'These skills and capabilities themselves are not new. In fact, they are ancient human capabilities that have enabled people to succeed throughout history. They have been called many things and classified in a range of different ways across the globe. The difference now is the imperative for us to increase the value that society places on these skills, so that they are held by more people and in greater depth. (Extract from: Skills 4.0: A skills model to drive Scotland's future, p.8)

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## Career information, ICT in guidance

Digital technology is a powerful enabler for improving public services and driving down the costs of delivery. Government expects public bodies to deliver against [Scotland's Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services](#) (Scottish Government, 2018b) by ensuring that digital transformation is embedded within business strategies and corporate plans (further information can be found [here](#)).

The [My World of Work](#) (MyWoW) service is a highly interactive platform providing customer insight and aligned digital services. New and evolving developments include: Office 365 roll out to all Skills Development Scotland (SDS) regions; the development of the use of social media platforms; a Digital Lab and MyWoW Live STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths); Digital World lessons; career education activities; the development of an Apprenticeship Family from [Foundation Apprenticeship](#) opportunities in school to Graduate apprenticeships at Masters level and the ongoing development of career guidance practice, utilising research and best practice approaches from international colleagues and from the [Centre for Work Based Learning](#) to inform career management skills in the context of [Skills 4.0](#). The MyWoW web service is in a constant state of evolution to drive relevant tools, information and advice to users. Current developments include a [MyWoW](#) profile that will enable a digital career journey as pupils move through school, evidencing progression and engagement in career development activities and a skills tool to enable the identification and capture of core, career management skills (CMS) and meta skills evidence.

MyWoW Live offers a variety of workshops to inspire young people to consider careers in key sectors of importance to the Scottish economy now and in the future. This consists of exhibits designed to self-serve and inspiring activities delivered by staff with real life experience of industry; fun job-related challenges; activity sheets and learning resources including a series of live and online cyber security lessons for pupils.

The overall vision of the [Centre for Work-based Learning](#) is to establish the value of work-based learning in the Scottish education and training system; underpin policy development on work-based learning, by conducting and disseminating high quality, policy relevant research to influence the learning system; enhance practice by developing best practice in Scotland and drawing on lessons from international experience; change perceptions by promoting the reputation and esteem of work-based learning, through advocacy and broad engagement across Scotland.

The [SDS Inverness Centre Digital Lab](#), for example, utilises robotics, 3D printing and Lego Renewables to inspire pupils in STEM. The [MyWoW Ambassador](#) programme trains young people as ambassadors to champion MyWoW within their school, using peer to peer tutoring to inform pupils, parents and teachers about the resources available whilst gaining valuable experience and transferrable skills themselves.

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## Training and qualifications

The [new Careers Strategy](#) (Scottish Government, Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward, 2020a: 32) makes explicit: 'Professional development for practitioners will be shared more widely across the careers system, led by Skills Development Scotland. A vibrant national continuous professional development (CPD) programme will ensure that there is a clear focus on:

- multiple pathways for CIAG leadership, management and practitioner learning and development both online and offline, from apprenticeship to PhD study programmes
- learning, teaching and assessment CIAG strategies
- blended CIAG delivery drawing on digital and Artificial Intelligence approaches
- working to address issues such as gender stereotyping, inequality, fair opportunities for all, health, well-being and happiness
- evidence-based assessment and impact measures to inform benchmarking CIAG policies and practices
- the effective use and application of the Career Management Skills (CMS) framework in differing settings
- job shadowing, industry placements and peer learning and
- innovation and international models of good/interesting policies and practices.

Consideration will be given, through the pan-sectoral body (see below), to how we can most effectively ensure independent CIAG practitioners and providers are aware of, and have access to, the CPD programme. As an immediate priority, in recognition of the work already underway between Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council and Education Scotland to define and embed 'meta-skills' within the learning and education system, we will ensure that practitioners across the sector will have a clear understanding of metaskills and the relationship with career management skills.'

A [Skills Development Scotland](#) (SDS) Academy was established in 2015. SDS is committed to supporting at least 21 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) per annum for all staff. It is also responsible for capacity building for partners careers management skills (CMS) understanding, career education, labour market intelligence/information (LMI), My World of Work inter alia and offers structured learning pathways including PhD and Masters' level sponsored programmes, alongside an ongoing programme of continuous professional development for staff.

The following extract from [Scotland's Country report](#) submitted to the ICCDPP Symposium (Norway, 2019) highlights: 'This evolving CPD programme has been specifically designed to help CIAG colleagues across SDS to develop and maintain the professional skills required to effectively support customers. The programme focuses on areas identified by service users and practitioners. CPD for CIAG practitioners is developed collaboratively.

In 2015, SDS developed with the UK Career Development Institute (CDI), two new apprenticeship frameworks, a Modern Apprenticeship (MA) at SCQF7 and a Technical Apprenticeship (TA) at SCQF9. This was to create new pathways into the post-graduate qualification in career guidance (QCD SCQF11). This supports the Youth Employment Strategy and the attraction and retention of professionals within rural areas, and responds to the need to create pathways to meet future workforce planning needs. The SDS MA & TA programmes started in 2016, since then SDS have had:

- 10 MAs in Career Development - 8 have progressed and are currently undertaking the QCD. The recruitment process has started for a further cohort of MAs, and SDS are specifically focussing on attracting young people from under-represented groups to enable continuing diversity within the career development workforce.
- There have been 43 TAs -made up of 35 sponsored employees and 8 who have progressed from the MA onto the TA
- 88 people in total sponsored to work towards the QCD since 2016 i.e. 47 sponsored employees, 14 who have progressed from the TA, and 31 who were employed as Graduate Trainee CAs.

SDS has a close working relationship with Edinburgh Napier University and University of the West of Scotland Core Delivery Centres of professional post-graduate (SCQF 11) guidance qualifications. Fulltime QCD students are linked to SDS centres and undertake placements during their training. Placements are also accessed with other guidance settings. Assessment during placement is undertaken by an assigned practice tutor who is a practicing adviser.

Ongoing professional dialogue, training and reflection is supported by an Observation Framework within SDS. This includes structured peer-to-peer observation as well as supervision. A Coaching and Career Management Skills Module is delivered to all new advisers and is credit rated at SCQF 11. This module is refreshed in consultation with sector academic experts. Participants complete a practitioner handbook for accreditation.'



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## Funding career guidance

Following the publication of the Programme for Government (PfG), *A Plan for Scotland*, Mr Swinney, the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, outlined in a [Grant Letter](#) (Scottish Government, 2018a) the strategic priorities set for Skills Development Scotland (SDS) until the end of March 2019. Extract from the above-mentioned Scottish Government Grant Letter states: "In what has been a tight financial settlement for public services across Scotland, I am pleased that I have been able to secure an uplift in SDS's budget that reflects the government's priorities. I welcome SDS's approach to working openly with officials to better understand and consider the prioritisation and maximisation of opportunities within the confines of this settlement. ...SDS's budget allocation for 2018-19, to support delivery of our priorities on inclusive and sustainable economic growth is set out in the table below (these figures are subject to Parliamentary approval). This is confirmed in the budget allocation and monitoring letter issued in March 2018...Skills Development Scotland 2018-19 Budget 'Grant - in - Aid' = £193.3m. It must be noted that this grant covers significantly more than career guidance. Further information can be found here.

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## Career guidance for school pupils

Currently, the Skills Development Service (SDS) is delivered on-site in Scotland's 359 local authority secondary schools and one grant-aided secondary school. Scotland's new Careers Strategy (Scottish Government, Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward, 2020a:15) reports: 'The organisation has careers advisers based in every state secondary school in Scotland, including additional support need (ASN) schools.'

The service offers a blended approach including one-to-one careers coaching support, facilitated group sessions, drop in sessions, and supported access to [MyWow](#). Delivery is underpinned by career management skills embedded in all aspects of SDS's work in schools. A standardised approach to assessment of needs is adopted by all careers practitioners aligned to meet school and individual needs.

SDS has a key role to play in the delivery of the Scottish Government's *Opportunities for All* initiative, whereby 16 to 19 year olds will receive an offer of a place in learning or training. Services are delivered by Careers Advisers, Work Coaches, and Personal Advisers in partnership with teaching staff, employers and/or volunteers.

A national network of 21 industry-led 'Developing the Young Workforce' (DYW) Regional Groups have been established covering the whole of Scotland. According to DYW (2018), the creation and development of the Groups is designed to ensure that all of Scotland's young people are fully and fairly supported into employment by bridging the gap between education and employers. The groups aim to:

- encourage and support employers to engage directly with schools and colleges;
- challenge and support employers to recruit more young people into their workforce.

In the [15-24 Learner Journey Review](#) it is stated that: 'There is a strong CIAG (Careers Information Advice & Guidance) offer in place in schools, strengthened further by the Career Education Standard 3-18 and SDS/ School Partnership Agreements. However, evidence from the reviews of the Career Education Standard and CIAG shows that there is still more to be done for 20 schools to take more responsibility for this and for greater links to be made between learning in the classroom and its relevance to the world of work. Feedback from engagement work also suggests the need for CIAG to be backed up with more on-going personalised support for young people, throughout key points of their journey, which looks at their wider health and wellbeing, as well as career aspirations and academic ability. This would suggest that there is room for improvement in delivering on the CFE (Curriculum for Excellence) entitlement to personal support.' (Scottish Government, 2018c:19-20).

Scottish Government policy in relation to education and skills explicitly seeks to co-ordinate the roles of a variety of different institutions towards the same goals. The [Career Education Standard 3-18](#) allocates specific roles to schools and colleges of further education, as well as to SDS (in relation to both its vocational training provision and its career guidance service offer). The involvement of employers in education is seen as an important element in the development of the young workforce and is promoted through Employer Regional Groups, created through the Developing the Young Workforce programme of change. Challenges remain in achieving cross sector co-ordination.

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## Guidance for VET participants

### Further Education/ VET colleges

Twenty-six further education colleges operate in 13 regions across Scotland, allowing them to plan regionally and deliver locally for the benefit of individuals, communities, the economy and wider society. The types of skills development and employability provision currently on offer include:

- a. career management resources;
- b. advice and support;
- c. development plans;
- d. CV/interview skills;
- e. careers and application advice;
- f. careers fairs;
- g. essential skills;
- h. mentoring programmes; and
- i. signposting.

The new [Careers Strategy](#) (Scottish Government, Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward, 2020a:23) highlights 'a wide range of work-based learning pathways include Scottish Apprenticeships, which provide opportunities for Scotland's people, from young people in the senior phase of school, to new entrants to work, to older employees who need to upskill or re-skill.'

The SDS [Centre for Work-based Learning](#) will underpin policy development, and enhance practice by developing best practice in Scotland and drawing upon lessons from international experience, therefore change the perception of work-based learning by promoting its reputation and esteem, through advocacy and broad engagement across Scotland.

Please see the description of VET system in the United Kingdom [here](#).

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## Guidance for higher education students

Universities are largely autonomous institutions that are mostly able to devise and deliver curriculums as they choose. Legislation relating to higher education, therefore, is limited largely to the establishment and governance of higher education institutions and the provision of financial resources to institutions and students. As autonomous institutions, [Higher Education Institutions \(HEIs\)](#) are responsible for organising their own provision of career guidance and counselling.

Scottish HEIs and other higher education accredited providers include: 15 Universities, two small specialist institutions, one tertiary institution and The Open University in Scotland.

Universities are autonomous institutions but subject to legislation and regulation through the Scottish Government. For example:

- a. [the Education \(Recognised Bodies\) \(Scotland\) Order 2018](#) is a list of bodies authorised by Royal Charter or Act of Parliament to grant degrees;
- b. [the Education \(Listed Bodies\) \(Scotland\) Order 2018](#) is a list of bodies authorised to provide courses in preparation for degrees to be awarded by recognised bodies and/or are a constituent college, school, hall or institution of a university which is such a recognised body.

The Financial Memoranda with HEIs set out the formal accountability relationship between the [Scottish Funding Council \(SFC\)](#) and institutions, and the requirements that institutions are expected to comply with in return for funding. The Memoranda are an important part of the governance framework within which SFC and institutions operate and they ensure that statutory duties in relation to the [Public Finance and Accountability \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#) and other legislation are met. Further information can be found [here](#).

The [Higher Education Governance \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) put in place measures to improve and modernise the governance of higher education institutions. [Universities Scotland](#) is a membership organisation working for the Principals and Directors of Scotland's 19 higher education institutions. They develop higher education policy and campaign on issues where members have a shared interest.

The [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA, Scotland\)](#) safeguards academic standards and the quality of the student experience offered by Scottish higher education institutions, wherever and however delivered.

There are no statutory requirements relating to the provision of careers advice in higher education; the provision of careers advice and guidance for students is a matter for individual Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to determine.

The UK [Quality Code for Higher Education](#) provides guidance and 'indicators of sound practice' in careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) for HEIs. Further information can be found [here](#).

All providers of higher education have their own careers service, staffed by appropriately trained professionals. Guidance activities offered at HE institutions (HEIs) can be categorised as:

Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - UK /  
Scotland

- a. core careers services - over 90% of FE institutions offer careers services;
- b. value added service - run by over half of careers services and growing areas of activity as services diversify and careers and employability agenda continue to increase;
- c. bespoke activities - offered by smaller numbers of services, often responding to particular local needs and contexts, for example, employability partnerships with local businesses and/or innovation projects commissioned by a wide variety of agencies, including government departments.

There is significant diversity in delivery methods, e.g. skype appointments, online seminars. Careers Advisers in Scottish universities are often referred to as Careers Consultants.

The [Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services](#) (AGCAS) is the UK-wide professional body for careers and employability professionals working with higher education students and graduates and prospective entrants to higher education. AGCAS provides support and training for professionals in the sector, with the aim of promoting and ensuring excellence in service delivery. AGCAS includes over 160 HE careers services as members, representing approx. 3,200 staff. The AGCAS process includes:

- a. a [Code of Ethics](#) which helps members maintain the highest professional standards. The Code of Ethics identifies the professional attitudes and behaviours expected of members and provides guidance to help members recognise and develop these;
- b. the [Membership Quality Standard](#) which outlines and demonstrates the levels of professionalism with which member services fulfil their purpose;
- c. work towards external kitemarks/quality standards, e.g. [the matrix Standard](#), [Investors in People](#);
- d. recognition that each individual university has its own strategic vision, plan and priorities, with services customised and delivered accordingly.

The [Higher Education Career Services Unit](#) (HESCU) is an independent research charity specialising in higher education and graduate employment. This UK-wide organisation supports careers advisory services as they guide students and graduates through university and into the labour market. Its website [Prospects](#) provides careers information and services to students, graduates, university careers services, employers and others.

AGCAS, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAA) and the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Partnership](#) (SCQP) have been active members contributing to Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward (Scottish Government, 2020a).

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## Guidance for adult learners

Career guidance for adult learners is a priority moving forward. The new [Careers Strategy](#) (Scottish Government, Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward, 2020a:9) outlines 'structural changes are placing new demands on CIAG services with technological change, Brexit, and changes in the organisation of work (non-standard jobs and the 'gig' economy)...growing numbers of adults will need to switch jobs, retrain and/or upskill'. It outlines 'For those not in school, including adults, there are centres in every local authority area throughout Scotland, in addition to an online presence and a telephone helpline. Skills Development Scotland provides a tailored service focused on individuals' needs, taking into account vulnerable groups and tailoring the service to best support them. No groups are excluded from access to the Skills Development Scotland careers service. This includes those in employment who are seeking to change or progress in their career' (p.15).

In Scotland, 'in line with the Scottish Government's Labour Market Strategy, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) were launched by Skills Development Scotland in October 2017. ITAs are available to help people develop the skills they need for work, giving learners who meet the eligibility criteria up to £200 towards a single training course or training episode per year. The money does not need to be paid back' (p.29).

[Partnership Action for Continuing Employment](#) (Scottish Government, 2018c) is the Scottish Government initiative for supporting people affected by redundancy. Skills Development Scotland leads PACE delivery, working with partners including local authorities, the Department for Work and Pensions (through Jobcentre Plus), Citizens Advice, colleges and training providers. 'The extensive network of community-based organisations delivering various types of CIAG, employability and/or enterprise service in local communities is significant. These experiences and expertise need to be further harnessed and move towards a proactive approach' as cited in the new Careers Strategy 2020a (p.16).

[Fair Start Scotland](#) and [Work First and Work Able Scotland](#) were both established by government in April 2018. Fair Start Scotland focuses on providing support to people who are further removed from the labour market helping them to find work and treating them with fairness, dignity and respect. Fair Start Scotland is delivered in nine contract areas across Scotland to reflect the reality of Scotland's geography, regional economies and population spread. Fair Start Scotland is being delivered collaboratively across a range of private, public and third sector delivery partners including a range of specialist providers to ensure people receive the right type of support for them. [Work First](#) includes voluntary services that aim to provide tailored and coherent employment support to people with disabilities and health conditions, via access to a range of specialist services that respond flexibly to the needs of both individuals and their employers. The [Department for Work and Pensions](#) (DWP) is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. As the UK's biggest public service department, it administers the State Pension and a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits to an



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## Guidance for young people at risk

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) offers a *Next Steps* service providing intensive careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) support for unemployed young people aged 15 to 18-and-a-half. A series of good news stories can be found [here](#). The programme may include:

- 15 to 26-year olds where customers are care experienced;
- customers status is unemployed and seeking;
- service offer delivery (Next Steps) is once the customer is engaged;
- frequency of engagement expectations; and
- a case management approach continues for all 16-19 customers.

The new *Careers Strategy* (Scottish Government, Scotland's Careers Strategy: Moving Forward, 2020a:16 & 17) highlights 'the 16+ Data Hub has a range of reports, drawn from a Skills Development Scotland client management system, which holds information on service users of all ages, that help partners provide targeted support to young people, specifically those not in education, training or employment. The information includes details of all young people across Scotland aged 16-24 who are: receiving careers support; planning on leaving school; starting and withdrawing from college of university; and/or receiving benefits. The exchange of data enables combined information on young people to be drawn down as reports that are tailored to partners' specific areas. Regular uploading of data by partners ensures these reports are up-to-date and informative.'

In addition, there is an increased emphasis on joined-up delivery and partnership working to support vulnerable young people NEET or 'at risk' of becoming NEET. For example [Community Justice Act 2016, Developing the Young Workforce](#) (DYW) Regional Groups – refer to: [No One Left Behind strategy](#).

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