



# Developing the Young Workforce

## School/Employer Partnerships

Guidance for DYW regional groups and local authorities  
September 2015



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

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

The Guidance for School/Employer Partnerships is published in 3 parts: Guidance for Employers, Guidance for Schools, and Guidance for DYW Regional Groups and Local Authorities. This part outlines key elements of the individual and joint contribution DYW Regional Groups and Local Authorities should make to establishing and supporting these partnerships. Background information is provided as an annex.

Also published to support DYW are:

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

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

Many employers are already working with schools, colleges and other education providers to deliver learning opportunities for young people. To significantly extend and enhance employer involvement with schools, there needs to be:

- clarity on who employers and schools can contact
- an easy way to engage
- support for creation, development and review of partnerships
- understanding of the needs of all young people.

# Role of Developing the Young Workforce Regional Groups

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A key recommendation of the DYW Commission's report was the establishment of regional industry-led DYW groups across Scotland to:

- encourage and support more employers to engage directly with education; and
- encourage more employers to recruit more young people and promote diversity in the workplace.

It is important that local authorities and DYW Regional Groups work together to support the development of effective long-term partnerships, building on existing structures and expertise, and working with key partners such as Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in addition to Economic Development Services within the authority. (These DYW Regional Groups were initially referred to as 'Regional Invest in Young People Groups'.)

This collaborative approach should ensure that the needs of all young people, and the schools and employers involved can be identified and addressed. A key element will be to promote equality and diversity in the workforce by helping to remove real and perceived barriers.

In some cases it is appropriate to facilitate partnerships between individual schools and an employer. However multiple partnership and joint working approaches should be encouraged. Partnerships could involve any number of schools, colleges or employers.

Regional Groups should encourage employers to engage with schools and colleges in a range of ways. For example providing career information, preparation for job applications, enhancing learning in specific subject areas (e.g. STEM or language skills) and by improving learning and teaching by bringing real-life contexts into the classroom. All stages of education from the early years onwards can benefit from employer involvement. Partnerships can also contribute to teachers and lecturers professional learning and skills.

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The following are approaches that DYW Regional Groups should consider in working with the local authority and SDS in their region, to develop school/employer partnerships:

- ensure that the education sector is sufficiently represented on the DYW Regional Group
- establish a lead contact in the DYW Regional Group's executive team to liaise with the local authorities in the region on school/employer partnerships
- develop a register of the employers in the region who wish to work in a long-term partnership with schools and can offer a range of opportunities
- work with the local authority and SDS to streamline processes and support for employers around involvement with schools
- support individual employers to collaborate with schools
- work with the local authorities in ensuring that schools understand the benefits of partnership working with employers
- work with the local authorities and SDS to establish what the needs of schools are and to identify gaps in provision that employers can contribute to filling
- work with the local authorities to develop an approach/template which can be used as the basis for scoping and agreeing the detail of partnerships between schools and employers
- work with local authority Economic Development Services to support the partnerships
- support the local authorities and schools in evaluating partnership agreements and subsequent reviews of outcomes.



# Role of local authorities

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School/employer partnerships should build on existing good practice and the assessment of young people's progress in learning. Local authorities have a key role in the development of school/employer partnerships in terms of leadership, support, and co-ordination of schools links with employers. Local authorities should have a role in:

- working with their DYW Regional Group and SDS to support employers in their understanding of the education system and an awareness of the role of the school in supporting young people in developing their skills for work
- liaising with their DYW Regional Group to identify employers who can form partnerships with schools
- shaping and co-ordinating schools expectations of what a school/employer can offer.

Local authorities should work with their DYW Regional Group to match employers and schools appropriately, taking account of schools' priorities and the nature and size of employers in the region.

SDS also has an important role in facilitating the development of partnerships as well as the Economic Development Services within the authority. They may wish to take a co-ordinated approach to contacting employers.

It is important to recognise that each partnership will be different and will depend on the needs of the school and the opportunities which the employer can offer. If there is one major industry in the area, several schools should have the opportunity to work in partnership with employers from that industry, if the employers have the capacity to do so.

Authorities should ensure that the needs of all learners are addressed within the school. They should aim to remove unnecessary bureaucracy and make it easier to establish and maintain successful partnerships. The local authority also has a contribution to make as a public sector employer.

Partnerships with a main employer should be long-term over 3-5 years and be planned and reviewed at regular intervals. In most cases, this will be supplemented by additional partnerships with other employers, focused on specific activities to meet the needs of schools/learners. All partnerships should be underpinned by a shared understanding and agreement of intended outcomes and responsibilities.

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

The following are suggested approaches to consider in planning a school/employer partnership:

- ensure the DYW contact within the authority has established links with the DYW Regional Group's executive team
- work with the DYW Regional Group to identify and overcome barriers and simplify processes
- support school staff to understand the benefits to all young people of work related opportunities, and identify the needs of each young person
- work with Skills Development Scotland to provide support and information on partnerships
- provide support for special schools and their partner employers
- build on existing school or authority connections with employers within your area
- ensure schools involve Parent Councils in the development of school/employer partnerships
- work with the DYW Regional Group to develop an approach/template which can be used as the basis for scoping, agreeing and recording the detail of partnerships between schools and employers
- work with the Economic Development Services within the authority to support the development of the partnerships
- ensure evaluation and review of school/employer partnerships within your area.

# Annex A

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## Background Information

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

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

In December 2014, the Scottish Government published Developing the Young Workforce – Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy, together with implementation plans agreed with local government. This set out a target of reducing youth unemployment by 40% by 2021 through introducing key measures such as:

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

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

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

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

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

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









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