



# Developing the Young Workforce

## School/Employer Partnerships

Combined version incorporating:

Guidance for schools

Guidance for employers

Guidance for DYW regional groups and local authorities

September 2015



# Developing the Young Workforce

## School/Employer Partnerships

Guidance for schools

September 2015

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

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

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

Also published to support DYW are:

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

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

# How will the partnership support the school and young people?

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

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

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

# How can an employer benefit from the partnership?

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

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



## What does a partnership look like?

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

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

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

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

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

## Will schools be supported to set up a partnership?

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

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

# How do I set up a school/employer partnership?

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

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

The following are suggested approaches in planning an employer partnership:

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

# How do we ensure and maintain quality in our partnerships

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

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

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

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

## Where do I find out more?

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Contact your local authority DYW contact.

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

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

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

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



# Developing the Young Workforce

## School/Employer Partnerships

Guidance for employers

September 2015

# Why be involved?

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Across Scotland many businesses have formed meaningful partnerships with schools and other education providers. There are lots of good reasons to be involved:

- helping young people develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge for your business
- inspiring young people to work for you and securing a talent flow
- promoting a positive awareness of your business in the community
- promoting improved career choices and supporting diversity in the workplace
- giving something back to your community
- applying the perspective and skills of young people to your business challenges
- providing development opportunities for your staff
- it makes good business sense!

All employers, regardless of size and type, can make a valuable contribution to preparing young people for the world of work, and it makes good business sense to get involved in developing your potential workforce. This is equally true for employers in the public, private and third sectors.

This employer guidance is intended to promote and support successful partnerships with schools (including those catering for young people with additional needs) that bring mutual benefit and evolve to respond to local circumstances. As such, the advice may also be relevant to college/employer links.

Guidance on School/Employer Partnerships is also available for Schools, and for DYW Regional Groups and Local Authorities.

**Your involvement with a school may be extensive or small. What matters is that it brings mutual benefit to your business and the young people who are the workforce of tomorrow.**

# What can employers offer?

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You and your workforce can use your skills, knowledge and experience to enrich learning across the curriculum, and help young people to improve their understanding and readiness for employment. You can help young people directly or by engaging with the people who support and influence them, such as teachers, lecturers and parents. In particular helping to keep them up-to-date on the changing workplace and opportunities available and how to access them.

Young people can benefit from your involvement at all stages of their education. These are some of the ways you could contribute:

- quality work placements, visits, or work shadowing opportunities
- internships in holiday periods
- talking about careers and opportunities, current and future
- information on (local/regional) labour market needs and opportunities
- participating in careers events
- developing skills for applications or interviews
- providing references and recommendations
- developing and recognising skills and attributes for employment
- developing entrepreneurship skills
- mentoring
- delivering employability awards (e.g. Certificate of Work Readiness).
- developing and delivering recognised qualifications
- working with teachers and lecturers to provide real business problems for young people to solve
- showcasing the latest developments in your business to young people
- enhancing lessons in specific subject areas (e.g. STEM, languages )
- supporting numeracy or literacy
- helping school leaders to shape the curriculum.

You might also want to enter a flexible long term relationship which supports the success of a specific school in these and/or other ways.

# Who can help me get started?

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A network of employer-led DYW Regional Groups (initially referred to as 'Invest in Young People' Groups) is being established across Scotland to facilitate employer links with education. To get started speak to the DYW Regional Group in your area. They can advise you of the current needs of schools to help you with initial scoping, and introduce you to schools if appropriate. If a DYW Regional Group is not yet established then speak to the DYW contact in your local authority.

If you have existing relationships with education and you have the support you need, there might be no need to approach the Regional Group or DYW contact. For example, you might have the assistance of an organisation which links you with a school (e.g. Career Ready, Scottish Business in the Community or a voluntary organisation).

These contacts can also help you expand your involvement when you are ready.



## What does a partnership look like?

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The aim of the partnership is to support young people in their understanding and readiness for work. Every partnership will be different and should be developed collaboratively, considering the needs and constraints of employers and education providers alike. It is involvement rather than financial support we are looking for, although we recognise your time and involvement does equate to a cost.

It will help to discuss and refine your ideas with your partner and develop a shared understanding of what is being offered and delivered by the partnership. No matter how or when the partnership originated, it is essential to be clear about what you want it to achieve. Be realistic and start small if necessary, taking account of pressure points for your business. If circumstances change and you cannot deliver a planned programme, then speak to your partner and those supporting you as early as possible. They may be able to identify another employer who can step in, and you might be able to assist with this.

Due to business interests an employer might link with a school through one department. A focused relationship can be valuable, but also consider if there is merit in a wider relationship.

It is unlikely that one employer, however large, can meet the needs of every learner. Schools can expect to have a number of employer partners to cater for different aspects of learning, and for particular individuals or groups of young people.

An employer might choose to be in partnership with any number of schools, in any number of regions. If you would like to connect with a number schools, the DYW Regional Group in your area (or the DYW contact in your local authority) should be able to help. Small employers may choose to work together to provide an input to a school.

## How do we ensure and maintain quality partnerships?

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Partnerships and the resulting learning activities should evolve and develop over a number of years. Although there is no need for a signed agreement, there should be clarity on expectations and roles of partners, and the intended outcomes. You might find it helpful to use a template and to record what you have agreed. Over time you should reflect on the partnership, the activities delivered, and if they had the impact that was intended. It is important to manage expectations throughout the process.

A partnership with a school may provide an opportunity for employers in the area to meet and benefit from sharing approaches to developing the young workforce to meet business needs.

# Do I need to change an existing partnership?

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There is no need to change an approach that is working well. As with any partnership, it is important to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of all parties and adapts to changing circumstances. The value of your contribution is likely to grow with your experience of the partnership. Refer to the new standards for careers education and work placements, and reflect on the opportunities you offer in the light of these. You should be alert to equality issues to help achieve diversity in the workforce.

## Where do I find out more?

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The DYW contacts in your area will be a useful source of information and will be able to help with issues that are a challenge for you, or signpost you to assistance (e.g. on health and safety aspects).

Examples of successful school/employer partnerships will be shared on the Education Scotland website. Additional support materials will also be provided.

A new Standard for Work Placements and a Standard for Career Education (3-18) available on the Education Scotland website. <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/thecurriculum/dyw/index.asp>.

For more information and background on DYW visit the Scottish Government website.

For background <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/edandtrainingforyoungple/ScottishGovernmentResponse>.

For blog <http://blogs.scotland.gov.uk/developing-the-young-workforce/>.

For CfE information for employers <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/Employers>.

You might find the SQA employer guide to CfE and the national qualifications helpful [http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files\\_ccc/BD7048\\_CfE\\_Employers\\_guide.pdf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/BD7048_CfE_Employers_guide.pdf).





# 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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