Career Information, Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland in Aberdeen City

A report by HM Inspectors

6 December 2019
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1. Introduction

The external review

The external review by Education Scotland took place between 7–11 October 2019. The review focused on Career Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) services delivered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in Aberdeen City.

We examined activities that impact on the quality of customer experience. We evaluated these against the three key principles of Outcomes and Impact, Service Delivery and Leadership and Quality Culture, using the 13 reference quality indicators outlined in External quality arrangements for the review of Career Information Advice and Guidance services delivered by Skills Development Scotland, published in July 2018. Further details can be found at: https://education.gov.scot/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/about-inspections-and-reviews/Careers%20service%20reviews.

The external review team talked with customers, staff at all levels in the organisation, external agencies and other users of the service.
2. The service area and its context

In carrying out the external review of services delivered in Aberdeen City, Education Scotland took the following area context fully into account.

Aberdeen is located in the North East of Scotland and is Scotland’s third largest city, with a population of around 227,000. The city has enjoyed higher levels of employment than elsewhere in the country with a higher than average working age population who are economically active.

Whilst Aberdeen City has some of the most affluent areas in Scotland there are nine areas considered to be in the 15% most deprived areas.

The rate of unemployment in Aberdeen is currently higher than the Scottish average at around 4.9%. The prevalence of the oil and gas sector has meant that Aberdeen City made a significant contribution to the economic performance of Scotland. However, the drop in global prices in 2014 adversely affected the North East economy which has undergone substantial change as a result. Approximately 70,000 direct and indirect jobs were lost in the industry which has in turn affected other sectors such as retail and hospitality. The economic downturn continues to impact young people in Aberdeen, with entry level opportunities having reduced alongside increased competition for jobs from other customer groups.

In response to the downturn, work is underway to diversify the economy of Aberdeen and the surrounding area. SDS Aberdeen works in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and Opportunity North East (ONE) to support the Regional Economic Strategy 2018-2023, Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2016-26, and the Aberdeen City Region Deal. ONE has identified food, drink and agriculture, tourism, life sciences, energy and digital, and Entrepreneurship as key sectors for the future economic growth of Aberdeen.

The workforce in Aberdeen has a higher proportion of skilled employees than the rest of Scotland, with 52% being qualified to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 7. The number of people within the workforce with no qualifications is relatively low.

There are now eleven secondary schools in Aberdeen, after the merger of two schools in 2017/18 which is reflected in the statistics in this report. There is also one school for young people with additional support needs (ASN). SDS Aberdeen have a partnership agreement in place with North East Scotland College (NESCOL) to deliver services to learners in Aberdeen.
3. Outcomes of external review

Judgement of grades

Section A: Grades

The review team awarded grades for each of the six key themes based on the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
<td>outstanding and sector leading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very good</td>
<td>major strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>important strengths with some areas for improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfactory</td>
<td>strengths just outweigh weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak</td>
<td>important weaknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsatisfactory</td>
<td>major weaknesses</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key theme</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer progression and achievement of relevant high quality outcomes</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting the needs of stakeholders</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of key services</td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of service delivery</td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic leadership</td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is one example of excellent practice which is described later in this report.
Section B: Customer progression and achievement

Areas of positive practice

- Over the last three years, the SDS Aberdeen City area team has made significant progress in improving the majority of performance measures.
- The number of young people who enter a positive destination on leaving school has improved over the last three years and is in line with the national trend.
- Over the last two years, the numbers of young people with a My World of Work (MyWoW) registration has increased.
- Over the previous three years, the area team has made good progress towards achievement of the school service offer performance measures.
- In the last year, all ten performance measures exceeded both the minimum expectation and national performance level.
- The percentage of young people in the Senior Phase receiving coaching guidance with two or more Career Management Skills (CMS) assessments showing improved CMS has increased over the last three years and now exceeds the minimum expectation.
- The percentage of Next Steps customers receiving coaching guidance with a CMS assessment has increased significantly from 33% to 93%.
- The percentage of targeted senior phase young people in school who have received a one-to-one engagement and expressed overall satisfaction with the careers service is 97% which is above the national average.
- The quality and accuracy of all legislated data provided by local authority schools has improved over the last three years and the information on anticipated school leaving dates now exceeds that reported nationally.
- In 2017/18 the four key outcome measures of the staff Your Views survey were higher than that achieved nationally and most have shown an improving trend over the last three years.

Areas for development

- The Annual Participation Measure for Aberdeen City has remained below the national average for the last three years.
- The proportion of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school in Aberdeen City is below the national performance level.
- In eight of the 12\(^1\) secondary schools, the number of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school is below the national average.
- The percentage of young people in secondary schools with a MyWoW registration is below the regional and national level. Seven of the 11 schools are more than ten percentage points below the national average.
- The minimum expectation for all the Key Performance Measures (KPM) relating to Next Steps customers was not met in 2017/18.
- The performance level for all three measures relating to Next Steps customers was lower than that achieved nationally in 2018/19.

\(^1\) In 2018, a new secondary school was created from the merger of two schools, resulting in the number of secondary schools in the Aberdeen City going from twelve to eleven.
Section C: Meeting the needs of stakeholders

Areas of positive practice

- SDS staff take good account of customer needs and work with a broad range of partners to enable customers to achieve their goals. Appointments, drop-in sessions and job clubs are provided, and tailored, to meet the needs of specific customer groups in locations across the city. This is helping customers to access services more easily.

- The main SDS centre in Aberdeen City is located in the heart of the city centre on main public transport routes and is fully accessible to all customer groups. Unemployed young people, including Next Steps customers, are further supported through the provision of bus vouchers to support their travel across the city to engage with SDS staff.

- The SDS area team delivers a flexible and responsive service to meet the needs of all school customers in the eleven secondary schools and one ASN school in the area.

- In all schools, young people have good access to a careers adviser. SDS staff are highly proactive and flexible, and they accommodate requests for services promptly. Both young people and school staff speak very highly of SDS careers staff.

- SDS staff in ‘champion’ roles work well with their colleagues to enhance their services and the Equalities Champions, MyWoW Champion and Customer Support System (CSS) Champion are helping staff and customers to good effect.

- The area team respond quickly and positively to the needs of customers who are facing redundancy. The team has been highly proactive in their response to the recent downturn in the oil and gas sector through the Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE). These interventions, and Transition Training Funding (TTF), have been particularly effective having enabled most customers to return to work.

- The SDS team make effective use of a range of communication methods to engage customers and parents including social media, newsletters for parents, and local community radio.

- Careers staff and managers work very effectively with customers and partners to support the priorities of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). They work well with DYW North East to provide advice to DYW lead staff in schools.

- Almost all SDS customers are highly satisfied with the service they have received. Young people describe increased awareness of the career and learning pathways available to them and growth in their confidence as a result of engagements with careers advisers.

- Community and voluntary organisations value highly their relationships with the area team. For example, in partnership with the team in SDS Aberdeen City staff are playing a significant role in the “No-one left behind” initiative. These partnerships and relationships are enabling more customers to access, and benefit from services.

- Through effective collaboration with partners, the area team works well with young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN), as well as those with protected characteristics and those who are care-experienced. They provide tailored support for these young people, the staff who work with them and, occasionally, with their families. The team provides helpful management information relating to economic development to partners to enhance support to specific groups such as care-experienced customers. This information-sharing is valued highly by all partners.

- Working in partnership with Aberdeen University, the Project Search initiative supports twelve ASN post-school learners annually to benefit from work placements within the university. SDS staff deliver tailored approaches for young people on this project. This practice works well and, to date, 68% of completers are now in employment in the local area.

- SDS staff work well with school leaders to develop the School Partnership Agreement (SPA) with a focus on the Career Education Standards (CES) and CMS in order to begin to meet young people’s needs and entitlements. In almost all cases, the SPA aligns with the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
Areas for development
• The pace of implementation of DYW priorities in secondary schools in Aberdeen is too slow. As a result, the development of young people’s CES entitlements are not fully reinforced across all aspects of pupils learning.

Section D: Delivery of key services

Areas of positive practice
• SDS staff deliver a range of well-planned services to support all customers to enter positive destinations. They work collaboratively with a range of partners and agencies to identify the resources required and appropriate delivery approaches to meet customers’ needs.
• Partnership working arrangements have enabled career staff to make improvements to support for care-experienced young people who are leaving school and entering further education, training or employment. As a result, outcomes for care-experienced young people in the area have improved.
• SDS careers advisers are proactive in their roles. They attend a range of relevant meetings, including parent evenings and opportunities to engage with local businesses and employers. They liaise well with individual school DYW leads and provide on-going support and advice to both faculties and subject teaching staff on careers-related issues and themes.
• Career staff contribute well to Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities for school staff through helpful subject conversations.
• One-to-one sessions delivered by careers advisers assist young people in schools to make informed subject choices and support their planning for next steps beyond school.
• Almost all customers speak very positively about their engagement with SDS careers staff. Purposeful and positive relationships between advisers and customers are evident in almost all schools. Young people in schools know when and where to access careers staff for support. The services provided to adult customers are valued highly.
• The area team promote the range of vocational and academic pathways available to school-based learners through the City Campus. This approach supports delivery of senior phase choice options very well and has increased uptake across the range of options available.
• Adult and Next Steps customers benefit from using a range of SDS resources and tailored advice to help them to engage productively in career planning. This approach works well and supports progression into work, further learning or training opportunities.
• The Needs Matrix is used very effectively by SDS staff and partner agencies to ensure the needs of customers are met well. They work collaboratively to deliver targeted interventions and ensure young people benefit from transitions to appropriate partner provision.
• SDS staff host Meet the Training Provider and employer events for customers. This enables SDS customers to discover pathways open to them for employment.
• Careers advisers work productively to support those furthest from the job market to make a positive transition. Advisers use coaching approaches effectively and skilfully. Early support and intervention services are targeted where these are needed most. This approach has a positive impact and supports young people at school to continue with their education and progress onto appropriate pathways.
• SDS work coaches respond well to partners in Project Search by introducing the Job Club to broaden provision for any young adult in need of more support and additional time to progress onto a positive destination. This led to the introduction of an SDS area-wide ASN community-of-practice group to enable the development of practice, knowledge and understanding.
• In a few schools MyWoW is supporting young people well to inform their career planning. This impacts positively on the development of these young people’s CMS and metaskills and helps support parental understanding of the pathways available.

• SDS staff engage well with parents through a range of initiatives including the Parents Pilot and Carers pilot. These initiatives support parents to contribute to young people in school making more informed career choices.

• The area team plan service delivery very well. They take very good account of data to inform the planning and delivery of their services. They have developed a wide range of partnerships, and very positive relationships with customers and a range of stakeholders, to deliver positive outcomes for the community they serve.

• All staff draw very effectively on their professional knowledge and expertise to plan and deliver appropriate interventions when working with customers. They make good use of Labour Market Information (LMI) and use this appropriately to help inform career-related conversations.

• During one-to-one meetings hosted by careers advisers, discussions are personalised to meet customer needs. Staff make highly effective use of a coaching approach with customers to identify agreed actions which supports them well. SDS staff adopt a range of strategies and approaches which ensure effective engagement with very diverse customer groupings. This enables customers to identify their own individual strengths and skills and improve their self-confidence.

• Group work sessions delivered by careers advisers are effective in engaging school and post-school customers in career-related discussions and enhancing their understanding of CMS and potential career opportunities. Careers staff use a range of resources and well-considered approaches which ensure customers are relaxed, engage in meaningful conversations, and see the relevance of the themes being explored.

• The team have a strong commitment to continuous improvement of the service offer and to deliver enhanced outcomes for customers. They work together productively, and reflect proactively, on how to enhance existing approaches and to identify improvements to service delivery. This strong team culture and practice supports effective service delivery very well.

• The area team works collaboratively to share best practice, resources and the development of career-related approaches. Colleagues work as members of mini-teams and within these clusters work well to support improvement. The area team are supported to co-design provision, initiate new approaches, and identify improvement practices. Staff value this approach and the recognition of their views and opinions.

• My Contribution are effective in bringing together the knowledge and skills identified through meetings and the observation framework to inform professional practice and the deployment of resources to maximise the impact on customers.

• The area team support newly-appointed colleagues well through a mentoring scheme that provides ongoing advice and support, and builds confidence and leadership capacity.

• The area team regularly use reflective practice sessions on specific themes to drive practice improvement. SDS staff make good use of team meetings to reflect on approaches and identify improvement actions. During discussions, they analyse relevant statistics and trends and review completed customer feedback forms. This approach helps ensure that service delivery is monitored closely and relevant enhancements introduced.

• As a result of engaging with PACE-related activities, SDS staff have helped to develop the Adult Guidance Reflective Practice handbook through conversations between careers advisers to share best practice approaches.

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2 Metaskills Meta-skills are timeless, higher order skills that create adaptive learners and promote success in whatever context the future brings. These are the skills that enable individuals to perform highly today; and will be required by all of us in the future.
Areas for development

- Almost all Aberdeen schools have not made sufficient progress in supporting young people to develop their CMS, or in delivering the entitlements of CES.
- Most schools have not implemented the use of MyWoW Ambassadors. As a result, most young people are not sufficiently aware of where to access on-line support to make informed decisions about available career pathways.
Section E: Management of service delivery

Areas of positive practice

- The area team has established and maintained a wide range of appropriate and effective external partnerships. These include successful strategic and operational arrangements with agencies and organisations such as Aberdeen City Council, the Third Sector, the Community Planning Partnership (CPP), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Aberdeen Foyer, and DYW North East.
- Through strong partnership working, SDS managers and staff meet the needs of specific groups, including: care-experienced customers; those following Personal Achievement Awards; parents of children and young people with ASN including autism and the homeless. These arrangements are highly effective.
- The SDS area team supports government priorities well. All staff and managers work with customers and partners to support the implementation of DYW priorities. The work of DYW North East has been significant in supporting the SDS area team to make progress in this area.
- Working with Community Learning and Development (CLD) partners and North East Scotland College (NESCOL), SDS staff arrange support to meet the needs of Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners, as well as those who need support with literacy and numeracy.
- The area team make a valued contribution to projects within the LOIP. This approach maximises the use of resources and their impact through productive collaboration with all partners involved.
- Recent changes have led to more collaborative and effective partnership working with Aberdeen City Education Department. This has resulted in enhanced working to establish improved Learner Pathways across the area. Although at an early stage, the initial positive impact of these new approaches is evident.
- SDS staff and managers maintain regular and structured contact with all partners, which is focused on meeting the needs of all customers through the effective use of information and data. They are proactive, flexible and work hard and successfully to ensure that collaboration is productive and sustained.
- SDS managers use management information well. They meet weekly to proactively monitor performance and implement actions to address emerging issues.
- The area team work successfully with schools to improve the quality, accuracy and completeness of the data entered into the datahub. The team is now beginning to work with schools and the local authority to improve analysis and use of this data, however it is too early to assess the effectiveness of this activity.
- Managers use reports from CSS to monitor activity and impact. They use data well to inform and plan decisions on all service offers to all customers.
- Managers and staff use a highly comprehensive and relevant Equalities Bulletin, issued quarterly, to inform their work and planning. These statistics enable the team to address proactively areas of under-representation and gaps in service provision.

Areas for development

- The local authority and schools have not yet developed a clear or sustainable plan to support the embedding of CMS within the school curriculum or the delivery of the entitlements of the CES.
- Only a few schools use LMI and SDS resources including MyWoW to inform curriculum planning and content.
Section F: Strategic leadership

Areas of positive practice

- The SDS Management team have developed a clear vision and direction for the services delivered in Aberdeen City. They have taken good account of a challenging economic downturn and planned delivery around the priorities of the LOIP, Regional Skills Strategy (RSS) and ONE, to support the improvement of positive outcomes for customers.
- The Head of Region and Area Manager are highly valued partners in the development of the Renaissance Strategy for Aberdeen City. As members of the Community Planning Aberdeen Board and Management Group they are influential in shaping plans to ensure outcomes are improved across all priority areas.
- The management team have built positive relationships and collaborative arrangements with strategic leaders in the local authority for schools. This is leading to a recognition of the importance of CMS and the entitlements of the CES as key priorities for all schools.
- Managers have developed a good understanding of the individual strengths of the area team and empower them to develop innovative solutions to the delivery of services and achieve improved positive outcomes.
- Managers have developed effectively the ‘Grow your Own’ approach to support the delivery of core services and address the challenges of recruitment through the addition of experienced staff with an employment background. This approach has benefitted both colleagues and customers.
- Managers support staff well through focused leadership and provide direction to support effectively the achievement of service delivery priorities.
- An effective mentoring scheme is supporting colleagues well to gain confidence in their delivery and build the leadership capacity of the team.
- All staff are highly motivated and committed to the delivery of services. They work collaboratively across clusters of schools in dual roles and provide services to meet the needs of all customers.
- The management team have developed strong strategic links with a wide range of partners and stakeholders. They work well together to identify the lead partner best placed to support customers and maximise the impact of resources available.
- The management team regularly meet with partners to share data to inform planning and agree strategies to address emerging issues. They work well together to address the priorities of the Outcome Improvement Groups (OIGS) and Project Charters to improve opportunities for identified groups. For example Care Experienced and winter leavers.
- The Aberdeen City management team is committed to supporting staff to achieve professional qualifications. Most staff either have, or are working towards an appropriate qualification. This is building the capacity of the team to undertake dual roles and enable the development of CMS for all customers.
- Opportunities for staff to develop a wide range of skills is facilitated well by the management team.
- The management team utilises team meetings, My Contribution discussions and the observation framework very well to support reflective practice and identify individual goals and professional development needs.
- All staff have engaged in a wide range of CLPL to support the delivery of a comprehensive PACE service and to identify the skills and attributes required for the emerging employment opportunities identified in the ONE strategy. This has enabled staff to support customers make informed choices about pathways to employment and training.
- Everyday Leadership is embedded within all team practice and continuous improvement activities very well. This has empowered staff to be creative and innovative in their approach to service design and delivery. Staff value this approach and are highly motivated as a result.
The area team are fully involved in the Business Excellence Assessment (BEA) process. They identify actions for improvement which are incorporated within the team’s Continuous Improvement Action Plan (CIAP). The Quality Improvement Lead (QIL) analyses and evaluates data prior to the assessment and contributes well to discussions.

Careers staff use management information effectively to plan, profile and monitor service delivery. Progress towards targets is reviewed regularly by the Area Manager and Team Leaders and is shared and discussed with staff at team meetings.

The observation framework is used collaboratively with colleagues across the Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City teams to support professional discussion and reflection of practice.

The area team is making good progress on almost all identified actions within the CIAP.

Area for development

- Staff in schools and the local authority lack an awareness of the role of SDS as a provider and enabler in developing CMS and raising awareness of the entitlements of CES. This is limiting opportunities for young people to achieve positive destinations.
Section G: Capacity for improvement

- The SDS Management team have developed a clear vision and direction for the services delivered in Aberdeen City. They have taken good account of a challenging economic downturn and planned delivery around the priorities of the LOIP, Regional Skills Strategy (RSS) and ONE, to support the improvement of positive outcomes for customers.

- The Head of Region and Area Manager are highly valued partners in the development of the Renaissance Strategy for Aberdeen City. As members of the Community Planning Aberdeen Board and Management Group they are influential in shaping plans to ensure outcomes are improved across all priority areas.

- The management team have built positive relationships and collaborative arrangements with strategic leaders in the local authority for schools. This is leading to a recognition of the importance of CMS and the entitlements of the CES as key priorities for all schools.

- Managers have developed effectively the ‘Grow your Own’ approach to support the delivery of core services and address the challenges of recruitment through the addition of experienced staff with an employment background. This approach has benefitted both colleagues and customers.

- Everyday Leadership is embedded within the team practice and continuous improvement activities very well. This has empowered staff to be creative and innovative in their approach to service design and delivery. Staff value this approach and are highly motivated as a result.

- The team have a strong commitment to continuous improvement of the service offer and to deliver enhanced outcomes for customers. They work together productively, and reflect proactively, on how to enhance existing approaches and to identify improvements to service delivery. This strong team culture and practice supports effective service delivery very well.

- The area team has established and maintained a wide range of appropriate and effective external partnerships. These include successful strategic and operational arrangements with agencies and organisations such as Aberdeen City Council, the Third Sector, the Community Planning Partnership (CPP), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Aberdeen Foyer, and DYW North East.

- Through strong partnership working, SDS managers and staff meet the needs of specific groups, including: care-experienced customers; those following Personal Achievement Awards; parents of children and young people with ASN including autism and the homeless. These arrangements are highly effective.

- SDS staff and managers maintain regular and structured contact with all partners, which is focused on meeting the needs of all customers through the effective use of information and data. They are proactive, flexible and work hard and successfully to ensure that collaboration is productive and sustained.
Section H: Main points for action

- The local authority, schools and NESCOL should work intensively with SDS to improve the numbers of young people who progress to and sustain positive destinations in Aberdeen.

- The local authority and schools should work with SDS to improve their awareness of the breadth of expertise and services available through SDS careers staff to support opportunities for young people to achieve positive destinations.

- The local authority should ensure that the pace of delivery of DYW priorities in schools is increased, particularly in relation to the embedding of CMS and delivery of the entitlements of the CES.
4. Examples of excellence

Career Essentials 2018 - 2019

Analysis of data and feedback from partners identified barriers that young people face in sustaining a positive destination. In response, the area team restructured Career Essentials to meet the needs of young people furthest from the labour market. Some of the challenges faced by the young people included: poor attendance at school, low confidence and self-esteem, low or no aspiration, disabilities, ASN, criminality, homelessness, being a young carer or a care experienced individual. This was set against a backdrop of a City that has experienced a significant economic downturn, with opportunities for young people to secure entry level jobs reducing.

The area team used Career Essentials as a short employability programme targeted at school leavers' pre-stage one of the employability skills pipeline. It was used as an engagement tool to support the development of CMS in a way that was fun, creative and meaningful to the individual. The programme used a range of activities that were interactive to enable the customer to engage regardless of their ability level.

Many of those in the group had left school with no qualifications, low self-esteem, and no certification. A graduation ceremony gave the group acknowledgement of achievement.

Feedback from customers include: “It was too short, perfect, not long enough, would like it to be longer, enjoyed meeting new people, found out about training. Made new friends. It got me up in the morning. Out and about doing something. Liked the people. Got fed. Doing something. Got more confidence now. Got a routine.”

Secondary school partners embraced Career Essentials as an innovative way to help pupils prepare for leaving school and to cement relationships with Work Coaches in school. For example, Career Essentials was delivered in a Secondary School from January – May 2019 where eight young people attended. All were at risk of leaving school and going into a negative destination. Out of these 4 have returned to school, 2 are in employment and 2 are on the Employability Fund. Over 2018-19, seven Career Essential programmes have run out of the Aberdeen Centre with 48 young people, 91.7% of those engaging have moved into a positive destinations.

Career Essentials will continue to be used by Work Coaches as a key part of the Next Steps service and will run in the centre four times a year. As a result of feedback from pilots in schools, the area team offer Career Essentials to targeted schools as part of the SPA as an approach to improving positive destinations.
5. What happens next?

Following publication of this report, SDS and partners are expected to produce an action plan to address the main points for action and/or areas for development in the report and other quality assurance and enhancement activities.

A follow up visit will be carried out involving SDS and partners 18 months after the initial review to determine if satisfactory progress has been made towards the main points for action.

Barbara Nelson
HM Inspector

6. Further information

The review and judgements relate to the service area as a whole. For further information about Education Scotland, the external review methodologies, or other information about reviews, see https://education.gov.scot/.

For further information about Skills Development Scotland, see http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/.
Appendix 1: glossary of terms

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ASN</td>
<td>additional support needs</td>
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<td>BEA</td>
<td>business excellence assessment</td>
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<td>CES</td>
<td>Career Education Standard</td>
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<td>CLPL</td>
<td>Career-long professional learning</td>
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<td>CIAG</td>
<td>Careers Information, Advice and Guidance</td>
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<td>CIAP</td>
<td>Continuous Improvement Action Plan</td>
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<td>CLD</td>
<td>Community Learning and Development</td>
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<td>CMS</td>
<td>career management skills</td>
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<td>CPP</td>
<td>Community Planning Partnership</td>
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<td>CSS</td>
<td>customer support system</td>
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<td>DWP</td>
<td>Department for Work and Pensions</td>
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<td>DYW</td>
<td>Developing the Young Workforce</td>
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<td>DYW NE</td>
<td>Developing the Young Workforce North East</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESOL</td>
<td>English for Speakers of Other Languages</td>
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<td>GVA</td>
<td>Gross Value Added</td>
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<td>KPM</td>
<td>Key Performance Measures</td>
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<td>LMI</td>
<td>Labour Market Information</td>
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<td>LOIP</td>
<td>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</td>
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<td>MyWoW</td>
<td>My World of Work</td>
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<td>NESCOL</td>
<td>North East Scotland College</td>
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<td>Quality Improvement Lead</td>
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<td>Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework</td>
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<td>Skills Development Scotland</td>
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<td>School Improvement Plans</td>
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<td>School Partnership Agreement</td>
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<td>RSS</td>
<td>Regional Skills Strategy</td>
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<td>TTF</td>
<td>Transition Training Fund</td>
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</table>
Appendix 2: external review process

HM Inspectors undertake an independent review of the quality of provision of CIAG delivered by SDS on behalf of the Scottish Government under a service level agreement between the Scottish Government and Education Scotland. External review teams include HM Inspectors and associate assessors.

During external reviews, members of the review teams observe group activities, one to one coaching sessions and hold discussions with customers, staff and stakeholders. They consider information on the quality of career information, advice and guidance. They meet with recipients of the service and obtain feedback from groups, partners and staff who work for SDS.

The purpose of this report is to convey the main outcomes arising from the external review, to acknowledge service's strengths and to provide a clear agenda for future action to improve and enhance quality.

This external review results in judgements of grades that express the external review team’s overall evaluation of Outcome and Impact, Service Delivery and Leadership and quality culture and a judgement on capacity to improve based on the evidence from all key areas, in particular Outcomes, Impact and Leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The report also uses the following terms to describe numbers and proportions:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>almost all</td>
<td>over 91%-99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most</td>
<td>75-90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>majority</td>
<td>50-74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority/less than half</td>
<td>15-49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>few</td>
<td>up to 15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: policy context

SDS all-age career information, advice and guidance services aim to support young people and adults to make a positive transition into continued education, training or the world of work. SDS achieves this by supporting customers in their development of CMS which lay the foundations for success in their future careers.

The services provided by SDS in schools are driven by the ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence. Accordingly there are significant interdependencies between the roles and responsibilities of schools and wider partners, the design and delivery of school curriculum and the services provided by SDS. Planning for successful service delivery through SPAs requires effective collaboration between SDS and its partners.

In March 2011, the Scottish Government published a framework for the redesign and improvement of CIAG services. As the largest provider of CIAG services in Scotland, SDS has a lead role in implementing this change. This change has been implemented through an integrated service involving face to face meetings, communication through contact centre and an online CMS environment, MyWoW.

In December 2014, the Scottish Government published 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 (3-18) with SDS, Scottish Government and Education Scotland. These changes have resulted in earlier intervention with school young people through SDS 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.

Underpinning service delivery is the commitment of SDS 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 CMS. This partnership approach supports schools to deliver this component of Curriculum for Excellence, whilst creating a learning context for young people that is compatible with and builds upon the service delivery commitments of SDS. As a result, much of the work of SDS requires effective collaboration with a range of partners at national and local levels.

Currently, this service is delivered on-site in Scotland’s 359 local authority secondary schools and one grant-aided secondary school. Services include a blend of one-to-one careers coaching support, facilitated group sessions, drop in sessions, and supported access to MyWoW. The level of intensity of support is determined by an assessment of pupil needs made in discussion with schools. The greatest proportion of careers coach support is provided to those young people who have been identified as requiring an enhanced level of support to promote progress towards securing and sustaining a place in education, training or work. This means those individuals would receive a ‘medium’ or ‘maximum’ service offer.

SDS has a key role to play in the delivery of the Scottish Government’s Opportunities for All initiative, under which all 16-19 year olds will receive an offer of a place in learning or training. SDS work in this area has been reinforced with the passage of legislation allowing SDS and key partners, including Local Authorities, schools and Further Education Institutions to share data on all the young people they work with. The Post 16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 and the statutory guidance mandate SDS and key partners to share data in order to support young people in their post school transitions.
Appendix 4: background information

Terminologies used in this report

The term ‘service area’ is used to describe the geographical area referred to in this report. SDS uses a variety of approaches to deliver CIAG services. This is often referred to as a blended service. SDS promotes a Universal Offer to support all secondary school young people. In addition, a Targeted Service Offer is aimed at young people who have the greatest need and who require enhanced support to progress them towards entering or sustaining a positive destination. SDS offers access to a range of services for post-school customers. The different offers are shown below:

SDS School Universal Service Offer consists of:

- access to MyWoW web service
- group-work sessions on:
  - Transition support at P7/S1 transition
  - Subject choices and Career Management Skills in S2/S3
  - Senior phase group sessions
- drop-in clinics for career management and employability
- opportunity for any pupil to request a face to face session

SDS School Targeted Service Offer consists of:

- Targeted one-to-one support in S3 for those with the greatest need (and optional group activity where appropriate)
- Structured programme of one-to-one career guidance throughout the senior phase
- Senior Phase supported transition to a dedicated post-school team member for those who require on-going support towards positive participation

SDS Post-school Targeted Service Offer (Next Steps) consists of:

- Open access to public centres (47 locations throughout Scotland)
- Access to MyWoW web service 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Structured programme of one-to-one careers guidance
- Employability support and group activity
- Partnership approach including structured referral arrangements with DPW/JCP
- Telephone access to SDS contact centre

SDS All age Service Offer (universal) consists of:

- Access to MyWoW web service 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Access to one-to-one career guidance
- Telephone access to SDS contact centre
- PACE
- IES joint work activities with JCP
- Open access to public centres (47 locations throughout Scotland)

Further information on Skills Development Scotland’s services to individuals and employers can be found at [www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk). MyWoW web service can be accessed at [www.myworldofwork.co.uk](http://www.myworldofwork.co.uk).
Staff roles

SDS uses a number of titles to describe the roles of the staff. These include Careers Adviser, Work Coach, Trainee Careers Adviser and Personal Adviser. Throughout this report, the term careers staff is used to refer to all staff involved in delivering CIAG services.