

Career information, advice and guidance delivered by Skills Development Scotland in Scottish Borders

13 November 2015

A report by HM Inspectors



The external review process

HM Inspectors undertake an independent review of the quality of provision of Career information, advice and guidance delivered by Skills Development Scotland (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 and hold discussions with customers, staff and stakeholders. They consider information on the quality of careers 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.*

The report also uses the following terms to describe numbers and proportions:	
almost all	over 90%
most	75-90%
majority	50-74%
less than half	15-49%
few	up to 15%

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1. Introduction

The external review

The external review by Education Scotland took place between 14th and 18th September, 2015. The review focused on career information, advice and guidance (CIAG) services delivered by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in Scottish Borders.

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 19 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 March 2014.

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

2. Policy Context

The role of Skills Development Scotland

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 upon leaving school. SDS achieves this by supporting customers in their development of career management skills (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 School Partnership Agreements 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, My World of Work (MyWoW).

Currently, this service is delivered on-site in Scotland's 364 secondary schools. 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 deemed at 'medium or maximum risk' of not securing and sustaining a place in education, training or 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.

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.

3. The service area and its context

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

SDS CIAG services in the Scottish Borders are delivered in two main centres at Hawick and Galashiels and within a range of partner premises across the region. These include community centres and public libraries. Fourteen staff are employed to deliver CIAG services in the region (approximately 11 FTE).

The Scottish Borders region covers an area of 1,827 square miles. It is a rural local authority with two main towns, Galashiels and Hawick, each with a population of over 10,000 residents. The population in the Scottish Borders has grown steadily over the last 10 years and is predicted to grow further. The completion and re-introduction of a domestic railway service between the region and Edinburgh has strengthened transport connections to the area to help maximise opportunities for employment, business, tourism and leisure.

For many years, the Scottish Borders economy was reliant on the knitwear, textiles, and electronics industries. Whilst there has been a long term reduction in the numbers employed in the textile industry, it has remained an important sector in the region. It is predicted that increased employment opportunities will be driven by the health and social care sectors. Although the Borders construction industry suffered during the recent economic downturn, the situation is starting to improve. Key local sectors for growth also include tourism, food and drink, renewables, and the creative industries. Activity tourism is well represented in the region. The Borders economic strategy emphasises the potential for further growth in this sector as a result of improved access to the region by rail.

There are nine secondary schools in the region, located in the main towns and learning communities. Each school is supported by an SDS career coach, work coach, and personal adviser.

The most deprived data zone in Scottish Borders is Central Burnfoot, Hawick. The other four most deprived datazones in the region are in Burnfoot, Hawick and in Langlee, Galashiels. This has remained the same since 2009.

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 pupils. In addition, a *Targeted Service Offer* is aimed at pupils who are at risk of not 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 Offer* consists of:

- Access to *My World of Work* (MyWoW) web service
- Group-work sessions on:
 - Introduction to *MyWoW*
 - Introduction to career management skills (CMS)
 - Introduction to labour market information (LMI)
- 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:

- Structured programme of one-to-one career coaching
- Handover to dedicated work coach

SDS Post-school *16-19 Service Offer* consists of:

- Access to MyWoW web service
- Structured programme of one-to-one career coaching
- Dedicated work coach service for targeted young people
- Telephone access to SDS contact centre
- Open access to public centres (47 locations throughout Scotland)

SDS All age *Service Offer (adults)* consists of:

- Access to MyWoW web service
- Telephone access to SDS contact centre
- Access to one-to-one career coaching
- Partnership action for continuing employment (PACE)
- Integrated employment and skills (IES) – joint work activities with Job Centre Plus
- 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. *My World of Work* web service can be accessed at www.myworldofwork.co.uk

Staff roles

In Scottish Borders region, SDS use a number of titles to describe the roles of the staff. These include *Career Coach*, *Work Coach* and *Personal Advisor*. Throughout this report, the term *careers staff* is used to refer to all staff involved in delivering CIAG services.

One-to-one career coaching sessions

A major strand of SDS CIAG work is the delivery of one-to-one career coaching sessions. However, the current arrangements for external review do not include observation of one-to-one career coaching sessions and therefore this area of work is not evaluated within this report.

5. 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:

excellent: *Outstanding and sector leading*
very good: *Major strengths*
good: *Important strengths with some areas for improvement*
satisfactory: *Strengths just outweigh weaknesses*
weak: *Important weaknesses*
unsatisfactory: *Major weaknesses*

Key theme	Grade
Customer progression and achievement of relevant high quality outcomes	very good
Meeting the needs of stakeholders	very good
Delivery of key services	very good
Management of service delivery	excellent
Strategic leadership	very good
Capacity for improvement	very good

Section B: Areas of positive practice

- The area team makes very effective use of local and national targets to plan delivery of services.
- The number of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school in the Scottish Borders has remained consistently high over the last three years and is above national performance rate.
- SDS staff work very flexibly with local schools to prioritise actions to support pupils across the region.
- SDS managers proactively devise approaches to overcome the challenges presented to customers by transport links to the more rural and remote areas of the region.

- SDS Managers work very closely in partnership with key stakeholders in the region to match service delivery to the needs of the full range of customers.
- Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) partnership working is very effective.
- SDS careers staff are held in high regard by all partners. Relationships with partners are highly productive and focus well on improving outcomes for customers.
- Careers staff are skilled in working with partners to jointly identify actions that remove barriers that can inhibit the uptake of services.
- Very effective team leadership enables staff to develop flexible approaches to service delivery to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for clients.
- All SDS team members share ownership of and are committed to the quality of service delivery.

Section C: Areas for development

- A few secondary schools in the area do not input data to the *data-hub* effectively.
- In the majority of schools, parents and carers are not provided with sufficient opportunity to engage with SDS careers staff.
- In most secondary schools arrangements to incorporate CMS within the broader school curriculum are not well developed.
- Within some schools timetabling and accommodation constraints are reducing the effectiveness of group-work sessions.
- On a few occasions the pace, content, or resources used by careers staff to deliver group-work sessions do not meet the needs of pupils.
- Some partners, particularly school, are not sufficiently aware of CMS and its role in supporting Curriculum for Excellence and employability.
- Nationally developed materials used by staff to obtain feedback from pupils are not sufficiently engaging.

Section D: Main points for action

SDS should:

- **Ensure that the pace and content of group-work sessions meets the needs of pupils in supporting the development of CMS.**
- **Continue to work with partners, in particular secondary schools, to promote the important contribution of CMS to the school curriculum and the development of skills for life, learning, and work.**

Secondary schools should:

- **Ensure that data is input to the *data-hub* accurately and in line with agreed deadlines.**
- **Ensure that appropriate arrangements and resources are in place to support effective delivery of group-work sessions.**
- **Provide careers staff with sufficient opportunity to engage with parents and carers to promote CIAG services.**
- **Provide pupils with opportunities to develop CMS within the wider school curriculum.**

6. Outcomes and Impact

How well are customers progressing and achieving relevant, high quality outcomes?

How effective is the area team at achieving and maintaining high levels of service delivery?

The area team makes very effective use of local and national targets to plan delivery of services. In 2014-15, almost all of the SDS nationally set targets were met. However, these targets were set prior to a significant decrease in the unemployment profile in the area for both adult customers and young people. Within the region, the unemployment claimant count has fallen by 33% in the last year and remains below the national level. Youth unemployment has also fallen by 34% in the same period.

The number of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school in the Scottish Borders has remained consistently high over the last three years and above national performance levels. In 2013-14, the School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR) indicated positive destinations for 94.2% of young people in the region, which is above national performance rate of 92.3%. Across the Scottish Borders, the number of young people sustaining an initial positive destination is high. The number of young people still in a positive destination after six months has increased in the last three years to 94%, which is also above the national performance rate of 91.5%.

SDS careers staff link very effectively with staff in local secondary schools and make good use of school partnership agreements (SPA) to agree targets for service delivery. They work very flexibly with local schools to prioritise actions to support school pupils across the region. Progress regarding the delivery of individual SPA's is monitored regularly by careers staff and school managers

How well does the service meet the needs of stakeholders?

How well do customers make progress and achieve individual outcomes?

Within Scottish Borders region, SDS careers centres are situated conveniently in two main locations within Galashiels and Hawick. Accessibility to the Galashiels centre has been further enhanced by the recent opening of the Borders rail link in September 2015. Centre facilities are accessible to customers with restricted mobility and wheelchair users. SDS staff have proactively devised approaches to help customers in rural and remote areas of the region to access services. Staff utilise a network of centres and locations across the region to deliver services flexibly within local communities. The use of part-time *caller stations* situated within partner premises enable staff to offer services efficiently and where they are most needed.

SDS careers staff have a very strong presence within all secondary schools in the region. Individual career coaches are visible within schools and their input is valued highly by school partners. The range of CIAG services offered to school pupils is carefully planned, appropriate, and meets the needs of school-age customers well overall. Most group work sessions delivered by SDS staff are helpful in supporting school pupils to develop CMS. However, in most schools pupils do not have sufficient

opportunity to further develop or consolidate these skills within the broader school curriculum.

Senior pupils who have accessed one-to-one support from career coaches have a good understanding of the options and choices available to them. The support they receive prepares them well for progression to further learning or employment.

Young learners studying full-time further education programmes at the local college are supported well by careers staff to access CIAG services and develop CMS. Close partnership working between the SDS career coach and college staff is ensuring provision of services is targeted appropriately to meet the needs of college-based customers.

In response to difficulties in establishing and maintaining contact with hard-to-reach customers aged 15 to 19 years, the local area team has devised an appropriate action plan to increase visibility of services within the community. Actions taken include the recent introduction of the use of *Facebook*, and more prominent publicising of services within targeted local areas. Adult customers are supported well by SDS work coaches. Well planned and targeted support is enabling unemployed customers and those at risk or redundancy to access CIAG services and develop CMS. All customers indicate high levels of satisfaction with SDS services and are very appreciative of the individual support they have received from career and work coaches.

How well do services meet the needs of relevant communities and other local and national stakeholders?

Within the Scottish Borders, SDS CIAG staff take very good account of the needs of the local area and its communities. SDS managers and staff work very closely in partnership with key stakeholders in the region to match service delivery to the needs of the full range of customers. Career coaches promote and deliver CIAG services well across all secondary schools in the area. They deliver services in a flexible and responsive way which overall meets the needs of school pupils well. Flexible access arrangements and the use of drop-in clinics enables pupils to access CIAG services at times which suit their individual needs. Very effective targeting of services by careers staff is contributing to successful outcomes for young people who are at risk of a negative destination on leaving school. Across all schools, the support provided by SDS staff to 'at risk' pupils is valued highly by school managers.

Within Scottish Borders, PACE partnership working is very effective. The local PACE partnership, chaired by the SDS team leader, responds appropriately to requests for support and coordinates service delivery across a range of partners very effectively. Customers who are at risk of redundancy are very appreciative of the comprehensive support available from careers staff. They receive individualised services which help them to explore alternative employment opportunities or undertake further learning. Almost all move on to a positive outcome as a result.

The local area team works well with the SDS national team to support staff and partners to make effective use of *MyWOW*. The local engagement plan ensures that staff have good access to support for the use of *MyWOW*. SDS staff engage well with a range of partners including staff in local schools and Borders College to further extend and embed the use of *MyWoW* within CIAG activities.

SDS managers and staff contribute very well to the recently reconstituted *Opportunities for All Group*. They work effectively with partners to plan transitions and support young people to enter positive destinations on leaving school. The group makes good use of available *data-hub* reports to support strategic planning of provision. Key partners are beginning to use available data to support implementation of the newly introduced participation measure. Most secondary schools within the region are inputting data to the *data-hub* effectively. However, a few schools are not. Improving data quality has been identified as a priority by the *Opportunities For All Group*, and plans are in place for SDS staff and Scottish Borders Council to provide support to individual schools to improve the timing and accuracy of data entry.

7. Service Delivery

How good is delivery of key services?

How well do services meet the needs of all customers?

The area team works well together and effectively to deliver CIAG services. SDS staff engage productively with partners to plan and target services to meet the specific needs and circumstances of customers. Career coaches provide an appropriate range of services to school pupils and college learners in the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence. These include the delivery of *MyWoW* sessions and CMS workshops and one-to-one support where appropriate.

Effective collaboration between careers staff and staff in secondary schools and support agencies is resulting in well-planned and targeted support for pupils who have additional barriers to learning. Careers staff work well with partners to plan effective transition arrangements which support young people to achieve a positive outcome. Flexible deployment of careers staff is enabling customers in rural areas to access CIAG services within local communities.

Work coaches plan and deliver targeted and tailored services to support adult customers. Unemployed customers are encouraged to develop their CMS through the delivery of a range of workshops and one-to-one support. These activities support customers well to develop confidence and skills to explore opportunities to enter employment or further learning. The use of *caller stations* in partners' premises across the area widens access to services for customers.

SDS staff work well with managers in local secondary schools to jointly validate the needs matrix. They make good use of on-going and regular communication with school staff to ensure the needs matrix and service offer are revised regularly. As a result of these arrangements, pupils who are most at risk of not achieving a positive destination on leaving school are supported very well. The area team works well with local employers and third sector agencies to arrange work placements to support college based customers, including those with additional support needs, to progress to a positive destination.

How effective are relationships with customers?

SDS careers staff in the area are held in high regard by all partners. Relationships with external agencies are mutually respectful and productive. Partners appreciate the responsive and flexible approaches by SDS managers and staff to meet the needs of customers.

Career coaches in schools are well known to staff and pupils. They are highly visible and provide accessible services that meet the needs of pupils well overall. All careers staff are skilled at engaging and building relationships with young people to develop CMS.

Almost all pupils know how to access support if required. All pupils who access CIAG services find staff to be approachable and supportive and value the support they receive.

Senior managers and staff in schools benefit from development sessions delivered by SDS staff. For example, *MyWOW* sessions have helped to raise awareness in schools of the range of *MyWoW* resources and how they could be used to support the curriculum.

SDS careers staff provide adult customers with timely and effective support to assist them to achieve their individual goals.

How accessible, flexible and inclusive are services?

Careers staff take very good account of the barriers that can inhibit uptake of services. These include the remote location of some communities and transport issues. SDS staff work well with partners to jointly identify actions to support customers to overcome these barriers and engage with CIAG services. Career coaches tailor CMS workshops carefully to take account of the needs of customers who have additional support needs. They adapt materials and approaches to support customers to develop CMS.

Work coaches collaborate effectively with partners to support the delivery of community based employability projects and provide targeted support to vulnerable customers, including care leavers. Work coaches build strong relationships with vulnerable customers to support their transition from education into training or employment. Careers staff engage very effectively with local groups including *Joint Agency Action Teams* and *Meeting Around the Child* groups to review and plan services.

Careers staff create a welcoming and supportive environment that encourages customers to visit centres and access CIAG services. Their friendly approach supports adult customers well to gain confidence and develop their CMS. Staff promote CIAG services well to customers using a range of media and approaches, including *Facebook*.

Careers staff engage productively with the local college to target support for college based customers to develop their CMS. Career coaches work creatively with the college's Students' Association and use innovative approaches such as engagement in Freshers' Week, to build capacity and promote CIAG services.

SDS staff work closely with *home school link workers* to support school pupils at risk of disengagement to continue with their studies. These arrangements enable SDS staff to engage with parents and carers and remain in touch with young people who have disengaged from learning.

In some schools, careers staff are proactive in raising awareness of the full range of progression options to school staff, pupils, parents and carers. They encourage pupils and their parents and carers to consider alternative post-school opportunities such as modern apprenticeships. However, in the majority of schools, SDS careers staff are not provided with sufficient opportunity to engage with parents and carers

How well are services delivered?

The area team makes good use of local intelligence and the SDS corporate plan priorities to inform and shape the local work plan. SDS managers plan the delivery of services well. They recognise and draw on the strengths of team members to plan and coordinate services. Senior staff in local secondary schools value discussions held with careers staff to negotiate and agree SPAs. Regular review meetings are used productively to evaluate progress towards achievement of SPA targets. Careers staff work with school colleagues to plan and revise activities where appropriate.

The delivery of CIAG services in schools is well planned. Career coaches participate actively in transition planning meetings with schools to provide support to pupils who are at risk of not achieving a positive destination. In a few schools and the local college, careers staff work very productively with staff to support the embedding of CMS within curriculum planning. However, most secondary schools arrangements to incorporate CMS within the broader school curriculum are not well developed.

Across the service area, most pupils in the senior phase are aware of the *MyWoW* web service and are registered users. They use *MyWoW* resources well to research post school opportunities, explore career options, and build a CV. In a few schools, careers staff are introducing pupils in S1 to CMS through the use of *MyWoW*. However, in a few schools *MyWoW* is not promoted sufficiently well to young people, parents and carers.

SDS staff use group work activities to develop CMS with school pupils. Most careers staff use nationally developed materials and adjust them to reflect the needs of participants. In most group work sessions careers staff work closely with staff from schools or community partners to organise the delivery of activities to develop CMS. They take good account of the needs of specific customer groups to jointly customise and plan sessions. However, in some schools, the effectiveness of group work sessions is limited by timetabling and accommodation constraints. On a few occasions the pace, content, or resources used by careers staff to deliver group work sessions do not meet the needs of pupils.

All customers are able to describe how engagement with CIAG services has helped them to develop their CMS and make informed decisions. There are examples of SDS staff and partners planning and embedding further opportunities for customers to consolidate and enhance their CMS.

How well do staff reflect on service delivery to improve services?

All SDS area staff contribute productively to action-planning for improvement using the *Business Excellence* self-assessment process. They make good use of customer and stakeholder feedback and draw on this to make improvements to the delivery of services. The area team makes regular and effective use *Panorama Benchmark Views (PB Views)* and other performance information to discuss progress against key measures. They use these processes effectively to shape service delivery and improve performance. Staff are highly motivated and enthusiastic and use *team time* and team meetings well to share ideas and develop their practice. Team discussions frequently result in improved approaches to service delivery. Almost all team members have clearly defined 'champion' roles, many of which directly support improvements to

service delivery. The knowledge and experience of staff 'champions' is used productively to support fellow team members to gain specialist knowledge and assist in the development of new approaches to service delivery. The area team uses reflective practice well to adapt and improve practice. For example, group work evaluation feedback is considered within *team time* and the findings are used to inform to adjustments to materials and resources. Team members use CMS principles well to reflect on their own learning and development.

How good is management of key services?

How well does the organisation work with partners to improve outcomes for customers?

Effective working relationships between SDS staff and partners is a key feature of the service area. All partners value the contribution made by SDS staff to the planning and coordination of services across the Borders region. SDS managers and staff have established very strong and mutually respectful relationships with a wide network of partners across the service area. SDS CIAG services are well represented on local groups and committees and staff make very good use of networking to coordinate and plan services. Effective partnership working between key agencies is leading to successful outcomes for the full range of customer groups including school pupils, unemployed young people, and adults facing redundancy. Very detailed and comprehensive SPAs outline clearly the service for individual schools. SDS staff in the local college support young people well to sustain their learning and achieve high quality outcomes. Collaborative arrangements between SDS, staff and the local college are helping to provide early intervention to support young people who are at risk of withdrawal from their college programme. This is effective practice.

How effective is the organisation's knowledge and information management in supporting service delivery?

SDS managers make very effective use of management information. They allocate resources well to overcome challenges presented by a large rural geographical area. SDS managers and staff use *PB Views* regularly to highlight performance against key measures and identify solutions to ensure that area targets are met. All staff in the area use *SDS Standard Operating Procedures* well when delivering services. Where appropriate, staff tailor materials and delivery to meet local needs.

Managers and staff gather and share intelligence with partners regularly. Community Planning Partnership reports are used well by SDS managers to stay in touch with local developments and the changing needs of employers and communities. SDS staff use information relating to the needs of individual customers well and share information appropriately and sensitively with partners. Most partners make regular use of the *data-hub* to access information about the destinations of young people.

8. Leadership and quality culture

How good is strategic leadership?

How effective is leadership for partnership working and service delivery?

Local SDS managers have a shared vision for the delivery of high quality CIAG services in Scottish Borders. They work together well to tailor the service offer to respond to regional skills development plans within the context of the area. The area team is represented at all levels of community planning structure, and partners speak highly of the key role of SDS in shaping the future service offer. SDS managers lead staff well and encourage and support all staff to contribute to the work of the team. Staff engage well with each other and have a shared commitment to meeting the vision and values of the organisation. SDS managers take good account of national priorities, including Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, and the SDS national operations workplan to direct and plan activities. The Head of Region, Area Manager and Team Leader work together very effectively and provide staff with clear direction and support. Managers recognise the significant contribution that staff at all levels make to strategic decisions through their engagement in '*Everyday Leadership*'. They enable staff to develop flexible approaches to achieve the best outcomes for customers. Staff are responsive and flexible and work well together to ensure customers receive a continuous level of service.

Overall, SDS managers and careers staff work well with local secondary schools. Career coaches deliver useful CMS group work sessions to school pupils and provide targeted services as required. However, staff in some schools and partner agencies are not sufficiently aware of the contribution of CMS in developing skills for learning, life and work.

How well do leaders develop and lead people?

SDS managers place a strong emphasis on teamwork across the service area. They encourage and empower staff to work creatively to identify solutions to local and area challenges. Managers meet regularly with staff to review the workplan and update team members about current and emerging developments. Managers provide all staff with opportunities to embed *Everyday Leadership* within the team. Staff welcome and value this approach. Team members engage enthusiastically in opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge and to contribute to national developments. Flexible deployment of staff is enabling individual team members to expand their knowledge and skills and make effective use of available resources.

How well do leaders secure improvement of quality and impact of services?

SDS managers encourage a culture of continuous improvement and support staff well to engage productively in quality processes. Staff take good account of feedback from customers and partners to plan improvements to service delivery. Managers involve staff regularly in reviewing the quality and impact of services. They make good use of the *Business Excellence* approach to identify and take forward improvements. All team members share ownership of the quality of service delivery. SDS managers have recently begun reflecting on the impact of improvement actions taken as a result of evaluations and review meetings with staff. All careers staff use SDS national

evaluation approaches routinely to obtain feedback from school pupils about the delivery of group work sessions. However, the questionnaires used are not sufficiently engaging. As a result, school pupils do not always provide meaningful feedback about group-work delivery. Most school managers and staff are not sufficiently aware of the purpose of developing CMS with pupils or the opportunities that CMS provide to support Curriculum for Excellence. This is leading to missed opportunities for incorporating CMS within the curriculum to develop skills for learning, life and work, including the use of *MyWoW* to support career planning.

9. Capacity to improve based on evidence from Outcomes and impact, Service delivery and Strategic leadership

The area team makes very effective use of local and national targets to plan for delivery of services. The number of young people entering a positive destination on leaving school in the Scottish Borders has remained consistently high over the last three years and is above the national performance rate. SDS managers proactively devise approaches to overcome the challenges presented to customers by transport links to the more rural and remote areas of the region. Very effective team leadership enables staff to develop flexible approaches. All team members share ownership of the quality of service delivery. In the majority of schools, parents and carers are not provided with sufficient opportunity to engage with SDS careers staff. In most secondary schools arrangements to incorporate CMS within the broader school curriculum are not well developed. On a few occasions, the pace, content, or resources used by careers staff to deliver group work sessions do not meet the needs of the pupils.

10. 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 approximately 18 months after the initial visit to review progress made in response to any main points for action in this report.

Gill Ritchie
HM Inspector

11. 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 www.educationscotland.gov.uk

For further information about Skills Development Scotland, see <http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

12. How can you contact us?

This report has been produced as a web-only publication and is available on our website at

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/othersectors/careersservices/index.asp>

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Text phone users can contact us on 01506 600236. This is a service for deaf users. Please do not use this number for voice calls as the line will not connect you to a member of staff.

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Appendix 1

Glossary of terms

CIAG	Careers Information, Advice and Guidance
CMS	Career Management Skills
IES	Integrated Employment System
LMI	Labour Market Information
MyWoW	My World of Work
PACE	Partnership action for continuing employment
PB Views	Performance Benchmark Views
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SLDR	School Leaver Destination Results
SPA	School Partnership Agreement