

# 16+ Learning Choices

## Policy and Practice Framework

supporting all young people into positive  
and sustained destinations



SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS



CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS



RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS



EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

16+ Learning Choices

# Policy and Practice Framework

supporting all young people into positive  
and sustained destinations

© Crown copyright 2010

RR Donnelley B63770 03/10

ISBN: 978-0-7559-8293-6

The text pages of this document are printed on recycled paper and are 100% recyclable



curriculum for excellence

SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS > CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS > RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS > EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>The Framework: Purpose and Partners</b>	2
<b>Key messages</b>	3
<b>Strategic context</b>	4
<b>16+ Learning Choices</b>	
– The model	5
– Implementation	6
– Eligibility	7
– What 16+ Learning Choices means for young people	8
– Preparing for post-16 transition	8
– The offer	10
– Supporting the needs of vulnerable young people	11
– Measuring the success of 16+ Learning Choices	13
<b>Roles and responsibilities</b>	
– Local authorities	14
– Schools	15
– Skills Development Scotland	16
– Colleges	18
– Other Providers of Learning and Support	19
– Jobcentre Plus	20
– Parents/carers and young people	20
<b>Annexes</b>	
Annex 1	What constitutes an ‘offer’ of post-16 learning
Annex 2	Key interdependencies
	– Activity Agreement pilots
	– Financial Support
	– Information, advice and guidance (IAG) policy review
	– e-Prospectus and Common Application Process
	– 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub
Annex 3	The ‘offer’ process
Annex 4(i)	Learning Choices – the first offer of post-16 learning
Annex 4(ii)	16+ Learning Choices – a subsequent offer of post-16 learning
Annex 5	Defining our terms



## Who is this Framework for?

This Framework is for **all** partners – across a broad range of settings – who are involved in planning for and delivering the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence, including those involved in young people's post-16 transitions to further learning, training and employment.

### Who are these partners?

All those involved in planning and delivering learning and support for young people in the Senior Phase, including:

practitioners in all learning settings, ie secondary and special schools, colleges, universities, community learning and development, voluntary organisations, private training providers, youth workers and other specialist learning providers; and

young people, their parents, carers and families, local authorities, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and other support agencies, professionals in other children and youth services (health, social work, police), Sector Skills Councils and employers.

## What is this Framework for?

This Framework sets out the Scottish Government's policy on 16+ Learning Choices; its expectations for implementation; and clarifies the roles and responsibilities for the wide range of partners involved in supporting young people to progress into positive and sustained post-16 destinations. *It is not prescriptive*; rather, it offers local partnerships a useful framework for implementing and delivering post-16 learning choices. It explains to which young people an offer should be made; what constitutes an offer and what the offer process looks like. It also clarifies how success will be measured.

Local partnerships should use this framework to guide their more detailed strategic and operational planning; and to establish more formal agreements for local implementation and sustainable delivery.

Partners will wish to refer to the following documents which provide advice, guidance and policy for different aspects of Curriculum for Excellence, within which 16+ Learning Choices sits:

- > Building the Curriculum 3 – A framework for learning and teaching<sup>1</sup>
- > Building the Curriculum 4 – skills for learning, skills for life, skills for work<sup>2</sup>
- > Curriculum for Excellence Management Board Senior Phase Discussion Paper<sup>3</sup>
- > Building the Curriculum 5 – Assessment Framework<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc3/index.asp>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc4/index.asp>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/publications/s/publication\\_tcm4565331.asp?strReferringChannel=curriculumforexcellence](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/publications/s/publication_tcm4565331.asp?strReferringChannel=curriculumforexcellence)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc5/index.asp>

## 16+ Learning Choices – key messages

16+ Learning Choices is a guaranteed offer of a place in post-16 learning for every eligible young person who wants it.

It is an integral part of Curriculum for Excellence and is central to facilitating delivery of the national indicator for positive and sustained post-16 destinations.

16+ Learning Choices is our model for helping young people stay in learning post-16, since this is the best way to ensure their long term employability. It will help build capacity in individuals, families and communities; and will support economic growth in Scotland. Critically, it will help prevent and reduce youth unemployment.

By December 2010 16+ Learning Choices will be a universal model for **all young people** – generally those aged 15-18 – leaving any episode of learning, regardless of setting and including compulsory education, during the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence.

For young people, 16+ Learning Choices will translate into an offer of post-16 learning well in advance of their school leaving date and before leaving any subsequent episode of learning during the Senior Phase. In line with Curriculum for Excellence, the offer of learning will focus on personalisation and choice, reflecting individuals' needs and aspirations. Importantly it will encompass relevant supports to help young people make effective learning choices; and to progress on the path of lifelong learning.

16+ Learning Choices is for **every young person** and gives particular attention to those who are at risk of moving into a negative destination. Effective delivery, therefore, requires building on wider activity to support young people needing more choices and chances, embracing the principles and practice around Getting It Right For Every Child and the Additional Support for Learning Act.

From all partners, it demands multi-agency collaboration, with robust systems and shared processes to provide the right learning and support for **all** young people; and with ongoing tracking and monitoring of individuals, so they can access, sustain and progress in their learning choice.



## Strategic context

*“Learners should experience activities which enable them to develop the skills and attributes they will need if they are to achieve and sustain positive destinations beyond school. Demands and employment patterns are changing, so it is particularly important for all young people to develop high levels of skill and also an understanding of the world of work, training and lifelong learning so that they can embrace opportunities.”<sup>5</sup>*

The national performance indicator on school leaver destinations<sup>6</sup>, and our skills strategy, Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy<sup>7</sup>, both reflect the Scottish Government’s wish that **all** young people stay in learning after 16 since this is the best way of improving their long-term employability. Skills for Scotland gives a clear commitment to young people about the routes on offer to education, employment and training – and the support they can expect – and recognises the need to focus on young people who are at risk of moving into a negative destination.

Consistent with that ambition, *Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 3 – A Framework for Learning and Teaching*, makes clear the success of the education system will be judged on the extent to which it contributes to the national indicator on positive and sustained destinations. *Curriculum for Excellence* aims to achieve a transformational change in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3-18 with learners’ needs at the heart of planning and delivery and designed to enable all young people to develop the four capacities. In doing so, it will offer better educational outcomes for all young people, providing more choices and chances for those who need them.

The design of *Curriculum for Excellence* enables schools and their partners to build a flexible system that offers personalisation and choice to meet the needs of all children and young people, wherever their learning is taking place. It also provides clear and supported pathways for young people to make successful transitions and to continue learning beyond compulsory schooling.

In the Senior Phase of *Curriculum for Excellence* – broadly 15-18 – it will become more common for a young person to learn through a range of providers, including schools, colleges, universities, community learning and development, youth work and in other less formal settings. This makes it particularly important to ensure that **all** young people can experience a coherent curriculum in the full range of settings.

The Senior Phase of a young person’s education builds firmly on their broad general education. Young people can continue to expect to receive entitlements, whatever their individual needs and wherever their learning is taking place. Specifically these are:

- > a curriculum which is coherent
- > the opportunity to obtain qualifications as well as to continue to develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities
- > opportunities to continue to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work with a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing
- > personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities that Curriculum for Excellence can provide
- > support in moving into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/healthandwellbeing/outcomes/planningchoices>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/indicators/schoolLeavers>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/09/06091114/0>

In delivering these entitlements, partners should take account of the local economy and labour markets, ensuring that young people have access to opportunities which enable them to develop the skills, knowledge and enterprising attitudes they will need to meet the challenges of life and work in the 21st century.

This will be particularly important in responding to the disproportionate impacts of recession on young people and the pressure on the opportunities available to them. Those who leave school at the earliest opportunity are more likely to experience significant periods of disengagement and unemployment in later years. 16+ Learning Choices will help to counter this by providing opportunities for young people to develop the skills they will need for the future and, at the same time, offering them some protection from the impacts of the current recession.

## 16+ Learning Choices

### The model

“A coherent curriculum requires close collaboration across transitions. This means that educational providers must work with each other, with parents and with other services for children and adults to ease learners’ transitions between stages and educational sectors. Such joint working ensures a continuous lifelong learning experience where barriers to learning are successfully identified and tackled.”<sup>8</sup>

16+ Learning Choices will ensure clear, robust systems and processes so that all young people have a suitable, high quality offer of post-16 learning. As such it will support the planning and delivery of a coherent and inclusive curriculum in the Senior Phase, irrespective of setting. 16+ Learning Choices is a universal offer: by its nature, though, it gives particular attention to vulnerable young people who require more choices and chances. It will support the transition, first, from compulsory education and then from subsequent episodes of learning broadly up to age 18 to ensure all young people achieve positive and sustained destinations.

The model includes the following **3 critical elements**:

- > **the right learning** – with a range of options on personalisation and choice. This will include staying on at school, entering further or higher education, taking up employment, participating in a National Training Programme, or taking part in personal skills development in a community learning and development setting or a third sector organisation.
- > **the right support** to remove barriers that might restrict young people’s learning choices and information, advice and guidance; to help young people take up and sustain their offer; and
- > **the right financial support** to help young people take up the offer which is right for them and not the choice which pays best or offers the most generous support.

An explanation of what constitutes ‘an offer of learning’ is provided in Annex 1.

Successful delivery of these elements will require local partnerships to develop systematic approaches to the way post-16 learning is planned, delivered and supported for all eligible young people, with ongoing tracking and monitoring of individuals. 16+ Learning Choices, therefore, has a number of key interdependencies relating to non-formal learning; financial support; information, advice and guidance (IAG) and data management which are described in Annex 2.

<sup>8</sup> HMIE, *Improving Scottish Education 2005-2008*, 2009: <http://www.hmie.gov.uk>



## Implementation

Implementing the model will continue to be challenging and putting in place the right offers of learning and support will take time – particularly when it means using limited mainstream funding differently and more effectively. Twenty-one early implementer local authorities introduced the model in winter 2008; for the most part in targeted schools and focusing on young people most at risk of moving into a negative destination. Building on this experience, every authority is on board from winter 2009. To date the model has been applied mainly for young people who are eligible to leave school for the first time.

Looking to winter 2010 – the target date for universal delivery – the model will be extended to cover **all** young people making a transition within the Senior Phase, including:

- > young people eligible to leave school for the first time
- > S5 and S6 school leavers
- > young people whose initial destination was a one-year course at a college
- > young people whose initial destination is Get Ready for Work or a more tailored programme of personal and skills development
- > those who fail to sustain an (initially) positive destination

Clearly, it will be more challenging for partners to engage with some young people at subsequent transition points when they are moving between different post-school options.

Early implementation indicates that 16+ Learning Choices has provided the catalyst for tightening up transition planning, bringing together community planning partners to support young people into positive and sustained destinations. The experience of local partners, thus far, shows:

- > greater focus on early identification of young people at risk of moving into a negative destination
- > sharper focus – across local partnerships – on post-16 transitions than ever before
- > closer working between SDS and local partners (including schools), with their Key Worker Service playing a vital role
- > more innovative use of resources to enhance the range of offers available locally
- > targeted action to re-engage non-attenders through SDS Key Workers, community learning and development, Youthworkers and third sector agencies
- > area-wide multi-agency networks and teams have been established to drive implementation
- > local partnerships are building on existing good practice, eg option choice interviews in schools and Transition Planning procedures for young people who need additional support for their learning



## Eligibility

16+ Learning Choices is for **all** young people within the Senior Phase who are eligible to leave compulsory education. Local partnerships will need to work together closely to plan for, deliver and support the young person with their learning choices. Local authorities should take account of their statutory responsibility for those:

- > on the school roll of publicly-funded secondary schools, including grant-maintained secondaries (including non-attenders)
- > in (publicly-funded) special schools
- > on a school roll but attending other provision commissioned by the authority in, or outwith the local authority area, for example, on a purchased placement
- > in residential and secure settings
- > missing from a school roll but known to local partners, eg social services, community learning and development, young people's services etc

It is important to emphasise here that young people should be treated as individuals in respect of 16+ Learning Choices rather than as cohorts or year groups. The 'passport' for all young people to a post-16 offer of learning is reaching the statutory leaving age of 16. Schools and SDS will need to identify and engage with all eligible young people, ie both those who are making a first time transition from compulsory education, and those who are making a subsequent transition. In doing so, they will need to take special account of young people who are:

- > in S4, but eligible to leave school in the winter of their fifth year
- > in S3, but have repeated a year in education
- > in S5, but approaching their statutory leaving date
- > staying in education, ie on a school roll beyond age 18 in, eg Special Schools

For young people who are eligible to leave school in the winter of their fifth year, there will be an additional focus on those:

- > attending special programmes/courses between August and December
- > who have exceptional entry to a full-time college course from August
- > in identified priority groups such as looked after children<sup>9</sup>, care leavers, young carers, those who need additional support for their learning and young offenders

Where parents/carers **choose to educate their children at home**, the local authority and other partners will often have limited scope to influence or support post-16 learning choices. However, the young people concerned have the same learner entitlements as those attending school or learning elsewhere and it will be for local partners to respond to any requests for their support in line with their overall responsibilities for young people.

Similarly, the Senior Phase learner entitlements apply to young people being **educated in the independent school sector**. It will be important for schools in the sector to consider how they will work with partners to ensure that their young people have access to the provision and support they need to make, take up and sustain positive post-16 learning choices.

<sup>9</sup> From August 2010, under the auspices of the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (Amended), all looked after children and young people will be deemed to have additional support needs unless assessed otherwise

## What 16+ Learning Choices means for young people

“Every child and young person is entitled to support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities to develop their skills which *Curriculum for Excellence* can provide. Timely provision of support to meet individuals’ needs will enable children and young people to effectively engage with opportunities for skills development.”<sup>10</sup>

**Every** young person who is eligible to leave compulsory education and is making a transition to further learning, training or employment within the Senior Phase should receive an offer of post-16 learning. Effective transition planning will ensure that the offer is in place in advance of their planned date for leaving school or other episode of learning. It will include staying in school; attending college or university; taking part in a National Training Programme; learning in a community learning and development or third sector setting, including with an Activity Agreement; volunteering and employment.

Their learning choice must be appropriate to their needs and aspirations: so it must be at the right level; accessible both in terms of location and local labour market opportunity; and delivered through the right learning method. Having no offer is better than a wrong, or poor quality, offer of learning. Equally, some young people may choose to take up an opportunity that may not be advisable: the decision to act on advice or decide otherwise rests with the young person. Any young person without an offer will continue to be tracked and supported by SDS so that appropriate learning provision and specific supports can be put in place at the earliest opportunity by a local provider.

All eligible young people will get high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance from SDS to help them decide on and take up the post-16 learning choice that is right for them. Additionally, they will get the support they need to help them sustain their learning choice; with more intensive, on-going support for particularly vulnerable young people.

For young people in low-paid employment, partners should make them aware of Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) as an important tool to help them to continue in part-time learning. ILAs fund those on low pay and with low skills so they can improve their skills, gain qualifications and be better placed to get or stay in employment. The eligibility criteria for ILA benefits 16 and 17 year olds.

## Preparing for post-16 transition

“Learners need to experience opportunities which are designed not only to raise their awareness of future choices but also raise their expectations and aspirations. They develop the skills for personal planning and making decisions in the context of curriculum, learning and achievement which will prepare them for next stages in life.”<sup>11</sup>

**Joint planning must start early.** This will require schools and relevant partners to place higher priority on transition planning, giving added attention to young people at risk of moving into a negative destination.

Self-evidently, the foundations for successful transition should be laid throughout a young person’s education. Specific support should be put in place from S3 for those who have been identified as having specific barriers to learning: this should involve schools, SDS and relevant partners. In delivering the Senior Phase entitlements, therefore, partners should provide a continuum for learning, achievement and progression for all young people. This will mean building on the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes around which the broad general education<sup>12</sup> up to the end of S3 is framed; and with a continued focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Within the latter, young people will receive help to prepare for, and to move through, changes and choices.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc4>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/healthandwellbeing/outcomes/planningchoices>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/entitlements/broaeducation>

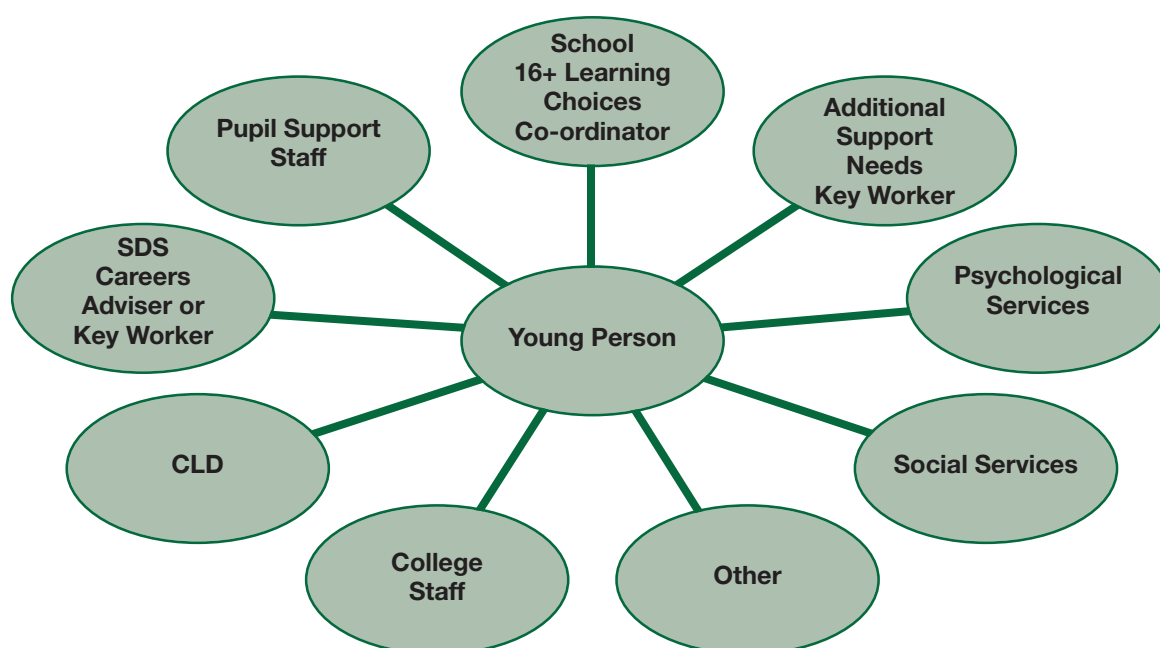
### More Choices, More Chances Partnerships

Local authority-led MCMC Partnerships provide a well established structure for delivering 16+ Learning Choices, with opportunities to build on the good practice which has been developed in increasing the number of young people in education, employment and training. MCMC reaches beyond post-16 transitions, but, like 16+ Learning Choices, focuses on *prevention* – stopping young people moving into negative destinations at the end of compulsory school education; *intervention* – providing those who are in negative destinations with opportunities to develop the skills for learning, life and work; and *sustainability* – preventing young people from churning back into negative destinations. These Partnerships include the wide range of partners involved in delivering services for children and young people, drawing together relevant policies and strategies in a multi-agency approach. They should form an integral part of – or be linked to – Curriculum for Excellence planning mechanisms.

**More targeted action to deliver 16+ Learning Choices** will take place during the last year of a young person’s education. It is essential that planning and implementation of these actions begins early and that most activity takes place before young people leave school or any other learning.

Young people’s post-16 transitions should be planned thoroughly and systematically, with a clear process to deliver both a first offer of learning and subsequent offers if required. Effective planning will require specific action from partners at certain points in the year as well as on-going activity with young people and between partners. The flow chart at Annex 3 explains what needs to be done, when and by which partner: it links to more detailed timelines (Annex 4) which illustrate the optimum planning cycle for delivering both ‘first’ and ‘subsequent’ offers of learning.

Schools are at the heart of post-16 transition planning. They are, therefore, well placed to facilitate the process required to help young people make and take up effective post-16 learning choices. This will involve a range of partners and agreed approaches, building on existing good practice and established relationships. Emerging local practice highlights the significant benefits of having a dedicated 16+ Learning Choices team in school, with key partners actively supporting individual young people to achieve positive destinations. The following diagram illustrates the range of partners who are likely to be involved in an in-school team: this is equally relevant to other non-school learning establishments.



## The offer

“All children and young people are entitled to opportunities for developing skills for learning, life and work. The skills are relevant from the early years right through to the senior phase of learning and beyond.”<sup>13</sup>

Responsibility for ensuring there is sufficient suitable learning provision – formal and non-formal – to deliver 16+ Learning Choices lies with a number of agencies: local authorities, including schools; community learning and development; colleges; SDS; training providers and the third sector. Local partnership mapping of provision, a continued priority for local More Choices, More Chances partnership planning, should be the basis for identifying gaps in provision. Information on young people’s needs and intended destinations, together with labour market information, should form the basis for planning and commissioning learning provision to eliminate any gaps and unnecessary overlaps.

Young people should have accurate and up-to-date information about the range of opportunities available to them along with appropriate career information, advice and guidance and information on the local labour market to help support the decision-making process. Here, SDS will have a central – but not exclusive – role.

16+ Learning Choices means an agreed offer of an appropriate place in learning; this must include an agreed start date. **A place on a waiting list does not count as an offer.**

Whilst in some cases, the economic climate, will influence the timing and availability of opportunities, clearly it is important to minimise the gap between making – and take-up – of the offer in order to promote continuity and progression; and to reduce the risk of disengagement. Where there is a gap, on-going support will be essential to ensure the young person remains motivated and engaged. In such cases, partners should work closely with the young person to put in place an interim offer, eg personal skills development or volunteering, until they can start their preferred option.

### Staying engaged and motivated through volunteering

Rob left school last summer when he was 16 and wanted to follow his brother into the army. He discussed this with his Careers Adviser, his parents and the local Army Careers Officer and knew what was expected of him before he could join up when he turned 17. He enrolled for an army–prep course at his local college, starting in September. However, Rob’s Careers Adviser suggested he could usefully develop his skills doing some sort of programme before his college course started. Rob was introduced to a local Youth Project which involved voluntary work, building mountain bike tracks in the local country park. He thrived in this environment since he is a mountain biker himself: he loved being active, working with a team and doing something for his community. Supported by the Project Coach, he learned valuable skills that would stand him in good stead for his college course and army career.

Additionally, it may take longer to identify appropriate provision for some young people, particularly those who face specific barriers to learning.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/buildingthecurriculum/guidance/btc4>

With that in mind, our expectations are that:

- > summer leavers should have an agreed offer in place by the end of June following their leaving date, with a start date no later than the coming September (the only exception being where a young person has a confirmed deferred place in higher education)
- > young people leaving school in December should have an agreed offer in place by the end of the following February, with a start date no later than April of that year.

These timescales are challenging and there will undoubtedly be some young people whose plans will change as a result of, for example, exam results.

For the group of young people leaving school in December, local partnerships will require to take account of young people who – between August and December – are doing their learning in school; at college or in alternative provision, taking part in a short-term dedicated programme or on exceptional entry terms for a full academic year. However there should be equal focus on those young people who leave provision in December and those who are not actively participating in any learning in the lead-up to December.

Local partnerships should also reflect requirements under the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (ASL Act) and the 2009 amendment Act<sup>14</sup> for young people with identified additional support needs. Here, progression planning should commence at least 12 months before the statutory leaving date and an appropriate post-school option agreed with a provider and young person at least 6 months prior to the actual leaving date.

It is important to minimise delays in notifying offers made to young people in order to help SDS track those who are still to receive one. It is expected, therefore, that offers made are notified to SDS by the learning provider within 5 working days.

Local authorities, as leaders of the strategic Partnerships, should actively work with SDS to monitor and facilitate ongoing support for young people who:

- > are still to receive an offer – establishing the reasons why they are without an offer
- > do not take up an offer – and the reasons why

Local authorities should take the lead on working with partners to address any barriers identified.

### Supporting the needs of vulnerable young people

“Every child and young person in Scotland is on a journey through life: experiencing rapid development and change as they make the transition from childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. As they progress, some may have temporary difficulties, some may live with challenges that distract them on their journey and some may experience more complex issues. No matter where they live or whatever their needs, children and families should know where they can find help, what support might be available and whether that help is right for them.”<sup>15</sup>

Although a universal offer, 16+ Learning Choices gives added focus to young people who face significant barriers to learning and need more choices and chances to enable them to achieve positive and sustained destinations. Building on early identification and tracking mechanisms – a priority for local MCMC Partnerships – partners should be aware of the circumstances and needs of these young people; be alert to specific issues likely to arise in relation to post-16 transitions; and put in place relevant supports to ease their passage.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/welfare/ASL>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/238985/0065813.pdf>

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)<sup>16</sup> – the Scottish Government’s strategy for improving outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland – provides a framework for all services and agencies working with children and families to deliver a co-ordinated approach which is appropriate, proportionate and timely. Local partnerships will wish to align post-16 transition support with the approaches promoted through GIRFEC.

Local authorities should also consider how they can support implementation of 16+ Learning Choices through their statutory responsibilities in relation to the ASL Act and its associated Code of Practice. They will wish to take account of the information on individual young people which they must request from other agencies who are likely to be involved with the young person on leaving school. Due attention should be given to the following groups of vulnerable young people, many of whom will have clearly identifiable additional support needs:

- Looked After children and care leavers
- Young carers
- Young parents
- Winter leavers
- Young offenders, including those in custody
- Young people with low attainment in school
- Young people on a school roll who persistently truant
- Young people with physical or mental health problems or disabilities
- Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse
- Young people with behavioural issues
- Young people for whom English is a second language
- Young people leaving special schools
- Young people who are homeless
- Young people who are a risk to themselves or others
- Young people who have interrupted learning, including as a result of transient lifestyles
- Young people who do not sustain an initial positive destination
- Young people with other identified additional support needs

For these young people, needs-led targeted assessment and planning must start early, often at the transition from primary to secondary school; and should bring in wider services for children and young people as appropriate.

Local authorities will require to fulfil their specific responsibility as the ‘corporate parent’ for young people who are Looked After or leaving care, harnessing the support of the wider Partnership to deliver better outcomes for this group.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/childrenservices/girfec>

### Improving Positive Destinations for Looked After young people

Key partners in North Lanarkshire – Education, Social Work and Skills Development Scotland – have mapped service delivery to better align, co-ordinate and integrate operational practice to help Looked After children, young people and care leavers to achieve positive post-16 destinations. The focus is on a shared vision and shared outcomes around assessment, planning and support, and shared action planning to improve outcomes for individual young people. Key learning points have included:

- > using a GIRFEC approach complemented by implementation of the ASL Act connects partners in respect of assessment, planning and support; and ensuring an integrated, joined up approach
- > early identification of support needs followed by early intervention, particularly at transitions from Primary to Secondary and from Secondary to next steps, is crucial

Partners should pay particular attention to young people whose additional support needs and/or personal circumstances present significant barriers to learning – many of whom will have already disengaged from learning pre-16. These young people may not yet be ready for a ‘formal’ route: in such cases, non-formal learning, including personal and skills development opportunities, is likely to be more appropriate.

However, since these activities for most young people are likely to be of relatively short duration, on completion the young person remains entitled to further choices and chances to help them progress into formal learning or employment. Young people taking this path will require sustained – often intensive – support and tracking. It is acknowledged that for some vulnerable and high risk young people more sustained periods in such opportunities will be necessary though it is important that a clear focus on progression into more mainstream options is maintained.

### Measuring the success of 16+ Learning Choices

The success of 16+ Learning Choices will be measured on the basis of an *appropriate agreed offer of post-16 learning*. **A place on a waiting list does not count as an offer.**

In measuring the success, local partnerships should establish the number of:

- > young people who have reached the statutory school leaving age and who have an offer of post-16 learning in place
- > school leavers across S4–S6 who have an offer of post-16 learning in place
- > young people who have left school, but remain within the Senior Phase and require a further offer of a place in learning

Separately, the annual School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR) and the follow-up survey undertaken by SDS provides a valuable snapshot of post-school destinations in Scotland. The SLDR – in particular, the detailed local analyses – will help local partnerships understand where young people are going after school; to identify specific issues and trends; and to align resources and provision more effectively to meet need.

However, the SLDR does not provide the more detailed ‘real time’ data that is required to support and deliver effective post-16 learning choices. This requires a detailed understanding of individual young people, their learning journey and outcomes, and their career ambitions; together with a clear understanding of the opportunities and supports available locally. It will be crucial for partners, therefore, to make effective use of the wide range of information that’s available on young people and their learning choices to ensure improvements in the number of young people achieving and sustaining positive post-16 destinations.



## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

16+ Learning Choices demands a multi-agency approach, with shared-ownership and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The Scottish Government gives high priority to young people and needs continually to ensure its policies deliver better outcomes for all of them, working with relevant stakeholders and supporting local delivery in doing so. Local authorities, through Single Outcome Agreements<sup>17</sup>, have the lead role for progress on the National Indicator on positive and sustained destinations post-16. They, therefore, have the strategic lead – and overall responsibility – for ensuring that 16+ Learning Choices benefits the young people in their area.

However, local authorities alone cannot deliver 16+ Learning Choices. What matters is that local partners, collectively and individually, are clear about what they need to aim for in order to achieve universal delivery by December 2010; and thereafter, to sustain improvements on the National Indicator. They will need to be clear about each other's roles and responsibilities at both strategic and operational levels, and to deploy the resources available locally to best effect. Inevitably, this will involve continuous professional development for relevant staff to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to maximise their contribution; and rigorous mechanisms for quality assuring service delivery, premised on continuous improvement and value for money.

The views of young people themselves will be critical in determining the opportunities and support to be provided locally and parents and carers will be key to achieving the best outcomes for young learners.

Working in partnership with others is a fundamental way for educational establishments and services to help practitioners act in ways that make positive differences across transitions.<sup>18</sup>

This section sets out the roles and responsibilities for the key partners, focusing on:

- > learning provision
- > support for young people
- > data management

Schools, whilst under the auspices of local authorities, are shown separately to ensure clarity about their contribution to 16+ Learning Choices.

### Local authorities

Strategically, it is for local authorities to provide leadership and direction on implementation; ensuring that all partners are clear about what is expected of them in supporting local delivery. This should demonstrate a clear line of sight between 16+ Learning Choices and delivery of the Single Outcome Agreement, and should articulate specifically with implementation of Curriculum for Excellence and with wider services for delivering better outcomes for young people. Authorities should also consider their obligations as 'corporate parent' in supporting post-16 learning choices.

Specific local authority responsibilities include:

#### *Learning Provision*

- > Supporting schools to develop and deliver a diverse curriculum for those staying on at school
- > Working with the wider Partnership to identify appropriate alternative offers for any young person whose intended learning choice is not taken up
- > Maintaining accessible information on the range of learning available locally and on local labour market needs (a pre-requisite for developing an e-Prospectus)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/local-government/SOA>

<sup>18</sup> HMIE, Improving Scottish Education 2005-08: <http://www.hmie.gov.uk>



- > Monitoring the availability of provision and ensuring, with SDS and learning providers, that gaps, overlaps and over-concentration are addressed in a timely manner
- > Monitoring implementation, challenging performance across the partnership and co-ordinating collaborative approaches to resolve difficulties

### *Support for Young People*

- > Ensuring appropriate resource allocation to support the authority's role in leading and co-ordinating sustainable delivery of 16+ Learning Choices
- > Working with SDS to agree the scope of IAG to be provided
- > Co-ordinating community learning and development partners to support 16+ Learning Choices
- > Mobilising services for young people to ensure targeted support where it is needed
- > Commissioning specific/specialist supports for particularly vulnerable young people
- > Ensuring that any young person who is – at the discretion of the home authority – learning in a school or other establishment outwith the home authority area, has an agreed co-ordinated package of support both before and after leaving school
- > Putting in place an offer of post-16 learning for any young person who has chosen to attend school or other learning establishment within your authority rather than their home authority area
- > Retaining responsibility for any young person who, at the discretion of the home authority, is placed in a learning setting outwith that authority area, eg Looked After young people: this will include making and recording offers and monitoring take up

### *Data Management*

- > Working with partners, notably schools and SDS, to ensure robust data management systems and procedures to facilitate tracking and monitoring of individual young people; and to inform service design and delivery
- > Working with partners to evaluate the impact of 16+ Learning Choices on young people
- > Working with SDS to review/renew Data Access Agreements and that relevant staff understand the scope of the Agreements

## **Schools**

Schools are at the heart of sustainable delivery of 16+ Learning Choices since they are the primary partner for delivering learning during the Senior Phase, and for supporting young people into positive destinations. Schools will wish to work in partnership with other providers and support organisations to ensure a sufficiently diverse range of opportunities for the young people who opt to stay in school beyond age 16. They will also want to build on existing post-16 transition planning, working closely with SDS and others, including parents and carers, to ensure systematic approaches to help young people make and take up their preferred learning choices.

School responsibilities include:

### *Learning Provision*

- > Working with partners to develop and deliver a diverse curriculum with opportunities for progression in the Senior Phase
- > Providing predicted S4-S6 achievement and assessment results to local authorities and SDS to inform the planning of future post-16 provision

### **Support for Young People**

- > Ensuring nominated lead responsibility for 16+ Learning Choices within the school
- > Ensuring that school staff understand the principles and purpose of 16+ Learning Choices and communicate its relevance to young people and their parents and carers
- > Working with SDS and other professional services to provide support for those most at risk of not having an offer
- > Joint action with SDS on key dates (eg prelim results, SQA results days, UCAS acceptances) to confirm provisional offers, and to give additional support to those choosing an alternative route in light of their results
- > Notifying SDS of young people not taking up intended S5 or S6 places, and leaving during, or at the end of, S5 or S6

### **Data Management**

- > Early identification of all young people eligible to leave school across S3-S6, with added attention to those likely to leave at their first opportunity and those at risk of not having an offer
- > Reviewing/renewing – at agreed intervals – Data Access Agreements (DAAs) with SDS; ensuring staff understand the scope of the Agreements
- > Supporting SDS to gather and analyse information on young people's intended post-16 destination, using this to shape the Senior Phase curriculum and to develop strategies for improving staying-on rates and positive transitions
- > Maintaining up-to-date information on offers received by young people and sharing information with SDS, including offers of a place in S5 and S6
- > Ensuring that Transition Planning Forms for young people with identified additional support needs are shared with post-16 partners to support progression
- > Supporting the SLDR
- > Completing the School Leaver Form; and sharing agreed data with SDS

### **Skills Development Scotland**

SDS have a pivotal role in implementing 16+ Learning Choices at both operational and strategic levels. This falls within three areas of activity: as the national provider of IAG; as the national 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub; and in managing and delivering the National Training Programmes.

The importance of effective and impartial IAG for all young people within the Senior Phase cannot be overstated. SDS should deliver consistent high quality IAG across all local authority areas, ensuring equity of service for every young person. This will involve face-to-face guidance – on a self-referral basis – to all young people who require support. SDS will also work collaboratively with schools, colleges and other relevant partners to proactively identify and provide targeted face-to-face guidance for young people who are at risk of moving into a negative destination. Additional help and support will be provided for particularly vulnerable young people (see Vulnerable Young People section). For these young people, SDS will ensure co-ordinated face-to-face support – ongoing and intensive as required – to help them achieve a sustained positive destination.

IAG around the post-16 transition stage will build on earlier careers education aimed at helping young people to understand themselves, their strengths and weaknesses and likes and dislikes; and to explore the world of work and possible career pathways. It will be based on individual needs, achievements and aspirations and will use current labour market information as a firm basis for ensuring informed post-16 learning choices. Where necessary, SDS will commission appropriate support from other partners to meet the needs of individual or groups of young people in order to maintain their engagement in learning and work. Whilst consistency across and within areas is essential, delivery of IAG should be sufficiently flexible to respond to educational and local economic development priorities and the related impacts for young people.



To support this process, SDS is a lead partner in the development of an e-Prospectus and common application process (CAP) which will provide comprehensive and accessible information on learning opportunities and help young people make more appropriate choices during the Senior Phase.

Ongoing tracking of individual young people will be key to ensuring they get the support they need to take up and sustain their learning. As the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub, it will be for SDS to articulate a wide range of information on individual young people and their learning choices – currently, through its client management information system – Insight; and in the future, through an enhanced technical solution. SDS will continue to carry out the SLDR annually in September and the follow-up survey in March; and to provide national and local analyses of the information gathered.

On National Training Programmes, it is for SDS to ensure sufficient high quality places on Get Ready for Work, Skillseekers and Modern Apprenticeships; and to develop ‘new’ provision to address particular challenges in the labour market.

Responsibilities for SDS include:

### *Learning Provision*

- > Reporting young people’s intended destinations to the local authority, other partners and learning providers, by end October and end February for winter and summer leavers respectively
- > Working with local partners across all sectors to ensure the supply of provision (in relation to type and level of learning) matches demand from young people throughout the year
- > Working proactively with partners across the network of branded learning centres who commit, through the Pledge for Learners, to offer both formal and non-formal learning opportunities that widen choice and mode of delivery for post-16 learning choices
- > Ensuring SDS-funded provision supports delivery of Curriculum for Excellence

### *Support for Young People*

- > Working proactively with other partners to identify any young person without an offer of learning, those to whom an offer has been made but not taken up, and those who have not sustained their learning choice. Offer intensive support to help individuals while the wider partnership identifies an appropriate offer and alternative support, if appropriate
- > Joint action with schools on key dates (eg prelim results, SQA results days, UCAS acceptances) to confirm provisional offers, and to give additional support to those choosing an alternative route in light of their results
- > Ensuring that young people who have an offer of post-16 learning outwith their home local authority area know how to engage with SDS should they subsequently need support
- > Tracking young people with confirmed deferred offers of a place in higher education, to ensure that they have the support they need to engage in learning
- > Tracking young people undertaking tailored provision for personal skills development and those on short courses to ensure further progression
- > Support young people to investigate and access opportunities presented through n-LOD (and the subsequent e-Prospectus) and other resources
- > Tracking and reporting on the outcomes of young people within the Senior Phase who have taken up an offer of a post-16 learning
- > Engage with young people who have dropped out of or completed a college course whilst within the Senior Phase, to re-engage them in learning
- > Working with Jobcentre Plus to help young people into employment and to ensure a continuum of support for young people applying for benefits, with ongoing tracking and recording of individuals



### *Data Management*

- > Recording on Insight/the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub offers made – within 5 working days of being informed by a learning provider
- > Working with schools and other providers to track and monitor individuals through the Senior Phase, recording agreed information on Insight/the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub in a timely manner. (Local partners will require to monitor the young people with whom they are working; and to pass data to SDS using agreed systems.)
- > Ensuring all eligible young people (along with their current contact details) are recorded on Insight/the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub
- > Establishing and recording intended destinations on Insight/the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub, with support from the authority, schools and other learning providers
- > Reviewing/renewing – at agreed intervals – DAAs with LAs and other partners; ensuring staff understand the scope of the Agreements
- > Establishing Service Delivery Agreements with LAs and other agreements with specific learning establishments in respect of young people in residential schools or other learning establishments outwith the authority area
- > Joint working with Jobcentre Plus to provide data to local partnerships on 16-18 year olds who are engaging with both organisations to inform service delivery
- > Undertaking the SLDR and related follow-up, and providing detailed analyses in line with Agreements
- > Articulating and sharing agreed data internally and with other partners, including the Scottish Government to support monitoring, evaluation and improvements in service delivery

### **Colleges**

Colleges are prominent within local communities and offer young people valuable and popular post-16 learning choices. The Scottish Funding Council has committed to supporting More Choices, More Chances and 16+ Learning Choices: colleges, therefore, have a key role in supporting implementation and ongoing delivery. In doing so, they will wish to ensure their offering fully embraces the Senior Phase entitlements.

Responsibilities for colleges include:

#### *Provision*

- > Working with local partnerships to ensure the supply of core-funded provision (in relation to type, level and timetabling) matches demand from young people, including those who are attending college for part of their S5/S6 school curriculum, and those who are progressing to college for post-16 learning
- > Ensuring courses, programmes and qualifications delivered through school-college partnerships articulate with relevant post-16 learning choices
- > Ensuring learning opportunities are available on a flexible entry basis
- > Collaborating with local partners to find suitable provision for young people yet to receive an appropriate offer of learning



### *Supporting young people*

- > Ensuring that college staff understand the principles and purpose of 16+ Learning Choices and communicate its relevance to young people and their parents and carers, where appropriate
- > Ensuring young people's support needs are met in order to improve retention and progression
- > Ensuring college provision is uploaded to the nLOD and subsequently reflected in the e-Prospectus

### *Data*

- > Informing SDS within 5 working days of offers they make to young people and ensuring that up-to-date details of current offers are available (eg start dates). Information should also be given to SDS of those young people who have applied for but not secured a place so that further support and opportunities can be provided
- > Analysing young people's experience and outcomes from courses and programmes delivered through school-college partnerships to inform progress to post-16 options
- > Informing SDS – within 5 working days – of young people who do not take up places, do not sustain them, or who complete a course or programme while still within the Senior Phase
- > Working with SDS to review/renew DAAs at agreed intervals; and ensuring relevant staff are familiar with the scope of the Agreements

## **Other Providers of Learning and Support**

The diverse range of provision and supports which young people can expect to receive in the Senior Phase brings a wide range of other providers and support agencies firmly into the learning framework. This includes public, private and third sector organisations delivering National Training Programmes and other flexible, innovative and personalised programmes and courses; together with needs-led support in a wide range of settings and contexts. These partners make a valuable contribution, whether they are supporting schools to enrich the school offer; as a partner in college-led provision; or leading the learning in a training centre or in the wider community. Regardless of their contribution, they should support delivery of Curriculum for Excellence.

Responsibilities for other providers and support agencies include:

### *Provision*

- > Working with local partners to develop and deliver learning opportunities which meet demand from young people, with clear progression to further learning
- > Ensuring learning opportunities are available on a flexible entry basis
- > Collaborating with local partners to find suitable provision for young people yet to receive an appropriate offer of learning

### *Supporting Young People*

- > Ensuring young people's support needs are met in order to improve retention and progression
- > Working with SDS to ensure appropriate support for young people with identified additional support needs
- > Working with other partners to ensure a smooth transition between episodes of learning
- > Ensuring relevant provision is uploaded onto the nLOD, and subsequently the e-Prospectus



### Data

- > Informing SDS within 5 working days of offers they make to young people and ensuring that up-to-date details of current offers are available (eg start dates)
- > Informing SDS – within 5 working days – of young people who do not take up places, do not sustain them, or who complete a course or programme while still within the Senior Phase
- > Monitor numbers of young people applying for and not getting places on courses/programme – refer to SDS with individual-level information, including course details and reason for not securing a place
- > Working with SDS to review/renew DAAs at agreed intervals; and ensuring relevant staff are familiar with the scope of the Agreements

### Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus supports young people of working age from welfare into work. Their role in 16+ Learning Choices will mainly be through joint-work with SDS. Jobcentre Plus will provide support for young people who do not move into a positive destination to enable them to access employment and/or relevant benefits.

Responsibilities for Jobcentre Plus include:

- > Ensuring information on local employment opportunities is available to young people
- > Working with SDS to support young people through the benefit application process
- > Working with SDS to support young people under the age of 18, who are in receipt of benefits, into positive and sustained destinations
- > Working with SDS to provide data to local partnerships on 16-18 year olds with whom they are engaging to ensure service delivery meets local demand

### Parents/carers and young people

**Parents and carers** will wish to be active partners in supporting their children to make effective post-16 learning choices and to fulfil their potential. They will want to encourage them to be both ambitious and realistic about their future learning and longer term career aspirations, and to help them to take advantage of the opportunities and support available. Undoubtedly, parents and carers are key influencers in their children's decisions and play a major role in helping them to consider their options and make informed decisions.

It will be important for partners to engage parents and carers (including local authorities as Corporate Parents) in their children's learning choices. The Curriculum for Excellence Parents Toolkit is a useful resource for helping parents understand what the Senior Phase can offer their children. 'Top Things to Know' about the Senior Phase can be found at <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/CurriculumGuide/senior/topthings.asp>, and information about options for young people leaving school is available at <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/Startingschool/informationaboutleavingschool/Helpyourchildwiththeircareer.asp>.

**Young people** should be fully engaged in, and take responsibility for, their post-16 learning choices, and will receive the professional support they need to make the most of the opportunities available to them. They should actively consider any 'offers' made to them and not dismiss them without valid reason. It will be important for individual young people to inform, their school or SDS Careers Adviser as soon as they have accepted an offer of a place in learning. This information will then pass to SDS for recording on Insight/the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub. Young people will wish to be reassured that support, and further opportunities where it is needed, will continue to be available during their Senior Phase and that SDS will help them to re-engage in learning.



## ANNEX 1

### What constitutes an 'offer' of post-16 learning

#### Education in school

Attending school for all or part of the curriculum, in S4 (or S3 where a young person reaches their statutory leaving date in that period), S5 and S6. It might include a wholly school-based curriculum or a curriculum delivered by a range of providers, including schools, further and higher education, employers, community learning and development and third sector providers. The school should retain overall responsibility for planning the most appropriate educational provision for the young person.

#### Full- or part-time further education

Attending college and studying below the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework<sup>19</sup> level 7 (below HNC) (eg National Qualifications, Access courses, portfolio courses, portfolio preparation, pre-vocational courses, S/NVQs, Highers/A Levels).

Note: Young people who are attending college for Personal Skills Development – delivered by another provider, not the college itself – should have their offer recorded as Personal/Skills Development.

#### Full- or part-time higher education

This includes attending university to study at SCQF level 9 (degree level), or an FE/HE college to study at SCQF levels 7-8 (HNC/HND level).

Note: Young people who are taking a Gap Year but have a confirmed deferred place at university, starting in the following year, should be recorded as having received an offer of HE.

#### National training programmes

This includes participating in a National Training Programme (NTP) (involving a contractual arrangement between SDS and a provider); a young person may be a trainee and in receipt of a training allowance, or an employee receiving a wage. NTPs include:

- > Get Ready for Work, excluding Lifeskills (full/part-time/ad hoc attendance)
- > Skillseeker – employed or non-employed trainee status, undertaking a VQ at SCQF level 5
- > Modern Apprenticeship – employed and undertaking a VQ at SCQF levels 5-7 in a specific sector

This is a dynamic environment, particularly as a result of specific programmes designed to respond to the impacts of recession such as the Pathways to Apprenticeship: partners will, therefore, require to keep abreast of national and local developments in relation to NTPs.

#### Employment (where this is not a national training programme)

Employment, whether with or without structured training, will involve learning and should generally be considered a positive post-16 learning choice. Broadly, employment covers:

- > all young people who consider themselves to be employed in full- or part-time employment (with a minimum of 16 hours)
- > all young people who consider themselves to be self employed and earning a living by working independently of an employer either freelance or by running their own business.

Where a young person takes up an offer of employment that does not include training, SDS will engage both the young person and employer in negotiating appropriate training for the young person.

---

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.scqf.org.uk/>



### **Personal/Skills Development**

Some young people are not yet ready for, or in the position (for any number of valid reasons) to participate in any of the foregoing opportunities. Where this is the case, individuals should be able to engage in Personal/Skills Development often, but not exclusively delivered by a community learning and development or a third sector organisation, as a stepping-stone to a positive destination. This includes a wide range of what will often be short-term learning and development combined with appropriate personalised support, such as:

- > Get Ready for Work Lifeskills
- > Training programmes that are not funded through a national training programme, eg provision funded by a local authority
- > Employment involving less than 16 hours and including either job-related training or Personal/Skills Development
- > Personalised programmes of support aimed at supporting progression into positive and sustained learning destinations
- > Activity Agreement delivered in any of the 10 pilot local authority areas

Note: The criteria for Personal/Skills Development will be further revised following evaluation of the Activity Agreement pilots.

### **Volunteering**

Undertaking volunteering, which will involve a young person giving of his/her time and energy through a third party. It will benefit both the young person and others, including individuals, groups and organisations, communities, the environment and society at large. A young person will get involved in volunteering through choice, and should not be motivated primarily by financial gain or by a wage or salary. Some volunteering includes a financial allowance.



## **ANNEX 2**

### **Key interdependencies**

#### **Activity Agreements pilots**

Activity Agreements improve the support and recognition of young people learning in a community learning and development or a third sector setting. There are two priority groups for Activity Agreements:

- > Young people identified as being vulnerable to disengagement prior to leaving compulsory education
- > Young people who initially move into a positive post-school destination but who do not sustain it

The common factor in eligibility is that the young person could not engage and sustain a place in learning provision without personalised key worker supports provided by a range of agencies across the broad community planning spectrum.

Ten local authority partnerships are currently piloting Activity Agreements around four priority areas:

- > the trusted professional workforce (those who offer intensive advice and guidance to vulnerable young people)
- > assessment processes (so that information about young people's needs and interests is appropriately captured and shared)
- > local provision (so that young people can be appropriately referred into existing, or new opportunities that are commissioned in response to their needs)
- > Education Maintenance Allowance (so that young people receive an appropriate financial incentive to participate)

Involvement in Activity Agreement activity constitutes a 16+ Learning Choices offer within the Personal/Skills Development category.

#### **Financial Support**

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is available to 16-19 year olds in school or college and those who are home-schooled. Current pilots of Activity Agreements will see local authorities and their partners offer EMA to young people learning with a much wider range of providers through community learning and development or a third sector setting.

The EMA legislation and guidance has always allowed local authorities to recognise non-school providers for the purposes of EMA, which has included a diverse range of provision in some areas. With the advent of 16+ Learning Choices, all local partnerships – whether they are involved in the Activity Agreement pilots or not – will want to consider whether financial support is available to young people consistently across different learning options.

#### **Information, advice and guidance (IAG) policy review**

High quality, impartial IAG is important in helping young people (and others) make informed decisions about their pathways and future career choices. IAG should be a universal model – to support all learners at any age, whether they choose to learn at school, college, or in a work-based or non-formal setting. However, it should also have a particular focus on those people who are more likely to be vulnerable to disengagement from learning.

Our aim is to strengthen the support infrastructure for individuals relating to the acquisition of skills. This will be done through a service that gives individuals IAG about careers, employment, education and training, and funding. We will produce a policy framework for IAG in Scotland by summer 2010.



### ***e-Prospectus and Common Application Process***

As part of effective IAG, and to inform and drive choice, young people should be able to find out, online, what opportunities are available to them; and they should be able to apply for these opportunities through the same on-line resource. 16+LC will be supported through the development of a comprehensive, local e-Prospectus, accessed through a national site.

The e-Prospectus we have in mind will be learner-centric: an accessible, searchable directory of information on different types and levels of learning and progression opportunities in a 'travel to learn' area. Over time, it will develop to provide wider information useful to learners such as financial support, transport and childcare. This will improve the information available to all learners, including those in need of more choices and chances; and it will be a valuable tool for IAG advisers and other influencers of young people's future choices such as parents, carers and teachers.

Our aim is for the first iteration of the e-Prospectus to be in place by December 2010, consistent with the timetable for roll-out of 16+ Learning Choices. This first iteration, will deliver a consistent way of accessing information on the range of learning opportunities available to 16-19 year-olds including college, National Training Programmes and volunteering opportunities.

### ***16+ Learning Choices Data Hub***

Effective data management is key to the delivery of 16+ Learning Choices. To this end, local and national systems and processes will be developed. This will drive improvements in service delivery and to measure, monitor and evaluate the impact of the model in relation to the National Indicator on positive and sustained destinations. Nationally, SDS will develop the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub as the central mechanism for bringing together and sharing relevant information on young people and their learning choices. This development is underpinned by:

- > the establishment of data sharing agreements between partner organisations and protocols safeguarding the confidentiality of individuals
- > mechanisms to allow safe and easy transfer of data
- > provision of data and analysis to national and local partners to inform:
  - both SDS and local partnerships in their planning and delivery of services to meet individual young people's needs
  - the tracking of young people's progress within the Senior Phase, allowing local partners to engage quickly any who drop out of or complete their learning choice, with a view to helping them stay in learning
  - accurate and timely recording of confirmed and agreed offers of post-16 learning

It is crucial that all partners support SDS in ensuring the data held on Insight is current and accurate.

The SDS 'Insight' management information system will continue, for some time, to be the primary data source supporting delivery of 16+ Learning Choice. SDS will communicate on the 16+ Learning Choices Data Hub as this development progresses.



## ANNEX 3

### The 'offer' process



Practice starts well before the statutory leaving age with early identification of vulnerable young people.

Tracking, monitoring and IAG is at the heart of the process for all young people, building on early career education.

Returns from schools and SDS will include data on those young people who are staying within school based learning and those who disengage within the Senior Phase.

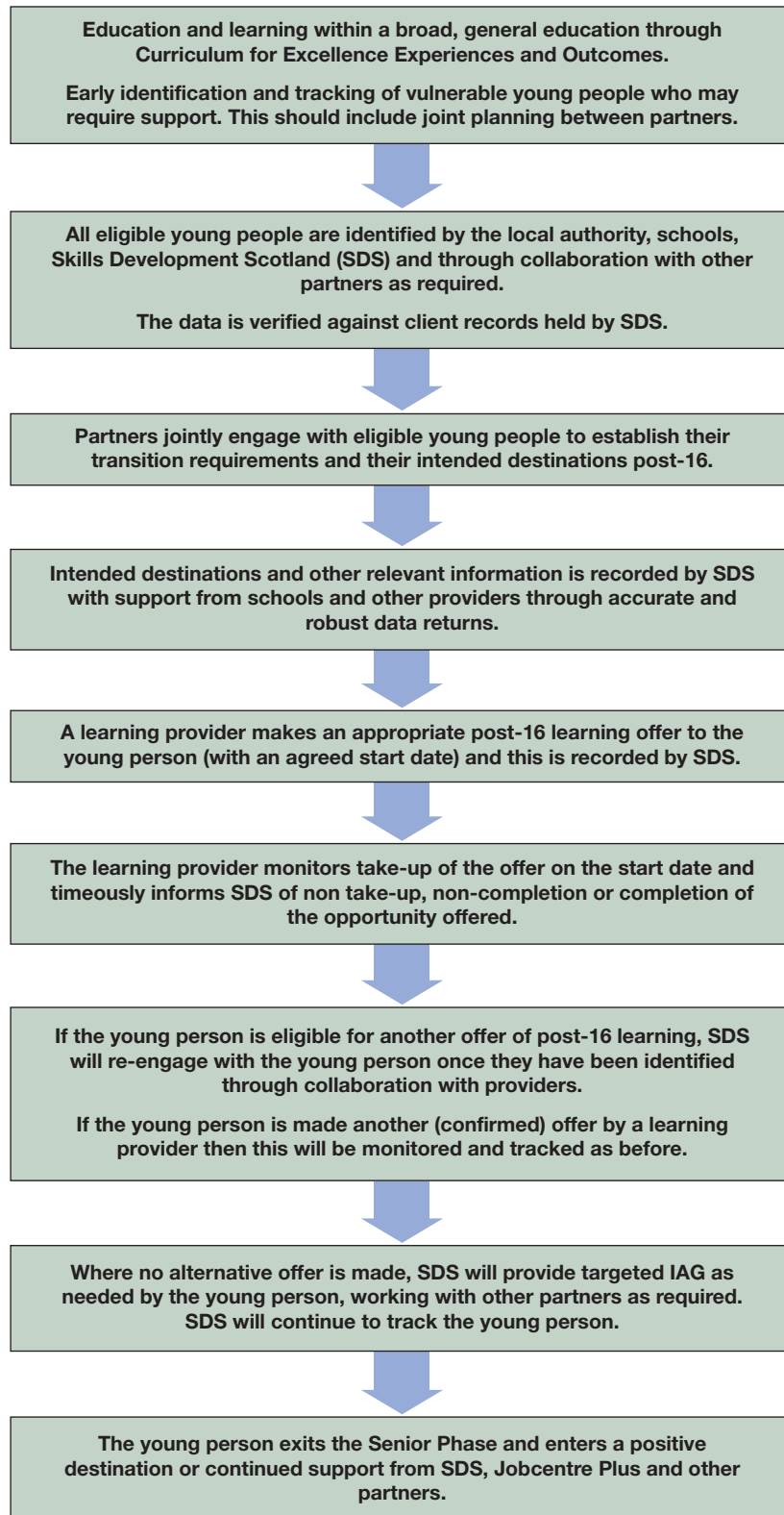
SDS is the data hub and all young people will be tracked through INSIGHT.

Data sent to SDS with information on non take-up, withdrawal or completion of offers within all learning settings will be sent through monthly returns or as appropriate support/IAG is required.

Any alternative offers made during the Senior Phase will be monitored by the learning provider and tracked by SDS.

The learning provider is responsible for sharing data with SDS so that the young person can be tracked.

An offer can only be recorded once it has been confirmed; this must be agreed by the young person and the learning provider and there must be a start date.



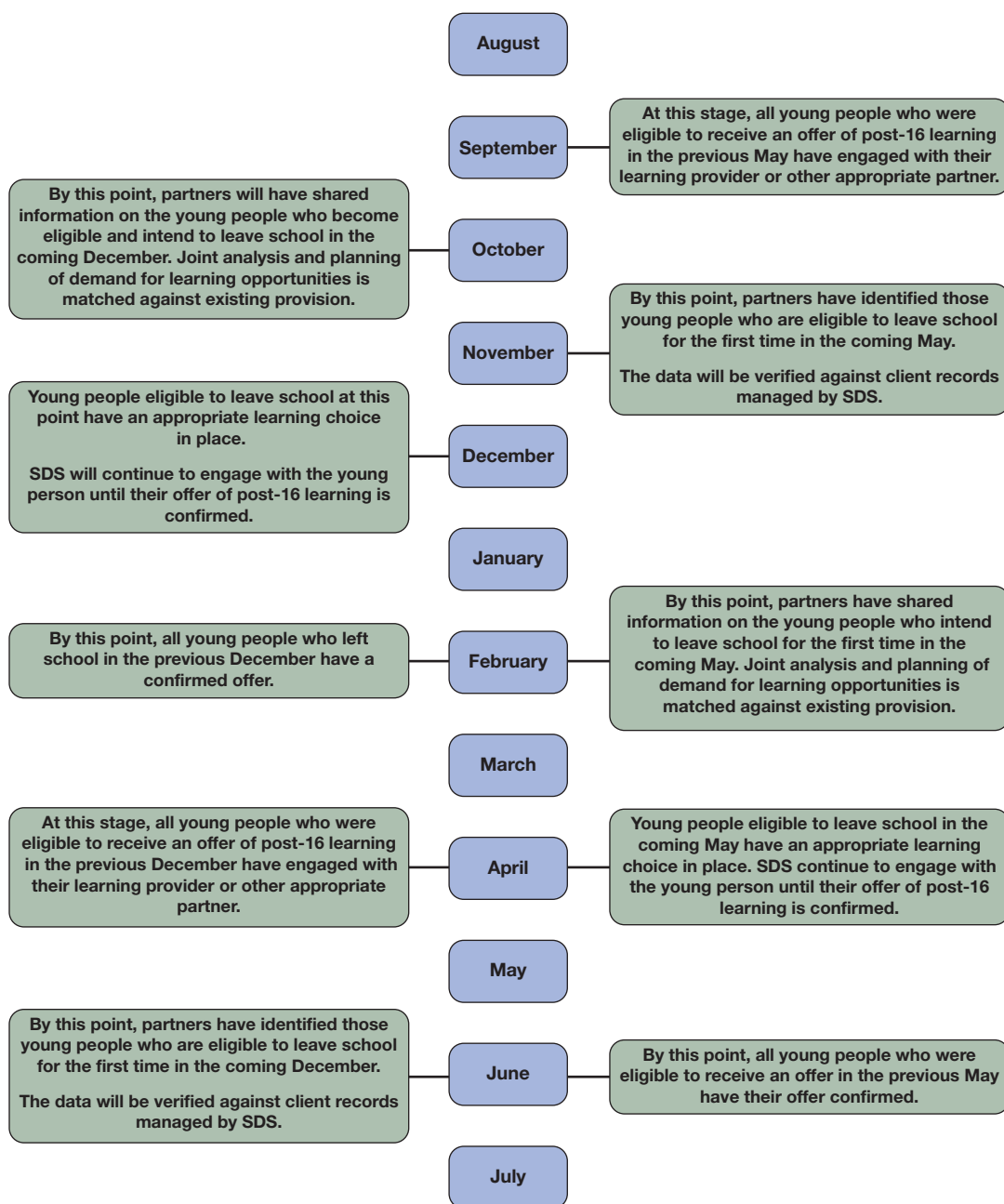
## ANNEX 4(i)

### 16+ Learning Choices – the first offer of post-16 learning

The following illustration suggests a timeline of action for partners, to be considered when planning and delivering the first offer of post-16 learning to young people – in December and May of the year in which they reach their statutory leaving date. It should be considered alongside partners’ roles and responsibilities. Where there is reference to partners, it is intended that this includes any person, organisation or agency working with or to benefit a young person.

Where there is a significant gap between confirmation of an offer and the offer start date; SDS will work with the young person and relevant partners to put in place an interim offer.

(Further details about the offer can be found within the 16+ Learning Choices Policy and Practice Framework.)



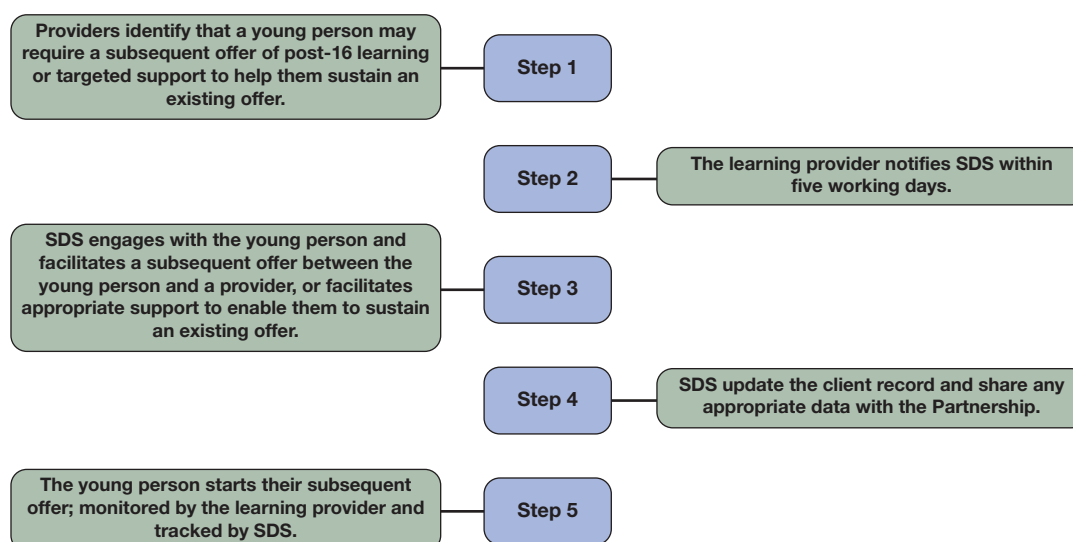
## ANNEX 4(ii)

### 16+ Learning Choices – a subsequent offer of post-16 learning

This illustration represents a typical cycle of action for partners, to be considered when a young person is making a subsequent transition within the Senior Phase. This is a continuous process and follows confirmation that a young person requires another offer of learning and/or appropriate support. Likely reasons for a subsequent offer include:

- > completion of a previous post-16 learning opportunity
- > risk of disengaging from an existing offer of post-16 learning
- > already disengaged from learning
- > referral by a partner agency or self-referral

There are no specific timings for subsequent offers: this will be determined by individual need and will require a prompt, collaborative response from local partners. Any number of subsequent offers may be made within the Senior Phase to help young people stay in learning.



## ANNEX 5

### Defining our terms

#### **Statutory School Leaving Date**

The date after which a young person is eligible to leave education.

#### **Community Learning and Development (CLD)**

Learning and social development work with individuals and groups in their communities using a range of approaches.

#### **Publicly-funded secondary schools**

Schools funded by the local authority from resources allocated by the Scottish Government.

#### **Grant-maintained secondary schools**

Schools funded through grant-aid directly from the Scottish Government and outwith local authority control.

#### **Independent Schools**

Private, fee-paying schools in Scotland.

#### **Purchased Placement**

Education provision purchased for a young person (to meet specific needs) by the home authority.

#### **Exceptional entry to college courses**

Some young people in S5 – under the age of 16 and on the school roll – can spend most or all of their time attending college prior to their school leaving date in December.

#### **Corporate Parenting**

The formal and local partnerships needed between all local authority departments and services, and associated agencies, who are responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children and young people, and care leavers.

#### **School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR)**

Carried out by Skills Development Scotland, this provides data on leaver destinations from Scottish schools: it is undertaken annually in September, with a follow-up in March.

#### **National Learning Opportunities Database (n-LOD)**

A Learndirect Scotland (SDS) database of learning opportunities available in Scotland.

#### **The Scottish Funding Council**

The national body responsible for funding teaching and learning provision, research and other activity in Scotland's colleges, universities and higher education institutions.







[www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk](http://www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk)



The Scottish  
Government

© Crown copyright 2010

ISBN: 978-0-7559-8293-6

RR Donnelley B63770 03/10

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES