SFC Corporate publication

Evaluation report for the SFC Early Adopter Programme

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Summary

1. This paper presents our findings and observations from the SFC's early adopter programme.

2. Key points about the programme:

    • We are content with the delivery and outcomes of the early adopter programme which ran during academic year 2014-15.
    • The key learning points from the programme are embedded in our outcome agreement approach and the expectations placed on colleges for academic year 2015-16 through agreed discrete regional implementation plans.
    • Early insights from early adopter activity informed the planning for delivery in 2016-17 across the sector.
    • The early adopter programme significantly increased our ability to respond to the Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy with a commitment from the sector to a four-fold increase in vocational pathways. This would not be possible without the early contribution (and therefore build up) of the early adopter programme (and its impact on other regions responses).
    • The early adopter programme confirms the barriers" to school / college partnership working namely timetabling and perceptions.

3. The early adopter programme identifies key success criteria to be:

    • Strategic regional partnership working and planning.
    • A regional co-ordinator who can turn strategic commitment into reality.
    • Effective employer engagement and incorporation of work based learning into pathways.
    • Local authorities and schools with a strong orientation towards vocational pathways.

4. The early adopter programme identifies key challenges to be:

    • Achieving space in a timetable and overcoming the fear of "dropping a higher".
    • An approach to partnership working that is systemic and embedded and is not reliant on "good will" and relationships.
    • Scalability of the provision in terms of capacity of colleges to deliver higher volumes of this provision verses the displacement of other activity.

5. From SFC's learning of the early adopter programme we recommend:

- Scottish Government working with national partners should lead a national marketing campaign on vocational pathways including employers.
- A discussion on how far we have come in securing more proactive employer engagement and how that is to be measured and assessed.
- Promoting the value and benefits of vocational pathways as an alternative route to getting a university degree.
- Focus groups with the 2014-15 cohorts to ascertain how young pupils made the decision to undertake a vocational pathway.

Background

6. SFC was asked to adopt an early response to the final report of the Commission on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. This took two forms:

- A stakeholder engagement plan to co-ordinate approaches and in time to support the Scottish Government's official response to the final report.
- A plan to support an early response in approximately six college regions during academic year 2014-15.

7. This report provides details on the early adopter programme.

What was the early adopter programme?

8. The early adopter programme was a small scale intervention to support and secure early regional responses to the Commission on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. The intention was that these early responses would enable us to learn from practical approaches to overcoming barriers and trying new approaches.

9. SFC staff analysed the current approaches to school / college provision in their college regions and six regions were identified as possible potentials for the early adopter programme. These were Dumfries & Galloway, Edinburgh, Fife, Forth Valley (Central), Glasgow and West Lothian.

10. Outcome Agreement Managers were asked to negotiate with these regions to identify if they would be interested in being involved in the programme and in bidding for funds. We also encouraged other Outcome Agreement Managers to discuss the programme in their regions.

11. In the end we supported Dumfries & Galloway, Edinburgh, Fife, Forth Valley (Central), Glasgow and West Lothian of the originally identified areas and Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire on the basis of the quality of their bids. A summary of these projects in terms of what they set out to do and a progress report up to December 2014 is provided in Annex B of this report.

12. In accepting funds to become an early adopter region, colleges agreed to

provide us with a financial report and a case study on their approach. They were also asked to include the outcomes / intended impacts of their project in their 2014-15 Outcome Agreements. Due to timing, some projects were approved later than others; it was not always possible to integrate the outcomes into the published Outcome Agreement documents. Where this was the case it was a condition of funding that these outcomes were agreed with and monitored by the Outcome Agreement Manager.

13. SFC allocated £300k to support this programme and it was run during academic year 2014-15. Most regions received approx. £50k to support their work and in most cases this funded a regional co-ordinator. The programme is now closed and the outcomes are now embedded in the 2015-16 Outcome Agreement processes, with specific aspirations around senior phase vocational pathways, gender, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and equalities contained within discrete Developing Young Workforce (DYW) Implementation Plans developed with regional partnerships.

What did the early adopter programme achieve?

14. SFC has concluded that for the funds invested, the early adopter programme was a success. As is the case with all programmes of this nature it included some regions that were front runners in terms of the impact they achieved and others which found it harder to get the community engagement they needed to make it work within the timeline. That said, in all cases, the agreed outcomes have either been met or are delayed. The work of all the projects is also embedded into the 2015-16 Outcome Agreements.

15. In practical terms the early adopter programme expanded the range of provision on offer and / or the reach of that provision to more secondary schools. In addition to this, the projects provided pathway offers that had more of a focus on progression routes. This is essentially what made this provision different to other or previous school / college provision.

16. A key issue is scalability in relation to the capacity of colleges to deliver higher volumes of this provision either to expand range and / or reach within their regions. Furthermore, many regions are also questioning the unintended consequences of this in terms of displacement of other activity such as full time adult provision.

17. What was particularly interesting during the same period is that some regions decided to demonstrate an early start to DYW outwith the early adopter programme - such as Ayrshire, Dundee and the West region - and it is these regions and the majority of the early adopters who are the most notable contributors to DYW through the OA negotiations. This is an important point as part of this has contributed to the current situation whereby if the 2015-16

Outcome Agreements are met in full, we will have achieved a four-fold increase in vocational pathways since 2013-14. Annex F provides an overview of vocational pathway activity, past and present.

18. From our perspective, the early adopter programme and our learning from that led onto the development of discrete regional implementation plans within our Outcome Agreement Guidance. The learning from the early adopter programme resulted in us requesting evidence of partnership; sign up with specific schools and investment in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as part of the discrete investment plans[1].

19. It was clear from the projects that this was not a new area of work for colleges. Colleges informed us that as was the case before, the key to the success of school / college partnership activity or senior phase vocational pathways as they are now known is the relationships in the region, and the structures they build. A common comment from the early adopter projects is that these relationships are now deeper and more embedded within community planning which enables a more strategic approach to planning the pathways.

20. Early adopter projects report that what was different from previous school / college partnership activity - which were more about tasters than pathways and routes - was the need for provision to be timetabled, systemised, offer progression and collaborated regionally.

   It is probably worth reflecting that in addition to small scale early adopter financial support, the early adopter regions also had the benefit of:

   • Very strong Scottish Government expectations in this area.
   • New regional college structures (which eliminated unhelpful competition and supported a collaborative approach).
   • A new outcome orientated culture in both the local authority and college structures.
   • National support for capacity building.

21. However, it is clear to us from the feedback received from early adopters (and indeed other regions) that relationships are still down to an element of "good luck" in a region in terms of the good will of the individuals involved to make it work. This is not sustainable and puts the effectiveness of partnership at great risk if key personnel who simply make it work move on. It is essential that we move towards a more systemised embedded approach.

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[1] http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/GUI_SFCGD152015_DeliveringCollegeOutcomeAgreementsAY201/Annex_D_Regional_context_statement_and_OA_template_2016-17.pdf

What did we learn from the early adopter programme?

22. To ensure we did learn from these projects, it was a condition of funding for the projects that the Outcome Agreement Manager was part of the steering group for the project, where applicable. It was also a condition that regions provided a financial report and a case study on their approach.

23. In addition to this we ran two events to learn from the experiences and feedback of the early adopter projects. The second of these focused on developing an understanding of the key barriers to developing senior phase vocational pathways, how these barriers could be overcome and the role of stakeholders in supporting the development process. Annex C of this report provides a summary of the main findings from this event.

24. Regions also undertook a self-evaluation of early adopter projects. Key findings from these can be found in the *Senior Phase Vocational Pathways Insights* report, which was published in November 2015 and is provided in Annex A. Full details of the regions self-evaluations are provided in Annex D.

25. In Annex E we outline the development of senior phase vocational pathways across the sector for 2015-16 and also review outcomes for this activity in 2013-14 and 2014-15 (Annex E). Further contact details for early adopter partnerships can be found in Annex F.

     Our conclusion from all of this work is that the early adopter programme outlined that the challenges for the school / college partnership programme in the past were similar challenges to "those that were preventing some of the early adopter ambitions from being achieved. The two main barriers were – consistent timetabling and perceptions of the value of vocational pathways (set against a background of the perceived higher esteem value of Highers and the established post-school route to university).

The timetable issue

26. It is probably no coincidence that some of the projects such as (but not exclusively) Fife, West Lothian and Edinburgh that we have been particularly impressed by have through excellent partnerships with their local authorities and schools, overcome the barrier of timetabling. For those regions that have not overcome this issue, perhaps we need to consider how vocational pathways can be better embedded within curriculum options, with sufficient time allocated to this curricular option. Regions with common timetabling within learning communities aligned to college timetables or local authority wide common timetabling provide examples solutions to the challenge.

27. The timetabling issue would appear to be much wider than just the need for good community partnership working. A key barrier is the nervousness of

schools, local authorities, pupils and parents around alternative choices to Highers. It is suggested that this issue relates more to the screening processes adopted by both employers and universities than it actually does about the value of the vocational pathway. Career Management Skills and guidance are critical alongside the role of employers to promote the pathways and potential careers to pupils and parents. It is suggested that more needs to be done to market and promote the value of these new pathways.

The perception issue

28. It is also probably no coincidence that the projects where the school/s has a strong orientation towards vocational pathways and is highly supportive of their value e.g. Fife also demonstrated high impacts and strong outcomes. It is therefore suggested that we seek to understand how to influence positive orientations towards vocational pathways within schools. For example, it is clear in West Lothian that the college is seen as an integral part of the school system and is valued by partner local authorities and schools alike. What would be interesting to know is how that culture was developed and if it could be replicated in other areas.

29. As outlined in the what did the early adopters achieve section, it is also notable that regions which had very strong education strategic leadership which valued vocational pathways to start with e.g. Fife, Glasgow and Edinburgh went on to demonstrate very strong partnership working and high outcomes for their early adopter work.

30. From our perspective there seemed to be a direct relationship between these two areas and the outcome of the project and these seem to be the keys about what was and could be different to school / college working this time around.

31. Feedback from regions in relation to vocational pathways also suggests that there is a need to up our pace in relation to supporting / encouraging proactive employer engagement. Regions feel that an employer's involvement in vocational pathways such as supporting its value in the region i.e. using it to recruit; providing high quality placements; and / or getting involved in its delivery e.g. lectures / visits etc. is crucial in terms of enhancing the perceived value of this route and possible outcomes. From SFC perspective it is difficult to ascertain how embedded this is at the moment, what is different to before and therefore what needs supported.

32. Feedback from our early adopter events outlined the importance of a strong marketing campaign to demonstrate that vocational pathways are valued by employers and therefore secure options for young people to pursue. It is also suggested that we could do more with our Labour Market Intelligence through the Regional Skills Assessments to outline where gaps are and therefore market

what the vocational pathways are providing pathways towards. That said, it is also recognised that these pathways are often a means to support generic transferrable skills for young people.

33. In time, it is hoped our positive destination work can enable us to show the actual salary of these pathways. It is also hoped that our work with the Scottish Government to develop a Work Placement Standard for Colleges will significantly improve our shared understanding of what a good work placement is and how to measure it and therefore promote it.

34. Finally, it is suggested that in our work to challenge perception issues, not enough is made of the college sector acting as a springboard to university whereby they can often provide more efficient pathways direct to employment or university than Highers alone can achieve. Furthermore, a vocational pathway that can lead to a university degree can also be more cost efficient for the young person as more time can be spent in their home region attending their local college before articulating to the relevant university for their subject area. Students taking these routes can end up performing better at university than those who go straight from school.

How do young people make choices?

35. Our events and feedback from the projects reminded us to consider how young people make choices and what or who influences them. In most cases, we are informed by our college colleagues that the role of peers should never be underestimated. Feedback has also outlined that young people often do not make choices on the back of a long term plan of self-determined improvement rather it can be short term and trigger driven (often on the basis of their peers). This suggests an important role for the young people on these pathways to act as role model / influencers for future cohorts.

36. It also suggests a need to:

- Work with Careers, Information Advice and Guidance colleagues within Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to fully understand how young people are making choices, how they are influenced and therefore where vocational pathways sit within those decisions.
- Undertake some research with the initial 2014-15 cohorts to ascertain key learning points such as how they made the decision to join the pathway, what their pre-conceived ideas were about the pathway and what value they place on the pathway now. It is suggested that this could also tie into the marketing work outlined above.

Potential future issues – drop-out rates and qualification currency

37. We have also identified some initial anecdotal evidence in relation to higher

drop-out rates on some of these new courses in 2014-15. We intend on analysing our datasets for more evidence in relation to the drop out point and if this is an issue we will need to seek feedback from colleges to ascertain what the actual issues are. For example, does the drop-out issue relate to:

- Recruitment and induction practice, i.e. young people embarking on a course without being fully informed or prepared.
- Small class sizes making the provision unviable to proceed with.
- The value placed on the provision by the young person themselves.
- An issue relating to some other barrier such as the cost / time of taking part in the provision.

Furthermore, some of the feedback from the early adopters outlines the importance of getting previous qualifications to enable you to progress even within your school programme e.g. onto an HN programme. This suggests a need for alternative options for that young person and a strategy on how that is managed across Scotland.

Potential gaps in our evidence

38. Finally, our work with college regions to date on vocational pathways has outlined two additional questions that require consideration:

- Do colleges need to engage with young pupils earlier than the Senior Phase to enable us to overcome perceptions of what vocational pathways are? It is recognised that DYW is not about alternative pathways for pupils who are not academically orientated, however, it is suggested that little work has been undertaken to identify the background of the pupils who are or will engage with vocational pathways and as such what barriers they might face.

39. On this second bullet, if these young people are more likely to come from more deprived areas then it will be important to ensure that sufficient support systems are in place to enable them to take part in that provision and progress.

40. It is suggested that although the Youth Employment Strategy (and indeed the final report) provides excellent guidance in relation to equalities and care experienced learners it provides little guidance in relation to support for young people from deprived backgrounds or those who are under-achieving at school. Perhaps there is need for a framework that outlines how the work of the Youth Employment Strategy, the Scottish Government's Attainment Strategy and the work of the Commission for Widening Access - all of which target young people with the intention of expanding and improving their life chances and outcomes - tie together.

John Kemp
Director, Access, Skills and Outcome Agreements

Senior Phase Vocational Pathways Insights

Interim Evaluation of the SFC Early Adopter Programme

This paper reports on the interim findings and observations from the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) early adopter programme[2] for implementing Developing the Young Workforce. Findings have been grouped below to guide regional partnerships in their development of senior phase vocational pathways.

What did the early adopter programme achieve at a national level?

- **Broadening the impact across the sector:**
  The early adopter programme significantly increased the sector's ability to respond to Developing the Young Workforce: Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy with a commitment from the sector to a four-fold increase in senior phase vocational pathways for AY 2015-16. This would not have been possible without the early contribution of the early adopter programme[3] and its impact on other regions' responses.

- **Grounding the partnerships in key strategic plans:**
  The key learning points from the programme are embedded in our outcome agreement approach and the expectations placed on colleges for academic year 2015-16 through agreed discrete regional implementation plans.

What did the early adopter programme achieve at a local level?

In practical terms the early adopter programme expanded the range of college provision on offer and / or the reach of that provision to more secondary schools.

The projects provided pathway offers with clear progression routes into further education, higher education and employment. This is essentially what made this provision different to other or previous school / college activity which was more focused on taster activity.

The projects highlighted the need for provision to be timetabled, systemised and involve regional collaboration.

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[2] The early adopter programme was a small scale intervention (£300k for AY 2014-15) to support and secure early regional responses to the Commission on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. The intention was that these early responses would enable us to learn from practical approaches to overcoming barriers and trying new approaches.
[3] Involved 7 college regions: Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire, Dumfries & Galloway, Edinburgh and Lothians, Forth Valley (Central), Fife, Glasgow and West Lothian, see contact details at the end of this document.

Colleges and local authorities advised that the key to the success of school / college partnerships or vocational pathways are the **relationships** in the region. A common comment from the early adopter projects is that these relationships are now deeper and more embedded within community planning, which enables a more strategic approach to planning the pathways.

Key success criteria

- **Strategic regional partnership and planning**
  Regions which already had strong education strategic leadership, that valued vocational pathways, typically demonstrated strong partnership arrangements and high outcomes for their early adopter work. Providing further impetus for this, the College Outcome Agreement Guidance is a key strategic driver for this activity.

In the past, partnership relationships often relied on an element of "good luck" in regions in terms of the goodwill of the individuals involved to make it work. This is not sustainable and puts partnerships at greater risk if key personnel depart. One approach towards achieving a more systemised and sustainable approach involves the use of Memoranda of Agreements.

The new regional college landscape, combined with the outcomes-orientated strategic cultures in both local authorities and colleges, provide the basis for improved strategic alignment and collaboration.

The experience of the early adopters demonstrated both the value and importance of pathways clearly planned as part of the learner journey. The resulting benefits of smoother progression, flexibility and informed decision making on the part of learners were evident in the strongest partnerships.

> **Glasgow**
> A project steering group was established, comprising representatives from the three city colleges, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and SFC. Operating to agreed terms of reference, the group made recommendations for the future development of Developing Young Workforce (DYW) strategic and operational activity. Co-ordination for the group was led centrally by the local authority.

> **Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire**
> A strategic group comprising representatives from North East Scotland College, Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen University, both local authorities, SFC and the Chamber of Commerce was formed to inform and govern DYW project activity. This group fostered collaboration across institutions, increasing opportunities for smoother progression for learners and enhanced college – university links (e.g. articulation around guaranteed offers and associate student status for all HN students).

- **A regional co-ordinator who can turn strategic commitment into reality**

> **Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire**
> Having the commitment of a project manager with a singular focus on the Early Adopter activity ensured sustained co-ordination throughout, with the additional benefit of there being a single point of contact for schools and college colleagues and a source of expert knowledge when disseminating the learning to the wider College community and partners.

- **Challenging perceptions: Local authorities and schools that value vocational pathways**
  Projects where partner schools have a strong orientation towards vocational pathways and are highly supportive of their value tended to demonstrate higher impact and strong outcomes. Efforts to influence positive attitudes towards vocational pathways within schools were therefore critical. In some regions it was clear that the college was seen as an integral part of the school system and is valued by the local authorities and schools alike.

> **West Lothian**
> The college operates a campus model within the local authority and interacts closely in delivery and planning with the 11 high schools at operational and strategic levels. This culture has developed through a close working relationship at senior level in both organisations and integration of operational planning for DYW and previously Opportunities for All.

To promote the maximum interest and uptake of pathways, schools and colleges need to ensure alignment of curriculum offers and provision of the right vocational pathways. Within the early adopter programme, colleges have also been considering the profile of vocational pathways within their mix of total provision.

Forth Valley
Subjects such as Laboratory Science and Computing have been difficult to attract interest from schools and do not appear to complement opportunities available in schools as Nationals and Highers in these subjects are widely taught in schools. As such, rather than duplicate the offer already available in schools, the college pathway offer at National Certificate (NC) Level concentrated on developing an NQ in Hospitality and National Progression Award (NPA) in Playwork and Childcare, which would support progression from the established Skills for Work provision. The college is still working to develop attractive offers in Science and Computing. The experience of the NPA with its mandatory work experience element has been informative in shaping the Foundation Apprenticeship Pathfinders in Social Services and Healthcare and Early Years in 2015-16.

Glasgow
To promote the value of the Senior Phase Vocational Pathways, pupils were given access to the full range of college facilities and were treated as returning students in terms of recruitment and selection when applying for courses as progression options. This meant that returning students were given priority within applications, so that the candidates were able to be fast tracked through the system.

Forth Valley
The pathways were marketed to senior phase pupils and their parents at an open evening, at the time that pupils were making their S5 choices. The schools were highly supportive and promoted the HNCs to the appropriate pupils. There was recognition of the HNC 'brand' as a valuable qualification, which made it easier for parents, pupils and school staff to weigh up the costs and benefits of selecting the HNC over a Higher or other National Qualification in S5.

- **Outlining the benefits to staff**
  It is clear from the early adopter projects that, to have the most impact, staff in schools, colleges and local authorities need to be convinced of the benefits of the approach. This required leadership from the outset and clear communication of the overall shared aims of the projects.

Dumfries and Galloway

Staff who delivered the programme totally embraced the pathway and motivation was high. This helped to enhance partners' perceptions of relevant vocational pathways. Developing flexible learning materials to support the learners helped staff development and engagement. Staff delivered a compressed programme utilising interactive materials through learnnet and project led learning materials which also benefited learner engagement.

Edinburgh and Lothians

Students value the level of employer engagement in programme development and the quality of placements and other opportunities they offer. In addition staff motivation has increased via the STEM Academy and staff teaching on the programmes report that learners are also highly engaged due to the levels of employer involvement.

Key challenges

The early adopter programme highlighted that a number of the challenges familiar from previous school / college partnership programmes or 'old chestnuts' remained. A number of different approaches were adopted to overcome these potential barriers.

- **Timetabling: Achieving space in a timetable and overcoming the fear of "dropping a Higher"**
  It is probably no coincidence that in some of the projects the strength of partnerships between colleges, local authorities and schools assisted in addressing barriers of timetabling. In order to overcome potential timetabling issues, schools and colleges need to look at more flexible ways of structuring the senior phase timetable to ensure that vocational pathways are built into the senior phase offer for all young people and not an add on to accommodate a few. Some regions use additional approaches such as twilight, evening and holiday provision, whilst seeking to ensure sustainable arrangements which don't disadvantage the young people involved.

West Lothian
The college incorporated delivery within the weekly timetable using travel column days to transport pupils to college, and also organised delivery for week blocks over the Summer and Spring holidays. The model also included an agreed structure of S4 timetables to allow release from two regular timetabled sessions for those who were engaging in the Foundation Apprenticeship programme. As this course is in addition to regular timetabled classes, pilot schools were instrumental to the success by offering additional support to pupils to enable their release to attend the school-delivered component of the college course at the host school. Current evaluation of this programme has influenced a decision to offer this qualification from 2016 on a full time basis to S4-6 pupils across the region.

Forth Valley
Pupils attending part time HNs did so for two afternoons a week (normal college / local authority consortium time) for two years starting in August 2014. The exception to this is the HNC Hospitality management, which operated on a twilight basis from 2pm – 9pm on Thursday, in order that the pupils could benefit from working in the Gallery Restaurant during its evening opening.

The timetabling issue is much wider than just the need for good community partnership working. There can be nervousness amongst schools, local authorities, pupils and parents about "dropping a Higher". It is suggested that this issue relates more to perceptions about the screening processes adopted by employers and universities than it actually does to the value of the vocational pathways. Efforts to market and promote the value of these new pathways at local and national level are critical.

Edinburgh and Lothians
The Edinburgh College STEM Academy built on the core strengths of the Academy Model delivered in partnership with Queen Margaret University and the Engineering Academy delivered with Edinburgh Napier University. All academies incorporate skills development and employability, offer accelerated progression to degree pathways and involve a significant employer contribution to the design and delivery of programmes. The young people, employers and universities work as powerful advocates of the approach alongside the college and partner local authorities.

- **Scalability and flexibility**
  With the central focus on increasing the vocational pathway opportunities open to young people, colleges and local authorities are also addressing challenges around scalability. Flexibility and managing different sized cohorts are challenges faced across all partnerships, and regions are considering models to optimise cohort size and sustainability.

> **Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire**
> North East College Scotland delivers an NC Level 6 in Mechanical Engineering over 2 years to a cohort of pupils also studying Higher Maths. Development work has taken place to ensure that the qualification can be delivered over 2 years and that new pupils can join at the end of the first year on a 'roll-on, roll-off' basis to ensure course viability.

- **Costs and logistical issues associated with transport**

Regions encountered challenges with both the cost and logistical arrangements for transport and their solutions are varied. In the majority of cases resource was provided by the local authority, but pressures on public sector budgets raise issues about the sustainability of such arrangements. The use of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) was adopted in one region to tackle remoteness and distance issues.

> **Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire**
> There were challenges implementing a remote delivery model using VLE related to the existing IT resources and connectivity within schools. Considerable investment and IT infrastructure planning would be required to overcome all the functionality issues. However, there may be scope to further investigate this as part of future infrastructure investment.

- **Enhanced employer engagement**
  Feedback from regions in relation to vocational pathways also suggests that there is a need to up our pace in relation to supporting / encouraging proactive employer engagement. Regions feel that an employer's involvement in vocational pathways such as supporting their value in the region i.e. using them to recruit; providing high quality placements; and / or getting involved in delivery e.g. lectures / visits etc. is crucial in terms of enhancing the perceived value of this route and possible outcomes.

> **Fife**
> The Industry Challenge Project (ICP) was designed to build capacity with employers in Fife to deal with the challenge of finding 100 placements in year 2 of the foundation apprenticeship pathfinder. It was developed against a framework document and was delivered with the NC Unit ''Engineering project'. In pedagogic terms the ICP provides a work-based learning progression opportunity for learners to move from the stage of employer visits towards 'full work placements', involving engineering employers developing suitable opportunities in a college engineering workshop environment. This allowed Fife employers, particularly SMEs to engage in work placement delivery without actually providing the experience on their own sites.

- **Enhanced perceptions / marketing**

Feedback from sector events highlighted the importance of strong marketing efforts to demonstrate that vocational pathways are valued by employers and therefore secure options for young people to pursue. It was also suggested that more could be done with Labour Market Intelligence through the Regional Skills Assessments, clarifying where gaps exist and the value of particular vocational pathways. It is also recognised that these pathways are often a means to support generic transferrable skills for young people.

It was suggested that in work to challenge perception issues, not enough is made of the college sector acting as a springboard to university whereby they can often provide more efficient pathways direct to universities than Highers alone. A vocational pathway that can lead to a university degree can also be more cost efficient for the learner as more time can be spent in their home region attending their local college before articulating to the relevant university for their subject area. In many cases, students taking these routes are actually higher performers at university than those who go straight from school.

- **Decision making and careers information, advice and guidance**

Evidence from early adopters and elsewhere suggests that young people's decisions are often not made on the back of a long term plan of self-determined improvement. Peers' choices and other short term factors can be very influential. This suggests an important role for the young people on these pathways to act as role model / influencers for future cohorts.

> **Fife**
> A network of 180 STEM ambassadors has been developed – primarily from industry but also from within education, 43% are female – to promote improved awareness of career opportunities in engineering and engineering related professions. The region is also working to identify new Modern Apprentice Ambassadors to improve peer-to-peer influence.

It also suggests a need to:

- Work with Careers, Information Advice and Guidance colleagues within SDS to fully understand how young people are making choices, how they are influenced and therefore where vocational pathways sit within those decisions.
- Work with schools to ensure they are fully informed about the full range of pathways available to young people in their local colleges, as well as in schools.

Feedback from the early adopters outlines the importance to some learners of having previous qualifications to enable them to progress on to a particular programme (e.g. onto an HN course). This suggests a need for alternative options for young people and potentially earlier engagement with pupils to inform their perceptions of vocational pathways before the senior phase.

The National Response

The lessons emerging from the early adopter programme, will be used along with learning from other local authority / school / college partnerships across Scotland, including the foundation apprenticeship pathfinders, to help shape national support in this area.

It is vital that young people, practitioners and parents are supported in seeing the value of work-related learning and vocational qualifications and understanding how DYW, along with other key national policies on widening access and improving attainment, will help increase opportunities and improve outcomes for our young people.

In the interim evaluation in December, we set out that further work needs to be done at a national and local level to:

- Continue to promote the value of vocational pathways to schools, parents and young people themselves.

- Ensure those advising young people on learning / career pathways are fully aware of and value the range of vocational pathways available, what these involve and where they will lead.
- Support further creative thinking around the design of the senior phase curriculum, that will help schools embed vocational pathways as part of a blended learning experience for all young people in the senior phase. Explore potential issues around uptake of vocational provision.

We also said that SFC, the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, SDS and other national partners all had a role here. Since December 2015, we have continued to work with schools and colleges (amongst other partners) to test out the Standards on Career Education 3-18 and are currently working to develop a Work Placement Standard for the college sector, which will be implemented from the beginning of the 2016/17 academic year.

We held a third DYW Learning Event in December, which brought together all those involved in developing and delivering work-related education for young people, and provided the opportunity for them to reflect together on their curriculum offer.

Following this a reflective tool was developed and shared to support continuous improvement in partnership working between schools and colleges. We have also led workshops and conversation days for parents, young people and practitioners looking at the design of the senior phase curriculum and Developing the Young Workforce more generally.

Alongside these events, Scottish Government and Education Scotland officials have met with all 13 college regions, bringing together Directors of Education, College Principals and other key partners to explore how they are growing senior phase vocational pathways in their areas.

All these activities have provided a valuable insight into emerging practice, issues and opportunities in relation to senior phase vocational pathways and a clear steer on further support needed in the short and long term.

We will continue to work with schools, colleges, employers and other relevant bodies to take forward work in this area.

Interim Progress Reports to December 2014 from Early Adopter projects

Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire

What did the early adopter set out to do?

Building on an already robust School / College Links programme, North East Scotland College's project was about extending its SFC funded vocational programme offered each year. This would allow the inclusion of more vocational areas across all campuses, thus, increasing the range of vocational areas available to school pupils.

The College was also proposing to extend the pilot of its Higher Order Skills Passport, which is designed to provide pupils with the skills required to be successful on progression to university. It will also extend across all College campuses peer review with lecturers and teachers in support of joint curriculum planning and transition for pupils in the senior phase.

With regard to STEM subjects, the College proposed to:

- Extend access to science courses.
- Promote science in schools and increase university access by introducing a new more practical and applications based route to the HNC Science.
- Make available to school pupils the NC in Engineering over two years.
- Where appropriate, make available to school pupils, through open learning or college attendance, some units from the HNC Mechanical Engineering.

To further enhance the College's School / College Link plans, SFC is providing funding (£40k) to support the College to increase access through its Virtual Learning Environment, and support the development of an interactive online course for aspiring engineers in collaboration with the University of Aberdeen, making it available to school pupils across the region.

Progress report from the early adopter project in North East Scotland College

The NESC project is less advanced than other early adopter projects. As such its case study focuses on planned outcomes for 2014-15 and 2015-16. These include:

- Additional vocational programme offer for each local authority for pupils while still at school, taking to 19 the number of SFC funded vocational courses offered each year. And complements the 16 Intermediate 2 / Higher courses offered each year.

- A commitment to increase school pupil participation in STEM that will see extended access to science courses and the promotion of science in schools and increasing university access by introducing a new route to the HNC Science.

Central

Forth Valley College (FVC) has thriving school-college partnerships across the three local authority areas in Central Region. While the nature and maturity of these partnerships vary across the region, significant developments have been made in recent years. This is particularly true in the Falkirk Council area, where the College offers pupils from across the area a range of Skills for Work Courses; Highers and support for Advanced Highers; and a wide variety of STEM activities. This has been further enhanced by:

- CPD activities for school staff.
- Success of the new jointly delivered / funded School College Opportunities to Succeed (SCOTS) programme aimed at S4 pupils.
- The piloted HNC Engineering (Mechanical and Electrical) for S5 and S6 pupils.

Within the Stirling and Clackmannanshire council areas, the College delivers a range of Skills for Work and "alternative curriculum" transition provision for senior phase pupils on its local campuses. The College is working on extending and strengthening the school-college partnership in these council areas.

In addition to existing partnership provision, the College is progressing widening access to HNC courses to other subject areas and has identified Construction, Hospitality Management, Computing, Sports Coaching and Tourism as potential areas for expansion. This builds on the success of the HNC Engineering pilot and will allow entry to year 2 of FVC HND courses and onward articulation to a range of HEIs.

With regard to STEM, FVC intends to develop courses consisting of SQA National Certificate units at SCQF level 4/5, including practical skills development and vocationally contextualised underpinning skills and knowledge development in key areas, particularly Maths. This provision will provide a bridge between school and college in STEM areas. Potential subject areas include Engineering, Construction, Laboratory Science, Facilities Management and Computing (Tech Support / Software Development).

Progress report from the early adopter project at in Forth Valley College

In 2014-15 as a result of the piloted HNC Engineering run the previous year, the College has extended the pilot to four further subject areas: Hospitality Management, Computing Science, Early Education & Childcare and Sports Coaching.

Enrolment across all 4 subjects totals 54, representing all eight Falkirk Council secondary schools. Pupils have been selected on their ability to achieve at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 7.

These HNC programmes will allow progress to year two of FVC HND courses on successful completion. Most also have established articulation routes with advanced standing. Work placement is also a significant part of the HNC Early Education & Childcare, meeting Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) requirements for registration as a practitioner.

The College has faced more challenges developing pathways in Stirling and Clackmannanshire council areas, due to a number of factors including a lack of harmonised timetabling and a lack of understanding of vocational pathways and qualifications. Piloted activity in these areas has therefore been restricted to two vocational areas: Hospitality and Early Education & Childcare.

These programmes at SCQF level 5 have attracted 24 pupils (9 and 15 respectively).

Both programmes will provide participants with learning in real working environments or relevant work experience opportunities.

Planning for 2015-16 and beyond, the College has four closely interconnected priority workstreams that it will work on developing further: the development of industry recognised qualifications to potentially replace current Skills for Work provision; enhanced employer engagement; awareness raising with schools, pupils and parents / carers; and capacity building within schools to enable them to co-deliver vocational qualifications.

Dumfries & Galloway

Dumfries & Galloway College (DGC) has a strong partnership with schools within the region and a number of initiatives are underway. Building on its existing programme, which provides advanced vocational qualifications that pupils can undertake alongside their academic programmes of study, DGC aims to extend the range of provision and make it available to all schools in the Dumfries and Galloway region, and potentially beyond.

With the potential to shorten the learner journey by leading to direct entry to year two of a degree course, the innovative model improves efficiency by using shared existing resources of school and college that offers sustainability and flexibility, expanding the choice for the individual.

The College is aiming to offer HNC courses in:

- Social Sciences.
- Early Education and Childcare.
- Electrical Engineering.
- Fitness, Health and Exercise.

The courses will be piloted in five schools and delivered through a blended learning model. Subject to the success of the pilot, DGC plans to roll this offer out to all secondary schools in the region.

Progress report from the early adopter project in Dumfries & Galloway College

Early in discussions one of the five schools withdrew from the pilot. However progress continued, with a number of presentations taking place at the remaining four participating schools. An information session held in the College for interested pupils, parents / carers and teachers followed. This included pupils being placed into relevant HNC groups for interview. It also provided an opportunity for teachers to familiarise themselves with the HNC frameworks and delivery patterns.

Consequently, the schools identified 17 (in total) expected participants of the pilot. Pupils that met the entry criteria based on expected grades were provisionally enrolled and undertook a tailored induction programme at the College.

For the HNC Engineering pupils this meant starting the course as they had already achieved the necessary entry requirements. This HNC is being piloted as planned. Unfortunately the HNCs in Social Science, Early Education & Childcare and Fitness, Health & Exercise are not being piloted, due to too few of the expected participates achieving the necessary qualifications for entry.

While a formal review of the HNC Electrical Engineering will be undertaken at the end of the session, the College will be responsive to feedback from the current cohort of pupils as they progress, adapting the programme as necessary.

Offering a blended model of delivery of HNCs in schools remains a priority for the College and it will continue to promote the opportunity to gain an HNC while still in school to pupils, parents and teachers.

Edinburgh and East / Midlothian

Edinburgh College's vision is the creation of a STEM Academy. As a new state of the art education centre, the Academy will showcase excellence in STEM subjects with a focus on clean and green technologies and the life sciences industries. It will build on existing partnership arrangements between the College, schools, local universities and employers, and will further develop the existing Edinburgh College and Queen Margaret University academy model concepts.

The partnership will provide additional learning opportunities and capacity building for school pupils in targeted STEM areas of skill need. Courses will be provided across the STEM curriculum specifically in the following areas:

- Life Sciences.
- Applied Sciences including Micro Biology.
- Automotive engineering.
- Electrical Engineering.
- General Engineering (includes Mechanical, Manufacture, Design, Welding).
- Petroleum engineering.
- Chemical Process Engineering.
- Renewables & Environmental Engineering.
- Measurement & control Engineering.

These pathways are currently being delivered by Edinburgh College across SCQF levels 4-8, within the Engineering Curriculum Area. The STEM Academy will be developed by building on the expertise within this curriculum area and re-orienting these subjects more towards the needs of STEM employers.

Students will gain qualifications that will be recognised by industry as providing them with the skills that they require. Courses at NC, HNC or Modern Apprenticeships will provide a curriculum that will have a strong vocational focus. Higher levels of qualification at HNC, HND or professional body awards will also enable seamless progression to higher skilled jobs or direct entry to years two or three of university study.

Beyond the formal qualifications it will be the extended learning experience within the STEM Academy that will deliver the extra value. This will include the learners being taught in a range of different environments including the college and universities. They will also benefit from skills training in industry standard facilities and improvements to their personal development through engagement with employers and the delivery of essential skills

Progress report from the early adopter project in Edinburgh College

For 2014-15, two groups of between 20 and 25 students have already been recruited.

One of these groups has been recruited from Midlothian Schools and the other from City of Edinburgh Schools. Both of these cohorts will begin a two year "day release" HNC in Engineering Systems in 2014-15 with those who progress, completing their HNC in 2015-16.

East Lothian Council have also indicated that they are likely to require a new cohort of students for 2015-16. For those who complete their HNC, Edinburgh Napier University have already agreed to offer accelerated progression to year 2 of a number of their Engineering degrees.

Two further actions will be progressed in the short term to move the STEM Academy forward. A Steering Group will be formed comprising of representatives from schools, the college, university and selected employers. Members of this Steering Group will shortly begin the process of writing up a job description for, then recruiting and selecting the Director, who will lead the development of the STEM Academy through its transition phases outlined above.

Fife

Developed in support of a Fife `Wood Commission Action Plan' and aligned to the Fife Employment pathway, Fife College has developed three projects to underpin the Fife Foundation Apprentice Pathfinder funded by SDS, and support the wider roll-out of the Pathfinder. The Pathfinder will see the development of college progression pathways through modern, foundation and advanced apprenticeships, and will be piloted in up to six secondary schools across Fife region.

The three projects are focused as follows:

1. Improving the level and quality of the messages reaching school pupils, teachers and parents / carers of the value of pathway opportunities provided by Fife College. Targeting S3 pupils, and above, in all 19 secondary schools in Fife with a clear and consistent set of messages of skills-based pathways to employment.

2. Addressing the gender stereotype issues of Fife school pupils and Fife communities, attracting more girls into engineering resulting in an increase in the number of young people choosing careers in engineering.

3. Increase and enhance the quality of work placement experiences provided to engineering students through effective roll-out of the Fife Employer Standard,

and consistent engagement with employers in raising the standard of work-experience against this standard.

Progress report from the early adopter project in Fife College

In Fife 40 pupils, from S4, 5 and 6, from 5 schools, enrolled on the Foundation Apprenticeship Pathfinder, studying PEO 2 and NC Engineering Practice over 2 years part-time. Plans are in place to extend the Foundation Apprenticeship model to other subject areas and to improve access to all 19 secondary schools in the region.

Basic integrated presentations on the engineering and science sectors have been developed. Cross stakeholder sessions have taken place to agree consistency of language and key messages, common objectives, priorities and timelines.

A STEM Student Co-ordinator has been appointed and a STEM Ambassador network established, which includes teachers, lecturers, employers and STEM students.

Through parent and young person workshops, focussing on engineering pathways and providing careers awareness amongst other things, for S4, 5 and 6 circa 500 people have been reached. CPD for teaching and college staff relating to maths and science in senior phase, joint STEM curriculum development and integrated curriculum planning for the new Levenmouth campus was hosted.

A Girls into Engineering event was jointly hosted, which resulted in a planned second similar event.

Glasgow

In recent years, there has been a focus in the region on encouraging schools to work together to harmonise senior timetables to widen choice with college partners. This has had limited success and a more flexible approach is needed in the region to allow students to maximise their choices. Strengths of existing school / college partnerships need to be secured, with current popular provision extended and new opportunities created.

Through the development of a School, College and Business Partnerships Project, the region aims to achieve the introduction of three National Certificates that will be jointly delivered by colleges, schools and the Employment and Skills Partnership team, as part of new pathways within the senior phase. And on successful completion, students will be guaranteed an HNC place at college. The subject areas under consideration include:

- Engineering
- Business Admin
- Events Management

In addition, the Project will also investigate the feasibility of joint delivery by schools and colleges of HNC units and / or certificates. Offered in areas such as Care, Early Years, Applied Sciences and Engineering, on successful completion it is proposed that students will be guaranteed either an HND place at college with the potential of articulation with university degree programmes or supported in their application for advanced standing into Year 2 of an appropriate university programme.

Progress report from the early adopter project in Glasgow's colleges

Building on the success of the NC Electrical Engineering scholarship delivered by Kelvin College in 2013-14, Glasgow's colleges are now offering a full time NC in one of the following subjects: Events Co-ordination, Food Preparation or Electrical Engineering.

Each course is open to 16 senior phase pupils and will provide access to work placement. There are 12 participating schools from across the region.
With support from Glasgow's Chamber of Commerce, a school business partnership framework is being develop, partnering schools with employers to benchmark education / employer links, with the goal of developing a five year strategy.

Future plans include:

- A revised catalogue of part-time provision for school pupils.
- The development of new work based employer led learning routes.
- Exploration of further collaboration between schools, colleges, universities and business on STEM.
- Action plans to ensure the participation rate of protected characteristic groups are supported into positive post school destinations.
- Review of college curriculum content.
- Review of the methods of engagement with parents.
- To work with SDS to support the introduction of foundation and advanced apprenticeships.

West Lothian

Focusing on STEM, West Lothian College is taking forward joint delivery with schools to groups of S4 pupils on a progression pathway leaving school at the end of S5 to guaranteed Modern Apprenticeship (MA) employment with an SME. Delivered over a two year period, commencing in AY 2014-15, priority will be given to learners from the most deprived 10% postcodes areas in the region.

Over the two year period 12 NC credits will be delivered that are relevant and contribute knowledge to underpinning MA frameworks. The College also intends to support Women into Science and Engineering (WISE) as a means of promoting

opportunities for girls to pursue STEM. Pupils will be supported to secure a meaningful placement experience and opportunities with employers.

Building on a very positive and pro-active Schools / College Partnership agreement in the region, which focuses on joint planning and delivery of the senior phase, in total 36 pupils will be recruited with the aim that nearly 90% secure a MA with an SME by the end of S5.

Progress report from the early adopter project in West Lothian College

During the early part of 2014 West Lothian College focused on the planning, co-ordination and promotion. This resulted in an agreed structure for S4 timetables to allow the release from two regular sessions for those engaging in the foundation apprenticeship programme.

Four pilot schools selected pupils for a total of 81 applications to the College for the programme, 11 of whom were female. 56 applicants were invited to interview. Subsequently 33 offers where made, 5 of which were to female applicants.

After two weeks at summer all the participants successfully attained two credits; Engineering Materials and Dimensional Control.

The College plans to:

- Development learning and assessment materials and complete a mapping exercise to determine commonality between national 4/5 Information Technology and NC Engineering.
- Complete a mapping of SCQF 5 NC Manufacturing Engineering units and SVQ Performing Engineering Operations units.
- Co-ordinate placement opportunities.
- Engage with employers to get involved with learners and their programme.
- Increase the use of My World of Work.
- Recruit a further 36 pupils for Aug 15 start.
- Ongoing evaluation of programme success.

Findings from the Early Adopter Sector event on 4 June 2015

Summary of key issues

The need to raise awareness and undertake marketing of DYW and new vocational pathways to pupils, parents / guardians, school / college staff was raised across a number of the discussion groups. The importance of parity of esteem and the need to challenge perceptions of vocational qualifications was also a common theme across groups.

The capacity of school timetables to accommodate vocational choices was flagged, and the lack of common timetabling across single and multiple local authority areas was highlighted by a number of the groups. Groups also talked of concerns about retention of pupils with conflicting school course / vocational programme priorities.

While the number of employers willing to engage with schools and colleges is increasing, the timing and nature of employer engagement varies significantly across schools and colleges. There is also increasing demand for meaningful work experience placements.

Consideration needs to be given to the qualifications of staff to allow the teaching of vocational subjects. There is also a need for the development of regional / local curriculum and partnership models.

The development of new vocational pathways needs to adhere to planning deadlines, provide access at every level and be appropriately managed. Groups identified concerns about what happens if / when demand exceeds capacity and how schools and colleges build collaboration without the benefit of extra funding.

In many cases current successes have be achieved through existing partnerships and the goodwill of individuals to collaborate on the development of new programmes.

Suggested solutions

National promotional materials and models for the rolling out of information and advice, which schools / colleges can use and adapt for regional needs, should be developed as a priority. This should also provide local authorities, schools and colleges with guidance on promotional events, workshops, video presentations, local and national economic information and employer / employment opportunities that can be used in the promotion of new vocational programmes to pupils, parents /

influencers, school / college staff and employers. Consideration should be given to a national campaign that promotes the value of alternative progression routes.

Schools should be empowered to develop timetabling solutions that minimise conflicting priorities for pupils and allow vocational pathways to be seamlessly incorporated into subject choices. Timetable could also be designed to encourage employer engagement. School and college curriculum should be reviewed to identify where subject delivery can be divided between providers.

Early employer engagement has shown to benefit pupil decision making and improved academic success. There is a need for a joined up approach by schools and colleges to employer engagement and to gain better access to SME's and microbusinesses. Work placements should be an integral element of the course offer / provision and should be developed in collaboration with employers to ensure appropriateness from both learning and student safety perspectives. Industry challenge projects could also be attractive to employers, particularly SMEs.

There needs to be mechanisms in place to allow for improved CPD planning that can be delivered in partnership and on a regular on-going basis. Improved knowledge exchange needed between school and college staff on course content and context, which could be achieved through shared development of curriculum.

A co-ordinated approach is needed for the planning and integration of new pathways that allow courses to be developed one year in advance. Guidance needed on funding issues / partnerships, as is a national standard on school / college roles and responsibilities.

Actions

The groups were less clear on the actions needed to address and implement the issues and solutions highlighted in the preceding narrative. However, they were clear that more direction is needed from Scottish Government and SFC, as is increased support from SDS and Education Scotland. Local authority Directors of Education also have a key role to play in the promotion and development of partnerships and pathways.

College Early Adopter Self-evaluation findings

Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire

In February 2014 it was confirmed that North East Scotland College (NESCol) would receive £40k funding from Scottish Funding Council to support the costs of Early Adopter pathfinder work for the period AY 2013-14 to AY 2014-15.

The initial bid requested funding for the post of a Skills and Virtual Learning Development Officer to work with the School College Links Team to increase access to vocational experiences for school pupils.

Two specific projects were proposed in the early stages, to undertake preparatory work to widen access to vocational learning at a variety of levels to geographically remote school pupils through use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and to develop a range of contextualised maths packages aimed at supporting school pupils to progress to further study or employment in the STEM areas.

In addition to the two specific projects, as Early Adopters NESCol undertook to extend the SFC funded vocational programme available to school pupils across all campuses, extend the pilot of its Higher Order Skills Passport, promote access to science in schools, make available to school pupils the NC in Engineering over 2 years and where appropriate make available to school pupils through open learning or college attendance some units from the HNC Mechanical Engineering. Due to a later start as Early Adopters the focus of this work was on planned outcomes for AY 2014-15 and 2015-16.

A strategic group comprising representatives from NESCol, RGU, Aberdeen University, both Local Authorities, the Scottish Funding council and the Chamber of Commerce was formed in order to inform and govern the projects.

During AY 2014-15 the two projects were implemented as pilot projects upon which future development could be based, and work took place to expand the 2015-16 School College links vocational provision.

The scope of the 2 projects was informed by research carried out in the initial stages by the Skills and Virtual Learning Development Officer and advice and direction from the Regional Steering group. This resulted in the final outcomes differing slightly from the initial objectives.

As a result of an audit of pre-existing maths materials, and taking views of a group of pupils identified by partner schools as a potential user group it was decided to progress with development of a maths App that would introduce school age users to

the concept of maths application in the workplace through a progressive game. The resulting prototype was well received by pupils and teaching staff as the outline concept of a tool that could support increased engagement in maths learning, thereby reducing the perceived barrier to progression to STEM studies and employment resulting from low levels of engagement with the school maths curriculum.

The VLE pilot project resulted in real-life testing of the concept of delivery of a vocational education programme through the medium of a virtual learning environment. The purpose of testing the concept was to support future developments that would serve to reduce timetable disruption and the travelling burden of pupils geographically located furthest from College teaching centres. The results were positive with the impact evident through the partial delivery in AY 2015-16 of three accredited courses using the methods tested during the pilot.

In terms of impact on learners in the regional area arising from the Early Adopters work, 70 school pupils from 8 schools were directly involved in the 2 pilot projects. Through implementation of the learning from the VLE project a further 45 pupils from 2 schools are benefiting directly from the projects in AY 2015-16 through the partial remote delivery of N5 and Higher Sociology and NPA Computing. Other Early Adopter activity focusing on extending the vocational School College links programme has resulted in a 44% increase in activity in this area from 2014-15 to 2015-16. In all 687 Senior School pupils are participating in school links vocational programmes in AY 2015-16 in comparison to 476 in AY 2014-15.

Whilst the final outcomes of the project differ slightly from the initial stated objectives, the impact of the additional funding and the development work carried out as a result has proven to be considerable and will continue to have an impact through application of the learning to future developments.

Background

Prior to Early Adopters activity NESCol School College Links consisted of a robust programme of industry relevant vocational qualifications with delivery embedded in locally agreed timetable arrangements.

To a certain degree there was a pre-existing culture of viewing College delivered vocational qualifications to school pupils as a means of supporting pathways to employment and both Local Authorities maintained positive relationships with the College in developing and implementing the programme through a mutually agreed Memorandum of Understanding.

Progression opportunities to related full time FE opportunities and employment were explicitly stated where they had been identified. Several schools had already implemented a systemic approach to School College links ensuring that the

vocational qualifications were afforded the same parity of esteem as school delivered national qualifications through inclusion in course choice information. Issues had however been identified in supporting access to courses taking place according to a common timetable for the most geographically remote schools and pupils. When considering the possible work that could be undertaken through Early Adopters activity it was felt that focus on supporting those encountering barriers accessing vocational education was of key importance.

How successfully did the project achieve its aims?

The majority of the initial stated objectives were achieved. However challenges in changing perceptions of some pupils and parents as to the value of vocational and College delivered courses resulted in there being no progress in the proposed Higher Order Skills Passport development due to a lack of demand from pupils. The target group for this qualification, devised in partnership by NESCol with Aberdeen University, were pupils aspiring to University studies. The course objectives sought to develop Higher Order Skills amongst the target group to facilitate transitions to Higher Education settings. With hindsight the links of this qualification to DYW expectations were not as apparent as in other areas of Early Adopter activity, although the objectives of developing Higher Order Skills remain relevant in supporting successful transition to the workplace from education.

Proposed efforts to promote access to science in schools were hindered by the high demand for full time courses placed on existing resources, so this objective was not actively progressed during the period of the project. However current developments at NESCol Fraserburgh Campus include expansion of science teaching facilities and plans are in place to develop science delivery through the School College links programme according to DYW expectations, with the focus being on progression to employment opportunities in the Food and Drink Manufacturing industry as well as the wider Laboratory Science industry.

The NC Level 6 Mechanical Engineering course has been introduced to the School College links programme as a pilot course that will be delivered over 2 years to a small cohort of pupils also studying Higher Maths. Agreement has been reached with Aberdeen University to confirm that successful completion of this qualification, alongside an A pass in Higher Maths will secure the entry criteria to three Engineering degree programmes. Development work has taken place to ensure that the qualification can be delivered over 2 years and that new pupils can join at the end of the first year on a "roll-on, roll-off" model to ensure continued viability throughout the course. It is anticipated that pupils involved in this course will be offered a work based learning opportunity during the 2 year programme to support progression to the workplace as an alternative to Higher Education progression.

A small number of school pupils are currently attending College one full day per week over a 2 year period to undertake the HNC in Mechanical Engineering.

In terms of efforts to extend the SFC funded vocational programme available to pupils, this was successful in securing a 44% increase in activity from AY 2014-15 to AY 2015-16 with a broader curriculum having been offered to engage with a wider cohort of pupils.

How well did the project fit with DYW Expectations?

Whilst the relation to the now more understood DYW expectations of the NESCol activity may be less apparent than projects that focused on specific pathways, the objectives of reducing barriers to engagement with vocational education, thereby raising the profile of vocational education and its value in supporting progression to the workplace was of considerable value and relevance. The impact has been evidenced through the increase in vocational education participation and the use of the methods tried in delivery of a programme that will see pupils achieving an NC in Computing.

What worked well?

The primary success factor was a commitment from all strategic partners to engage with and support the projects through a common understanding across the institutions and region of the potential positive impact on our young people.

Having Local Authority support encouraged full engagement from the schools involved in the pilot projects. Participating schools had each responded to a request for volunteers to be involved in the pilot and so there was a high level of buy-in from those involved, which in turn facilitated effective communication and operational planning.

Applying the funding received to a dedicated post-holder allowed for effective communication and operational implementation of both pilot projects at all stages. Having the commitment of a project manager with a singular focus on the Early Adopter activity ensured sustained co-ordination throughout, with the additional benefit of there being a single point of contact for schools and college colleagues and a source of expert knowledge when disseminating the learning to the wider College community and partners.

The VLE Early Adopter project was a success in that it provided evidence to schools, College and University partners that it is possible to utilise technology in a new pedagogical approach that is attractive and engaging to today's digital native learners. The identification of inhibiting factors such as IT connectivity, software compliance issues, bandwidth and network security concerns was useful in identifying areas of development to allow this type of approach to be expanded.

Impact on learners

Involvement in the Early Adopter activity has served to create a regional strategic group with a shared commitment to further develop pathways for learners that support progression to the workplace with a focus on the development of essential skills, increased opportunities to gain real-life work experience and pathways with clearly identified exit points from education to employment designed to suit individuals and employers.

Enhanced understanding of the value of vocational education within schools and amongst regional partners has served to create a shared vision of how the regional curriculum at all levels can be developed to support young people successfully entering the workplace.

Developments to a regional curriculum are subject to ongoing consideration but will focus on a range of learning and work experience opportunities that relate to the regional employment market with clearly defined progression pathways with relevant exit routes that support individuals career plans.

Impact on staff

Through participation in Early Adopter activity, and since the publication of the Youth Employment Strategy there has been a shift in mind-set within College and amongst partners. The strategy creates a clear focus for development of School College links activity and offers a strong basis upon which to focus efforts in changing parental perspectives of the benefits of vocational education and career planning. Whilst positive partnership working was already evident within the region, the Early Adopter activity and the DYW agenda have ensured more effective joined up thinking in relation to considering the curriculum to be offered and the impact on learners of participation in vocational education. This has in turn increased demand for a wide range of related activity, from School College links courses to work experience opportunities and work based learning opportunities at a range of levels.

What were the barriers?

In terms of the Early Adopters projects the primary barrier to implementation of a remote delivery model using VLE related to the existing IT resources and connectivity within schools. In order to overcome all the functionality issues considerable investment and IT infrastructure planning would be required to allow the remote delivery model to be rolled out wider. However, the capacity issues that have been identified nationally as a potential barrier to implementation of some DYW recommendations could be partially addressed by further investigation into the use of this model of delivery and investment in the required resources.

The primary barrier to further development of the maths App is the financial investment required to create a live, interactive and fully functional product that engages learners of different levels. The value of improved contextualisation of maths application in the workplace was clear, but it is acknowledged that time constraints within the classroom create difficulty in raising awareness of all the vocational areas where maths is required.

Other barriers relating to parental and pupil perception of vocational education are gradually being overcome but do require considerable time investment from staff involved. In order to fully overcome the perception of the 5 Higher gold standard high levels of parental engagement are required, in partnership with industry representatives and Higher Education partners. Local efforts to support this change in mind-set are underway through a series of different events. There is evidence of this activity having a gradual positive impact as pupils of a wider range of abilities are engaging with vocational education School College link opportunities.

Dumfries & Galloway

The Early Adopters Project is still work in progress, although the HNC Electrical Engineering programme is gathering momentum. Although only 6 learners enrolled, 4 were successful in 15/16 and went onto university pathways. Around 26 learners applied for 16/17 but only 7 had the correct Maths / Physics entry criteria. In respect of gender imbalance we have our first female learner following this Engineering pathway who will act as a role model for other females who want to consider the Engineering area. I do believe the early adopters' pathway has helped in opening doors to conversations regarding developing new pathways with schools.

The project fits well with DYW expectations and has assisted in the development of school portfolios. However one of the main challenges remains parents' understanding of these pathways as meaningful alternative routes to employment and articulation to university.

The Early Adopters helped to facilitate strategic discussions with head teachers and their senior teams. There are still some difficulties with some schools with offering real HN choices to learners alongside traditional Higher options. Operational issues tend to work well between partners, both college and schools. At a strategic level work is taking place to develop a cohesive strategic plan to support local authority, schools, colleges and Employability Partnership Group together around DYW themes and values

The main factor in the success on the HNC project was the selection and recruitment to the programme, and the time taken to talk and plan including schools', learners' and parents' awareness of the HE programme, and its demands in terms of learning, teaching and assessments.

Learners were made aware of the programme during their option choice period with the college offering follow up advice sessions. This lead to detailed follow ups to ensure this option aligned with learner career plans and progression, and the learner had the necessary abilities to achieve their goals.

Staff who delivered the programme have totally embraced the pathway and motivation has been high, it has helped in our own staffs' perceptions of relevant alternative pathways. Staff development has increased in terms of developing flexible learning materials to support the learners. Workload was not an issue as it was delivered as part of their normal remit. However the costs of delivering to such a small group were additional to our normal delivery model and should not be underestimated.

The main barriers are still around some schools not seeing HNs as a creditable alternative route to traditional Highers and in helping parents understand HNCs as a real alternative route to employment and university .This remains a challenge. There have been follow up meetings with head teachers and formal workshops at the Head Teachers Annual Conference. A challenge for us is that each school has devolved authority for their curriculum. In effect the college has to work with 16 schools across the region taking into account different timetables and delivery patterns to support DYW and Early Adopter initiative. Sustainability of this model will be a real challenge moving forward.

Edinburgh

The Edinburgh College STEM Academy built on the core strengths of the original Academy Model developed in partnership with QMU and more recently the Engineering Academy in partnership with Edinburgh Napier University. The core strengths of each Academy is that all incorporate skills development and employability, all offer accelerated learning to agreed degree pathways with a partner university and all have significant employer contribution to the design development and delivery of the learning programmes. All local authorities across the region are actively involved in at least one of the STEM Academy pathways

Initially the STEM Academy started as a single Academy. However early discussions with school and local authority partners agreed that significant value could be added if STEM could be considered as four discrete subject pathways rather than a single subject area. Following these discussions two new pathways have been developed from scratch: Life Science and Financial Services. One pathway has been consolidated and grown: Engineering. The fourth pathway: Technology, it was agreed would be put on hold pending wider national developments in Digital Skills. Activity and pathway maps have been finalised for all the STEM subject pathways (examples attached) and will be rolled out across all schools in all regions for the 2016-17

academic year. This will map senior phase with college activity 2 days per week and will include industry specific vendor qualifications.

The Life Science Academy has and is being developed in partnership with the Scottish Life Science Association and Edinburgh Napier University. The curriculum content has been aligned to the skills gaps and shortages of the Scottish Life Sciences Association employers and the college is now a member of the SLA. The curriculum is also aligned with planned curriculum changes in Life Science at Edinburgh Napier University. The curriculum has been mapped by SCQF level across both institutions with each level of study linked to career pathways within life science association employers and will also provide seamless and accelerated study from school to college to degree study. Both the College and the University are members of the SLA and sit on their special interest groups where they gain feedback and input from SLA employers on the proposed curriculum. The Life Science Academy will be formally launched later in this academic year and promoted to all local schools across the region for the first cohort of students to begin study in 2016-17. This Academy will include senior phase delivery and advanced progression to degree level.

The Financial Services Academy has and is being developed in partnership with major financial services employers including Tesco Bank and Standard Life with an accelerated pathway to year 2 of a degree in Financial Services agreed with Edinburgh Napier University. This Academy is designed to provide the employment destination for the Maths subject pathway. However while this could be a route for maths students, in reality the career options in financial services are so broad that anyone considering Financial Services as a career destination will benefit from the learning in the Academy. This Academy has two differentiators from others on the portfolio. First the learning on the programme links to the Foundation Apprenticeships in Financial services and therefore provides a different point of entry. The first cohort of 13 students has begun their studies this academic year and is being supported by Tesco Bank. A second differentiator is the route to year 2 of the degree. This will involve students studying Edinburgh Napier first year degree subjects while still at school instead of an HNC

Project Aims and Objectives

Aim: To establish a STEM Academy at Edinburgh College that replicated academies in other curriculum areas and that was aligned to the recommendations in the Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Report

Objectives: The following objectives were agreed at the first meeting of the STEM Academy Steering Group on 13 August 2014:

- Establish and collate the existing STEM education pathways across the schools, college and university sectors.

- Audit the totality of education provision in the STEM subject areas and any planned curriculum developments in STEM in the schools colleges or universities.
- Audit the skills set of all staff delivering STEM subjects in schools colleges and universities across the region to provide an assessment of capacity and capability in STEM.
- Identify possible new education pathways for STEM that improved progression in STEM subject areas between school, college and universities.
- Produce a matrix that illustrated these education pathways and also how education provision was aligned to career destinations / skills gaps and shortages.
- Outline the transitional stages by which the STEM Academy would be realised from the [then] one dimensional focus on Engineering.

Success against Project Aims

Overall the STEM Academy to date has achieved all but one of these initial project aims. The audit of staff skills sets across education sectors in the region has not been fully completed. While the college and university capabilities are relatively well understood, the school sector still requires much more work

Beyond the initial objectives agreed at the outset there has been additional value added as the STEM Academy has developed. It has won two awards for an electric vehicle racing car project, widened is now planned access to groups from SMDI 10 and there is planned provision that will be targeted solely at young women. These will be covered in more detail in later sections

Student numbers in the STEM subject areas are also on the increase:-

- 2014-15   30
- 2015-16   60
- 2016-17   75 [planned]

Alignment to DYW

This Academy has been developed along the lines of all the others and as such has a strong alignment to the DYW Report. Specifically:

- Schools colleges and universities working together more efficiently and effectively to accelerate the learning of young people.
- The STEM Academy does and will provide the qualifications knowledge and skills employers need.

- Employers are fully engaged with and fully contribute to every STEM subject pathway in terms of curriculum design and development and though the provision of placement and / or employment opportunities for those who complete their studies.
- Within the STEM Academy subject pathways, there is a focus on work awareness, work readiness, employability skills and maximising the work opportunities employers make available.
- The STEM subject pathways are aligned to the apprenticeship opportunities available and there is a greater focus on work as the primary success measure.

Strategic and Operational Planning

Planning and implementation of plans generally has gone well. Specifically:

- Good partnership arrangements and collaboration between schools, college and university.
- Effective employer engagement with project establishing employer contacts and relationships in new markets such as financial services and life science.
- Organic innovation within the STEM Academy. There was an early decision to split the STEM Academy into four discrete subject pathways that could offer different educational opportunities and career destinations instead of treating STEM as a single generic subject pathway.
- Early Adopter Workshop was useful in hearing about other STEM projects and has led to a partnership between Edinburgh College and West Lothian College for progression in Life Sciences.

Some planning and implementation challenges that have been / need to be overcome included:

- Fragmenting into four pathways rather than one or two has diluted / dissipated effort and so progress has perhaps been slower than if all effort had been concentrated in a single subject area.
- A lot of initial effort was concentrated in enhancing the Engineering Academy to ensure we had the concepts absolutely right before progressing into new subject areas.
- While growth into new employer markets is great news, the rate and volume of employer uptake in these new subject areas will need to increase to ensure there is a sufficient number of opportunities available to young people in these subject areas.
- National development in Digital Skills has been slow to progress. This has hampered the establishment and growth of a "technology" subject pathway.

- There is the risk of duplication and wasted resource in capital planning and estates projects in STEM subject areas as strategic or resource intensive project developments between schools colleges and universities are not well joined up.

Success Factors and Success Risk Factors

Several factors have / are contributing to this projects success:-

- The "Academy Model" is a proven concept with a number of core principles that can be replicated in any curriculum area. It also has a proven track record so it is easier to "sell" to new partners in new subject areas.
- Through its other academies the college has well established relationships with the three local authorities and universities. This new Academy is simply an incremental development rather than a brand new idea that would take longer to change manage.
- The contribution of employers continues to be the Academy Models major differentiator. Through the STEM Academy development, new relationships have been established with a number of employers in Life Sciences via the Scottish Life Science Association many of whom are reporting significant job vacancies that these young people could fill. Similar new relationships have also been established in Financial Services with Tesco Bank and Standard Life.

Risk factors to this projects success are

- Ensuring that the opportunity reaches all schools - while arrangements are very good at authority level there is variable engagement of schools within each authority.
- Exam leave for Highers often mean that students are absent for up to 6 weeks which poses a significant challenge if they are attempting to complete their college qualifications.
- Unilateral variations to school timetables by some schools means that a number of students are now finding it difficult to attend classes.
- A lack of understanding in some schools that [depending on the young persons planned destination] the STEM Academy opportunity potentially offers more benefits to a young person than completing another Higher in school.
- A lack of funding to school budgets to enable them to underwrite the costs of transporting students to attend the STEM Academy.
- The rate and volume of employer engagement needed to recruit a sufficient number of employers to each pathway. Resourcing employer engagement is a challenge across the sector and this will slow employer uptake.

Implications for Learners

The STEM Academy has and will create a number of really positive opportunities for learners:

- The maps and matrices submitted previously show the number of education and employment pathways now available.
- Learners now have three new subject pathways to select from under the STEM Academy. All these pathways are in areas of high skills demand with large numbers of job vacancies for those who complete their studies successfully.
- Within the Engineering subject pathway, learners also have the opportunity to engage in some unique value added project work. This year a group of young people were sponsored by Lamborghini to build and drive an electric vehicle racing car. This project won two awards in the Greenpower Challenge.
- Learners within the Science and Engineering subject pathways are also benefitting from a huge employer input via the Scottish Life Sciences Association. The SLSA has worked with the College to contribute to the development of a new NPA in Engineering and Science. They are also posting all job opportunities for young people from SLA employer members so that young people can see first-hand the jobs on offer and will be able to apply for these as they progress through their studies.
- Employer are now hosting events at their premises to promote the STEM Academy but also to promote the job opportunities they have to offer and to better market the STEM industry to young people.
- The STEM Academy is also widening access. The Lamborghini sponsored project was delivered to a group of young people exclusively from a SMDI 10 post code. For 2016-17, one of the new PDA's in Science and Engineering will be offered exclusively to young women.

Implications for Staff

The STEM Academy is also creating a number of positive opportunities for staff across the school, college and university:

- Staff morale has increased via the STEM Academy. Those teaching on the programmes report very able highly motivated learners that staff really enjoy teaching.
- More work needs to be done across the schools, college and university to determine the skill sets available how to best utilise the capability available and to identify where there are any potential gaps.

Barriers

No significant barriers to report to date other than those identified as possible success risk factors above.

Fife

Girls into STEM

Project Objectives: Increase by 50% (increase from 48 to 72) choosing careers in engineering by attracting girls into engineering career pathways- for 2015-16 entrants: Establish a sustainable college infrastructure of information and school engagement to assist all girls make informed choices- an accessible, informed model, with school staff better informed about STEM issues- via website and other connected information service, plus staff CPD events x 19 (1 per High School): Engage the support of the STEM Coordinator and female STEM Ambassadors to reach 100 females in Senior Phase in an engaging career development experience to provide much improved awareness of career opportunities and resulting in an 80% success rate or 80 in number selecting engineering or engineering related Career Pathway choices in the following year at school, or post school.

- The Robot and Hydrogen Roadshows we have engaged with 1,024 Girls and 1,134 Boys within Senior Phase groups.
- Overall total for Secondary was 2,650 - 1225 Girls; 1425 Boys and Primary 1,270 -615 Girls – 655 Boys.
- Promotion in 8 schools re Foundation Apprenticeship Programme - teachers: 28 approx, parents: 150+ and pupils:150+
- June Forensics activity run in Stenton (Murder in the Lab) which engaged with 77 senior pupils (47 Girls / 30 Boys)
- Part of our plan was to partner STEM East and invest our support in the development of a network of STEM ambassadors, from industry primarily but also from within education. We now have in Fife an active network of 180 STEM Ambassadors of which 78 are female (43.3%).
- We have distributed more than 1500 Fife College STEM brochures at school STEM events, showing good gender-balanced case studies.

Our webpage on STEM Courses is more informative and structured:

http://www.fife.ac.uk/stem/Pages/STEM-courses-at-Fife-College.aspx

Internal meetings have been delivered to Heads of Department, and Curriculum Managers re STEM Priority.

The College has conducted an audit of school / college STEM activity and is pulling together a map of 215-16 STEM activity for Senior Phase, and earlier school engagement.

The project has fitted well with DYW expectations, but the outputs are more likely to be long term than short term. In working with S1/2/3 pupils we are building a base for the future and aiming to tackle culture change.

Ensuring that everyone is on massage re gender balance, and promoting of the STEM opportunities to girls has been an ongoing focus. In planning terms our landscape has become more complex in some ways with funding being available through schools DYW, through EQUATE, through SDS, LIFT-OFF and through SFC. We have worked hard to integrate these interventions and create synergy as opposed to conflict.

As this project has been about working through our mainstream processes from the outset, the most successful outcomes are the development of our internal infrastructure to take account of project ambitions. Examples are that:

a) the schools engagement team are now progressing this project, alongside our marketing team who support with materials and key messages.

b) Our STEM Ambassador in Fife has increased from approx. 80 people through to 180 of whom 43% are female and most from industry. This effort has also now been mainstreamed and our teams will work to identify new Modern Apprentice Ambassadors each year, thereby improving the peer-peer influence.

It is too early to evaluate impact but we hope that increased females in engineering and construction in particular will redress the balance and offer a more supported learning experience for those who make this choice.

It is hoped that mind-set shift and culture change will be major features in future months and years, as mainstreaming has impact.

In partnership we were pleased to work with Fife Council on the 2014 campaign.

The main barriers have been dealing with the complexity of the interventions happening across Fife, with disparate unconnected actions, but now much better integrated with progression pathways considered for each intervention. Examples include:

- SHELL's desire to work with Fife College for curriculum delivery in Fife but via direct approaches to High Schools which led to delays and potential loss of pupil (funding, and job opportunity). Fife College and Fife Council Education

Service have become much more integrated in its handling of this and we are beginning to see the benefits of Senior Education Service engagement in the project.

- At the outset of the project the Education Service's engagement in the STEM Curriculum Pathway development (from Senior Phase) was minimal. This is now a much strengthened partnership which is providing new project opportunities on a regular basis. Membership of the STEM Strategy Group now includes Senior Manager support from Nursery through to School Leaver planning.
- The separate Primary Engineer initiatives funded by SDS have been aligned and pulled into a single approach, with the support of the STEM Strategy Group members. On this occasion this involves the Economic Development Service, Education Service, College, Primary Engineer, SDS and industry.
- The major outcome of this is a much stronger partnership base between school and college. The funded projects under DYW have caused us to work collectively to integrate our activity.

Project 3: Shared Workplace Development and Management

Aim: Develop a model for Fife's future implementation and present a business case for joint delivery of work-placements and job-placing with Fife Schools, Fife College and supported by Opportunities Fife. (Our concern is that Pathfinder Placements may displace opportunities for other young engineers and capacity needs to be quickly developed to ensure that this does not happen). This will involve engagement of major oil and gas employers who increase the career opportunities and pathways for Fife engineering students.

The project set out with ambitious targets aligned to the overall Pathfinder FA targets. In the final recruitment only 40 young people commenced the FA and so the demand on both placements and Industry Challenge Projects was lessened.

However the smaller group size enabled us not only to develop but to also pilot the Industry Challenge Project (below) with a key employer.

It is expected that a further recruitment of 60-70 new starts in year 2 will bring the total FA population up to over 100 persons.

Objective: Work-based learning -placements for college-based Senior Phase engineering students be developed to an agreed standard, agreed by key employers and providing capacity for growth in year two of the roll-out of the Fife pathfinder. This will be supplemented by mentoring, tool-box talks, employer visits, and MA employer engagement events, or challenge projects.

(A combination of placement simulation and partial exposure to the real work environment is feasible, and the optimal solution in growing capacity for growth. A few employers have already proposed this model, for example Fife College and Fife-fab have created a small 'CNC Academy' in Fife Fabrications manufacturing plant and current engineering students will become engaged in this approach, therefore it can be extended for Senior Phase activity.)"

The work placements were successfully agreed with 11 employers, detailed on the attached spreadsheet. These were: FiFab, SCORE, AJS, Fife Council, Fife College, Rexroth Bosch, Greenfold Systems, BAM, Forbo, Tullis Russell, Babcock, Raytheon

In addition wider discussions took place with large umbrella bodies such as OPITO, and via ESP, to try to secure oil and gas support for the placements or Industry Challenge Project.

In the end only the first seven in this list provided a Work-Based Learning Placement, Babcock transferred its commitment to the Industry Challenge Project pilot, Tullis Russell went into receivership, and the other two withdrew their support on the day before the placement was due to commence, as a result of not being ready to offer the placement, and one (the largest corporate!) simply did not progress it's commitment

In addition to this employer visits were arranged with two employers, only one of which has been possible so far as a result of a lack of time. It is anticipated that the second visit can take place early in 2015-16.

In addition toolbox talks and employer visit to campus were arranged. Each FA class had one visit from an employer in which he discussed his company and why the Foundation Apprenticeship was a positive career pathway choice.

We also arranged an evening titled '*Pathfinders meet Industry*' in which we gave the young people the chance to come along and meet the employers providing placements: 12 employers attended.

Making the placements happen

Pre-planning for an employer briefing (several meetings!) included partners from Fife Council with other Opportunities Fife partners. This aimed to ensure that all public sector partners were fully briefed on Foundation Apprenticeships, our plans, our targets and our timelines, so that no employer would find him / herself facing engagement partners who had not been informed of our FA ambitions for Fife. - 36

staff from a range of partner agencies attended (Fife College Business Development Team, Fife Council Enterprise and Economic Dev Advisors, SDS Career Coaches, and Senior Education Advisor.

An employer briefing event attracted around 25 key employers (mainly SMEs) but with several large corporate engineering companies. All were enthusiastic and committed to the Foundation Apprentice developments

Following the employer event all employers were visited by the Project Director, and further informed, engaged in the process. Following this employers 'opted-in' to provide a placement, and the Fife College Modern Apprentice team were briefed.

Employers as detailed above were then further briefed, attended the 'Industry Meets Pathfinder' event and had a Foundation Apprentice, or group of Foundation Apprentices matched to their organisation. This was based on student preference and skills match.

Following this employers were issued with the employer handbook and visited by the Project Coordinator to agree student induction and work plan. College Health and Safety Advisor then visited for the completion of Health and Safety forms in advance of start date.

Students then attended for two week work placement.

Many lessons were learned from this engagement with employers which took place over the period October 2015 - May 2016

Industry Challenge Project

Improved access to all Fife employers, and Oil and Gas employers in Aberdeen area (target 10 companies), in a coordinated manner for Fife College and Partners.

*Simulated work placement will involve engineering employers working with Fife College to identify a suitable simulation for work placement in a college engineering workshop environment. This will allow the Fife employers, particularly SMEs to engage in work placement delivery without actually providing the experience on their own sites. The Simulated work placement would be delivered to an agreed scope, and standard, and can involve employers in 'dropping in' to observe workshop productivity, and to become involved in project delivery.

The Industry Challenge project was developed against a framework document was delivered with the NC Unit 'Engineering project as the key assessment

component. Babcock work with Fife College to deliver against the Fife College pilot design and the 2 week Challenge Project for 11 students, supported by 5 final year MAs worked exceedingly well. The evaluation is yet to be concluded.

The outcomes of this project fit well with other DYW developments and offer synergy in project management, but good progression for learners.

Leadership was provided by the Project Director but all Fife partners, including good employer numbers engaged with this project.

Success factors:

- Good planning, engagement of partners, continuity in management and effective engagement of key college functions such as MA team, H and S advisor, project Coordinator.
  Creation of help tools such as the parent information guides, the teacher presentations, and the Employer Guide.
- Good relationships with partners and employers (a known and trusted face, very important).
- Implications for learners positive; the work placement offered an additional work-based experience, quality assured, in a structured and accredited manner, giving learners confidence and an insight into the engineering sector otherwise unavailable to them.
- No loss of original qualification choices, but inclusion of an additional skills qualification, industry led, and complementary, and consolidating the learning experience.

Finding good staff to deliver the 4 year-one classes was a challenge as few staff have the experience of PEO (Performing Engineering Operations) as this is normally a Modern Apprentice component and not taught to high volume mainstream classes. On finding staff we offered awareness raising of the FA and the importance of the work-placement, and employer engagement. Confidence and culture / mind shift were the biggest issues for two of the three staff involved. The Coordinator was selected for his interest and positivity, as well as experience of working with schools and school pupils.

What the main barriers were, what solutions were devised / put in place and how effective they were

The main barrier was the capacity to deliver from within the wider team, but this became a DIY task for the Project Director, as the only means to get the job done during 2014-15 (as a result of restructuring). Plans are in places and implementation commenced to hand the employer engagement to the MA team for 2015-16. This

should work well as the first group to leave the FA will do so in 2016 and will be competing for MA places (managed by our MA team).

Project Component: Industry challenge project

The Industry Challenge Project

Aim: Improved access to workplace experience with all Fife employers, and Oil and Gas employers in Aberdeen area (target 10 companies), in a co-ordinated manner for Fife College and Partners. (Completion deadline: summer 2016). Originally proposed as 'simulated work placement' the concept was redeveloped to approach this as an Industry Challenge Project.

> "Simulated work placement will involve engineering employers working with Fife College to identify a suitable simulation for work placement in a college engineering workshop environment. This will allow the Fife employers, particularly SMEs to engage in work placement delivery without actually providing the experience on their own sites. The experience to be known as an Industry Challenge Project would be delivered to an agreed scope, and standard, and can involve employers in 'dropping in' to observe workshop productivity, and to become involved in supporting project delivery.

The Industry Challenge project was developed against a framework document, was delivered with the 40 hour NC Unit 'Engineering Project as the key assessment component. In the pilot year Babcock Engineering worked with Fife College to deliver against the Fife College pilot design and for wave 1 the 2 week Challenge Project involved 11 students, was supported by 5 final year MAs worked exceedingly well.

Note: The evaluation will conclude in September once student and employer feedback has been collated.

The evaluation is completed on the basis of assignation of responsibility and 'learning points' and a Responsibility Matrix has been completed in support of future planning and management

The Industry Challenge Project (ICP) exceeded its 2014-15 target by delivering one student group of 11 learners, whilst not scheduled till 2015-16.

The 10 day ICP was delivered in the Rosyth engineering campus with the adjacent employer Babcock Engineering.

The parties agreed an approach which worked very well, and included components that were agreed would be useful for the continuing year's studies as well as

enabling young people to contextualise their previous skills development into real live projects (a previous request of our Foundation Apprentices).

Responsibility

Fife College (with a demand to have employers take on some responsibility)

Learning points

- The ICP concept works well and though the timescales were tight it was easily applied.
- College staff liked the projectisation, the engagement with employers, and the ability to accredit learning through the use of the Engineering project NC Unit as SCQF 5.
- Close geographic proximity to the employer (client / customer) premises made the experience easier and more satisfactory for all parties.
- The quality and realism of the work environment made the task more interesting and challenging for the Foundation Apprentices.
- The mixed staffing model worked well, led by a coordinator / lecturer but involving the employer, the final year Modern Apprentice 'supervisors' and additional specialism visitors (in the case of the Fife pilot this included a Senior Director responsible for BIT, a Procurement manager and a Health and Safety Officer from the employer.

The commitment of the employer was significant in terms of the shared positive use of the mature Modern Apprentices (who were able to use this two week project for the completion of BIT, leadership units of their own MAs) as well as minimal materials and management visits and commitment to succeed.

This project is a good forerunner to the developing DYW IiYP Board in Fife and gives employers and opportunity to see a role for their businesses beyond and before the basic placement or internship model.

Responsibility

Fife College and Employer

Learning points

Engagement of the final year MAs was a superb additional benefit to the employers and to the young people.

The MAs were given time to complete a significant part of their portfolio, the young people had the chance to work with competent young people of their peer group, with the experience of these young people as positive role models.

The FAs saw how much written work and reporting was required by the MAs for portfolio completion (review and reflection, group work and planning) and the FAs wrote up their own Engineering Project assessment logs alongside these excellent role models.

What worked well / not well in terms of strategic partnership planning, communications between institutions, operational planning and practicalities

Responsibility

College and Employer

Learning points

No strategic agreement made with employers in Fife, BUT Framework needs to be agreed and standardised, and a collective agreement attained that the Industry Challenge Project can work well for industry partners.

We clearly laid out for employers, in the Employer's Guide what was expected of them, and explained to Babcock Engineering that our requirements of them mirrored those employers who took young people into their own workplaces. An extract from the Employers Guide is included below.

> "The Work Placement Component
>
> Interviews with employers across Fife have strongly supported UK wide research which has found that, while employers use qualifications in the first sifting of job applicants, they are also looking for a range of 'soft' or personal skills when recruiting.
>
> These are:

- *A positive attitude* – keen to work, enthusiastic, can-do approach.
- *Self-management* – taking initiative, using common sense, clear about priorities.
- *Teamwork and communication* – working well with others and communicating clearly.
- *Understanding the business* – appreciating what will help the business succeed.
- Understanding career opportunities in this industry
- *Thinking and solving problems* – understanding what they are doing and why and how it could be done better

- ***Language skills and numeracy*** – able to write and speak clearly, comfortable dealing with numbers.

The workplace component of the Foundation Apprenticeship seeks to develop the confidence and the understanding of the young people taking part and to help in the acquisition of the soft skills alongside the standard skills expected of their trade. It may be that learners lack confidence in entering the workplace for real life work experience but the college would work with employers to assist in this.

The workplace component also provides the employer the opportunity to get to know the students and, if practicable, to extent the work placement over the summer on a mutually agreed basis (not involving school or college). It will be possible to request the same student for a year two placement and influence the PEO pathway design (ensuring a good fit for your work place) should you wish to recruit the candidate as a Modern Apprentice employee.

- Provision of practical skills (PEO).
- Pupils and parents made aware of commitment required.
- Commitment to offering placement(s) or Industry Challenge Project.
- Possible input to recruitment and selection process, for example by sharing short narrative on your organisation, and your placement opportunity, as well as stipulating criteria for match for interview with you. (A close to employment selection process will be used to assist students in preparing for the future experiences).

Levels of Support
During the work placement you will have the opportunity to assess the skills of the young person and to help them improve in the areas that are important to you. It would be expected that you will provide a named supervisor who will mentor, advise and work closely with the candidate to build confidence and ability.

The project coordinator will visit the students when in placement to monitor progress with employer.

Feedback

The Pathfinder Work-Based Learning approach will provide opportunities for a sharing of relevant feedback and information. For summer 2015 this is still under development but will be released by June 2015.

It is expected that the Foundation Apprentice will record his / her experiences for his/her folio and be able to communicate to the employer their thoughts on the experience they have had. This will be completed via a structured proforma.

In a similar manner employers will be invited to provide feedback to each young person on work-based learning placement, enabling them to better identify their strengths and develop their career aspirations and associated actions.

The implications for learners e.g. choices, level of engagement, curriculum focus, achievement, career plan, progression

In the model the Foundation Apprentices in Fife will have no choice in whether to engage in the Industry Challenge Project or not- this will be a central component of the model of delivery, and method statement. UNLESS a central decision at SDS determines otherwise.

Responsibility

Fife College / CoP developments and SDS Guidance

Learning points

A hugely valuable model and providing effective transition into employer based work placements, and likely to support- capacity building, skills and learning transitions, careers awareness.

Responsibility

Time considerations for co-ordination and management, set-up and delivery.

Learning points

Staff gained effective CPD through working with MAs from industry in partnered way.

The barriers will be management and co-ordination of the Industry Challenge Project, particularly for those that need to happen in remote locations.

Responsibility

College with employer.

Learning points

Standardised model should help; collective briefing of employers important for consistency, and engagement of MAs may make this a win-win situation for employers, encouraging engagement.

Delivery Framework

The framework below is the SVQ level 2 skills framework and offers a base for the development of skills during the Industry Challenge Project (Appendix 1).

Exemplar Timetable

The exemplar timetable for the manufacturing Industry Challenge Project shows the added value components, provided by the employer and college together. Through the two week period two develop, design, and make projects were completed to the employers specification (Appendix 2).

Appendix 1	Fife College Engineering Pathfinder	(Identify problem)	Implement Solution			
	Industry Challenge Project Framework College Workshop Delivery with Employer Project / Challenge	Plan	Develop	Design	Make / Maintain	Report
Challenge Project Context	: SVQ2 Performing Engineering Operations with core skills evidenced					
Mandatory Units:						
	Working safely in an engineering environment					
	Working efficiently & effectively in engineering					
	Using and communicating technical information					
Plus a selection (options) from the following:	Producing mechanical engineering drawings using a CAD system					
	Producing components using hand fitting techniques					
	Producing mechanical assemblies					
	Forming and assembling pipework systems					
	Preparing and using lathes for turning operations					
	Preparing and using milling machines					

	Preparing and proving CNC machine tool programs					
	Preparing and using CNC turning machines					
	Preparing and using CNC milling machines					
	Maintaining mechanical devices and equipment					
	Maintaining fluid equipment					
and Core Skills for Employability	Communication in a work environment					
	Using Mathematical and numerical processes in a work environment					
	Using ICT in a work environment					
	Problem-solving					
	Working with others					

26

Appendix 2 - Exemplar Timetable for 2 week ICP

	1/6	2/6	3/6	4/6	5/6	8/6	9/6	10/6	11/6	12/6
am	Introduce client (to attend) and project specification.	Client brief on supply chain and H and S requirements (employer H and S Officer)	Planning and Development	Project Development	Project Delivery	Project delivery	Project delivery	Project completion stages	Project completion	Client reception to present product and discuss process
am	Task discussion: 2 week programme	Personnel involved in project / roles and remits / reporting lines and deadlines	Visit from the client		Visit from the client		Visit by the client- change of deadline???		Prep for client handover and commissioning meeting.	
pm	Tour of employer site with discussion on resource /space/ equipment available	Project Planning and assessment of skills required for the task. PM session		Preparation of materials	Supply Chain visit		Employer presentation and discussion on Business Improvement Techniques	Review accuracy of records	Supply chain visit	Review process and complete all documentation
pm	PPE and general intro to H&S	Write up Project Plans and Logs for portfolio	Visit to client site re H&S standards observation (walkabout yard)							

Forth Valley

1. Background and Context

In January 2014 SFC offered Forth Valley College funding to support Wood Commission Early Adopter activity. In the proposal submitted to SFC in December 2013, the college proposed additional activity during 2014-2015 in support of the recommendation in the Wood Commission interim report that "over the course of the senior phase young people should have the option to study for a National Certificate from S4 onward and where appropriate to progress onto a Higher National Certificate in S5 and S6 alongside academic subjects."

2. Funding

SFC provided the college with a grant of £49k to support the proposed Early Adopter developments. This was, as set out in the original proposal, used to fund the secondment for one year of a full-time Development Support Officer during academic year 2014-2015.

The additional resource was used to provide 0.4 FTE backfill for the Head of Department, allowing the delegation of responsibility for awarding body centre co-ordination and leadership of specified quality assurance and enhancement functions. This released sufficient strategic resource to lead on the senior level planning and co-ordination.

The remaining 0.6 FTE provided senior operational co-ordination, including planning and co-ordinating marketing, branding and awareness-raising; and development and co-ordination of pupil recruitment, monitoring, learner support and reporting processes.

The post was a secondment opportunity for a full-time lecturer and further details of the cost breakdown can be provided if required.

3. Initial Aims of the Project

The initial aims of the project were:

- To add four HNC courses for S5-S6 pupils to our school-college partnership portfolio for 2014-2015. This was very successful and is detailed further in section 4 below.
- To pilot NC provision in STEM related subjects (include Engineering; Construction; Laboratory Science; Facilities Management; and Computing) for S4 pupils in 2014-2015. This aim was not met, although two alternative programmes were piloted and further details are provided in section 5 below.

4.   HNCs for S5-S6 Pupils

4.1   The Programmes and Recruitment

In 2013-2014 the college piloted HNC Engineering with a small group of S5/6 pupils from Falkirk schools. The first year of the pilot proved very successful and, as a result, there was significant demand from Falkirk Council secondary Head Teachers and education service managers for this provision to be extended in 2014-2015. As a result, the pilot was extended to four further subject areas: Hospitality Management; Computing Science; Early Education and Childcare; and Sports Coaching, as well as Engineering.

We found it surprisingly easy to market these courses to senior phase pupils and their parents. We held a very well attended open evening in early February 2014, at the correct time for pupils making their S5 course choices at school. The schools were highly supportive and promoted the HNCs very effectively to appropriate pupils. A strong message coming through was that there was wide recognition of the HNC "brand" as a valuable qualification, which made it easier for parents, pupils and school staff to weigh up the costs and benefits to specific individuals of dropping a Higher or other National Qualification in S5 and S6 to allow them to undertake the HNC. All of the HNC programmes will allow entry to year 2 of Forth Valley College HND courses on completion and most have established articulation routes with advanced standing.

4.2   Programme Numbers, Retention and Progression

Fifty-nine pupils enrolled across the five courses, with representation from all eight Falkirk secondary schools. The HNC Hospitality Management was held at the college's Stirling campus and attracted pupils from all three local authorities. The pupils were all about to enter S5 and were selected on the basis that they were confidently predicted to be on track to achieve two Highers in May / June 2015. These are no, therefore, pupils who are on a definite route towards university study but who are capable of vocational study at SCQF level 7.

The pupils have been attending college for two afternoons a week (normal college / Falkirk local authority consortium time) for two years starting in August 2014. The exception to this is the HNC Hospitality management, which ran from 2pm-9pm on Thursday, in order that the pupils could benefit from working in the Gallery Restaurant during its evening opening.

Sixteen places were made available on each course and the numbers recruited and retained are shown in Appendix 1. Numbers enrolling on the Computing Science course were lower than we would have hoped, however labour market information

clearly evidences skills shortages in this area, so we decided to run with the smaller number, hoping that success would encourage more young people to take this option in the future.

Retention and progression into year 2 of the programmes have generally been good, with all leavers having valid reasons for doing so and 47 of the original 59 still on track to achieve the HNC.

4.3   Qualitative Evaluations

The following are comments made by participating pupils during discussions about their HNC experience. These have been, without exception, positive.

HNC Electrical Engineering:

"I was told by a family member, who works in engineering that I needed to give myself an advantage over the hundreds of other people that would apply for an apprenticeship. The HNC in Electrical Engineering gives me that advantage and I am hopeful that I can start an apprenticeship at the end of the course. However, if I am unsuccessful in getting an apprenticeship I will come back to college to study the HND"

"Studying at college on the SCOTS programme made me aware of what was available and of the opportunities that were available through college study. I was intending leaving school and trying to find a job but I decided to apply for the HNC Electrical Engineering because my teachers at school said that I was capable of studying at this level and higher if I was prepared to put in the effort and that this qualification would make it easier to get a job. The lecturers at college have influenced my decision to pursue this as a career and I hope to be lucky and get an apprenticeship but I will be applying for the HND course as this will help put me in a good position for the career that I know I want"

HNC Coaching with Development of Sport:

"I was always interested in Sport but I knew that I wouldn't get the Highers that I needed for a PE teaching course at university. My PE and guidance teacher suggested that I looked at this course as an alternative way to teach in sport. I know now that a coaching career is what I want and I intend to return for HND next year"

"The HNC has opened up lots of doors for me and I now realise the opportunities that the HNC has made available to me. My parents had always hoped that I could go to university and agreed to me applying for the course with that hope in mind. Since I came to college I have become aware that HND and into employment is my

preferred route although I will still apply for university just to make sure that I don't miss that opportunity and then make my decision which route to go when I am closer to the end of my HNC"

HNC Early Education and Childcare:

"I applied for the HNC Early Education and Childcare because the course was linked to my preferred career path and so far my experience at Forth Valley College has inspired me to continue along that path. My career path may change as if I am successful in getting a place at university this may lead me toward lots of other opportunities. I hope to use the HNC to gain employment to support me through university and I know that if I don't go to university I can move into employment within the Early Years sector with the help of my HNC"

"Studying for the HNC has made me aware of the level of work required to be successful at university. It has made me realise that there needs to be a good balance between study, work and life and I feel much more prepared for the future as a result of my experience in college"

HNC Hospitality Management:

"I have always enjoyed cooking and saw my future in events management but I was unsure what qualifications were best for me. My guidance teacher told me that the HNC Hospitality Management would be a good preparation to study events management at university. After a year on this course though I have changed my mind and I see my future in the hospitality industry and will come back to Forth Valley next year to study for my HND before maybe getting a job or going to university"

"The course has been tough but very enjoyable I feel that it has helped raise the level that I am studying at in school because it has made me realise why we need to achieve some qualifications. The college is much better than school but learning in an adult environment has made me more respectful to the teachers in school. I hope to come to college to study another HNC probably in tourism as I would like a career which combines hospitality and tourism."

HNC Computing:

"I am interested in a career in the computer industry and saw this course as a good way of improving my chances at employment. Since I came to college I have become aware of the routes through college into university and I feel that by the end of the course I will be better prepared to be successful in university study as the learning environment of the college is very different to school with a more independent

learning style similar to what we expect at university. When I applied for the HNC I had hoped it would lead me into a college place and employment but the course and the lecturing staff have made me realise that I could be successful at degree level"

In addition, college staff have very much enjoyed working with these pupils and have reported across the board that they were more motivated, engaged and conscientious than full-time students on the equivalent courses.

4.4   Considerations for the Future

Whilst we believe that the introduction of HNC courses for S5-S6 pupils has been very successful, there are a few lessons we would learn from our experiences for the future:

- The HNC Early Education and Childcare course will include a significant period of work experience in the second year, planned in conjunction with the local authority, so that pupils completing the course will meet the SSSC requirements for registration as a practitioner. Beyond this, there has not been any significant employer engagement, neither in endorsing the value of the HNC as a pathway into employment / apprenticeship, nor in the delivery of the courses. This is something we would wish to improve on in the future.

- In our original proposal, we had indicated that we would fund the capacity to deliver these additional school-college courses through the ESF underspend project. In the event, these courses did not qualify for this funding and the college had to find ways to reduce other provision in order to make way for these courses through core (wSUMs / Credit) funding. This has been achieved in the short term, however, going forward, these courses will potentially be competing with an increasing number of Foundation Apprenticeship courses for school pupils and we will need to consider carefully the best ways in which to use our core funding to balance the sometimes conflicting aims of meeting regional skills needs, widening access and meeting the demand from pupils and our local authority partners.

5.   NC Pathways

Our initial aim was to pilot National Certificate provision in STEM related subjects (include Engineering; Construction; Laboratory Science; Facilities Management; and Computing) for S4 pupils in 2014-2015. This was closely aligned to the recommendations in the "Education Working for All" report and reflected in the subsequent Youth Employment Strategy and, indeed, in the later development of Foundation Apprenticeship Pathfinders..

Unlike the HNCs, which were widely recognised by school staff, pupils and parents, the concept of National Certificate courses was quite alien to these stakeholders and we found it impossible to get support for this type of provision in the timescale we had available to us – when we received the grant in January 2014 we were already at an advanced stage in marketing school-college courses for 2014-2015.

Part of the problem was that we already had a very well-embedded and successful menu of vocational school-college partnership courses at SCQF levels 4-6 available for senior phase school pupils, including Skills for Work courses in Engineering and Construction. These one-year courses were popular and well-established and we were unable to convince the schools that there would be any benefit in exchanging these for courses that were less well understood.

In addition, subjects such as Laboratory Science and Computing have always been difficult to attract interest in from schools, as Nationals and Highers in these subjects are widely taught in schools and appear to offer duplicate provision, rather than opportunities not available in schools.

Under these circumstances and with the tight timeline, we went ahead with our "normal" offer of Skills for Work and similar courses, with two specific additions – the NQ group Award in Hospitality (SCQF level 5) and the NPA in Playwork and Childcare (SCQF level 5), both for Stirling schools. We felt that these, at least, moved us beyond "traditional" Skills for Work courses and towards something that better resembled the emerging Foundation Apprenticeship model.

Unfortunately, the NC Hospitality was not successful. The main reason for this was that the course delivery did not sit within a harmonised timetable model and involved pupils missing parts of their school subjects in order to attend. All of the pupils either withdrew or transferred onto another course over the academic year.

The NPA in Playwork and Childcare was, however, more successful. Ten pupils started the course and nine completed, with one leaving school for employment. This course included a mandatory work placement element and, of the nine who completed the course, two did not achieve the Group Award, as they did not complete the work placement due to the cost of a PVG. This is an inclusion issue that will need to be taken into consideration in future planning for the funding of such courses. Of those completing the course, two have progressed to a full-time NC in Early Years and Childcare at Forth Valley College; four are employed, two in early years settings; and the three others returned to school to gain more qualifications. All of the pupils undertaking the NPA reported that it was enjoyable and useful to them in making decisions about their future career path.

Our experience of delivering the NPA, with its mandatory work experience element, has been very useful to us in shaping our thinking around Foundation

Apprenticeships and is the basis for us now offering Foundation Apprenticeship Pathfinders in Social Services and Healthcare and Early Years in 2015-2016.

6.   Summary Evaluation

The Early Adopter project and its associated grant funding has been invaluable to Forth Valley College in terms of enabling us to try out some new models of delivering vocational qualifications to senior phase school pupils. It has also undoubtedly been of great benefit to the pupils successfully completing their HNC units and NPA award in 2014-2015.

In light of their success so far, we would like to continue to offer most of these HNC programmes going forward – indeed, we added HNC Civil Engineering to the offer for 2015-2016. However, we anticipate further tensions in resourcing and priorities that we have not yet been able to resolve, in order to allow us to keep access to vocational qualifications in the school senior phase open to all levels of young people.

There is still significant demand for vocational courses at SCQF levels 4 to 6 across Forth Valley and we believe it is important that we continue to meet this demand, in order to bring in young people who are not flourishing so positively in the "academic" environment and help them to achieve their vocational potential. We already have some success stories where young people predicted to move into a negative destination have come to the college through our School College Opportunities to Succeed (SCOTS) course and have successfully progressed on as far as HNC.

We are also looking carefully at how the emerging Foundation Apprenticeships will fit into this mix, as these larger qualifications will take up more resource than our existing vocational qualifications at the same level and would, therefore, limit the numbers of young people gaining access to vocational qualifications whilst still at school.

HNC Numbers

Course	2014-2015		2015-2016	Comments
	Enrolled	Completed	Progressed to Year 2	
HNC Electrical Engineering	12	11	11	One student fell away due to poor results in school and eventually left school and college. The remaining 11 students are considering returning to college for HND in 2016-2017 with some also applying for university and others aiming for an apprenticeship.
HNC Hospitality Management	12	9	8	One student withdrew to focus on Highers and two others as the travelling and times of the course were an issue. One decided not to continue into second year due to difficulties in first year. All are looking to progress into Hospitality in some form or another with most of them applying for HND or university for next session.
HNC Computing Science	8	8	8	Each of the 8 is hoping to gain a place at university to study computing with a few considering the college integrated degree.
HNC Coaching with Development of Sport	16	14	10	One withdrew for health reasons the other left school for work. Two more left school for employment and two failed to return, with both leaving school for employment. Some of the group are considering further study in HND Coaching or university.
HNC Early Education and Childcare	11	10	10	One withdrew for health reasons. Some intend to continue their studies at university and a number of others will be seeking employment in the industry.

Glasgow

Achievements

A project steering group was established, comprising of representatives from the three city colleges, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow's Chamber of Commerce, SQA, SDS and SFC. This group worked towards an agreed term f reference and made recommendations for future development of activities within the emerging Developing Young Workforce strategic and operational developments. The group will continue to meet approximately 4 times per year to review strategic developments and progress.

The Regional Outcome Agreement and Community Planning Reports refer to DYW outcomes. The Colleges' Corporate Plans each feature DYW as a key driver and each of the three colleges have a share portfolio plan. There is also a Glasgow Region Teaching and Learning Group, attended by Principals and Deputes which meets regularly to review and plan subject and industry specific activity.

During 2014015, Glasgow Region became the one of the first areas of Scotland to introduce an employer led **DYW group**. This is being coordinated by the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce of behalf of the Scottish Government

A **school and business partnership** framework document was devised and has been introduced in 16 secondary schools to date. A further 4 schools are working with Scottish Business in the Community, participating in the Business Class (UK wide) initiative. At the end of 2016, we will evaluate the benefits of both these approaches and continue to roll out school business partnerships with all mainstream and non-mainstream secondary schools by 2017. A variety of international, national and local businesses have engaged with this initiative, including BBC, STV, Scottish Government, Scottish Water, Transport Scotland, Network Rail, the Bank of Scotland and Laing O'Rourke. Educational institutions, Glasgow Caledonian University, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the City of Glasgow College are also participating as lead employer organisations.

Consideration has been given to widen out senior phase offers, which include **more vocational pathways** and other industry recognised qualifications. A city wide prospectus was devised. This was published in two versions, covering part time provision by the three Glasgow colleges at Levels 1-3 and Levels 4-7. These publications were issued to schools and also made accessible online.

During 2015-16, new pathways have been offered:

- HNC Computing (SCQF Level 7) over two academic sessions- Starting August 2015 and completing May 2017- delivered by Clyde College at Langside Campus- 7 candidates have commenced this course.

- Foundation Apprenticeships have been introduced- Engineering (SCQF Level 5) – starting August 2015 and completing May 2017- delivered by Kelvin College at Springburn campus- 12 candidates have commenced this course. Financial Services (SCQF Level 5/6) - starting August 2015 and completing May 2016- 10 candidates from Glasgow have commenced this course.

- A Personal Development Award in Youth Work - SCQF Level 5 - is also being delivered by Kelvin College, in collaboration with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. RCS are hosting work placements for candidates and supporting a year - long research project further investigating the successful components of work-based learning for senior phase school pupils. 12 candidates from schools across the city are participating.

- NCs are continuing to be delivered in Engineering (SCQF Level 5) by Kelvin College (13 candidates) and Food Preparation (SCQF Level 5) by City of Glasgow College (13 candidates)

- **Knowledge exchange activities** between school and college colleagues have begun. The first of these sessions took place in May 2015, hosted by Kelvin College, including North East of the city school and college staff members from STEM departments. These events and ongoing activities will be rolled out to other areas and colleges during 2015-2017.

- Young people, employers, school and college colleagues attended the Scottish Learning Festival 2015, to showcase the early adopter project on behalf of the Glasgow region.

- A series of publicity materials, including video content is being devised by Kelvin College to share across the region.

- School and business partnership videos are also in the process of being edited. These show key personnel from Scottish Government and STV, two of our lead business partners, in dialogue with school teachers and senior management team representatives.

- Events and activities to introduce school pupils in S1-3 to college are being programmed for session 2015-16.

- A city wide parents Senior Phase information event was held in November 2014, supported by the National Parents Forum. Over 200 parents attended.

Three NC qualifications were delivered to pupils from schools across Glasgow city during 2014-15.

Pupils from 18 of the 29 secondary schools in Glasgow participated in these programmes.

2 schools participated in all three courses, 2 schools participated in 2 of the courses and 12 schools participated in one course.

Achievements from NCs

College / Course	Starters	Completers	Destination	Comments
Kelvin- Electrical Engineering SCQF Level 5	13	13	8- Higher Education 3- Modern Apprenticeship 1- employed 1- unknown	9 remain within engineering High quality MA with BAE systems, Glasgow City Council, City Building. All HE students continuing at Kelvin College Work placement providers did not offer ongoing jobs or training.
City of Glasgow- Food Preparation SCQF Level 5	13	10	1- Higher Education 7- Further Education 1- Employed 2- employability Fund- 2- unknown	9 out of 10 completers remain in hospitality sector All HE and FE students continuing within City of Glasgow. No Modern Apprenticeship destinations. Employment within- global hospitality employer- Hilton, who also supported work placements within the course Candidate moving into Employability Fund Stage 4 in creative industry sector 2 non completers unknown. one non completer moved to Employability Fund Stage 2
Clyde College- Events Co-ordination SCQF Level5	14	10	Completers- Higher Education- 3 Further Education- 5 Unknown- 2 Non-completers- to be followed up	Tracking of those candidates who did not complete course to be better monitored Candidates continuing in education moved to a variety of different colleges and courses: 3 candidate continued at Clyde College- HND/HNC- events and HND travel and tourism Other FE candidates studying NC admin, social science, travel at Clyde College, West College and City of Glasgow College. No MA or employment destinations

Automotive engineering and business admin pathways with Glasgow Training Group / Arnold Clark

Glasgow Training Group and Arnold Clark provided a two afternoons per week programme of activities for pupils from two neighbouring schools, Govan High School and Bellahouston Academy. 12 candidates completed VQs in automotive engineering and business admin. Two pupils were successful in obtaining MA employment with Arnold Clark on completion of the programme. There are plans for this programme to further enhance the work placement provision and to address any gender imbalance across provision for 2015-16.

Access to apprenticeship programmes will be further developed during 2015-16 and 2016-17. Industry sectors to be targeted include health and social care, computing and finance, construction and business admin, in alignment with potential growth areas for jobs within the Glasgow and neighbouring areas. Key employers include NHS and John Wheatley Group (Glasgow Housing Association).

A successful consortium bid was made to Education Scotland for the Access to Education Funds, by Clyde Gateway, Glasgow City Council and South Lanarkshire Council. Monies obtained within this project will enable identified schools in the North East of the city to participate in access to apprenticeship projects focusing on engineering and hospitality sectors.

The introduction of the Glasgow Guarantee has extended the age range and eligibility of young people to access additional employer incentives supporting entry to the workplace. We will develop an action plan to support school and college leavers to make best use of these funding mechanisms and personal support systems during 2015-16 and beyond.

Careers Education and Work Placement

The introduction of the new quality standards for careers education and work placement are being implemented across schools and colleges in Glasgow.

There is currently a project plan being created to re-design the way in which work placements can better enhance career aspirations of individual learners. College and employer representatives will be working closely with Glasgow City Council and Skills Development Scotland colleagues to influence the operational and strategic changes necessary to fulfil the requirements of these new standards.

The Early Adopter project in Glasgow has been highly successful in establishing close working relationships between the key agencies involved. This has been particularly notable between the three city colleges and Education Services within Glasgow City Council. The link with Glasgow's Chamber of Commerce has also been strengthened

and it is anticipated this will continue to grow, now that the DYW Regional group has been established, with a definite employer focus.

Milestones for participation and achievement within new NC provision have exceeded expectations. School business partnership development has also developed faster than anticipated, as there appears to be a significant appetite from employers and educational establishments to work together.

Awareness raising among school, college, employer and agency colleagues has increased, with the focus on diverse pathways to employment and better understanding of labour market information. Impact of the project on candidates and partners involved has been high, although the number and scale of achievement can only be increased. Analysis of ongoing learning and employment destinations of candidates will be better achieved through the introduction of the new OFA participation measure for 16-19 year olds.

Positives:

Strategic lead and intent- Director of Education, College Principals and Depute Principals, Head of Employment and Skills Partnership Team committed towards extending the range of vocational pathways available and supporting colleagues to implement change.

Early Adopter steering group- well attended by range of agencies and active contribution towards achievement of shared goals.

Regional planning of provision across all SCQF Levels and acknowledgment of overlap of courses, by subject and level, based on demand from schools and pupils.

Collaboration between agencies regarding funding proposals to SDS, Education Scotland, other potential funders, e.g. ESF

Sharing of information to facilitate work placement element with identified employers

Pupils given access to full range of college facilities and treated as a returning student in recruitment and selection processes for forthcoming year. Capacity for this to be extended across the region

Areas for improvement

- Earlier notification to schools, pupils and parents of likely provision to better meet planning cycles and timetabling, subject qualification choice.
- Prospectuses to be published much earlier than April 2015. Aim is for January 2016.

- More relevant procedures for monitoring attendance, potential for achievement, early warning systems for potential problems, tracking of students.
- Recruitment and selection of pupils.
- More accurate Labour Market Information to influence likely uptake of courses. Better strategic and operational use of the Regional Skills Assessment and Skills Investment Plans
- Timing and content of work placement provision.
- Focus of provision for pupils participating in courses at SCQF Level 1-3.
- Publication of progression and articulation diagrams, case studies, learner journeys.
- Timetabling of college and school based provision to maximise personalised learning plans and achievement of skills and aspirations.

Positives

The most significant positive factor was key personnel with a definite project focus. Changes to staff, who undertook key job roles had a negative impact on smooth operations. Sickness absence and turnover of staff, particularly within Glasgow City Council, meant that recruitment for programmes starting in August 2015 had to be managed by colleagues new to the project. This resulted in reduced up-take of some courses and realignment of provision.

Awareness of teaches, career advisers, parents and pupils must be further enhanced to allow for a wider range of schools and pupils to understand the benefits of greater collaboration between providers.

During 2014-15 and 2015-16 individual schools were allocated notional numbers of places on NPAs and other part time courses. This had been in response to travel from school to college preferences and costs and a sense of equity across all schools. Colleges are keen to offer more selective processes, whereby all candidates are interviewed and offered places on merit. For 2016-17, a new improved recruitment method will be introduced, although we must guard against some schools accessing an unfair share of provision to the exclusion of others. Consideration will be given to a more flexible system, which will allow freer access to courses.

Considerable time and effort was placed on planning a portfolio of courses, which could be delivered by colleges and also met the needs of senior phase pupils. Uptake for some planned courses, such as:

NC Digital Media, NC Building Services Engineering, NC Early Education over 2 years, HNC Art and Design was so low that the courses were not viable. Colleges then had to reappraise staffing commitments, accommodation demands etc.

Better communications, publicity and recruitment approaches are required to improve understanding and implementation of such options.

Focusing on the new pathways of provision, those young people who completed the courses were much more likely to enter a positive destination, in most cases at a higher level of achievement than was predicted by teachers, prior to their involvement in the provision.

The majority of completers went on to participate in further or higher education at the same establishment as the senior phase course.

Employer links were coordinated by Glasgow City Council staff. This was absorbed within existing team responsibilities. Should this be scaled up, resource implications will have to be considered. Work placements were scheduled at different times for each course. Engineering offered a one day per week placement, Food Preparation offered placements during October and Easter school breaks and Events co-ordination was during the months of May and June, once all course content had been completed. Health and safety checks, parental permissions for attendance and travel arrangements were also coordinated by GCC.

The communication between college, school and employer, was channelled through GCC contacts. Systems could be streamlined to increase efficiency in the future.

Employer visits to the students were also coordinated by GCC, although as the year progressed colleges began to introduce more links with employers and included these in programmes, celebration events, etc.

The industry area where there is a recognised range of qualifications necessary for onward progression- Engineering- proved to have a more coordinated approach and communication flow between partners. Progress within SQA qualifications which were delivered by schools was more closely monitored by pupils and college staff in this area. This may be due to the complete understanding of all concerned and the acknowledgement that students require relevant maths and science qualifications to continue to access advanced learning and employment within this occupational area. This was also the only course, which had no early leavers and all but one moving onto positive destinations.

Some candidates dropped their attendance level at school throughout the course. This was most prevalent for non-completers. There is scope for early warning systems to be better monitored to prevent this happening. The involvement of SDS staff could be further developed here, especially as the two year Foundation Apprenticeship model develops. As the options for onward progression can be quite varied and complex for individual pupils considering and participating in such programmes, it would be beneficial for pupils to access 1-1 , face to face careers advice and guidance. Not all candidates had met with their careers adviser within this

cohort. Arrangements have been put in place to work with SDS to promote Foundation Apprenticeships to parents and pupils in a more cohesive manner during 2015-16 and beyond.

Timetabling issues continue to cause issues of personal portfolio building of qualifications for individual learners. Although all college courses are offered on either whole of part time attendance on Tuesdays and Thursdays across the three city colleges, pupils often regularly miss timetabled elements of core subjects, meaning that they have to develop self-study skills and out of classroom support from teachers. The occurrence of this additional support has mostly been concentrated within the engineering students to date.

Pupil feedback was gathered, which highlighted the significant approval of the relevant work placement element and signalled the high impact of these experiences helping learners to clarify their career choices and supplement their ongoing job and course applications.

Pupils also reported some concern regarding the ability to balance the different learning styles and expected behaviours expected at school and college. Scheduling of assessments and assignments sometimes clashed and communications between college and school staff varied. Pupils also recommended that there should be more dialogue between the institutions to improve the overall experience.

All pupils who participated in the feedback sessions (80% of those who enrolled) would recommend the programme to others.

In the main, pupils were more positive about considering college as a future option. The engineering and food preparation students were more likely to view the opportunity as a viable entry route to jobs within the sector.

Further enhancement of awareness of STEM initiatives planned for 2015-16 include:

- Pathways and jobs in STEM / college - carousel taster events
- Pilot schools using college facilities and equipment

Staff feedback has been focused on how similar courses could be extended. There has been very positive feedback regarding the possibility of validating the programmes through a quality assurance process, coordinated by Education Scotland, across school and college.

The role of SDS in supporting the introduction of pathfinder Foundation Apprenticeships has also created a new dynamic to the provision. Different college staff, from marketing and business engagement departments' ae now involved. This has brought with it, new resources and a more competitive element to the overall experience. Colleges know that they are competing for funds and have to work towards a financial profile which will be stringently monitored.

The Glasgow Economic Leadership Group have been instrumental in developing the business case and the relevant bespoke qualifications, which have been packaged together to introduce the Foundation Apprenticeship in Financial Services, delivered by City of Glasgow College and this has revitalised the enthusiasm for involvement.

School staff are also encouraged by the prospects which are opened up for individual pupils and as such are more likely to support candidates in their applications. There is still a significant improvement to be made to embed similar courses within the overall senior phase curriculum, however. Incidents were planned courses, have had to be cancelled due to lack of suitable candidates have caused frustration across all staff. Co-operative working, particularly around pastoral care issues, could also be greatly improved.

CPD events are being met positively by school and college staff. To further develop a wide STEM curriculum, a small group of GCC staff will be tasked with leading on this key priority. This will develop curricular programmes in partnership with industry, colleges and universities. A STEM website will also be launched before the end of 2015. Examples of events planned include:

- Hackathons, seminars and development sessions.
- Use of social media and other digital communications software.
- Development of a STEM hub in the new Cathedral Street building of City of Glasgow College.
- Further development of co-designed programmes by school, college and university colleagues.

Barriers

Logistical and operational barriers to extend access to provision often centred on travel, finance and lunch time arrangements.

Pupils who are in receipt of free school meals are entitled to this benefit, however, schools are recharged for this provision. Pupils who fall into this category are issued with pre-paid vouchers, if they attend full day provision. Negotiations have been made with employers providing work placement so that free meal entitlement is honoured.

Timetable restrictions means that pupils may be late in starting afternoon only sessions. Taxis have been put in place to support a limited amount of individual leaners that may have been prohibited from accessing courses due to time constraints to public transport arrangements.

Workplace visits, when organised by GCC education team members, did not always include a subject expert to support the learning opportunity and relate this back to

current teaching. This has been recognised and will now be supported by college or school experts.

Gender imbalance on courses persists. Carousel activities between colleges and schools will continue to offer more examples of opposite gender job roles to counteract stereotypes.

West Lothian

Introduction

Now in its second year of joint delivery with local secondary schools, the College is a nationally recognised SFC Early Adopter. Two groups of S5 pupils from the most deprived 10% postcode areas are engaged in a pilot model for Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) training that delivers NC Level 5 Manufacturing Engineering, the knowledge element, and SVQ Level 2 Performing Engineering Operations, the vocational skills element, alongside work experience to support capability that will lead to leaving school to progress with advanced standing into a Modern Apprenticeship with an SME in 2016.

This model includes an agreed structure of the S4 timetables to allow release from two regular timetabled sessions for those who are engaging in the FA programme. As this course is in addition to regular timetabled classes, pilot schools were instrumental in ensuring success of the model by offering additional support to the pupils to enable their release to attend the school-delivered component of the college course at the host school.

Good practice from this model is the pupils' commitment to attend College and placement during their school holidays. Current evaluation of this programme has influenced a decision to further offer this qualification from 2016 on a full time basis to S4-6 pupils across the region.

Project Objectives

Working with all identified partners, to:

April 2014-June 2014:

- establish detail of programme design
- promote the value of college education to parents, young people, schools, employers
- recruit 36 pupils on the programme
- organise summer and August start programme
- report to Opportunities for All Steering Board & Senior Phase Steering Board
- report to Learning and Teaching Committee

August 2014-June 2015:

- coordinate placement experiences
- work with employers to engage with learners
- increase use of My World of Work
- establish partnership agreements
- promote the value of college education to parents, young people, schools, employers
- possible recruitment of further 36 pupils for August 2015 start programme
- ongoing evaluation of success of programme
- report to Opportunities for All Steering Board & Senior Phase Steering Board
- report to Learning and Teaching Committee

August 2015-June 2016:

continue with previous year objectives, plus

- establish guaranteed MA employment with SME for 2014 start groups
- secure opportunities to progress to higher levels (SVQ level 4 and 5)

Course Structure

| NC Manufacturing Engineering | → | SVQ Performing Engineering Operations | → | Work Experience Project Work Site Visits |

| Knowledge Element | + | Skill / Vocational element | + | Capability |

The participating learners for the pilot project are from James Young High School, Whitburn Academy, Armadale Academy and St Kentigern's Academy.

Academic Year 2014-15 Student Statistics

2014-15 Applications	2014-15 Interviews	2014-15 Starts	Block 1 of AY 2014-15*
81	56	33	25

*8 early withdrawals in block 1 (including the 3 females) for a variety of reasons including; personal / home issues; erratic attendance at school/college; realisation that the programme was not for them; conflict with additional curriculum activities.

Academic Year 2015-16 Student Statistics

At the beginning of the second year of the programme 20 learners remain. 5 elected to leave the programme for the following reasons:

- 2 learners secured Modern Apprenticeships
- 2 left school
- 1 left programme (but remained in school)

The FA Manufacturing Engineering offer was extended to all West Lothian Schools for AY 2015-16. A second cohort was recruited with a total of 17 students participating from the following schools: Whitburn Academy, James Young High School, Broxburn Academy, St. Kentigern's Academy, St. Margaret's Academy and West Calder High School.

Success Factors

The main factors that led to a successful project were:

- Collaboration and strong partnership working with Local Authority
- Enthusiastic, adaptable and highly motivated delivery school and college staff
- Project Officer as key point of contact and co-ordination of the project
- Learners' commitment to attend College during term time and their school holidays
- Raised aspirations of learners and increased opportunities for positive destinations
- Enhanced and newly formed relationship with the local business community

Strategic partnership planning

Strategic planning for the programme was as a result of a strong collaboration between West Lothian College and West Lothian Education Services.

West Lothian Education Services operates a common approach to timetabling, with Tuesday / Thursday travel column options for either vocational subjects at College or for subjects not available at pupils' own schools but taught at other schools in the region. Schools and Community Planning Officer from College attends all timetablers' meetings. Annual vocational offerings to Senior Phase pupils are negotiated and agreed with Community Planning partners from Education Services and Economic Planning with the Senior Phase Development Officer, Development Officer for Raising Attainment and Community Youth Services Team Leader attending the College's Skills and Progression meeting with Curriculum Heads and Deputes for college / school portfolio planning for the following academic year.

College Information session are provided, attended by Skills Development Scotland, Voluntary Sector Gateway and employers in December each year, specifically aimed at Senior Phase pupils preparing for course choices. The College plans to extend this in 2015 to an evening event to allow parents and carers to come to find out more about College offerings. The College also offers an annual parents / carers evening for update on progress for current school pupils attending College.

Communication between Institutions

Communication between institutions worked well, by having the Schools and Community Planning Officer appointed as the main point of contact between the College and the schools.

The main responsibilities include:

- Co-ordinating transport for the learner to and from the College, including industry visits
- Communicating with parents / carers
- Communicating with key personnel in schools
- Liaison with West Lothian Council Senior Phase Development Officer
- Organisation of information sessions for parents / carers
- Checking learner attendance and assisting learners with problems or queries they may have
- Being a familiar face and single point of contact for the learners at the College

In terms of recruitment from participating schools greater success was achieved with applicant numbers where the schools have been instrumental in organising College course information sessions and where Head Teachers had commitment and buy-in to the programme.
Ongoing discussions and liaison between the College and participating schools is paramount to ensure the staff and pupils are well informed about the programme to ensure the applicants are suitable and fully aware of what commitment is required. School staff, including Senior Management, requires to be fully appraised of the programme and the progression pipeline opportunities.

Defined roles require to be established for all stakeholders ensuring all parties are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in participation and delivery. A matrix is deemed a suitable method of mapping the roles against the timelines with specific roles and responsibilities cited within a Memorandum of Agreement.

Challenges

The pilot phase saw pupils and parents / carers invited into College for an initial information session and then on-going parents' evenings. The attendance at these events was low. This is attributed to several factors – non typical style of communication, reluctance to attend meetings in unfamiliar settings, conflict in timing and commitments alongside a lack of information or understanding pertaining to the programme.

The information provided to schools to be cascaded to pupils and parents / carers was minimal. Reliance was placed on the schools to circulate promotional materials to pupils who in turn were assumed to be passing-on the information to parents / careers. There was no measure of return on this method of marketing.

Operational planning and practicalities

Operationally, West Lothian College has a named Schools and Community Planning Officer who liaises directly with the Council's Development Officer for Raising Attainment, Senior Phase Development Officer and Community Youth Services Team Leader.

A College Project Officer was appointed, playing a crucial role in co-ordinating and driving aspects of the programme including the employer engagement activities and a variety of measures to maintain learner engagement in the programme. The level of communication, reporting and liaison with the spread of stakeholders emphasised the merit of having a Project Officer to act as the single point of contact for the pilot.

Staffing

A joint teaching experience in the delivery of mathematics was an excellent opportunity for professional learning to occur. At a time when colleges are expanding vocational course provision to meet the Developing the Young Workforce agenda, this has been an excellent opportunity for lecturers to team teach and get an insight into school curriculum and methods of delivery.

The employer engagement activities embedded within the FA pilot model provide further, invaluable Continuous Professional Development opportunities for staff to heighten their industry knowledge.

College staff involved in the delivery required a mind-set shift to consider the age and maturity of the learners. The majority of learners were 15 years old at the start of the programme and this was their first experience of being taught in a College,

where they are exposed to different learning and teaching practices, diverse cultures and unfamiliar environments from what have been used to within school.

Challenges

Throughout the first year Staff found learners to have varying degrees of maturity. Despite some learners having struggled with their new 'freedom', on the whole the learners cooperate well in class and were keen to engage in the learning material.

Learners were coming to College from various schools, where the curriculum is delivered in a slightly different order or format. Some learners started College whilst studying National 4 subjects whilst others were studying at National 5 level. Varying academic capabilities between students were identified and varying teaching methodologies and levels of support introduced to accommodate these.

Employer engagement

Employer engagement is fundamental to successful delivery of the programme and the whole student experience. Enthusiastic buy-in to the programme from the business community informed an appropriate and varied framework of employer engagement activities.

	Summer	Block 1	Block 2	*spring*	Block 3	Summer Holidays
Year 1 (AY 2014-15)		Industry Visit & professional speakers(s)	Industry Visit & professional speakers(s)		Industry Visit & professional speakers(s)	
Year 2 (AY 2015-16)	*Holidays*	Industry Visit & professional speakers(s) Pre-placement 1-to-1s Experience Readiness	Industry Visit & professional speakers(s) WORK EXPERIENCE	*Holidays*	Industry Visit & professional speakers(s)/ WORK EXPERIENCE Employer Interviews	**Positive Destination (MA/ Employment /HNC)**

Employer engagement activities

The framework maps the **minimum** employer engagement activities. The engagement with employers is staggered over the two year delivery providing learners with a varied insight into multiple engineering sectors building towards work

experience placements. This assists in informing the learners about the diverse career options and to support their preferred choice of work experience. This progressional approach enables learners to develop their maturity, skills, knowledge and confidence prior to their actual work experience with an employer.

Work Experience

A unique collaboration with the Local Authority resulted in an agreed joint approach with the schools' work experience programme. The joint approach between West Lothian College, West Lothian Council and the participating secondary schools will enable enriched and meaningful work experiences. The collaboration will align the FA pilot programme and schools curriculum work experience requirements simultaneously, with one placement fulfilling both criteria.

A pre work experience one-to-one interview was conducted in block 1 of year 2 with all participating learners to ascertain their progression aspirations, sector and location preference and any relevant supplementary information with the aim of supporting a positive destination.

The work experience will take place in 2016 within block 2 and 3 of year 2 of the pilot programme by which point the learners will have had several industry tours and talks allowing them to be better informed as to which sector of engineering they wish progress into. Furthermore, they will have acquired a range of skills and knowledge that can be taken into the work experience placements. The timing of the work experience (within the last 2 months of school term) will put the learners in a prime position for positive destinations.

Challenges

Time Limitations: The time required out of class to for learners to attend visits is a challenge. Some employers require small numbers of learners at a time to visit their premises. This has the potential to disrupt a class for a number of weeks.

New Employers: With new employers, it takes time to build up a relationship before work placements can take place. The challenge therefore faced is having sufficient employer relationship in place to support the programme.

Learner's Age: The age of the learners presents a challenge on the basis that the work experience cannot occur for learners until they have turned 16.

Learners

Raised Aspirations

The initial aim and vision was to support learners into a Modern Apprenticeship with an SME. The majority of the students started on the programme with the perception that it was instead of going to university. At one-to-one interviews with each of the learners at the start of AY 2015-16 learners, however, demonstrated their raised aspirations.
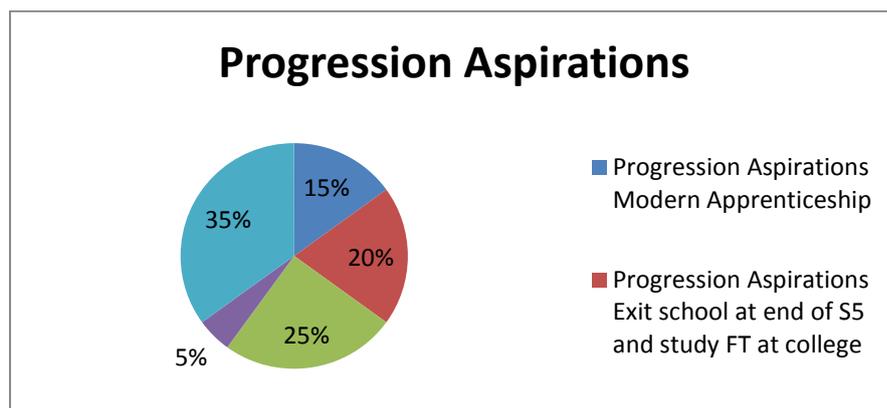

Modern Apprenticeship (15%)	Exit school at end of S5 and study FT at college (20%)	Modern Apprenticeship or FT at college (25%)	Not sure (5%)	Remain in school for S6 then progress (35%)
3	4	5	1	7

Post S6 progression aspirations included: University, Air Force and Merchant Navy.

Value of programme

To gauge the value of the programme, the learners were each asked to give a score out of ten (ten being the highest) as to how beneficial the programme was to them as individuals. The results were as follows:
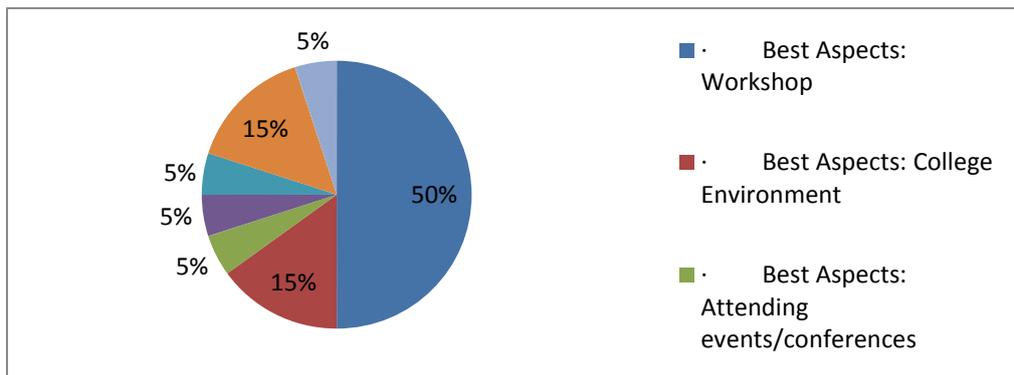
Scoring of programme

Scoring of Programme
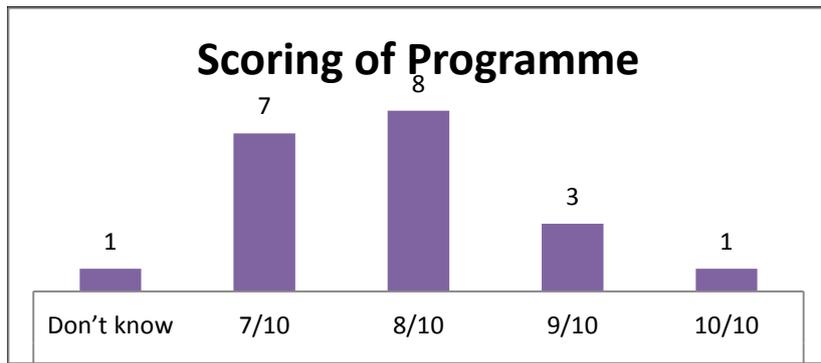
Don't know	7/10	8/10	9/10	10/10
1	7	8	3	1

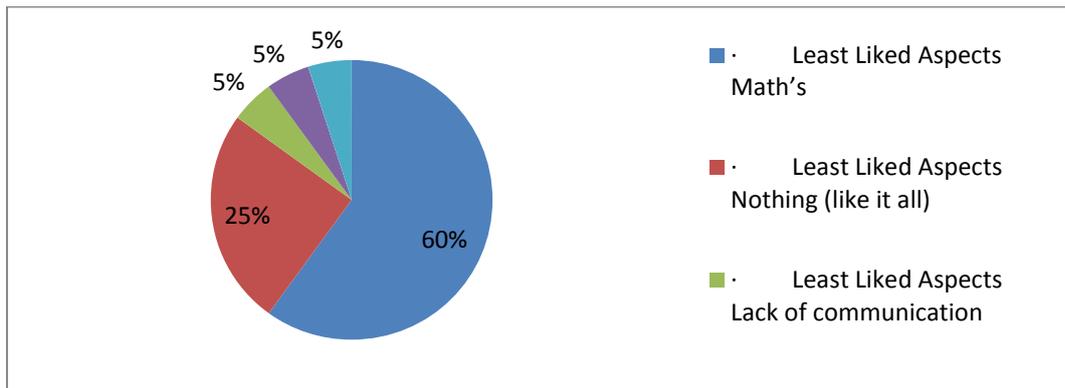Learners were also asked to provide feedback on which aspects of the programme they liked best and which they liked least. The results showed:

Best Liked Aspects

Workshop	College Environment	Attending events/ conferences	Computing & workshop (equally)	Maths	College & workshop (equally)	Workshop & Industry visits (equally)
10	3	1	1	1	3	1

Least Liked Aspects

Maths	Nothing (like it all)	Lack of communication	Time not being productive in college	Length of break times (too short)
12	5	1	1	1

Work Experience

At the one-to-one interviews, the learners were also asked how they felt about undertaking work experience and how well prepared they felt. All 20 learners cited that they were keen to undertake work experience to gain a better understanding of the world of work, apply their learning and gaining meaningful and real life work experience.

Team Working

The students spent a day at Wiston Lodge, an activity and personal development centre, where they engaged in a variety of outdoor team activities. This enabled the students to bond as a team out with a college or school environment. It also provided an opportunity to work towards additional self-development awards including Problem Solving and Working with Others. These are essential skills to enhance Curriculum Vitae and strengthen applications for job / college interviews.

Industry Visits

Industry visits are paramount to student motivation. As well as augmenting the students' learning, industry visits provide the opportunity to engage with employers whilst experiencing and gaining first-hand understanding of the workings of a variety of engineering sectors. The students report that visits inspire and motivate them whilst introducing to them to previously unthought-of potential career choices.

54

Fun & Food

Pizzas and doughnuts were provided for the students during evaluation work undertaken during the spring holiday week. The students recognised that this was not a standard practice and reported that it made them feel valued and motivated them during the evaluation work.

Uniforms

West Lothian College branded high visibility t-shirts were produced for the students. The t-shirts gave the students a sense of identity, enabled everyone to be seen as an equal as opposed to being 'divided' by their school uniforms and also underpinned the sense of being a collective group. Furthermore, many employers require Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the purpose of visits and therefore the high visibility t-shirts also addressed this requirement.

PPE was also provided in the form of overalls and safety boots to enable the students to undertake Performing Engineering Operations units within the College's purpose built workshop. The wearing of kit reinforced the importance of Health and Safety compliance and learners were at all times responsible for their own and others safety, including the wearing of PPE.

Payment

The students do not receive any funding as they are not full time FE learners however £30 per week training allowance was paid during the holiday periods based on full attendance, participation and exemplary behaviour. Students who lived outwith a 2 mile radius of West Lothian College were issued with a bus pass for travel. Travel between the schools and College during term time is managed and paid for by the Local Authority and there is no training allowance awarded during term time.

Senior Phase Vocational Pathway Outcomes

DYW Senior Phase Vocational Pathway Activity (all college regions 2015-16)

Year	Courses	No. Pupils	Schools	LAs
2014-15	19	293	61	9
2015-16 [4]	65	1452	139	18
% Increase	242%	396%	128%	100%

Senior Phase Vocational Pathways Enrolments by Early Adopter college region by academic year - attended and outcome

		Completed Successfully[5]	Completed Unsuccessfully[6]	Early Withdrawal[7]	Further Withdrawal[8]	Spanning / flexible[9]	All	% Completed Successful
2013-14	Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire	34	21	12	10	1	78	44.2%
	Dumfries & Galloway	54	14	8	12	0	88	61.4%
	Edinburgh	78	32	5	23	0	138	56.5%
	Fife	5	2	2	0	2	11	55.6%
	Forth Valley	77	22	4	3	0	106	72.6%
	Glasgow	121	59	9	18	0	207	58.5%
	West Lothian	33	29	2	0	0	64	51.6%
	All	**402**	**179**	**42**	**66**	**3**	**692**	**58.1%**
2014-15	Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire	125	6	9	14	0	154	81.2%
	Dumfries & Galloway	30	22	9	6	0	67	44.8%
	Edinburgh	108	69	13	23	0	213	50.7%
	Fife	3	0	4	3	33	43	30.0%
	Forth Valley	119	18	3	17	0	157	75.8%
	Glasgow	228	48	23	49	0	348	65.5%
	West Lothian	48	26	0	1	0	75	64.0%
	All	**661**	**189**	**61**	**113**	**33**	**1057**	**62.5%**

[4] Data sourced from all college regions' 2015-16 Outcome Agreement discreet DYW implementation plans, based on projections for 2015-16. Covers all students where the SCQF level is 5 and above AND their school year is between S4 and S6 AND the qualification aim is one of the vocational qualifications defined below. Higher National Qualification / National Certificate / Scottish Vocational Qualifications / National Progression Award / Skills for Work
[5] Enrolments that made it to the end of the course and were successful (Experimental data applied historically based on the OA Measures 16 and 17 introduced for AY 16-17)
[6] Enrolments that have made it to the end of the course but were unsuccessful
[7] Colleges can't claim sums for students who withdraw before the 25% date
[8] Students who have withdrawn after the 25% date but before the end of the course
[9] These enrolments are generally excluded from the PI reports as they take longer than a year to complete the course

Early Adopter Regional Partnership Contacts

Regional Partnership	College	Local Authority
Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire	**North East Scotland College** Shelley MacKenzie s.mackenzie@nescol.ac.uk	**Aberdeen City Council** Maxine Jolly MJolly@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Dumfries and Galloway	**Dumfries and Galloway College** Andy Wright WrightA@dumgal.ac.uk	**Dumfries and Galloway Council** Graham Barry gw08grahambarry3@ea.dumgal.sch.uk
Edinburgh, Mid and East Lothian	**Edinburgh College** Mike Jeffrey Michael.Jeffrey@edinburghcollege.ac.uk	**City of Edinburgh Council** Joyce Rochford joyce.rochford@edinburgh.gov.uk
Fife	**Fife College** Janet McCauslin janet.mccauslin@fife.ac.uk	**Fife Council** Derek Brown DerekM.Brown@fife.gov.uk
Forth Valley	**Forth Valley College** Fiona Brown Fiona.Brown@forthvalley.ac.uk	**Falkirk Council** Steve Dougan steve.dougan@falkirk.gov.uk
Glasgow	**Glasgow Clyde College** Eric Brownlie ebrownlie@glasgowclyde.ac.uk	**Glasgow City Council** Abigail Kinsella Abigail.Kinsella@glasgow.gcsx.gov.uk
West Lothian	**West Lothian College** Lindsay Seywright lseywright@west-lothian.ac.uk	**West Lothian Council** Stuart McKay stuart.mckay@westlothian.gov.uk