

# SUMMARY GUIDE TO EMPLOYMENT POLICY, STRUCTURES AND INITIATIVES IN SCOTLAND

Autism Initiatives  
September 2013

## CONTEXT

Supporting people with autism into work is complex and multi-faceted with a range of policies, support programmes and initiatives all aiming to improve employment outcomes for all people with disability.

People with autism have much to offer the world of work and, like everyone else, are at their most effective when playing to their strengths and doing a job about which they are enthusiastic. However, whilst some people with autism have successfully found employment, a common experience is that there are a number of barriers which need to be addressed if the pathway to employment is to be made easier.

There are no autism-specific employment strategies or policies. Therefore the agencies that support people with autism work within generic disability employment policy and strategies. However, Scotland has its own employability strategy, 'Working for Growth', as well as a Supported Employment Framework for Scotland.

This paper is intended to set these employment policies and initiatives in Scotland in context and aims to provide an overview to all professionals involved directly or indirectly in supporting people with autism to move towards employment, with links to further information which may be useful for staff with direct involvement. The paper is also illustrated with some examples of services and initiatives. These are illustrative examples only and are not intended to be a definitive list of all available services.

Comments on the effectiveness of the various policies, initiatives and service structure are generally not included.

It is acknowledged that policies and initiatives change and as such parts of this document may date quickly and will need reviewing regularly.

## PURPOSE

The primary audience for this guide are professionals who are involved in supporting people with autism but who are not familiar with the complex environment of employment policy and structures.

It has been drafted by Autism Initiatives (Kirsty Butts, Scottish Government Seconded and Richard Ibbotson, National Director for Scotland) on behalf of the Scottish Government's Autism Reference Group – Subgroup 4 'Wider Opportunities and Access to Work'.

## Contents

1	Policy and Strategies .....	3
1.1	UK Policy .....	3
1.2	Scottish Policy .....	7
1.3	Other employment strategies and initiatives which inform the Scottish context ...	9
1.4	Further policy documents informing the wider context .....	11
2	Delivery .....	15
2.1	Strategic Skills Pipeline .....	17
3	Employability in Scotland – Key Themes .....	19
4	Benefits context .....	24
5	Autism and Employment .....	27
6	Looking for work .....	29
7	Key Organisations .....	32
8	Employment support initiatives for people with autism .....	38
8.1	Autism-specific support services .....	38
8.2	Non autism-specific support services and networks .....	40

## 1 POLICY AND STRATEGIES

- The UK government has responsibility for employment services across the UK. In Scotland, mainstream job search and support services are delivered through the UK Government's Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).
- Training for employment is a responsibility shared between the UK and Scottish Governments.
- Scotland has its own employability strategy called "Working for Growth".
- There are other policy areas that are devolved to Scotland that inevitably have an impact on employment such as skills development, health, regeneration and education and childcare.

### 1.1 UK Policy

#### A SUMMARY OF UK WIDE POLICY ON EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY

##### Welfare to Work Programme

In 2011, the DWP introduced the Work Programme (which is part-funded by the European Social Fund) to replace a range of employment schemes, pilots and projects. It provides support for those who need more help (generally those who are long-term unemployed) to find and stay in work. Those unemployed for 12 months or more are referred to this programme. They are then assisted to find work by a contracted provider. The majority of providers are large private sector companies, and providers in Scotland include Ingeus, Working Links, and A4e (Action for Employment).

##### EXAMPLE

Ingeus subcontracts with national and specialist charities and organisations from across the public and private sectors and regularly seeks new partners to deliver in particular areas. This includes supporting people in over-coming specific restraints, delivering vocational training, as well as expert advice, advocacy services and in-work assistance. They work closely with Jobcentre Plus, the Skills Funding Agency, Local Authorities, staff in charge of implementing city strategies, Primary Care Trusts, further education colleges and other providers to ensure their programmes are fully integrated with local delivery pathways. The 'Stairway to Work' programme is a voluntary programme for Ingeus clients, delivered in 19 locations across the East of England and SE Scotland.

### **EXAMPLE**

DHP Scotland Ltd, in collaboration with Ingeus, deliver the Work Programme and focus on developing self-employment solutions. They offer free training courses, designed to help explore self-employment options, for eligible participants who are currently on benefits. Participants' benefits remain unaffected, they receive advice and support from a business advisor, gain relevant skills/knowledge and are given the opportunity to try out their business idea for a limited time period.

The general consensus is that the Work Programme, which is designed to offer personalised support to individuals requiring more help in finding and sustaining employment, is failing disabled people, as fewer people are being moved into work through this programme than without it. For disability organisations and specialist employment providers, one of the key issues is the 'payment by results' nature of these contracts which has allegedly led to 'parking' and 'creaming' of clients. For people with autism, it can be a disheartening experience, draining the confidence of those seeking employment.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-people-to-find-and-stay-in-work/supporting-pages/managing-the-work-programme>

### **Disability and Employment**

The mainstream Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) have funded some specialist employment programmes aimed at disabled people seeking open employment: Access to Work, Remploy Employment Services and Work Choice.

The UK Government is preparing a Disability Employment Strategy (autumn of 2013).

Disability Rights UK has called on the Government to use this opportunity to establish a single disability employment programme, putting power firmly in the hands of people living with disability or health conditions. This would build on the success of 'Access to Work' and create a one stop shop for personalised employment support.

Linked to the new strategy, the Disability Confident campaign has been launched to support employers overcome barriers and become more confident in recruiting disabled workers. It will:

- \* host a series of regional Business Breakfasts on proposals for a dedicated employer service
- \* roll out a new 2-year advertising government campaign targeting employers' and workforce attitudes to hiring disabled people

- \* support disabled people and media organisations to increase media representation and portrayal of disabled people in mainstream programmes
- \* provide greater opportunities, through Access to Work, for employers to engage disabled people on work experience, traineeship and supported internships.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) is a key piece of legislation to safeguard against discrimination in employment, placing a Disability Equality Duty (DED) on public authorities to promote equality for disabled people, including autism. From October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the DDA. However the DED continues to apply.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/6>

'Fulfilling Potential' is a new cross-government strategy committed to enabling disabled people to fulfill their potential and play a full role in society.

*"The Government is clear that whilst employment is not just important but good for health and well-being, and should be a realisable option for as many people as possible, at any point in time it may not be an option for some disabled citizens. Even so, everyone makes a contribution to their families and communities, and all citizens have a right to flourish and to live in dignity".*

This Government-wide programme includes a transformation of the system of care and support, with welfare benefits reforms to support disabled people to gain and maintain independence and also to support employment. From April 2013, income people earn in employment is exempt from residential care charges.

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/fulfilling-potential/index.php>

### **UK Independent Living Strategy (March 2008)**

The UK Government's 'Office for Disability Issues' (ODI) states that

*"Independent living is about disabled people having the same level of choice, control and freedom in their daily lives as any other person."*

The Independent Living Strategy aims to ensure that all disabled people who need support in their daily lives will have greater choice and control over how that support is provided and increased access to housing, education, employment, leisure and transport opportunities and to participation in family and community life. The following site provides a link to the Strategy and other reports which deal with employment and employability issues, including 'Jobs for People with Learning Disabilities'.

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/odi-projects/independent-living-strategy.php>

### **Welfare reform**

The Welfare Reform Act 2012

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/welfarereform.html>

Although welfare is a reserved matter for the UK Parliament, the changes and cuts introduced by the UK Government which affect both income levels and benefit conditions

for the unemployed have an impact on the people and services in Scotland. **Universal Credit** will gradually replace six main benefits. It is claimed that Universal Credit will remove the financial risks for disabled people moving back into employment. Whilst the Scottish Government agrees that the benefits systems should be simpler and people financially better off in work, there is concern that these changes and cuts will impact on some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in Scotland. The right level of tailored support needs to be given to those who have been unemployed for a number of years and who require intensive help over a period of time to enter and sustain employment. The Scottish Government will therefore work closely with the DWP and local partnerships to ensure that employability services are able to continue to work effectively within the context of these reforms.

For more information on the UK government's policy on Universal Credit see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/simplifying-the-welfare-system-and-making-sure-work-pays/supporting-pages/introducing-universal-credit>

On 22 December 2011, Scottish Ministers partially refused legislative consent for those parts of the UK Welfare Reform Bill relating to elements of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment. This resulted in the **Welfare Reform (Further Provision) (Scotland) Act 2012** which gives Scottish Ministers powers to make changes to Scottish legislation relating to 'passport benefits', so that these could operate under the new benefits regime.

With the UK Government introducing major changes in the welfare system through the Welfare Reform Act, the Scottish Government needed to review the criteria it sets for access to support and ensure it continues to support low-income or disabled people as intended through passported benefits. The Scottish Government is determined to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure access to passported benefits is maintained for the same groups of people who receive them now.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/welfarereform>

For an overview of the changes being made by the UK Government, see UK Government's policy: 'Helping people to find and stay in work (April 2013)':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-people-to-find-and-stay-in-work>

A recent UK Policy document, '[Employment Law 2013: Progress on Reform](#)' (March 2013) outlines the UK Government's vision for the UK labour market and Employment Law Review work to support an effective labour market:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/184892/13-P136-employment-law-2013-progress-on-reform2.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/184892/13-P136-employment-law-2013-progress-on-reform2.pdf)

## A SUMMARY OF SCOTTISH POLICY ON EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY

### Key publications:

[A Working Life for All Disabled People: The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland \(February 2010\)](#)

In 2010 the Scottish Government and COSLA published 'A Working Life for All Disabled People'. This was based on consultation with a range of experts and stakeholders. It outlines actions to be taken by Community Planning Partnerships, COSLA, the Scottish Government and other stakeholders to provide better quality, more effective, sustainably funded supported employment services which meet the needs of disabled people.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/23093849/0>

[Working for Growth: A Refresh of the Employability Framework for Scotland – September 2012](#) reflects how approaches to employability have developed since 2006. It provides a clear framework to strengthen the focus on jobs and growth, under the following themes:

- Strategy and Effective Leadership
- Better Integration and Partnership Working
- Towards Prevention – Tackling Inequality
- Improving Performance.

Working for Growth reiterates the aim of the Supported Employment Framework (2010) to tackle the inequality in employment experienced by disabled people. It suggests there should be more locally commissioned, good quality supported employment services as part of the mix of supports provided by local employability partnerships.

Since 2006 (when there was an assumption of continued economic growth) the context for employability in Scotland has changed radically: economic growth is slow and there are higher levels of unemployment. There are on-going changes to the UK Welfare system; public services are being reformed as envisaged by the Christie report (see below) and also measures are being introduced through Post-16 Reform of Education and Skills: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/15103949/0> (September 2011)

To promote effective leadership in employability, the Scottish Government has refreshed the membership and remit of the [Scottish Employability Forum](#) (STF). It is jointly chaired by Scottish, UK and Local Government and provides a single forum where all parts of Scottish Government can meet with key stakeholders and delivery bodies, to address unemployment within the context of economic recovery. This group has responsibility to ensure that provision for young people with support needs is in place.

[http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/94473/scottish\\_employability\\_forum\\_-\\_remit.pdf](http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/94473/scottish_employability_forum_-_remit.pdf)



The Christie Report: Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (June 2011):

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/352649/0118638.pdf>

The Scottish Government is also working more closely with the:

- Strategic Forum (aims to ensure activities at national level to support unemployed into work align with efforts of Government agencies to increase economic growth). This forum brings together key Scottish Government bodies which contribute to economic development
- Economy Board (aims to achieve more strategic integration of employability and economic development policy and delivery). Membership consists of senior Scottish Government officials, COSLA and Chief Executive Officers of relevant agencies, including SDS, STUC, the enterprise agencies, Visit Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
- National Delivery Group (includes employability leads from each LA and partners – national organisations with an interest in employability, e.g. Jobcentre Plus, Skills Development Scotland)
- Third Sector Employability Forum (aims to develop the capacity of Third Sector in relation to policy development and delivery of employability services that are funded by Scottish and UK Governments). It feeds into the work of the Scottish Employability Forum and the National Delivery Group. It liaises with Scottish Government Ministers around the employability and skills agenda in Scotland and aims to be an effective, collective voice for the Third Sector on employability.

Of the above groups, the ones best placed to have an impact on the employment of people with autism and who people with autism can influence are the Scottish Employability Forum, National Delivery Group and the Third Sector Employability Forum.

### **Greater Integration and Partnership Working**

Since the release of Workforce Plus in 2006, effective partnership working has been a guiding principle. The aim is to achieve an effective fit between the range of employability services funded at the Scottish and local level and those funded by the UK Government through DWP. Further alignment of employability and skills services for the benefit of both individuals and employers is being encouraged. To assist job seekers, Local Employability Partnerships are being asked to consider improving data-sharing and the co-location of services.

'Our Skillsforce' – partnership service for employers - This is a new online service for employers with information about the range of programmes and financial assistance available to help plan and recruit the skilled workforce required.

<http://www.ourskillsforce.co.uk>

The Scottish Government further recommend that partnerships should strengthen their involvement in economic development by (a) exploring opportunities locally to align with this agenda more closely and (b) considering where cross-boundary working with other partnerships can better reflect the realities of travel to work areas and the recruitment practices of employers.

Local partnerships should be strengthened through appropriate engagement with colleges and the third and private sectors.

See below: [Workforce Plus: An Employability Framework for Scotland](#) (June 2006) – was Scottish Government’s previous Employability Framework.

### 1.3 Other employment strategies and initiatives which inform the Scottish context

[Action for Jobs – Supporting Young Scots into Work: Scotland’s Youth Strategy](#) (June 2012) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/9210>. This gives young people the chance to channel their talent, enthusiasm and energy into sustainable and rewarding employment. This strategy recognises the wide variety of challenges faced by unemployed young people, that one size does not fit all and that a diverse range of policy interventions to support different needs is therefore required.

[Community Jobs Scotland](#) (CJS) is a partnership between the Scottish Government and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) that creates work opportunities for unemployed young people aged 16-24 years old within a wide range of third sector organisations across Scotland. CJS aims to support young people into sustainable employment through providing meaningful paid work experience in the third sector, as well as to increase the capacity of third sector organisations. 100 of the 1000 jobs are being made available to unemployed 16-24 year olds with a disability or health-related issue who are eligible/suitable for the Work Choice programme and are not accessing alternative Government support (e.g. Work Programme).

<http://www.scvo.org.uk/training-employability/community-jobs-scotland/about-community-jobs-scotland>

#### Opportunities for All

Scottish Government’s commitment to offer a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old who is not currently in employment, education or training (NEET). This is an amalgamation of existing national and local policies and strategies to improve young people’s participation in post-16 learning or training, and ultimately employment, through appropriate interventions and support until at least their 20th birthday. It adds impetus to existing entitlements and commitments to support youth employment

through the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence, including the development of skills for learning, life and work, robust transitions through 16+ Learning Choices and the targeted support offered through More Choices, More Chances (MCMC).

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/11/7618> (Nov 2012).

#### More Choices, More Chances (June 2006)

This is a strategy to reduce the proportion of Young People (YP) not in Education, Employment or Training in Scotland (NEETs). It aims to ensure that:

- the Curriculum for Excellence provides opportunities to young people under 16 that are tailored to individual need, with flexibility and appropriate support
- every young person has a clear pathway from school into learning post-16; with supported transitions and sustained opportunities
- learning is a financially viable option, by considering the financial support and incentives available to young people
- the right support is available to young people to find out about, engage with and sustain learning and employment

The Strategy makes a joint commitment to action between central and local government, employers, learning providers and support agencies to develop the service infrastructure required to meet the needs of vulnerable young people.

#### Skills for Scotland: Accelerating the Recovery and Increasing Sustainable Economic Growth (October 2010).

This is a refreshed version of **Skills for Scotland Strategy (2007)**. It clarifies the Scottish Government's commitment to training and skills and sets out a flexible, responsive partnership approach to meeting Scotland's skills needs. It has 4 priority themes:

1. empowering Scotland's people
2. supporting Scotland's employers
3. simplifying the skills system; and
4. strengthening partnerships.

An 'initial equalities impact assessment' was published alongside this Strategy, see <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/920/0105439.pdf> looking at barriers which may exist for various groups affected by the commitments made and the approach to addressing these barriers. It makes many references to disability and employment.

#### Workforce Plus: An Employability Framework for Scotland (June 2006) – the Scottish Government's previous Employability Framework.

The Framework recognised the disconnected nature of much of Scotland's employment services at that time and set out the importance of greater alignment of those services in terms of real partnership working between agencies, especially at a local level, backed by leadership and support at a national level. It acknowledged work as a key factor in moving

people out of poverty and set out actions at national / local levels to help more people access and sustain employment. The framework linked closely with the Scottish Government strategy for young people requiring 'More Choices, More Chances'. Actions aim to ensure that young people, including those with additional support needs, can access mainstream services.

#### 1.4 Further policy documents informing the wider context

Below are a number of other policies and strategies that are not exclusively or primarily focussed on employment but will have an impact on it.

##### The Same as You? A Review of Services for People with Learning Disabilities (2000) and The Same as You? Consultation Report (May 2012)

This report summarises the evidence which the Evaluation Team has gathered about the progress on The Same as You? from published evidence and from face-to-face interviews with people with learning disabilities and family carers about their lives.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/05/6945>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1095/0001661.pdf>

##### The Keys to Life: Improving Quality of Life for People with Learning Disabilities (June 2013)

The new learning disability strategy in Scotland, following on from, and building on the principles and successes of The Same as You? (2000).

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/06/1123>

##### Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013

The Act gives people a range of options for how their social care is delivered, beyond just direct payments, empowering people to decide how much on-going control and responsibility they want over their own support arrangements.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2013/1/contents/enacted>

Together, the Act and strategy aim to deliver the Scottish Government's vision for social care where support is based around the citizen, not the service.

##### Count us in: it pays to listen: National Autistic Society, (January 2013)

This report is a call to action for the Scottish Government to build on its already strong commitment to people with autism and their families, by ensuring that they are given a say in the decisions that affect them. The report concludes that one of the things which matter most to people with autism is sustained employment.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/news-and-events/news-from-the-nas/count-us-in-campaign-launched-at-scottish-parliament.aspx>

### The Mental Health Strategy for Scotland: 2012-2015

The Mental Health Strategy for Scotland makes an important commitment on employability. It recognises that being in the right work promotes positive mental health and wellbeing. It also recognises that people with mental illness are less likely to be engaged in work than the general population or those with other health conditions. It makes clear that improving and increasing access to employment for those with mental illness is challenging, but necessary and achievable. Those with long term mental health conditions who were able to undertake supported employment used significantly fewer mental health services.

#### **EXAMPLE**

**The Works**, an NHS Lothian vocational rehabilitation service for people living in Edinburgh, is cited as an example of a service which supports people with mental health conditions to stay in work, return to work, or gain work for the first time. The 'Place then Train' model is considered to be effective, having demonstrated strong employment-related outcomes for this client group.

The strategy commits to “reinforce the message of the importance of employment”. It refers to the evidence base on supported employment for people with mental health conditions, and makes a commitment to promote this evidence base by publishing a guidance document.

The strategy recognises that mental health services need to change their programmes and funding allocations, if they are to follow good practice and develop supported employment.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/08/9714>

### The Scottish Strategy for Autism (November 2011)

This 10 year strategy exists to ensure that progress is made across Scotland in delivering quality services for people with autism and their families/carers.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/11/01120340/0>

There is only one specific recommendation that refers to Employment (Recommendation 26):

*“It is recommended that the supported employment framework for Scotland is evaluated in terms of its impact on employment and employability for people with autism.”*

However, the strategy takes an holistic lifelong approach and therefore themes such as sharing good practice, understanding the economic impact and consideration of people with Asperger Syndrome all have a strong employment dimension.

#### The Government Economic Strategy (September 2011)

This refreshed strategy sets out short and long term targets in relation to economic growth and identifies the six strategic priorities which will accelerate recovery, drive sustainable growth and develop a more resilient and adaptable economy.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/13091128/0>

#### Universal Credit: Welfare that Works (November 2010)

A White paper – The Coalition Government’s plans to introduce legislation to reform the welfare system by creating a new Universal Credit. Universal Credit will radically simplify the system with the intention of making work pay and combatting worklessness and poverty.

#### Self Directed Support: A National Strategy for Scotland (November 2010)

A 10 year strategy for Self-directed Support in Scotland which aims to set out and drive a cultural shift around the delivery of support that views people as equal citizens with rights and responsibilities.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/05120810/0>

#### Achieving Our Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland (November 2008)

This framework sets out priorities for action and investment to deliver improvements in reducing income inequalities. It introduces longer-term measures to tackle poverty and the drivers of low income, supporting those experiencing poverty or at risk of falling into poverty and making tax credits and benefits system work better for Scotland.

#### Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) 2008

This is a change management programme and a national approach by the Scottish Government to ensure that all Scotland's children, young people and their families have consistent, coordinated support, when they need it. Link to original guide:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/238985/0065813.pdf>; further information:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>

#### Concordat between the Scottish Government and local government (November 2007)

This concordat set out the terms of a new relationship between the Scottish Government and local government, based on mutual respect and partnership. The Concordat underpinned funding provided to local government and included a package of measures intended to lead, over time, to significant benefits for users of local government services.

Curriculum for Excellence (November 2004)

The Scottish Government's lifelong learning strategy aims to ensure that everyone develops the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need for life, learning and work.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/11/20178/45862>

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and subsequent Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009:

The Scottish Government recognises that all children and young people are different and some will require additional support to reach their full potential.

The Act is based on the concept of support being required for both long and short term.

Education authorities have key duties to identify, make provision for and review provision for the additional support needs of children for whose education they are responsible. They (and in certain circumstances health, social work and Skills Development Scotland) also have duties to plan and make joint provision for children with complex or multiple additional support needs. Where their needs are significant, lasting for more than one year and requiring support from education and another partner agency, children may have statutory coordinated support to meet their learning needs.

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/7/pdfs/asp\\_20090007\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/7/pdfs/asp_20090007_en.pdf)

## 2 DELIVERY

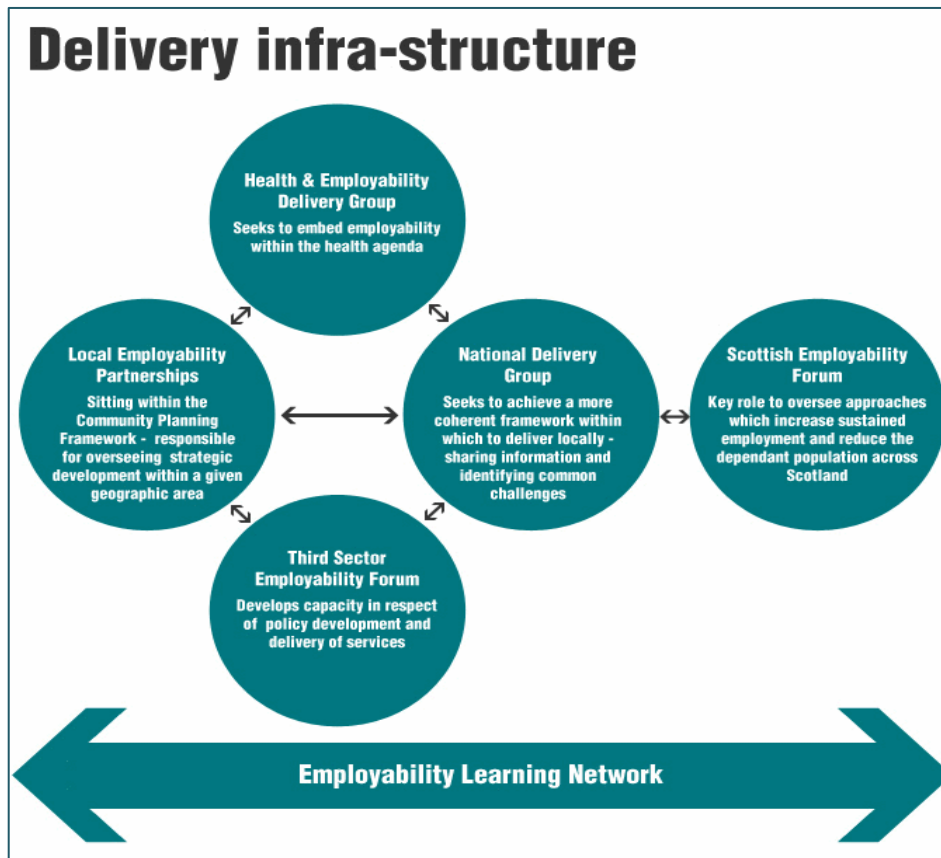
The Scottish Government Employability Delivery Team (EDT) has a focus to develop and grow the infrastructure and build capacity in employability across Scotland, through developing and working closely with Employability Partnerships.

### Employability Structures in Scotland

Employability Partnerships now exist in all 32 Local Authorities and sit within the Community Planning Partnership Framework. The formation of these partnerships has provided a much higher profile for employability at a Scottish level, raising its importance with the Community Planning Partnerships and the Single Outcome Agreements against which they report.

A number of national stakeholder-led groups have been established with Scottish Government support to work together with each other and the Scottish Government Employment Delivery Team to seek solutions to these challenges.

It is important that these partnerships pay attention to the specific needs of those on the spectrum, who may have employability skills in abundance but are still disadvantaged, due to their condition, in terms of finding a route into employment.





- [Scottish Employability Forum](#)
- [National Delivery Group](#)
- [Health and Employability Delivery Group](#)
- [Third Sector Employability Forum](#)
- [Local Employability Partnerships / Local Partnership Information by area](#)
- [Employability Learning Network](#)

### **Local Employability Partnerships**

With their local expertise and knowledge, Local Partnerships are essential to deliver appropriate services at local levels. Each one decides which strategic partners they need to achieve the best positive outcomes for the unemployed and employers in their area.

Partnerships typically include representation from Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus (JCP), Skills Development Scotland (SDS), local colleges, the Third Sector and the NHS.

There is high value in strengthening partnerships through the appropriate engagement with colleges, the third and private sectors. Local Employability Partnerships work with young people to match training provision with local labour market opportunities.

### **Youth Employment Action Plans**

All Local Authorities have these plans which are drawn up with Skills Development Scotland and key partners such as colleges, the voluntary sector and the DWP. These plans identify unemployed young people with priority needs, their location, services working on their behalf and referral arrangements between partners.

Scotland's Third Sector actively contribute by providing those furthest from the labour market with support and opportunities to develop skills/aptitudes which enhance their employability. Through working in partnership with the private sector and providing strong practical support, they assist young people to stay in work.

A number of local partnerships now have systems to track clients through services and follow their progression towards and into work and require their use by those they fund to deliver. This enables performance monitoring, as well as helping partnerships to plan, develop and align the range of services they offer.

### **Third Sector Autism Agencies**

A number of third sector agencies are involved in the delivery of employment support specifically for people with autism. They can provide a range of information, advice and support services and the usual help e.g. assistance with job search, CVs, applications, covering letters, interview preparation, preparing for work, managing in the workplace and cover basic skills for the job market. In addition, assistance may be given on defining skills and abilities for each individual, assisting them with career routes, job types, completing application forms and getting them to the point of readiness for employment.

These Third Sector Services are not usually directly connected to those provided through JobCentre Plus, in the sense that they are not funded by DWP. If a person is in receipt of benefits, has autism and wishes to find employment, they are advised to visit their local Jobcentre Plus, where there are Disability Employment Advisors (DEAs) who support people with a disability, including those with autism.

DEAs play a role in the initial assessment and referral to the right agency is an integral part of the intended process. However, a person will only be signposted to an autism support service (such as Number 6, IntoWork, Prospects) if a DEA at the Job Centre tells the person that these organisations/services exist. Similarly, contact with a DEA relies on the person with autism knowing DEAs exist and being willing to see them.

#### EXAMPLE

Intowork has contact with all local DEAs in the Edinburgh area and they are aware of the service. About 20% of their referrals are directly from DEAs and their involvement has extended to providing training to DEAs on autism awareness to improve the JCP experience for ASD jobseekers. The findings from this exercise were presented by Intowork and JCP at an Autism/employability event in Edinburgh City Chambers. Intowork has also had two JCP staff members on secondment for 4-5 months for a joint good practice initiative and will deliver follow-up training to DEAs and frontline staff in September.

‘My World of Work’ online provides careers guidance. There is potential for Skills Development Scotland to work together with employability partners in order to help individuals with support needs to use this site.

For further information on ‘My World of Work’, see link in Section 7 ‘KEY ORGANISATIONS’.

## 2.1 Strategic Skills Pipeline

### The Strategic Skills Pipeline

A key element of Workforce Plus was the recognition that people enter the labour market at different stages along a ‘pipeline’ and that this should inform policy direction and operational delivery. The Strategic Skills Pipeline - See below ‘Working for Growth: A Refresh of the Employability Framework for Scotland – September 2012’ for a representation of this: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/09/5609/8>

Pipeline	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
	Referral/Engagement activity	Barrier removal	Vocational activity	Employer Engagement & Job Matching	In-Work/Aftercare
Client Status	Not Job Ready	Not Job Ready	Job Ready	Job Ready	In Work
Examples of Eligible Activities	<p>Early Engagement Activity</p> <p>Identification of needs</p> <p>Development of Action Plans</p>	<p>Barrier Removal and Confidence Building activities</p> <p>ESOL</p> <p>Literacies</p> <p>Specialist and non-traditional employability provision (e.g. debt/financial, homelessness)</p> <p>Vocational rehabilitation</p>	<p>Vocational activity</p> <p>Job search advice</p> <p>Work Experience Placement</p> <p>Activities to raise awareness of enterprise and entrepreneurship</p> <p>Accredited pre-employment training for core skills (eg ICT)</p>	<p>Employer engagement and job matching activities</p> <p>Training, mentoring and supporting men and women into occupations or sectors where their gender is under-represented</p>	<p>Support to help employee retention, including upskilling/workforce development</p> <p>Initiatives to encourage development of vocational skills among low-skilled and low-waged individuals</p> <p>Apprenticeships</p> <p>High level business and management skills</p> <p>Training to support business start up (particularly for groups under-represented at managerial levels)</p>

It enables all of those who plan and develop services at a national or local level to determine where duplication and gaps exist, to address those against an easily understood common definition and to ensure that at each stage, clients are progressing toward sustained employment. There is a need to ensure that all local authority Single Outcome Agreements include young people with support needs, including those with autism.

There are concerns that young people with autism who could work will not receive funding as they do not fit into the ‘pipeline’ because of their atypical routes into work.

The Supported Employment Framework for Disabled People (February 2010) (See Section 1.2, Scottish Policy) includes a clear description what Supported Employment is and how it is delivered: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/23093849/5>

The introduction includes a diagram of the 5-stepped supported employment approach:



### 3 EMPLOYABILITY IN SCOTLAND – KEY THEMES

'Employability' refers to everything which enables people to increase their chances of getting a job, retaining it and progressing further in work. 'Working for Growth: A Refresh of the Employability Framework for Scotland' was published in September 2012. (See Section 1.2: Scottish Policy). It makes reference to the Scottish Government Employability in Scotland site:

<http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/key-themes/key-clients>

Within this site, the Scottish Government has identified a number of **key themes** that are relevant to employability as described below:

#### 1. Employer Engagement

Organisations and agencies engage locally in different ways and for a variety of purposes with local employers, e.g. JobCentre Plus, Workforce Plus partners, Chamber of Commerce, Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives, Skills Development Scotland.

When engaging with employers, Employability Partnerships should agree how information about employers is gathered and provide a single point of contact. They should identify a variety of employers with whom they wish to work and identify current and potential job opportunities, including what they entail. Employability Partnerships need to understand current recruitment practices, promoting the business benefits to employers of recruiting priority clients and of being involved in local employability approaches. They should support employers in understanding the needs of these groups, providing support or signposting in terms of recruitment, training and in-work support.

When identifying employers with whom to work and potential job opportunities,, organisations such as the following are useful:

#### Jobcentre Plus

Part of DWP, it brings together employment and benefit services for people of working age and is a key element in the Government's objectives to help people based on "Work for those who can, support for those who cannot". They provide:

- personal advisers - provide practical support and advice, including training provision and benefits guidance
- support to employers in filling their vacancies quickly and successfully
- online and over the phone job search support through Jobpoints in Jobcentre Plus offices, the Jobseeker Direct phone line and through the website
- swift, secure and professional access to benefits for those entitled to them.

Jobcentre Plus services -1,000 locations across Britain, work with over 275,000 employers, advertising over 4 million jobs per year, from all sectors.

[www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus](http://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus)

### Office for National Statistics

Website includes statistics on the number of Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) for the whole of the UK. The site also includes key publications and latest summaries and publications. This information includes National Profiles: Key Statistics – Scotland, with employment rates for people aged 16-64, which include levels of unemployment and the percentage of those economically inactive.

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

### Future Skills Scotland

Provides labour market information (LMI) and intelligence. The Scottish LMI Framework brings together key stakeholders and partners to examine current LMI, future needs and opportunities and identify opportunities for improvement.

[www.futureskillsscotland.org.uk](http://www.futureskillsscotland.org.uk)

## **2. European Structural Funds**

European Structural Funds provide EU Member States and regions with assistance to overcome structural deficiencies, strengthen competitiveness and increase employment. Scottish Government is the 'Managing Authority' for Structural Funds in Scotland and has overall responsibility for supervising the implementation, on-going management and effectiveness of the programmes. Programmes run over seven years.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/support/17404>

## **3. Cross-boundary working**

'Working for Growth: A Refresh of the Employability Framework for Scotland' (September 2012) draws attention to the fact that young people furthest from the labour market often remain in very narrowly defined geographic areas where job opportunities are severely restricted. However, if they are given support and successfully engage in post-16 education and training, it is possible that they may be able to consider employment in a different local authority.

## **4. Early Interventions**

Partnership working and the pooling of resources across traditional service boundaries including health, employment, social services, debt advice and justice will be key to allow Scotland to progress on this agenda while continuing to maintain the crucial support for those currently experiencing crisis.

## **5. Health**

Unemployment is associated with a higher risk of death and increased mental health problems. Unemployment has a range of consequences for people's lives, materially, socially and psychologically. In addition to the Scottish Government's 'Achieving Our

Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland' (Nov 2008), see the Scottish Government's Equally Well Review 2010, CMO Sir Harry Burn's annual CMO report 2010, the report of the Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities(2008) and information on the Reconvened Ministerial Task Force:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Healthy-Living/Health-Inequalities/Equally-Well>

## **6. Key Clients**

This 'theme' refers to clients who are a particular focus for employability or poverty initiatives. It includes people with additional needs (e.g. people with autism). For those with learning disabilities, it highlights that they should be offered the same rights as other people, including the opportunity to earn a living wage, develop friendships and have wider choices in their lives. It points out that too often people with learning disabilities experience poverty, exclusion and dependency on specialist service provision and highlights the vital role that employment can play in offering an alternative, more inclusive lifestyle.

## **7. Managing Money**

People with autism in receipt of benefits need to be carefully supported when moving into work, so that they can retain stability and sustain employment. They need to be aware of which benefits, if they are in receipt of any, will remain unaffected and which will be affected. It is important that employers and employability services are aware of the impact that moving in and out of work can have financially.

## **8. Rural Challenges**

There are a range of challenges faced by those in rural areas. These include lack of diversity in available work, distance and travel time to FE/HE facilities which are often limited. Most businesses have small workforces and recruit fewer people, so a strong network of contacts is required to successfully place clients. There is less capacity to provide support and guidance to employees in the workplace. The cost of providing services in rural areas can be high so it is essential to use resources effectively.

## **9. Skills**

Employers may be reluctant to take on employees lacking qualifications or experience. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) promotes lifelong learning in Scotland. It provides information on mainstream qualifications in Scotland. It aims to support everyone in Scotland, including learning providers and employers, by assisting people of all ages and circumstances to gain access to appropriate education and training and by helping employers, learners and the general public to understand the full range of Scottish qualifications, how they relate to each other and other forms of learning and how different types of qualifications contribute to improving the skills of the workforce.

## 10. Social Return on Investment (SROI)

SROI is an impact measurement tool and a way in which an organisation can look at what it does, measure the difference that activity makes to people's lives, and tell a robust story about that difference or impact. If an organisation can successfully support an individual with autism in employment, it will clearly make an enormous difference to that person, their self-esteem and the quality of their life. SROI is an important tool for third sector and voluntary groups who are seeking tools to measure their impact and value.

## 11. Supported Employment

Supported employment (SE) has been defined in Scotland as “*promoting the rights of all individuals to achieve their full potential through a model of flexible support that enables people to overcome barriers to their employability and access real jobs for real pay*”.

Supported employment services provide ongoing, personalised support to those with long-term health conditions and disabilities who experience multiple barriers to work, with the aim of securing sustainable, paid jobs. In good practice supported employment, a “Place and Train” approach is used where the preparation phase is minimised, job search is rapid and people are quickly supported into an open, competitive position.

Supported Employment in Scotland is provided by a range of organisations and agencies, particularly in the form of specialist projects offered through voluntary sector, health or social care services. Supported Employment is a distinct model, separate from Work Choice which is outcome-funded. These specialist services target people who can benefit from ongoing support to find and sustain work. A barrier to the provision of good quality supported employment in Scotland is the lack of sustained funding: currently agencies are funded by a range of sources, including the NHS, local authorities, Fairer Scotland Funds and the European Social Fund.

Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE) is an umbrella organisation for public, private and voluntary bodies interested in supported employment, social inclusion and the changeover from traditional resource centre-based day services to programmes in the community. See Section 8 ‘Employment Support Initiatives for people with autism’.

## 12. The Role of the Third Sector

Locally, the relationship between local government and the Third Sector is extremely important, given the role of the latter in Community Planning Partnerships and Single Outcome Agreements. From 2012-15, the Scottish Government has committed £73.6 m to the Third Sector. The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that the Third Sector is able to play a full role in public service reform through greater involvement in service design and delivery. The Third Sector is well placed to deliver many of the recommendations of the Christie Commission regarding partnership working, collaborative spending in localities and preventative spending.

The Christie Commission: [www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2011/06/27154527/0](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2011/06/27154527/0)

### **13. Volunteering**

Volunteering can help people back into paid work or be a valid employability choice in its own right. Benefits include establishing a routine, gaining new skills and updating existing ones. Supported Volunteering refers to schemes where volunteers receive additional support in order to carry out their volunteer roles. One particular challenge is to find meaningful volunteering opportunities which allow for development and are not simply repetitive, unless that is the individual's preference. Volunteer Scotland is the main website in Scotland for finding volunteering opportunities.

<http://www.volunteerscotland.org.uk>

### **14. Welfare Reform**

The UK Welfare Reform Act 2012

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents/enacted>

Although welfare is a reserved matter for the UK Parliament, the changes and cuts being introduced by the UK Government will impact on people and services of Scotland. Scottish Ministers have partially refused legislative consent for those parts of the UK Welfare Reform Bill relating to elements of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment. The Welfare Reform (Further Provision) (Scotland) Act 2012 gives Scottish Ministers powers to make changes to Scottish legislation relating to 'passported benefits'. The Scottish Government is working with stakeholders to better understand the impact of these reforms and to deliver on Scotland's new devolved responsibilities.

See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/10/enacted?view=interweave>

### **15. Expert Working Group on Welfare**

The Expert Working Group on Welfare Report was published in May 2013. The Group was asked to 'scrutinise and challenge the Scottish Government's work on assessing the cost of benefit payments in an independent Scotland and the delivery of those payments in an independent Scotland'. They were also asked to offer views on immediate priorities for change in the event of independence. The Report provides a very useful overview of Welfare Reform. The group's focus was on delivery, transition and early priorities for change, considered from the perspective of benefit claimants. There are significant references throughout to those with disabilities.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00424088.pdf>

### **16. Tackling Poverty**

Whilst not listed as a key theme, tackling poverty is also identified as an important part of the Employability in Scotland picture.

To improve the life chances of people and target the causes of poverty there needs to be greater access to jobs, improved early years provision, enhancement of skills and educational achievement, regeneration of communities and better health and public services.



## 4 BENEFITS CONTEXT

### Benefits for those seeking or eventually seeking paid work:

1. Job Seeker's Allowance – the main benefit
2. Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) – for people who are ill or disabled  
ESA is 2-tiered:
  - Tier 1: Work-related activity group – personalised help for people with some ability to work but assessed as having a condition which makes getting a job difficult (e.g. autism, mental health, physical or learning disability).
  - Tier 2: Support group – for people currently unable to work.

To get ESA, a lengthy form needs completed and the person needs to score 15 points. Applications for ESA can be made by those who are employed, self-employed or unemployed. Many people with autism will not score sufficient points to merit ESA even though their condition may incur discrimination in the job market. Services like Number 6 in Edinburgh can help people with their ESA applications by providing help with form filling or appeals.

### Benefit available for those with a disability (whether employed or not)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) – to be replaced by Personal Independence Payments over next two years or later.

### Moving from benefits to paid work and how to avoid the 'Benefit trap'

For many people on ESA and/or DLA (to be gradually replaced by Personal Independence Payments (PIP) over the next two years with most being unaffected until 2015 or later), the best route into paid work is to secure the job, ensuring it fits the criteria for either permitted work or supported permitted work. This is also the case for those in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, National Insurance Credits or Income Support because of illness or disability. This allows a person to try out part-time work to develop skills and confidence whilst still receiving the same amount of benefit. For those in receipt of Income Support, benefits may be reduced if average earnings are more than the earnings disregard. In this way, they avoid the risk of the job potentially not working out and then having to re-apply for benefit.

The following link to the UK Government's Benefits and Credits page on 'Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)' explains about working and claiming ESA. It clarifies what Permitted Work and Supported Permitted Work are and the conditions attached to these.

<https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/eligibility>

See also 'Permitted Work Rules':

<http://www.workways.org.uk/index.php/the-maze/permitted-work-rules>

### Universal Credit and Permitted Work or Supported Permitted Work – changes for people with disabilities who are working.

If an individual receives income-related Employment and Support Allowance, they will eventually be moved onto Universal Credit and assessed as to whether they have limited capability for work and/or limited capability for work-related activity. The tests are the same as for Employment and Support Allowance.

The ‘permitted work scheme’ (see Disability Rights UK factsheet F35 *Work for people who are sick and disabled* for more information) does not apply under Universal Credit. If a person is disabled and doing permitted work and moves onto Universal Credit, their total income from Universal Credit and earnings may be less than their benefits and earnings under the permitted work scheme – but they should get transitional protection so that they do not lose any money at the point of change.

See DWP’s Welfare Reform Bill Universal Credit – Equality Impact Assessment November 2011, page 14, which explains how the ‘taper and disregard’ will replace the more complex current ESA permitted work rules which allow people to undertake some work whilst retaining their ESA.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/220152/eia-universal-credit-wr2011.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220152/eia-universal-credit-wr2011.pdf)

### Working Tax Credit

This is a mainstream source of financial support for working people on a low income. If a person has a disability, they may qualify for extra Working Tax Credit.

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits/start/who-qualifies/workingtaxcredit/index.htm>

The following credits, which include those mentioned above, will gradually be replaced over the next couple of years by Universal Credit which brings together a range of working-age benefits into a single payment.

Universal Credit will be introduced in 2013 and will replace:

- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credits
- Working Tax Credits
- Housing Benefit

### Self Directed Support (SDS)

Self Directed Support is an available support/resource for individuals, paid directly, through council-arranged provision or a mixture of these methods (in which control of the fund is shared). Currently, many people with autism use SDS for community outreach e.g. daily activities such as accessing shopping, entertainment etc. There is potential for people with autism to use SDS to help them find and sustain employment.  
<http://www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk>

The fear of the 'benefits trap' can be one of the main barriers that a person with autism needs to overcome as they move into paid employment. Jobcentre Plus can do 'better off' calculations for people to determine what benefits they can have based on earning a particular amount of money.

#### **EXAMPLE**

In Edinburgh, Number 6 (Autism Initiatives) and Intowork support people to access better off calculations which advise about Housing Benefit levels and Working Tax Credit rates.

In 2012, Number 6 and FAIR provided joint information sessions on how employment impacts on benefits and it has been recommended that this continue.

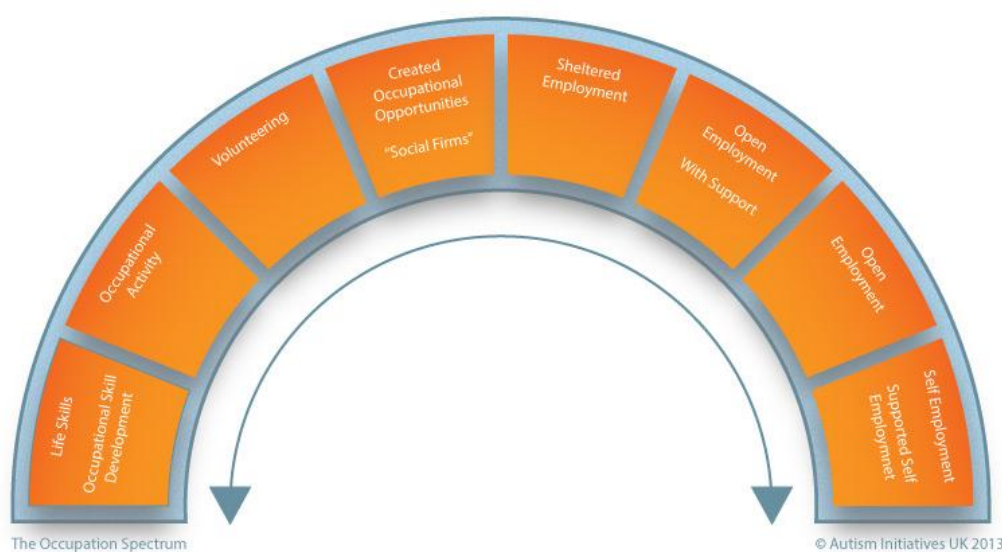
## 5 AUTISM AND EMPLOYMENT

There are many different pathways to employment for people with autism. In general, services across Scotland are patchy and disjointed. Adults with autism often find it difficult to access appropriate information, advice and practical support that is autism-specific, with regard to both obtaining and keeping a job.

NAS research has found that for people with autism in the UK, only 15% are in full-time paid employment and 9% are in part-time employment, whilst 79% of people with autism on out-of-work benefits say they would like to work, with the right support.

It is important that the right occupational outcome is identified and, as the ‘What I Do’ diagram shows, there are a range of positive outcomes, not just open paid employment, and different outcomes may be appropriate at different times in the person’s working life. Each outcome has value and people with autism have contributions to make across this spectrum.

### “What I do”



There are a number of well recognised barriers and challenges to be overcome by people with autism seeking to work. Many of these are around the lack of understanding and non-recognition that people with autism can sometimes encounter and where relatively minor adjustments in the workplace can make a significant difference.

Despite these challenges we need to acknowledge and recognise the benefits that people with autism can bring to the workplace and the contribution that people on the autism spectrum have always made to Society.

There are many books and articles that have been written about autism and employment and most of the autism organisations listed in Section 8 can provide further information on the typical challenges and strategies to overcome these.

## 6 LOOKING FOR WORK

### Looking for work if you are disabled

The first point of contact is the local Jobcentre Plus, through which access can be gained to a Disability Employment Advisor (DEA). Most Jobcentres have DEAs who provide support to jobseekers aged 18 or over with disabilities.

DEAs can help the person find a job or gain new skills and provide information about local disability-friendly employers. They also refer people to specialist occupational psychologists, if appropriate, or carry out an 'employment assessment', asking about the person's skills and experience and the kind of roles in which they're interested. There is wide variety in the degree of understanding DEAs may have about autism, how autism impacts on the individual and what is required to assist people with autism to find suitable employment, if they are able and wish to work. DEAs may not have autism-specific knowledge but can advise about getting work and the law relating to disability.

### Programmes and grants

Disability Employment Advisors can provide clients with information about programmes and grants which are available to help people into work. These include:

- [Work Choice](#) - to help person find a job, and get support when they start work
- [Residential Training](#) - to give person work experience and training
- [Access to Work](#) - money towards a support worker or for the cost of equipment or travelling to work

<https://www.gov.uk/looking-for-work-if-disabled>

### Work Choice

This employment programme, launched in October 2010, is a voluntary programme for disabled people of working age who need support in work as well as to find a job. In addition, to be eligible, applicants must be able to work a minimum of 16 hours per week after Work Entry Support, have a recognised disability (<https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>) that means it is hard to get or keep a job and also need specialist help which they cannot get from other government programmes or schemes, e.g. workplace adjustments, suppliers working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus or Access to Work (<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>). Individuals who are in work (including those who are self-employed) but at risk of losing their job due to their disability may apply. There is no requirement to be in receipt of benefits.

Work Choice aims to assist them in acquiring and keeping a job. It is tailored to individual needs and may include training and developing skills, building confidence, interview coaching and finding suitable employment.

Work Choice is delivered by different providers across the UK. There are 3 levels of help:

1. Work entry support: Advice on work and personal skills to help find a job – up to 6 months. This can be extended by 3-6 months in exceptional circumstances and when there is a clear prospect of getting a job.
2. In-work support: Help to start work and stay in a job – Up to 2 years
3. Longer-term in-work support – help to get on in job and work without support – long-term

The British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) has published a number of articles on its website which comment on Work Choice, as well as the Work Programme and the UK Government’s Review of their Disability Employment Strategy.

<http://base-uk.org/topics/programmes-and-delivery/work-choice>

### **Access to Work**

Access to Work is a UK Government programme that can provide practical and financial support to disabled people and people with long term conditions, aged 16 or over, living in Scotland, England or Wales and who need support, to start or remain at work. If individuals are working and claiming Employment Support Allowance or Incapacity Benefit, however, they do not usually qualify. ‘Access to Work’ also provides practical advice and guidance to employers to help them understand physical and mental ill health and how they can support employees, so that they fulfil their responsibilities. For employers considering employing someone with a disability or who have an employee who develops a health condition, Access to Work through Jobcentre Plus may be able to assist, through helping the employee with special equipment (or alteration to existing equipment), alterations to premises or their working environment and help with employee costs of getting to and from work amongst others. Importantly, Access to Work can provide a support worker or job coach to assist the employee in the workplace.

A new development is that Access to Work support is being made more widely available and funding increased to deliver enhanced outcomes for disabled people.

<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview>

#### **EXAMPLE**

From 2013-14, The Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL) is being funded by the Office of Disability Issues (ODI) to promote and provide information and advice on Access to Work to disabled people, people with long term conditions, employers and employment support organisations in the Lothian Region.

## **Residential Training**

Unemployed disabled adults (aged 18 or over) who are UK residents can apply, if there are no suitable training courses locally available. The courses provide help to find work, gain more experience to keep a job or become self-employed, through a combination of guidance, work experience and qualifications. Training is given in accessible college buildings and is taught by staff with knowledge of disability issues. Courses vary from college to college; many lead to NVQs in subjects such as administration, catering, retail, horticulture or leisure/tourism/travel. Some help is available for living and travel costs. There are 9 residential training providers in England; however, there are none in Scotland. Access to information about courses is through the DEA.



## 7 KEY ORGANISATIONS

Below are some of the key generic organisations that are involved in supporting people with disabilities into work in Scotland:

### Skills Development Scotland

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-people-to-find-and-stay-in-work/supporting-pages/managing-the-work-programme>

Skills Development Scotland is the national skills body supporting the people and businesses of Scotland to develop and apply their skills. They assist individuals, employers and work with training advisors. They are one of the delivery partners for the Scottish Government's guaranteed offer of a place in education or training for all 16-19 year olds through 'Opportunities for All'. They work with partners across Scotland to deliver the following key services:

- Careers Service - Building Career Management Skills through career information, advice and a guidance service available to all people of working age.
- My World of Work – web service offering tools, features, job information to help people learn about themselves and the future world of work.  
<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/our-services/my-world-of-work>
- Modern Apprenticeships – allow businesses to train new entrants and existing employees to industry-recognised standards.  
<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/our-services/modern-apprenticeships>
- Skillsforce – support for employers to recruit, develop and plan a skilled workforce through a dedicated employer team and a skills web service.  
<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/our-services/our-skillsforce>
- PACE (Partnership Action for Continuing Employment) – lead delivery in support for those dealing with redundancy.  
<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/our-services/pace-redundancy-support>
- The Employability Fund – supporting individuals to secure and sustain employment through the development of employability skills through a local delivery model. It brings together the national training programmes 'Get Ready for Work' and 'Training for Work'. Provides flexible training support which responds to the needs of employers and local labour markets.  
<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/our-services/employability-fund>
- Individual Learning Accounts – providing financial support for individual learning.  
<http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/our-services/individual-learning-accounts>

## Secondary School Support

Most, if not all secondary schools are involved in introducing young people to work experience. There are also many pupils involved in programmes which involve one or two days in a college or work placement with the remainder of days being spent in school. Schools often work hard to liaise with all the different agencies and find a fit for young people and have a vital role in moving young people into work.

### EXAMPLE

Opened in 2004, St Modan's Autism Provision in Stirling is a specialist service within Pupil Support and Development (SPD), providing support to school pupils with autism. As part of this specialist service, St Modan's Autism Provision offers work experience projects within the school to develop life skills and experiences for senior pupils. The service was successful in attracting funding through the Scottish Government to further develop these projects.

## Transitional Support at School

In terms of transitions for school pupils with additional support needs, increasingly, more attention is being paid to what happens after school. This is reflected in the Curriculum for Excellence's expectations for all learners in their 'Senior Phase' within the school, as described in the Scottish Government's publication '[Building the Curriculum 3: A framework for learning and teaching](#)' (2008). This document provides the framework for planning a curriculum which meets the needs of all children and young people from 3 to 18.

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/whatcanlearnersexpect/seniorphase.asp>

### EXAMPLE

South Lanarkshire Council's 'Work it out' project provides a pathway to supported employment for school leavers with additional support needs. It provides them with supported access to employment, FE and training opportunities. This project has supported over 250 young people, 91 of whom have secured jobs and 54 of whom are undertaking training for employment. Many are working towards SVQs in Horticulture or Food Preparation. See

[http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/911/training\\_and\\_personal\\_development/948/work\\_it\\_out\\_programme-asn](http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/911/training_and_personal_development/948/work_it_out_programme-asn)

### Putting Learners at the Centre – Delivering our Ambitions for Post-16 Education

Published September 2011, makes reference to overcoming barriers for all disadvantaged young people and to offering a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old in Scotland who is not currently in employment, education or training. For links to both publications, see **Section 1.2 Scottish Policy** within this Guide.

Third Sector organisations may work together with local authorities and schools for pupils with additional support needs around transitions.

#### **EXAMPLE**

The Glasgow-based Values into Action Scotland's Employer Liaison Coordinator has been working in partnership with Glasgow City Council and Glasgow schools on behalf of pupils with additional support needs to consider how best to assist with transitions into employment. She has met with the Manager of Supported Employment Services and with Work Placement Officers. Some pupils are interested in longer-term work placements, (as opposed to the traditional 1 or 2 week placements). Longer-term work experience placements (whereby the student might attend school 3 days per week and their placement on the other 2 days of the week) could be beneficial for preparing students for the workplace in confidence building, team building and understanding the workplace and how work is structured.

#### **Lead Scotland**

Lead Scotland (Specialists in Linking Education and Disability) is a voluntary organisation set up to widen access to learning for disabled young people and adults and carers across Scotland.

<http://www.lead.org.uk>

#### **Scottish Union for Supported Employment (SUSE)**

SUSE is a charity and an umbrella organisation for public, private and voluntary bodies interested in supported employment, social inclusion for disabled people. In addition to being the professional body that supports the sector, it aims to promote and develop Supported Employment in Scotland and ensure the availability of a professional, high quality service and to have Supported Employment recognised as a mainstream service. Supported employment is a collaborative approach, requiring cooperation and understanding of all involved, including the client, support provider, employer and those funding it. SUSE works to promote this collaboration both at a local level, e.g. in

Employability Partnerships, regionally, through the creation of regional networks of Supported Employment Providers and a national level.

SUSE has its own website and offers Equality and Diversity Training for employers and practitioners. It has input into Scottish Supported Employment policy and the development of tools for improving supported employment quality and consistency. Board members worked with the Scottish Government and COSLA to develop and deliver 'A Working Life for All Disabled People' The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland (2010).

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/23094107/3>

SUSE is at the forefront of developing and delivering the model of Supported Employment to a wider target audience and runs a self directed support capacity building project.

### **Disability Employment Services**

Organisations can have agreements to deliver disability employment services with the Local Authorities.

#### **EXAMPLE**

In the Lothians area, 6 organisations have Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to deliver disability employment services. Their services are currently the subject of a review by Edinburgh City Council. Intowork and the Action Group are the only two organisations using the Supported Employment 5 stage model. Other organisations not receiving SLAs also deliver disability employment support e.g. SAMH, Support in Mind.

### **Local Supported Employment Teams**

These teams provide an employment placement and support service to individuals who are disadvantaged in the labour market and seeking paid work. They aim to place them into integrated employment settings. The teams offer pre-employment support and preparation, recruitment and job-matching, training support for new employees with a disability and on-going support to the employee and their employer. They also provide information and advice on other relevant employment support services.

<http://www.susescotland.co.uk/local-networks>

### EXAMPLE

'Joined up for jobs' describes itself as the jobs strategy for Edinburgh. This strategy sets out how a partnership of key agencies will help more people into employment. They target programmes where there is greatest need. Their website offers information to job-seekers and to employers on what assistance is available. Amongst other things, the site provides information on funding and resources for service providers and a Directory, listing organisations and services offering employability support to people seeking work and information about these organisations' services and programmes. The website also includes a section on strategy, policy developments and implementation.

<http://www.joinedupforjobs.org.uk>

### Momentum

Momentum Skills is the employment and training arm of Momentum, a leading not-for-profit organisation providing rehabilitation, training and care services for people with disabilities and others who face economic and social exclusion.

<http://momentumskills.org.uk/our-services/employment>

It uses Work Choice, Access to Work and has a variety of programmes across Scotland (as well as other parts of UK) which are employment-related to assist those with disabilities to get back to work as well as a facility for locating local services.

<http://momentumskills.org.uk/our-services/employer-services>

### The Shaw Trust

A national UK charity which helps disadvantaged and disabled people back to work. Supports individuals achieve their personal goals with support through 'Work Choice' or 'The Work Programme' in the following areas:

- helping them prepare for work
- helping with employment and
- managing a disability.

[www.shaw-trust.org.uk](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk)

### Alliance

Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE), based in Glasgow, is an independent Scottish Charity funded by a Scottish Government grant which works to make the lives of people with long term conditions, disabilities and unpaid carers better. Alliance runs a project 'My skills, my strengths, my right to work' which, amongst other things, aims to improve access to the labour market for people with long term conditions

and reduce discrimination and negative attitudes by spreading good practice and effective, evidence-based approaches.

<http://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/my-skills-my-strengths-my-right-to-work>

### **The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)**

SCVO is a national body and an umbrella organisation for Scotland's charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises. SCVO is committed to providing jobs through employment initiatives and supporting the sector to provide placements, internships and volunteering opportunities which help build skills.

Local Councils for Volunteer organisations can also develop activities around supporting employability initiatives.

### **Business Gateway**

Business Gateway Advisors can provide practical information and advice on starting up, funding and growing a personal business.

<http://www.bgateway.com>

### **Scottish Enterprise**

Scottish Enterprise works with businesses across Scotland to stimulate economic growth and improve the business environment, helping companies they work with to raise their sights and ambitions and consider their business from a global perspective. They offer grants, loans and equity investment to ambitious businesses looking to grow, develop and export.

<http://www.scottish-enterprise.com>

### **The Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust (PSYBT)**

This trust helps young people in Scotland to start up and continue in business. PSYBT is now Youth Business Scotland, part of The Prince's Trust. Together they are Scotland's leading youth organisation, supporting more young people into jobs, self-employment, training, education and volunteering.

<http://www.psybt.org.uk>

### **Shell LiveWIRE**

Offers free online business advice and start-up awards of £1,000 and £10,000 funding to young entrepreneurs in the UK (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

<http://www.shell-livewire.org>

## 8 EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT INITIATIVES FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

The purpose of this section is to give a few examples of agencies that provide support to people with autism in preparing for, seeking and maintaining employment. These examples are based in the Central Belt of Scotland and show the range of different types of support that may be required.

### 8.1 Autism-specific support services

#### **Intowork**

Intowork provides supported employment services to people with disabilities and health conditions in Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian. They work mainly with people with acquired brain injury, ASD, Learning Disabilities or Mental Health Conditions. They use the 5 stage supported employment model – job readiness, vocational profiling, job search, employer engagement and on/off job support.

<http://www.intowork.org.uk>

#### **Autism Initiatives**

Autism Initiatives offers work experiences in real work settings through its 3 social firms, The Café on the Corner in Edinburgh, The Hermitage and the Gallery on the Corner. They assist adults with autism to improve confidence and acquire new skills within a work environment by creating occupational placements. These social firms are developed by Autism Ventures Scotland (AVS), part of Autism Initiatives UK which was established to create employment opportunities and experiences for people with Autism.

The Gallery on the Corner: [thegalleryonthecorner.org.uk](http://thegalleryonthecorner.org.uk)

The Café on the Corner: <http://www.cafeonthecorner.org.uk>

The Hermitage: <http://www.autisminitiatives.org/employment-autism/the-hermitage>

In addition Autism Initiatives has created real employment and volunteering opportunities within its administration team at its Edinburgh office.

#### **National Autistic Society**

The Prospects employment service is NAS's employment and training service for people with autism who wish to work. Prospects in Glasgow offer a project 'Moving Forward' which is Big Lottery funded, providing support into paid employment, volunteering, or going to college or university for people with autism aged 16-25. The aim of the project is to develop social confidence, employability and living skills. The project consists of two modules, 'Building Independence' and 'First steps to employment', each lasting 6 weeks. Prospects also provide training to organisations and employability professionals so that they can recruit, train and retain staff who have autism.

NAS's 'Prospects Scotland Graduate Programme', funded by the Scottish Government, offers businesses graduate interns who are skilled, motivated and high-achieving graduates with autism. The programme also provides training and support for the graduate and support to the employer.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/our-services/employment-support/employers/graduate%20programme%20scotland.aspx>

NAS also works in partnership with Remploy, who provide employment services for people with disabilities, to increase the number of people with autism entering mainstream employment and help them overcome barriers. The partnership has allowed Prospects to provide autism expertise through a tailored training package for all staff at Remploy's network of high-street recruitment branches.

### **Scottish Autism**

In the Lanarkshire area is Café Kudos, Carluke, run by Scottish Autism, which enables people who have autism to develop vocational skills in a supported environment whilst working in the café. Service users have the opportunity to build on skills, knowledge and understanding and gain recognised qualifications which allow for development into a career within the hospitality industry.

Café Kudos is one of three vocational services provided by Scottish Autism for people with autism which provide service users with an opportunity to learn new skills and train for work in a real business environment. The other two are Kudos Krafts and Braidwood.

<http://www.scottishautism.org/adult-services/south-west-scotland/day-vocational-opportunities>

### **Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability**

SCLD is a consortium of partner organisations who work together to encourage best practice in the support of people with learning disabilities through training, information, research and public. Their goal is an inclusive Scotland where everyone is valued and respected for who they are and what they contribute as equal citizens. They work in partnership with people with learning disabilities of all ages and family carers to challenge discrimination and develop and share good practice. Their website provides links to a number of national and local organisations providing supported employment services.

<http://www.sclld.org.uk/home>

### **Specialisterne**

Originating in Denmark this is an IT company where the majority of employees have a diagnosis of autism. Employees work as business consultants on tasks such as software testing, programming and data-entry for the public and private sectors.



Specialisterne harnesses the special characteristics and talents of people with autism and uses them as a competitive advantage and as a means to help people with autism secure meaningful employment. Specialisterne has operations in numerous locations around the world and in the UK; their ambition is to replicate Specialisterne as a sustainable business in locations throughout the United Kingdom, including Scotland.

(Prior to 2013, another company used the Specialisterne name and brand to run a similar business in Glasgow which closed in 2012).

<http://uk.specialisterne.com>

### **SAP**

SAP is an organisation seeking to hire software engineers with autism. It is rolling out its programme globally, initially in Canada, US and Germany in 2013, with a second pilot planned for Ireland. SAP is working in partnership with Specialisterne.

[http://www.theregister.co.uk/2013/05/23/sap\\_hires\\_autism\\_recruits](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2013/05/23/sap_hires_autism_recruits)

### **IWORK4ME**

IWORK4ME is a Scottish Charity working to provide specialised support to people with significant disadvantages, who have difficulty in accessing mainstream self-employment assistance. IWORK4ME provide information and advice, as well as support for projects. The charity focuses particularly on Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC).

<http://www.iwork4me.org.uk>

### **Aspire, City of Edinburgh Council**

The City of Edinburgh Council's transition team supports young people aged 14 to early 20s with Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism to move from the support provided by school and children's services to that provided by adult services. The team assess individual needs and develop support packages to enable young people with disabilities to plan and achieve their preferred post-school options. Aspire, part of the transition team, offers a life-coaching transition service specifically for young people with Asperger's Syndrome (AS) or High Functioning Autism. The staff work with people leaving school or college and others up to age 24 who require help with these or any other transitions. A referral for such assistance can be made to Aspire from age 14.

## 8.2 Non autism-specific support services and networks

### **The Action Group**

The Action Group works with children and adults and their families needing additional support to live in the community. They provide support/advice to around 1,000 individuals and families across Edinburgh, the Lothians and Falkirk.

### Real Jobs

The Action Group provide a supported employment service called Real Jobs. This is available in the Lothians and Falkirk to assist those with learning disabilities and other support needs to find jobs they enjoy.

Real Jobs Edinburgh aims to provide support for people with a range of support needs to find and sustain paid employment. It also aims to provide support for employers to recruit and retain staff with support needs.

Real Jobs Falkirk, funded by the Fairer Falkirk Fund, helps pupils leaving Carrongrange School to make a successful transition into work, training or further education and aims to assist pupils to identify and achieve their employment, education and training aspirations.

### **Edinburgh Social Enterprise Network**

Includes organisations such as Forth Sector, whose primary focus is to provide employability support to aid the recovery of people with mental health problems. There are over 120 Social Enterprises in Edinburgh which tackle a range of problems, from creating opportunities for disabled people through arts to tackling environmental issues and providing employment and training for young people.

<http://www.edinburghsocialenterprise.co.uk>

### **Hansel, Ayrshire**

Hansel works to support people with a wide range of support needs, including individuals with autism. Hansel delivers Work Choice to support people to gain employability skills, to access, and to sustain, paid employment.

Through Work Choice, Hansel provides work placements in partnership with a wide range of Ayrshire businesses. The organisation can also access support for people who aim to be self-employed. Hansel also has three supported businesses – Hansel Laundry, Lindy's Tearoom and its Grounds Maintenance Service – which provide paid employment and work experience opportunities.

<http://www.hansel.org.uk>

### **Routes to Work South**

Based in South Lanarkshire, it is a partnership of DWP, Scottish Enterprise and South Lanarkshire Council with offices in Cambuslang, East Kilbride, Hamilton and Lanark. It works with partner agencies to deliver a flexible, accessible, client-centred service that supports local residents over 16 years old find and sustain employment, supports local employers and links opportunity and need.

Routes to Work South works with job-ready clients and those furthest removed from the labour market. It supports individuals with a range of barriers to employment, including clients with learning difficulties, particularly those with autism, to find paid work. The service is free to anyone not on the Work Programme. The job brokerage service provides

a wide range of supports (assistance to identify skills and experience, an action plan to help the individual gain the job they want, matching individuals to current job vacancies, accessing hidden market vacancies across Lanarkshire and Glasgow, practical support and guidance with CVs, application forms, interview techniques, mock interviews and job searching, access to financial information when moving into work and training to develop employability skills). Ongoing support to find work is provided by a dedicated Advisor at their offices, or other location, which can include helping the person access childcare, advice and other support services and increase their chances of moving into work.

In addition, they deliver a range of services to local businesses such as recruitment, pre-screening and job-matching services. The South Lanarkshire Jobs Fund offers local businesses financial support towards salary costs when a new job is created that offers a real opportunity for long term employment.

<http://rtws.org.uk>

### **North Lanarkshire Council**

North Lanarkshire's Supported Employment Service is for individuals who wish to work at least 16 hours or more per week, are supported by their carer to do so and have a learning disability, mental health issue, acquired brain injury or are a young care leaver. The service meets and discusses the client's skills, interests, ambitions and experience and supports them to undertake job tasters and complete a vocational profile to identify the right job match. They assist in finding suitable paid employment and provide in-work job coaching and on-going support free of charge to the individual and the company which is gradually withdrawn as the employee's confidence grows. They also provide support and assistance through a Welfare Rights Officer to maximise benefits. In addition, they provide monitoring support to the employer and the employee to promote job retention.

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=24037>

### **Project SEARCH**

North Lanarkshire is supported by the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability. It is an employment-focused education and training programme, designed to give students with learning difficulties and/or other disabilities the opportunity to develop employability skills and to get hands-on experience in the workplace, combined with classroom sessions. It is based on a partnership between a business, a training organisation and a supported employment organisation. The programme gives students the opportunity to experience what it is like being at work, teaches them new skills and helps them understand the demands of the working world.

Students complete two or three work placements, each one lasting 10 weeks.

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=24038>.

In addition to the placements in North Lanarkshire, 36 places have now been planned for projects in new Project SEARCH schemes (Glasgow, Aberdeen and East Ayrshire). This includes a proposed autism-specific project based at Strathclyde University. It is also being recommended that this partnership approach model be considered for people with autism living in Edinburgh.

### **North Lanarkshire's Working**

Led by North Lanarkshire Council this provides support for local people who are unemployed to find work. It works in partnership with 'Routes to Work Ltd', Motherwell, Coatbridge and Cumbernauld College, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire and the NHS and offers a range of support services.

<http://www.northlanarkshiresworking.co.uk>

<http://routes-to-work-ltd.socialenterprisenorthlanarkshire.co.uk>.

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/Windmills-Cafe/148756601827758?v=info&sk=info>

<http://www.volunteerscotland.org.uk/Organisation/Detail/56271>

### **Values into Action Scotland (VIAS)**

VIAS are based in Glasgow. They promote the rights and equality of people with learning difficulties and individuals with autism. They provide online information for those seeking work, information for employers, for service providers as well as providing information on 'In Control' in relation to Self Directed Support.

<http://www.in-control.org.uk>

Information for those seeking work includes the possibility of contacting them for advice on finding employment support services in the person's local area, and other online assistance to seek and maintain employment. There is information for employers, including information, advertised by VIAS, about the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability's (SCLD) Employment Champions who are available to speak about their experiences, whether general or at school, college or in employment.

In addition, there are employer information packs and a report encouraging employers to see the benefits of providing supported employment for those with learning difficulties or autism. VIAS are in contact with a range of employers who are keen to undertake training and open up employment opportunities for young people with autism.

VIAS run two programmes: 'My Life My Way' and 'Diversity Works 4 U' (DW4U). 'My Life My Way' is for people who use Self Directed Support and who direct their own support through their own personal budget. The programme offers training to the person, their family, support staff and employers and covers everything a person needs to know about finding and keeping a job.

Disability Works 4 U (DW4U), an employer consultancy service, works together with businesses in the Glasgow area to ensure that the business is fully informed about

recruiting people with autism &/or with other disabilities. Courses include information on recruiting and employing people in an inclusive way, mentoring new employees, autism and disability awareness, and how to create opportunities for people which are beneficial for the business.

<http://www.viascotland.org.uk/work/supported-employment>

### **Young Scotland's Got Talent**

This is a joint project between SCLD and VIAS and is an employment campaign for young people with learning difficulties and individuals on the autism spectrum. Events are held throughout Scotland that aim to inspire young people to achieve their work goals.