

Positive Destinations and Plans for 2015 – Developing Midlothian's Young Workforce.**Report by Peter McNaughton****1 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to outline the significant improvements made in supporting young people to achieve positive destinations on leaving school. In 2014 the number achieving a positive destination increased by nearly 5% and this report will highlight key factors which have contributed to this improvement and also the approaches which will be taken to continue to support young people in 2015

2 Background

2.1 Each year Skills Development Scotland (SDS) publishes data relating to school leaver destinations. The school leaver destination report (SLDR) shows, for each local authority and each of its secondary schools, the numbers of school leavers entering:

- Higher education
- Further education
- Training
- Employment
- Activity agreements
- Volunteering

SLDR data also shows the percentage of leavers who are unemployed or seeking employment (referred to as a 'negative destination'). Scottish Government's Post-16 Transitions Policy states that every young person is entitled to support in moving into a positive and sustained destination on leaving school. Through *Opportunities for All*, every 16-19 year old who is not already in learning, training or work should receive an offer of an appropriate place in learning or training

The Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce published their final report in June 2014 with 39 recommendations covering 6 main areas. These are:

- Better preparing school leavers for the world of work
- College education focused on employment and progression in learning
- Modern Apprenticeships focused on higher level skills and industry needs
- More employers engaging with education and recruiting more young people
- Advancing Equalities
- Successful Implementation.

2.2 Performance

In December 2014 performance data indicates that Midlothian has made significant improvements in supporting young people to secure a positive destination.

Since the economic downturn of 2008/9, Midlothian's positive destinations figures have increased by 15.6%, the biggest improvement of any council area in Scotland.

The percentage of young people in Midlothian leaving school and going on to a positive destination is up almost 5% on last year.

The figures, collated by the national skills body, Skills Development Scotland, show that 93.9% of school leavers in Midlothian found a job, enrolled in college or training or secured another positive destination such as volunteering. This compares with 89.2% last year. The latest figures are also 1.6% higher than the national average. Only six other councils have positive destination statistics more favourable than Midlothian.

These figures mean that more young people are making a positive start to their life after school and will be in a better position to contribute to life within Midlothian's communities. This significant achievement would not have been achievable without the high level of commitment of schools, council staff and partner agencies.

However it is important that these efforts to support young people are sustained and that we proactively address the recommendations detailed within Developing Scotland's Young Workforce to further improve the services and opportunities available to young people.

In order to carry forward this sustained improvement it is important to know what has made the difference, where improvements have taken place and what still needs to be done.

The following summary provides an overview of key positive destinations indicators:

- Positive destinations figures for Midlothian have increased by 15.6% since the start of the economic downturn in 2009. This has been due to the high level commitment and focused attention of all partners involved.
- No leavers were unaccounted for.
- The percentage of leavers entering higher education (HE) is 28.8% which 9.8 % lower than the national average of 38.6% and is the lowest percentage of leavers entering HE in Scotland. In comparison to 2012/13 this is a fall within the authority of 0.5%. (27% University of Edinburgh, 13.7% Edinburgh Napier University and 7.4% Herriot-Watt)

- The percentage of those going onto further education is up nearly 1% and is now about 1% below the Scotland-wide figure (90%)
- The percentage of leavers entering employment has risen by 4.9% since 2012/13 to 30.3%. This percentage is 8.6% above the national average of 21.7%.
- The percentage of leavers entering training has fallen by 0.9% to 6.4% and is the 3rd highest percentage of leavers entering in Scotland and is 2.3% above the national average (4.1%)
- Only eight young people were unemployed not seeking (they were either pregnant, suffered from ill health or choosing not to enter employment, education or training).
- The percentage of leavers who are unemployed seeking is 5.2%, 3.7 % lower than in 2012/13. This is 1.1% lower than the national average.

(Appendix one contains further information on Midlothian/Scottish Comparisons).

It is clear that prioritisation, leadership and targeted partnership approaches have made a significant difference. Data has been well used to target specific individuals who may be at risk of not securing a positive destination. Schools, Skills Development Scotland, transition workers, employability staff, children's services staff, elected members and a range of partners including the third sector and businesses have worked relentlessly to drive this improvement.

The excellent work of student support and guidance staff in schools has been central to bringing about this improvement and equally important has been the effective partnership working involving a wide range of council staff and external agencies. Positive Destinations was identified as a key strategic priority for the Council in 2014 and achieved real commitment across the authority, giving rise to some innovative approaches and genuine collaboration.

It is important that this drive and focused attention is sustained in order to meet our ambitious target of 95% of young people achieving positive destinations in 2015. Sustaining this level of improvement will be challenging, but we have established effective strategies, gained better insight into how this can be done and have identified key actions to underpin continuous improvement.

2.3 Continuous Improvement Actions for 2015

- We need to build on our significant success this year: sustaining focus and momentum and championing Positive Destinations across the authority.
- Focus on those leavers who are currently not in a positive destination (approx 45) – and review possible support.

- Use information produced through the national Data Hub to identify young people at risk of negative destinations and ensure targeted interventions.
- Increase the number of young people gaining entry to higher education in 2015.
- Continue to strengthen our partnership with Edinburgh College, in particular the new South East Scotland sector academies.
- Review the senior phase curriculum in our secondary schools to provide improved vocational pathways for young people.
- Review the PSE, vocational and work experience programmes in our schools to help young people develop employability skills.
- Devise and implement Strategy for Developing Midlothian's Workforce (response to the national initiative, Developing Scotland's Young Workforce) with key partners including the third and business sectors.
- Review and refocus the Opportunities for All Board to ensure that it has a clear strategic priorities and a plan to respond to Developing Scotland's Young Work Force

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

Within existing budgets a significant amount of time and resources are being prioritised to continue to secure

3.2 Risk

A dramatic improvement has been achieved and there is a risk that it will be difficult to sustain this level of improvement over time.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

This work is a key priority for Midlothian Community Planning Partnership

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Key elements of our current and future approaches are to working with younger students to assist them to make positive transitions in a preventative manner.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Involving all sectors of our communities in support young people and involving young people in designing and coproducing our approach and future opportunities is integral.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

The approach undertaken will continue to target those at risk of not achieving positive destination from equalities groups and individual needs are proactively taken into account when supports and opportunities are developed.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

3.9 IT Issues

None

4 Summary

This report acknowledges and commends the progress made in improving positive destinations for young people. The Positive Destination figures, collated by the national skills body, Skills Development Scotland, show that 93.9% of school leavers in Midlothian found a job, enrolled in college or training or secured another positive destination such as volunteering. This compares with 89.2% last year. The latest figures are also 1.6% higher than the national average. Only six other councils have more favourable outcomes than Midlothian.

The report also sets out key factors which will be essential to achieve the target of 95% in 2015 and meet the recommendations of the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.

5 Recommendations

Council are recommended to:

- Recognise the improvement in supporting young people to achieve positive destinations

- Acknowledge and praise the efforts of staff, partners and young people which have resulted in this improvement.
- Approve the ambitious target of achieving 95% positive destination in 2015.
- Support the approaches which will be developed further to meet the recommendations contained within Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.

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Appendix 1

Extract from SLDR 2014

Section 1: Overview – Main Findings

- Overall the percentage of leavers entering a **positive destination**ⁱ is **93.9%**, a rise of 4.7 percentage points (pp)ⁱⁱ in comparison to 2012/13. This is 1.6pp above the national average of 92.3%. Midlothian Council is 8^{th*} out of 32 local authorities for the percentage of leavers entering a positive destination.
- The percentage of leavers entering **higher education (HE)** is **28.8%** which is 9.8pp lower than the national average of 38.6% and is the lowest percentage of leavers entering HE in Scotland. In comparison to 2012/13 this is a fall within the authority of 0.5pp.
- The percentage of leavers entering **further education (FE)** has risen by 0.8pp to **25.2%** which is 1.1pp lower than the national average of 26.3%.
- The percentage of leavers entering **employment** has risen by 4.9pp since 2012/13 to **30.3%**. This percentage is 8.6pp above the national average of 21.7%.
- The percentage of leavers entering **training** has fallen by 0.9pp to **6.4%** and is the 3rd highest percentage of leavers entering training in Scotland and is 2.3pp above the national average (4.1%).
- The percentage of leavers who are **unemployed seeking**ⁱⁱⁱ is **5.2%**, 3.7pp lower than in 2012/13. This is 1.1pp lower than the national average.
- There are no school leavers whose destination is **unknown**^{iv} this year. The national average is 0.3%

*Midlothian Council is 7th equal in relation to other Local Authorities. The Council is shown as 8th in the SLDR statistics as Skills Development Scotland have included one specific school from Glasgow in error

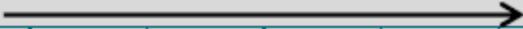
Year on Year destination percentage split. Local Authority & Scotland

Destinations	Midlothian Council			Scotland		
	2012/13 %	2013/14 %	% point change	2012/13 %	2013/14 %	% point change
Higher Education	29.3	28.8	-0.5	36.5	38.6	2.1
Further Education	24.4	25.2	0.8	27.8	26.3	-1.5
Training	7.3	6.4	-0.9	5.0	4.1	-0.9
Employment	25.4	30.3	4.9	20.4	21.7	1.3
Voluntary Work	0.3	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.4	-0.1
Activity Agreement	2.5	2.4	-0.1	1.3	1.1	-0.2
Unemployed Seeking	8.9	5.2	-3.7	7.1	6.3	-0.8
Unemployed Not Seeking	1.7	0.9	-0.8	1.2	1.1	-0.1
Unknown	0.3	0.0	-0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0
Positive Destinations	89.2	93.9	4.7	91.4	92.3	0.9
Total Leavers	1,014	889		52,792	51,876	

Year on Year Destination Split

Year	Total	HE (%)	FE (%)	Training (%)	Employed (%)	Voluntary Work (%)	Activity Agreement (%)	U/E Seeking (%)	U/E NOT Seeking (%)	Not Known (%)
2004/05	955	24.6	17.6	3.6	33.4			15.9	1.9	3.0
2005/06	987	26.3	21.3	2.1	31.6			15.9	1.7	1.0
2006/07	965	25.5	22.0	2.7	32.3	0.2		15.2	1.3	0.7
2007/08	1,096	27.5	20.4	4.4	28.8	0.3		17.0	1.0	0.6
2008/09	947	31.7	22.6	4.4	19.2	0.4		18.9	1.3	1.5
2009/10	950	30.5	24.5	7.4	20.1	0.5		14.5	2.1	0.3
2010/11	943	29.8	26.1	6.5	22.5	0.3	0.0	13.8	0.7	0.3
2011/12	978	31.6	23.5	5.3	22.9	0.7	1.3	12.8	1.2	0.6
2012/13	1,014	29.3	24.4	7.3	25.4	0.3	2.5	8.9	1.7	0.3
2013/14	889	28.8	25.2	6.4	30.3	0.9	2.4	5.2	0.9	0.0

Percentage Destinations by SIMD 2012

<i>SIMD Decile^v</i>	<div> <i>Most Deprived</i>  <i>Least Deprived</i> </div>										Not Known
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Higher Education	18	21	19	15	28	34	29	45	37	49	0
Further Education	29	43	27	26	27	25	27	13	17	18	31
Training	18	7	9	10	5	4	5	6	8	1	8
Employment	18	20	30	34	32	31	32	27	37	28	23
Voluntary Work	6	0	0	2	1	0	2	2	0	1	0
Activity Agreement	6	2	3	4	4	0	1	2	0	1	15
Unemployed Seeking	6	5	9	8	3	5	5	5	0	1	15
U/E Not Seeking	0	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	8
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Positive Destinations	94	93	89	91	96	95	95	95	98	99	77
Total	17	56	129	125	123	93	120	62	52	99	13
% of Total Leavers	1.9	6.3	14.5	14.1	13.8	10.5	13.5	7.0	5.8	11.1	1.5