Scottish Executive

The Lifelong Learning Strategy for Scotland - Summary

This paper provides a brief outline of the main plans within the Scottish Executive’s Lifelong Learning Strategy for Scotland, February 2003.

1. The Strategy covers a time span of five years and covers further and higher education, community-based learning and the professions (although little reference is made to the professions and professional bodies).

2. The Strategy sits alongside other recent Executive reviews, which are referred to at various points in the paper and deal in more detail with particular sectors and developments. “Empowered to Practice” – the future of community learning and development training in Scotland sets out the Executive’s plans for education and training of community learning and development workers, and the Executive is due to publish in March the outcomes of its review of higher education.

3. In broad terms, the Strategy sets out several packages of related plans which are intended to address: the “opportunity gap”, the “skills gap” and the “productivity gap” in Scotland.

4. The paper sets out:

   4.1 A “vision” for lifelong learning in Scotland:

   The best possible match between the learning opportunities open to people and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which will strengthen Scotland’s economy and society.

   4.2 Five people-centred goals that will realise the visions

   • A Scotland where people have the confidence, enterprise, knowledge, creativity and skills they need to participate in economic, social and civic life.

   • A Scotland where people demand and providers deliver a high quality learning experience.

   • A Scotland where people’s knowledge and skills are recognised, used and developed to best effect in their workplace.

   • A Scotland where people are given the information, guidance and support they need to make effective learning decisions and transitions.

   • A Scotland where people have the chance to learn, irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances.

   4.3 Various packages of initiatives to achieve those goals as follows:

   4.3.1 A package of plans to encourage and support wider participation in learning including in particular those who have not participated in learning. These include:

   • New Individual Learning Accounts
   • “Give it a go” learning tasters
   • An “e-learning public sector group” – to ensure that public sector investment is co-ordinated
   • Support for community learning development partnerships

   4.3.2 A package of plans in relation to the quality assurance of lifelong learning. These include:
• The Executive is not planning to make any changes to quality assurance in the HE sector – indeed good practice from HE will help inform the development of quality assurance in the rest of the sectors.

• Reference to the quality assurance of training of community learning and development workers.

• Introducing the concept of a new “Scottish approach to quality”. The Executive will set up a study of the current QA landscape in Scotland reporting in early 2004.

4.3.3 A package of plans in relation to employers and employers training.

4.3.4 A package of plans in relation to learner information, guidance and support. These include:

• Piloting Personal Lifelong Learning Plans

• Asking SQA, HEIs and FEIs to collaborate when qualifications are being developed so as to maximise potential for articulation and transition and to provide information to learners

• Taking proposals from the Funding Councils in “summer” on how to use the outcome of the FE/HE projects being undertaken by the Scottish Advisory Committee on Credit and Access

• The further development of the national database of learning outcomes services by learndirect Scotland

4.3.5 A package of plans in relation to the funding of lifelong learning. These include:

• The merger of SHEFC and SFEFC
• A review of funding of learners
• The development of an “entitlement” programme for particular groups whose formal learning has been disrupted

4.3.6 Plans for what next including:

• Plans to establish a Lifelong Learning Forum and a number of smaller Lifelong Learning Panels.

An e-version of the strategy is available at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/lifelong/llsm.pdf