

## **Scotland – Case Studies - Employability**

### **Learning to Work Two**

#### **1. Work Placements Projects**

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC)'s Investment Committee awarded funding of £4.713m to four work placement projects on the recommendation of a panel led by the Chair of the SFC's Skills Committee and consisting of members of that Committee plus external representation from Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Skills Development Scotland. Those projects were as follows:

##### Education into Enterprise

This three year project, led by Adam Smith College, brings together a consortium of colleges, the University of Abertay Dundee, Scottish Chambers of Commerce (SCC), the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils (ASSC) and local Councils for Voluntary Services to make accredited work-placement opportunities available to students enrolled in HE courses which do not currently offer this option at participating institutions. Placements will be mainly with Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), micro-businesses and third sector employers and in key sectors of the Scottish economy. The project will match around 850 students on 30-90 day placements with 500 employers over three years.

##### E - Placements Scotland

A Scotland-wide project led by Edinburgh Napier University and the E-Skills Sector Skills Council, this project aims to place 750 students of any discipline, at any level of study in participating universities and colleges into business and IT placements in the IT industry for between 3-12 month. Placements will be paid, with E-Skills Sector Skills Council employers contributing up to £9 million in student salaries over the three years of the project.

##### Third Sector Internships Scotland

This is a four year Scotland-wide project led by Queen Margaret University in conjunction with the Open University and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO). The project will develop a national framework for managing and delivering internships tailored to the needs of third sector employers and full-time, part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students of any discipline at any Scottish university. The programme will place 200-300 students in 60 day/12 week flexible format paid placements, where E-Skills Sector Skills Council employers will contribute up to £9 million in student salaries throughout the duration of the project.

##### Embedding Work Placements in Taught Masters Programmes

The University of Edinburgh will lead a partnership with the Universities of Aberdeen and Stirling to deliver placement opportunities to enable students in selected Masters programmes to be assessed on a report on relevant workplace experience instead of the traditional dissertation by research. Placements will be sought in the Scottish Government's key



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economic sectors with an initial focus on energy, financial and business services, life sciences and tourism sectors. The project aims, over three years, to place around 500 students in 3 month/60 day placements, predominantly with SME employers.

### 2. Development of Employability Support, Employer Engagement and Entrepreneurship

Employability, employer engagement and entrepreneurship have been highlighted by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) as long term policy objectives. The SFC values supporting national co-ordination and good practice development within HEIs and colleges, and sharing these between the sectors. It also identifies strengthening links and aiding dialogue between student bodies, institutions and employers as a national level strategic goal. These conclusions follow feedback received from the HE sector consultation on LTW2 (2009).

To further these aims, a new Scottish Higher Education Employability Forum (SHEEF) has recently been formed. The work of the Forum is steered by a management group comprising representatives from Scottish universities and a number of partner organisations. The SFC will issue £200,000 over 4 years to support the work of SHEEF, whose role will be to:

- provide an open forum to support and facilitate sharing of work-in-progress between the *Learning to Work Two* Horizon funded projects and the wider sector, throughout their lifetime as well as during their dissemination phases;
  - develop and deliver its own, parallel programme of work to support the sector and complement the various LTW2 projects;
  - foster relevant communities of practice and support them in their work: in particular, the Employability Coordinators' Network;
  - provide an informed source of advice on matters of Employability, as requested;
  - foster and support institutional collaboration to develop and share good practice across the sector; and
  - promote effective dialogue at a strategic level with student and employer bodies.
3. Developing enterprise and entrepreneurship education: the SFC will provide £600,000 per year for three years to support the Scottish Institute for Enterprise. Discussion with key stakeholders to progress other aspects of this objective is ongoing.
4. A Workforce Development project is being taken forward by a joint Skills Committee working group.