

Evaluation of the Activity Agreements Pilots

EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY AGREEMENTS PILOTS

Final Report

**Blake Stevenson Ltd
Glenys Watt, Director
Ian Clark, Associate Director
Lorraine Simpson, Consultant
Alasdair Stuart, Consultant**

Scottish Government
2011

© Crown copyright 2011

You may re-use this information (excluding logos and images) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document is available from our website at www.scotland.gov.uk.

ISBN: 978-1-78045-277-7 (web only)

The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Produced for the Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland
DPPAS11816 (07/11)

Published by the Scottish Government, July 2011

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
	ACTIVITY AGREEMENTS OVERVIEW	1
	EVALUATION	3
	METHODOLOGY.....	4
	REPORT STRUCTURE	6
2	CONTEXT	7
	CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE (CFE).....	7
	16+ LEARNING CHOICES	7
	GIRFEC.....	8
	MORE CHOICES MORE CHANCES (MCMC).....	9
	GET READY FOR WORK.....	10
	EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA).....	11
	SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.....	11
3	QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS	12
	SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS:	12
	SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT STATISTICS	12
	PILOT AREA DATA RETURNS	15
	CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG PEOPLE.....	15
	DESTINATIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING THE PILOT	18
	EARLY LEAVERS.....	21
	EARLY LEAVERS AND KNOWN DESTINATIONS COMBINED	21
4	FINDINGS: PROCESS ISSUES	22
	SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS:	22
	INTRODUCTION.....	23
	WHO ARE THE YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOTS?	23
	WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE ON OFFER TO YOUNG PEOPLE?	24
	HOW ARE ACTIVITY AGREEMENTS DELIVERED AND MANAGED?	25
	THE ROLE OF TRUSTED PROFESSIONALS.....	30
	PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND THE ROLE OF PARTNERS.....	32
	WHAT ARE THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVITY AGREEMENTS?	33
5	FINDINGS: OUTCOME MEASURES	36
	SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS:	36
	SHORT-TERM/IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES OR BENEFITS IN TERMS OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROGRESSION	36
	MEASURES AROUND YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATING IN AN ACTIVITY AGREEMENT	40
	IMPACT ON PILOT LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THEIR DELIVERY PARTNERS	41
	EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA).....	43
	VALUE FOR MONEY.....	45
	OUTCOMES	46
	ADDITIONALITY	47
	ADDED VALUE.....	47
	COLLABORATIVE GAIN	47
	DEADWEIGHT.....	47
	DISPLACEMENT	47
	VALUE FOR MONEY SUMMARY	48
	EVIDENCE FROM COMPARATORS.....	48
	SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES.....	49

6	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	51
	THE AVAILABILITY OF INTENSIVE ONE-TO-ONE ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FROM A TRUSTED PROFESSIONAL	51
	STRONG PROCESSES FOR ASSESSING THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE, BUILDING ON INFORMATION ALREADY COLLECTED ABOUT THEM	52
	A WIDE RANGE OF LEARNING ACTIVITY AVAILABLE FROM A RANGE OF PROVIDERS SO THAT A TAILORED PACKAGE CAN BE CREATED WHICH MEETS THE YOUNG PERSON'S NEEDS.....	52
	THE AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT, THROUGH THE EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE PROGRAMME ADMINISTERED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES.....	52
	THE DIFFERENT MODELS.....	53
	THE DELIVERY PROCESSES.....	53
	NATIONAL CO-ORDINATION (OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION, COMMUNICATION).....	54
	RESOURCES	54
	POLICY AND CONTEXT	55
	OUTCOMES AND PROGRESSION.....	56
	OVERALL CONCLUSION.....	56
	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	56

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1:	ACTIVITY AGREEMENT GUIDANCE	58
APPENDIX 2:	TEMPLATES	81
APPENDIX 3:	DESTINATIONS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS FROM PUBLICLY FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND BY LOCAL AUTHORITY 2008-09 ...	98
APPENDIX 4:	AGREED DEFINITIONS	99
APPENDIX 5:	TECHNICAL APPENDIX - QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS.....	101
APPENDIX 6:	CAVEATS ON DATA FROM PILOT AREAS	127
APPENDIX 7:	ACTIVITIES.....	130
APPENDIX 8:	COSTS	136
APPENDIX 9:	RESEARCH WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.....	142
APPENDIX 10:	COMPARATORS	148

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. The Scottish Government commissioned an evaluation of the Activity Agreement pilots that operated in ten areas across Scotland between May 2009 and March 2011. An Activity Agreement is 'an agreement between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment' (Activity Agreement Guidance, Scottish Government, 2010).
2. The Agreements were targeted at vulnerable groups of young people aged 16-19 who would otherwise be in negative post-school destinations to support their transition into learning, training or employment. Key elements of the pilots were: the availability of intensive one-to-one advice and guidance from a Trusted Professional; an assessment of the needs and interests of young people; a wide range of activities so that a tailored package of support could be created to meet the needs of young people; and the availability of financial support through the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).
3. More Choices, More Chances (MCMC) Partnerships were invited to bid to deliver the pilots. Sixteen areas responded and ten areas - Fife, Glasgow, Highland, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire, Stirling, and West Dunbartonshire - were selected on the basis of the number and rate of school leavers in negative destinations, with some additional contributory factors.
4. In total £12.3million was allocated to the pilot. £1.3million was set aside for EMA payments to participants and for programme management costs. Funds were allocated to local authorities to administer on behalf of the MCMC primarily on the basis of the number of young people not in hard progressions.
5. The Coherent Support Team within Enterprise and Employability for Young People Division of the Scottish Government developed and oversaw the pilot; a national co-ordinator based in Youthlink Scotland worked closely with the team. Young Scot was commissioned to gather feedback from participants.
6. This evaluation involved: ongoing consultation with the Scottish Government and Youthlink Scotland; attendance at the Activity Agreement Steering Group meetings in November 2010 and January 2011 and attendance at the Activity Agreement National Conference in November 2010; a literature review of relevant policy documents, research and delivery/management materials; detailed analysis of data from Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) Insight database and information supplied by the pilot areas; in-depth consultation with Activity Agreement Co-ordinators and other senior staff; focus groups with young people in each area; focus groups with Trusted Professionals in each area; interviews with activity providers; interviews/focus groups with local stakeholders including steering groups; interviews with national strategic stakeholders; and comparator area research.

7. Gathering robust data for the evaluation was not straightforward despite the Scottish Government supplying information on the key stages defined at the outset of the pilot and the gathering of additional information directly from the pilots on participants' characteristics and destinations. Although SDS is developing a 16+ Data Hub to consolidate information on young people it was still being developed at the time of the evaluation.

Context

8. Activity Agreements are an integral part of the overarching Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) policy and they represent a CfE 16+ Learning Choices offer. CfE aims to provide a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum for young people from three to 18 years of age. It aims to help every learner develop knowledge, skills and attributes for learning, life and work and enable each young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen, and an effective contributor. Seven principles underpin CfE and two - personalisation and choice, and progression – are at the heart of the pilot.
9. One of the key features of 16+ Learning Choices is that the right financial support is available to young people to enable them to take up the offer which is most appropriate to their needs. Activity Agreement participants could apply for EMA, a means-tested allowance of £30 per week.
10. The operating context is also informed by the MCMC Strategy (Scottish Government, 2006) which addressed the issue of 16-19 year olds not in education, employment or training, estimated to total 35,000 at that time. The Strategy's aims include: increasing retention in education and training post 16 to ensure young people move towards sustainable employment; ensuring that education, employment and training are financially viable options for young people; removing the barriers to opportunities by providing the right support; and developing joined up local delivery. The Strategy identifies two key target groups: the hardest to help who have complex needs and an intermediate group who are less likely to be part of specialist interventions and may be 'quietly disaffected' with issues around motivation, confidence and soft skills.
11. The National Training Programmes – Get Ready for Work (GRfW), Skillseekers and Modern Apprenticeships – are also significant contextually to the pilots. Some stakeholders perceived similarities between Activity Agreements and GRfW Lifeskills which provides focused support to allow participants to address issues which will reduce their chaotic lifestyle and enable them to progress to in line with their needs. SDS statistics show that approximately 10,000 young people started GRfW including Lifeskills in 2009-10 and approximately 36% of all starters achieved a positive outcome.
12. Getting It Right for Every Child provides a framework to improve the well-being of all children and young people and is contextually significant.

Activity Agreement Participants

13. Scottish Government statistics show that 2,484 referrals had been made to the end of November 2010, leading to 2,035 Activity Agreements being

offered, and 1,450 Activity Agreements that a young person signed up for (representing approximately 7 out of 10 young people who were offered an Activity Agreement). Approximately a quarter of young people left their Activity Agreement early and about a third of young people reaching the end of their Agreement achieved a hard progression (learning, training, or employment). These figures varied across the pilot areas.

14. Data from the pilots showed that more males than females were engaged through Activity Agreements. It also showed that the pilots focused more strongly on the younger age group with approximately half being 16 and a quarter 17 at the time of referral. Although this early intervention could be seen as a sustainable approach, it does raise the question of whether 18 and 19 year olds benefited to the extent that they could have.
15. Participants were some of the most disadvantaged young people. The most common factors identified for young people on Activity Agreements were that they were persistently truant, young people with low attainment in school and/or winter leavers. Looked after children and care leavers, those with additional support needs, young offenders, those with physical/mental health problems or disabilities and those with involved in alcohol or drug misuse were also prominent. However, there were limited numbers of young people who were homeless, leaving a special school, a risk to themselves or others, young carers, young parents, from a BME background, for whom English was a second language or from a gypsy/travelling community. There were variations across the ten pilot areas.
16. Destination information was incomplete but shows about 14% progressed to GRfW Training, 12% to College and 6% to employment without training.
17. Approximately 41% of young people who signed-up for an Activity Agreement were recorded as making a hard progression at the end of their Agreement or were an early leaver who moved into a hard progression; this was lower for those claiming EMA than for all participants. A fifth of participants were recorded as moving into a negative destination at the end of their Agreement or were an early leaver with a negative destination.

Activities

18. Activities included a very wide range of directly funded and in-kind provision including personal development, employability skills, sport/art/music based activities, vocational courses, volunteering and work placements. Approximately 150 directly funded activities were funded through £2million from the Activity Agreement budget plus, we estimate, a similar amount in match funding from other sources. The activities included existing and newly commissioned activities, as well as group and individual provision. Many of the activities have been accredited and links to CfE were strong. The Activity Agreement Co-ordinators played an important role in overseeing the activities which included mapping, identifying gaps, liaison with providers to tailor provision, commissioning new activities, and collating monitoring information.

19. Local authorities were the main provider of directly funded activities accounting for approximately a third of the total spending. The third and private sectors have also provided significant input but the role of Colleges as providers has been limited.

Delivery models and staffing

20. The pilots all sit within MCMC or 16+ Learning Choices within their local authority/ CPP. However despite the similar overall structural arrangements there were ten different models being delivered in practice reflecting local circumstances, for example those with a strong school based approach to referral, those with high involvement from CLD, some with large amounts of new provision and others focusing on improving existing provision.
21. Staffing arrangements were broadly similar across the pilots. Each area identified a co-ordinator – eight areas had a newly appointed member of staff funded through the pilot's budget while two areas had an existing member of staff who added this role to their remit. In-kind costs show that many other staff members were involved, in particular Council and SDS staff.
22. Trusted Professionals were integral to the pilots providing intensive, one-to-one advice and guidance to young people. Trusted Professionals tended to be either a dedicated team solely employed in the role (newly recruited or seconded) or existing staff allocating a proportion of their time to the role in addition to existing duties; in some areas a mix of these models was adopted. The Trusted Professionals identified some challenges including those linked to processing EMA claims, balancing caseloads, and supporting young people who face a number of difficulties. Feedback from young people on Trusted Professionals was very positive.

Referrals

23. There has been a range of approaches to referrals. Some areas focused on early identification of at risk young people in schools, in other areas the focus of referral was through CLD. while in other areas there was a broad range of agencies involved, such as social work, CLD, extended outreach and schools. Wherever the referrals came from in most cases SDS was involved in processing them. Generally, a multi-agency approach to the referral process was noted. Some areas had not achieved the anticipated level of referrals.

Assessment

24. The approach to assessment was broadly similar across the pilots although there were different tools being used. The broad approach was to cover the young person's strengths, skills, interests, barriers, wellbeing and forward plans. Most areas used some form of sliding scale to allow the young person to make a self-assessment. The assessment was undertaken by the Trusted Professionals in most areas although in some areas schools/SDS key workers made an initial assessment. In general, background information about the young people was shared among partners although limits to the sharing of SDS Insight data was highlighted as a barrier.

Partnership working

25. Partnership work was an integral part of the pilots. Partners took on three key roles. Critical partners who played a central part in the overall process such as SDS, social work, schools, and CLD. Provider partners from the public, private and third sector partners who delivered the activities. Steering Group/stakeholder partners who have an interest in the work but were less involved in the actual process. Overall, the pilots have had a positive impact on the local authorities and their delivery partners not least in terms of relationships, renewed focus on MCMC group, service delivery and provision.

Soft outcomes

26. As well as quantified outcomes Activity Agreements have led to softer outcomes or benefits which are no less important in areas such as confidence and aspirations, social interaction and life skills (such as independence and budgeting), vocational and non-vocational skills, health and wellbeing, and literacy and numeracy. Quantitative evidence of these softer outcomes is limited and better use could be made of the information gathered from young people through tools such as Rickter Scale or Resilience Surveys. Feedback from the young people emphasised the importance of these softer outcomes.

Costs and value for money

27. The total cost of the programme at end November 2010, as reported to us, was £5,070,320. The average cost per signed up participant was £3,497 and the average cost per hard progression of those who reached the end of their Agreement or left early was £8,507 (or £8,118 if the later-starting Stirling pilot is excluded). These figures varied across the ten pilot areas.
28. In terms of additionality, the role of the Trusted Professionals, with a clear focus on the individual young person and their needs, linked with the flexibility of the approach appears to have enabled the pilots to work with young people who would not have become engaged in any activity as soon as they did or might not have been engaged at all. It also appears that the pilots are sufficiently different from their nearest equivalent (GRfW Lifeskills).
29. There was some anecdotal evidence that there has been a reduction in GRfW referrals in some areas which was attributed to the pilot but it was not possible to prove this. Other evidence suggests that the pilot actually increased referrals as it provided a first step to engaging disaffected young people.
30. In terms of value for money, the central benefits of the pilots have been a range of hard and soft outcomes for young people who may otherwise not have been engaged, new and improved provision, improved partnerships and shared learning and capacity building with staff. There are no clear patterns emerging on the cost per hard progression against the characteristics of the young people or the different “models” being used and our sense is that there are too many variables in each area to make this possible.

31. 413 young people took up EMA, or 32% of those who signed-up for an Activity Agreement and the cost to end November 2010 was £150,305. There were mixed views as to whether EMA was an incentive for young people.

Conclusions

32. Our overall conclusion is that the Activity Agreement pilots have been well delivered and have achieved good results for the young people involved. They have reached and engaged the intended target groups of disadvantaged young people although inevitably there are still some harder to reach groups of young people who are not being so well engaged. The pilots have developed a wide range of appropriate activities. They have built on and enhanced partnership working. The role of the Trusted Professionals and the flexibility of the pilots have been central to the programme's success and any future model would do well to incorporate these two elements.
33. They have tested different approaches and processes with each area developing in a way that reflects local circumstances. The different models have both advantages and disadvantages. The school-based model has the advantage of early intervention so that young people can be supported before they become too disengaged, and it allows for relatively easy sharing of information between partners; the disadvantage is that it is less good at identifying those who fall out of a hard progression after school or who are unknown without first moving into a hard progression. The CLD model is the opposite in that it is less effective at early intervention but more effective at identifying those who have become disengaged after they have left school. Ideally a mixture of the two models will work most effectively and several areas have tried at least some form of combination.
34. The national co-ordinator has provided a central source of information and support. The semi-independence of the role within a youth related organisation appears to have helped maintain communications with the pilots.
35. Monitoring, in particular relating to the characteristics and outcomes for the young people has been challenging. With no consistent approach to data gathering put in place from the start there is a mixture of information held, in different forms, within each area. It may be beneficial for a more robust monitoring and evaluation framework to be developed with a clear logic model identifying the short term outcomes that participants are trying to achieve, linking to medium and longer term outcomes that would show an element of progression. While there is anecdotal evidence of the soft outcomes that young people have achieved there is no comprehensive gathering of information about outcomes or about how these fit with Single Outcome Agreements or the National Outcomes. This should also help in the development of progression for each young person as the evaluation evidence suggests some providers did not have a clear focus on this.
36. The overall resources allocated to the ten pilots appear to be in excess of what was required. This is useful learning. One of the comparator areas demonstrated that Activity Agreements can be put in place without additional cost, albeit on a limited scale. However, we are aware that in the current

economic climate this kind of in-kind contribution is more likely to be constrained given staff cutbacks and added remits to already busy roles.

37. If Activity Agreements are to be rolled out the key resources that appear to be significant are ensuring that Trusted Professional support is in place with some resource to allow for flexibility and tailoring of provision. We would also advocate for resources to ensure that monitoring and evidence collection is put in place consistently across all areas with support to do this as required.
38. Going forward, discussions regarding the means of allocating future funding to local areas should seek to maintain the impact and focus created in part by clearly additional funds. Our sense is that allocation models that are closer to the mainstream resources of either local authorities or SDS could potentially lead to a dilution of the impact; one option is to commission a third party such as Youthlink Scotland to oversee the allocations.

Recommendations

39. Based on our evaluation we make the following recommendations:
 - a) The Activity Agreements approach should be rolled out across Scotland with a clear monitoring and evaluation framework put in place based on short, medium and longer term outcomes. The link with local and national outcomes should be added to the Guidance document.
 - b) We are aware that there is a potential budget for this roll out of £4 million. We recommend that consideration is given to the continuation of discrete allocations to local areas to maintain a focus among partners.
 - c) A national co-ordinator post is maintained to support the roll out and provide ongoing support and communications with the local areas.
 - d) The issues of data sharing with SDS Insight should be resolved as soon as possible linking to the development of the Data Hub.
 - e) Eligibility for EMA should remain as although it is not a huge incentive it does make a great difference to some young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds. Local issues around the administration of EMA to help streamline it should be addressed.
 - f) The roll out of Activity Agreements should encourage a mixed school-CLD model to gain the best from both models.
 - g) Co-location should be encouraged wherever possible.
 - h) The resource should be allocated to the Trusted Professional role, maintaining some flexibility of provision and to effective monitoring and evaluation.
 - i) There should be some central monitoring of spend put in place.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Scottish Government commissioned Blake Stevenson Ltd to evaluate Activity Agreements which have been piloted in ten areas across Scotland.
- 1.2 The aim of the evaluation was to examine the effectiveness of the pilots in engaging young people who would otherwise be in a negative destination, and in supporting those young people's transition into a hard progression¹. The research findings are expected to inform the Cabinet Secretary's decision on the future of Activity Agreements including the potential roll-out of the programme across the whole of Scotland.

Activity Agreements overview

- 1.3 An Activity Agreement is 'an agreement between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment' (Activity Agreement Guidance, Scottish Government 2010).
- 1.4 The pilot was launched in May 2009 with a fixed end date of 31 March 2011. The pilot operated in the following ten areas: Fife; Glasgow; Highland; Inverclyde; North Ayrshire; North Lanarkshire; Renfrewshire; South Lanarkshire; Stirling; and West Dunbartonshire.
- 1.5 The key elements of Activity Agreements were identified in a consultation exercise on '16+ Learning Choices: First Step Activity and Financial Support' (Scottish Government, 2008) as:
 - the availability of intensive one-to-one advice and guidance from a Trusted Professional;
 - a strong process for assessing the needs and interests of young people, building on information already collated about them;
 - a wide range of activity available from a range of providers, so that a tailored package of support can be created to meet the needs of young people; and
 - the availability of financial support through the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).
- 1.6 The Scottish Government published Guidance on Activity Agreements in May 2009 (see Appendix 1). The Guidance outlined the purpose of the pilots and the expected roles and responsibilities for local authorities and other delivery partners. One of the key elements of the Guidance was a list of vulnerable groups of young people aged 16-19 representing potential beneficiaries. The list of young people was not intended to be exhaustive but is very useful in highlighting some of the intended target groups for Activity Agreements. The list is reproduced below which we have grouped into school based and non-school based issues to ease interpretation and highlight the range of factors.

¹ The term 'hard progression' is used throughout this report. A number of terms including this were defined at the outset of the programme by the Scottish Government (see Appendix 4). It is used in this report in place of the equivalent phrase 'positive destination' which is commonly used in this field.

Table 1.1 – young people identified as potential participants in Activity Agreements

School issues	Non-school issues
Low attainment	A risk to themselves or others
Persistent truancy	Those for whom English is a second language
Additional support needs	Offenders
Behavioural issues	Alcohol or drug misusers
Winter leavers	Homeless or at risk of homelessness
Those leaving special schools	Physical or mental health problems or disabilities
	Do not sustain an initial hard progression
	Looked after children and care leavers
	Carers
	Parents

- 1.7 More Choices, More Chances (MCMC) Partnerships across Scotland were invited to bid to deliver Activity Agreement pilots and 16 local authorities responded. The ten Activity Agreement pilots were selected by the Scottish Government largely on the basis of numbers and rates of school leavers in negative destinations, with some additional contributory factors as noted in Appendix 2 which summarises the ten pilots. The pilot areas were required to submit a plan outlining their intended approach. The Scottish Government's Activity Agreements Template for Planning outlined the following areas that should underpin planning and against which the grant could be spent: the Trusted Professionals; identifying young people; learning provision and support; and allowances and administration.
- 1.8 The six MCMC Partnerships that were not selected by the Scottish Government to pilot Activity Agreements were: Clackmannanshire; Dumfries & Galloway; East Renfrewshire; Midlothian; Moray; and South Ayrshire.
- 1.9 In total £12.3million was allocated to the pilot. Funding was primarily allocated on the basis of the number of young people not in hard progressions with £1,680 allocated per person as shown below. Funding was allocated to local authorities to administer on behalf of the MCMC Partnerships.

Table 1.2 – Activity Agreement pilot area allocations

	Young people not in hard progressions	Annual budget	Total budget
Fife	577	£969,024	£1,938,048
North Lanarkshire	520	£872,945	£1,745,890
Glasgow City*	450	£756,000	£1,512,000
South Lanarkshire	432	£725,760	£1,451,520
Highland	327	£549,360	£1,098,720
Renfrewshire	280	£469,778	£939,557
North Ayrshire	242	£406,896	£813,792
West Dunbartonshire	199	£333,581	£667,162
Stirling	159	£267,876	£535,752
Inverclyde	89	£149,386	£298,771
TOTAL	3,275	£5,500,606	£11,001,212

*Glasgow City only received funding for half of their negative destination population

- 1.10 The £1.3 million balance of the budget was set aside for additional EMA payments to participants and for programme management costs.
- 1.11 When announcing the Activity Agreements in May 2009, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning issued a press release emphasising the key role anticipated for the third sector in supporting the most vulnerable young people and providing opportunities for young people on Activity Agreements to undertake training in the community. The press release also provides a useful summary of Activity Agreements which succinctly highlights the key points: *“the pilots will involve local authorities and their partners improving the range of opportunities available to young people through community and third sector organisations; improving the support, advice and guidance that vulnerable young people can access and offering financial incentive to young people to put this type of learning on an equal footing with school or college”*.
- 1.12 The programme was developed and overseen by the Coherent Support Team within Enterprise and Employability for Young People Division of the Scottish Government. An Activity Agreement co-ordinator based within Youthlink Scotland worked closely with the Scottish Government. The co-ordinator’s role involved developing a national evaluation framework, developing robust processes for operational management and ensuring effective communication processes were in place for both pilot and non-pilot local authority areas. She had input into the national Guidance document that set out the parameters for the Activity Agreements which included careful defining of the statistics to be gathered in each area, known as the definitions paper.
- 1.13 Young Scot was commissioned by the Scottish Government to gather feedback from the young people participating in the programme across the ten pilot areas. Their research involved an on-line survey, discussion groups and video diaries to gather both quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Evaluation

- 1.14 The evaluation covers the period from the start of the pilot in May 2009 to the end of February 2011. A November 2010 cut off point was applied for the purposes of data comparison and analysis only. The qualitative evidence presented in this report covers the period up to and including February 2011.
- 1.15 The evaluation focuses on the following process and outcome measures:

Process Measures:

- the number and characteristics of young people participating in the scheme, including those eligible, engaged, and the drop-out rate;
- information on the activities offered to young people such as the range, unit costs, service provider, funding streams utilised, take-up, use of existing provision and commissioning of new provision, and any gaps;
- how the activity agreements are delivered and managed; and
- the costs associated with management of Activity Agreements including a detailed breakdown of how programme funding has been spent.

Outcome Measures:

- short-term/immediate outcomes in terms of young people's progression onto a hard progression, including an assessment of the extent to which the benefits in terms of participants' progression into hard progressions would have occurred without the Activity Agreement;
- measures around young people's experience of participating in an Activity Agreement and how that has affected their onward choices;
- the pilot's impact on local authorities and their delivery partners; and
- examination of the costs of Activity Agreements along with the net benefits achieved by the programme.

Methodology

1.16 The evaluation methodology focused on the process and outcome measures highlighted above. It incorporated a consideration of the critical role of the Trusted Professionals, local approaches, the relative importance of EMA, value for money, and ways to engage young people in the research. Reflection on these issues in advance made it possible to implement the workplan presented to the Scottish Government at the start of the evaluation without significant deviation. The research team used the following methods:

- a start-up meeting with the Scottish Government and Youthlink Scotland to discuss in detail the programme and the aims of the evaluation. An inception report followed containing an assessment of the quality of the data held by the pilot areas, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Young Scot, an overview of the number of young people participating; ethical issues surrounding the additional primary research with young people in the pilot areas which was agreed at the inception meeting; and an overview of findings from the English Activity Agreement pilots;
- further meetings were held with the Scottish Government and Youthlink Scotland throughout the evaluation to provide updates of progress and to discuss the emerging findings;
- attendance at the National Activity Agreement Steering Group meetings in November 2010 - to outline the aims of the evaluation and the anticipated input of the pilot areas and other stakeholders – and January 2011 to provide an update of progress and the emerging findings;
- attendance at the Activity Agreement National Conference in November 2010 which included a presentation outlining the aims of the evaluation, progress to that date and the emerging issues;
- a literature review of relevant policy documents, research and delivery/management materials which included '16+ Learning Choices: First Step Activity and Financial Support', '16+ Learning Choices Policy and Practice Framework Supporting all Young People into Positive and Sustained Destinations', 'Curriculum for Excellence Building the Curriculum 3: A Framework for Learning and Teaching', the Activity Agreement Guidance and various papers from the evaluation of the English Activity Agreement pilots;

- detailed analysis of quantitative data from the SDS Insight database and additional information supplied by the pilot areas using a bespoke pro-forma that gathered data on: the number of eligible young people; number of young people engaged; number of young people completing their agreed activity; drop out rate; options chosen and activities undertaken; and short term outcomes achieved;
- in-depth consultation with Activity Agreement Co-ordinators and other key staff such as 16+ Learning Choices Co-ordinators in each area, via depth interviews and ongoing contact, to discuss development and implementation of the pilots, lessons learnt, challenges, successes and local contextual issues;
- focus groups with a total of 104 young people across the ten pilot areas who were all current or recent participants on the Activity Agreement programme, to explore their experiences of the programme including their views on the enrolment process, the support received from the Trusted Professional, the activities they took part in; the importance or otherwise of the EMA, what they gained from their involvement and what impact it has had on their life;
- focus groups with Trusted Professionals in each pilot area, to discuss their roles, how they supported young people and worked with other professionals, and the challenges, successes and good practice emanating from the pilot;
- interviews with and visits to a wide range of activity providers including training organisations, voluntary groups, and Colleges to discuss their experiences, and the impact of the pilot on their practice and organisation;
- a series of interviews/focus groups with a broad range of local strategic stakeholders, for example members of the local MCMC steering groups including local SDS staff, colleges, local authority and training providers, to explore the development and delivery of the approach, links to existing provision, the local impact of the pilot and lessons learnt;
- interviews with national strategic stakeholders, such as SDS, Youthlink, Scottish Training Federation, Support Training Action Group (STAG), and Jobcentre Plus, to discuss the national context including links to existing provision for young people, the impact of the pilots on young people and the delivery partners and the lessons learnt for a potential roll out of the pilot to other areas;
- research consisting of data analysis, staff interviews and focus groups with young people in two areas (Moray and South Ayrshire) and two programmes (Get Ready for Work Lifeskills in Lanarkshire and Dundee) to act as comparators; and
- analysis of all qualitative and quantitative findings.

1.17 The research was implemented broadly as planned at the outset. The main challenges which arose were gathering comprehensive and consistent data on beneficiaries from the pilot areas (outlined in more detail in Appendix 6), being unable to engage young people who had left Activity Agreements to gather their views of the pilots and what may have encouraged them to remain part of it, and gathering information on the characteristics of the beneficiaries taking part in the programmes in comparator areas. The difficulties with the beneficiaries' data were primarily limited information on the characteristics of the young people at the different stages of the programme in five pilot areas, limited destinations data generally and use of quarterly snapshot data in one pilot area.

Report structure

1.18 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 – context;
- Chapter 3 – summary of data analysis;
- Chapter 4 – process issues;
- Chapter 5 – outcome measures; and
- Chapter 6 – conclusions and recommendations.

2 CONTEXT

- 2.1 This chapter sets out the context in which Activity Agreements have been piloted.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

- 2.2 CfE aims to provide a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum for young people from three to 18 years of age. It aims to help every learner develop knowledge, skills and attributes for learning, life and work.
- 2.3 All learning delivered under CfE – including Activity Agreements - should enable the learner to achieve the four capacities²: to be a successful learner; a confident individual; a responsible citizen; and an effective contributor.
- 2.4 Seven principles underpin CfE: challenge and enjoyment; breadth; progression; depth; personalisation and choice; coherence; and relevance. While all of the principles are relevant to Activity Agreements, one - personalisation and choice – is at the heart of the pilot which aims to provide flexible, individually tailored support to young people that matches their needs and interests. We also highlight progression as a key issue for the evaluation.
- 2.5 CfE also sets out a number of entitlements for learners³. The entitlements relevant to young people on Activity Agreements are: a senior phase of education that provides opportunities to obtain qualifications as well as to continue to develop the four capacities; opportunities to develop skills for learning, life and work (including career planning skills) with a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing; personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible; and support in moving into positive and sustained destinations beyond school.

16+ Learning Choices

- 2.6 16+ Learning Choices⁴ guarantees an offer of a place in post-16 learning for every eligible young person who wants it and is an integral part of CfE. It aims to provide: the right learning with a range of options on personalisation and choice; the right support to remove barriers that might restrict young people's learning choices and information, advice and guidance; and the right financial support to help young people take up the offer which is right for them.

²<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/thepurposeofthecurriculum/index.asp>

³ See 'Curriculum for Excellence Building the Curriculum 3:A Framework for Learning and Teaching' (Scottish Government 2008) for further details.

⁴ See '16+ Learning Choices Policy and Practice Framework Supporting all Young People into Positive and Sustained Destinations' (Scottish Government, 2010)

- 2.7 Activity Agreements constitute a 16+ Learning Choices offer⁵ within the personal/skills development category. Two priority groups are highlighted for Activity Agreements: young people identified as being vulnerable to disengagement prior to leaving compulsory education; and young people who initially move into a positive post-school destination but who do not sustain it.
- 2.8 SDS is developing a 16+ Data Hub for the benefit of all partners. It will consolidate information on young people to remove duplication and gaps and provide more consistent and personalised information for staff working with young people. Legal agreements and privacy notices are being developed to enable SDS, local authorities and colleges to share data. The Hub is still being developed and is not operational at this time.
- 2.9 CfE and 16+ Learning Choices emphasise the importance of issues such as relevance, personalisation and choice and significantly cross references Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).

GIRFEC

- 2.10 GIRFEC provides a framework to improve the well-being of all children and young people and is underpinned by shared principles and values which recognise children's rights. It knits together a number of policy objectives for children and young people and provides the methodology of delivering the Social Frameworks of Equally Well, the Early Years Framework and Achieving our Potential. The approach is supported by the GIRFEC Practice Model that in turn is based on the eight indicators of well-being: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.
- 2.11 At the heart of the GIRFEC approach are 10 core components that provide a benchmark for practitioners: a focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families, based on a shared understanding of well-being; a common approach to gaining consent and to sharing information where appropriate; an integral role for children, young people and families in assessment, planning and intervention; a co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs, agreeing actions and outcomes; streamlined planning, assessment and decision making processes that lead to the right help at the right time; consistent high standards of co-operation, joint working and communication where more than one agency needs to be involved, locally and across Scotland; a lead professional to co-ordinate and monitor multi-agency activity where necessary; maximising the skilled workforce within universal services to address needs and risks at the earliest possible time; a confident and competent workforce across all services for children, young people and families; and the capacity to share demographic, assessment and planning information electronically within and across agency boundaries through the national eCare programme where appropriate.

⁵ Post 16 offers include: education in school; further education; higher education; National Training Programmes; employment; personal/skills development; and volunteering.

More Choices More Chances (MCMC)

- 2.12 The 'More Choices More Chances' Strategy (Scottish Government, 2006) addresses the issue of 16-19 year olds not in education, employment or training, estimated to total 35,000 young people at that time.
- 2.13 MCMC Partnerships have been established across Scotland and as highlighted in Chapter 1 the Scottish Government invited all Partnerships to pilot Activity Agreements as an additional way of meeting the needs of the MCMC group and help them to progress towards hard progressions.
- 2.14 The MCMC Strategy's aims include: increasing retention in education and training post 16 to ensure young people move towards sustainable employment; ensuring that education, employment and training are financially viable options for young people; removing the barriers to opportunities by providing the right support; and developing joined up local delivery involving the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 2.15 The Strategy identifies two key groups of young people that account for the majority of those not in education, employment or training – the hardest to help and an intermediate group – and this distinction is relevant to Activity Agreements and this evaluation. The hardest to help group is described as having *“complex needs which are often clearly defined and which require intensive levels of support. The existing legislative and policy framework provides a strong foundation for supporting these needs”*. The intermediate group of young people is *“less likely to be on the radar in terms of other more specialist or targeted interventions. This group may be ‘quietly disaffected’ and commonly have issues around motivation, confidence and soft skills. Less intensive, appropriately tailored support and interventions could make a massive difference to their outcomes on leaving school”*.
- 2.16 The MCMC Strategy identifies that certain young people such as care leavers and young offenders are less likely to progress into hard progressions and prioritises their needs.
- 2.17 Significantly in terms of this evaluation, the MCMC Strategy prioritises the progression of young people who are not in hard progressions into education and training, rather than into jobs without training.
- 2.18 The School Leavers Destination Survey for 2008-09 showed that approximately 7,650 young people were not progressing to hard progressions and this data was used in the assessment of MCMC Partnerships' Activity Agreement bids. It showed that 85.7% of school leavers from publicly funded secondary schools were in hard progressions and 14.3% were not, including 1.2% whose destinations were not known. Across Scotland there was significant variation in the proportion of school leavers from publicly funded schools not in education, employment and training; the figures range from 93.9% to 78.3% as shown in Appendix 3. The figures also show that young people from a deprived area, looked after young people, and those with additional support needs are at risk of not entering a hard progression.

Get Ready for Work

- 2.19 All young people in Scotland have the opportunity to take part in the National Training Programmes: GRfW, Skillseekers and Modern Apprenticeships. SDS Advisors support young people to make the appropriate choice using the Needs Led Model of Assessment.
- 2.20 GRfW provides “*a national work based training framework to provide young people with the confidence and transferable skills needed to gain a positive and sustained outcome including continued learning. The focus of this intervention will be on offering generic work skills rather than training for specific employment sectors. Training will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual*” (GRfW Programme Rules 2010-11).
- 2.21 GRfW participants receive the minimum training allowance of £55 per week for a 26 week (maximum) placement. Learners sign an Individual Learners Plan with their SDS Advisor and a Trainee Agreement with their provider. It is noteworthy that – unlike Activity Agreements - providers receive bonus payments based on young people progressing to: Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship; further education; and employment.
- 2.22 GRfW Lifeskills is “*intended to offer a gateway to Learners who are disengaged or excluded from training opportunities through traditional routes and initially Learners will be able to attend Lifeskills on an ad hoc, part time, or full time basis as recommended by the Personal Adviser. In depth self assessment will be encouraged to promote self-awareness and identify aspects of the Learner’s behaviour which are unacceptable and require modification*” (GRfW Programme Rules 2010-11).
- 2.23 There are parallels with Activity Agreements as Lifeskills providers are expected to work closely with other agencies to support young people to address barriers such as homelessness, health, substance misuse and criminal records. Individual Learning Plans focus on short-term goals. The Programme Rules describe how Lifeskills is ‘intended to offer focused support to allow Learners to address issues which will reduce the chaos in their lifestyle and enable them to progress to full time attendance and then on to GRfW or a suitable offer in line with individual needs’. Lifeskills contracts are in place across Scotland with the exception of the Highlands and Islands.
- 2.24 Part time Lifeskills participants (16-25 hours per week) receive a £40 per week allowance; ad hoc participants (15 hour or less) receive no allowance.
- 2.25 Learners are assumed to have left GRfW including Lifeskills if they have not attended for five consecutive working days (ten for ad hoc attendees). This can be difficult for some young people with chaotic lifestyles to adhere to and the flexibility of Activity Agreements is therefore one of its distinctive features.
- 2.26 SDS statistics show that approximately 10,000 young people started GRfW including Lifeskills in 2009-10. Approximately 36% of all starters achieved a positive outcome, the majority of these were job outcomes (22% of all starters progressed into employment, approximately one in ten starters moved onto

full time education while 4% moved onto Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship).

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

- 2.27 One of the key features of 16+ Learning Choices is that the right financial support is available to young people to enable them to take up the offer which is most appropriate to their needs. It is noteworthy therefore that young people taking part in Activity Agreements have the opportunity to apply for EMA, a means-tested allowance of £30 per week.
- 2.28 Research⁶ showed that EMA had a number of positives but could be targeted more effectively. From 2009-10 EMA was refocused to target support more effectively at young people from lower income households. To qualify for EMA, household income thresholds of £20,351 and £22,403 for young people from families with more than one child in full time education apply.
- 2.29 In 2009-10 in Scotland, 37,480 young people received EMA payments which totalled £33.4 million. 63% of the young people were in school.
- 2.30 At the start of Activity Agreement pilot, EMA bonus payments were available to young people as rewards for good attendance and achievement. The Scottish Government announced in 2010 that the bonus payments were to cease due to the overall demand for EMA⁷. Activity Agreement pilots had discretion to continue bonus payments from local budgets.

Support for Young People

- 2.31 Young people looking for employment and training can access support from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Jobcentre Plus.
- 2.32 SDS advisors and key workers provide advice and guidance on employment, training (including the National Training Programmes) and learning to school pupils and young people. In 2009/10, SDS supported 31,500 young people in the MCMC group and approximately two thirds progressed to a hard progression⁸. Jobcentre Plus provides support to jobseekers aged 16 or over. Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) is available to people aged 18 or over capable of and actively seeking work; it is only paid to 16 or 17 year olds in exceptional circumstances such as family estrangement. Young people under 24 who have been claiming JSA for six months have to take part in New Deal where they can receive initially up to 16 weeks support to develop an action plan and secure employment, up to 13 weeks to gain work experience, undertake training or develop self employment ideas, and up to 26 weeks of additional support to find work.

⁶ 'Young People's Awareness and Experience of Education Maintenance Allowances and their Impact on Choices and Pathways' (Scottish Government 2007)

⁷ Scottish Government EMA budget was overspent by £4.5m in 2009-10.

⁸ SDS Annual Report and Financial Statements 2009/10

3 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Summary of key points:

- Scottish Government statistics show that a total of 2,484 referrals had been made to the end of November 2010, leading to 2,035 Activity Agreements being offered, and 1,450 Activity Agreements that a young person signed up for (71% of those who were offered an Activity Agreement signed up);
- on average 23.4% of young people left their Activity Agreement early;
- there was a slight under-representation of females on Activity Agreements, and proportionally Activity Agreements have focused more strongly on the younger age group;
- the most common factors identified for young people on Activity Agreements were that they were persistently truant, young people with low attainment in school and/or winter leavers;
- overall some form of hard progression was recorded for 35.0% of young people on an Activity Agreement;
- the proportion of young people making a hard progression was lower for those claiming EMA (30.8%) than for all participants;
- destination information was incomplete but for those we know about 14.0% progressed to Training: Get Ready for Work, 12.1% to College and 5.6% to employment without training; and
- 40.7% of the young people who signed-up for an Activity Agreement were recorded as making a hard progression or were an early leaver who moved into a hard progression, while 20.1% were recorded as moving into a negative destination or were an early leaver with a negative destination.

3.1 This chapter presents a summary of the findings from our statistical analysis of Activity Agreements. The full analysis and findings, including all relevant tables, are presented as a Technical Appendix (see Appendix 5).

3.2 The analysis is provided in two parts. Part one analyses the quarterly monitoring information gathered by the Scottish Government from the pilots on the agreed definitions (see Appendix 4). Part two analyses more detailed information that we gathered directly from the pilots using our own pro-forma during this evaluation. The analysis of both data sets covers the period up to the end of November 2010.

Scottish Government Statistics

3.3 Table 3.1 overleaf shows the Scottish Government definitions returns data on Activity Agreements up to November 2010, with information on the number of referrals, Activity Agreements offered, taken up and declined, levels of early leavers and the number of Activity Agreements that are considered to have led to hard progression for the young person involved.

3.4 It should be noted that the interpretation of definitions varies between pilot areas. For example, in some areas there is no difference between 'Referrals' and 'Offered', as the approach does not allow for this, with everyone who is referred immediately being made an offer. Similarly the approach to recording

'Offered' and 'Signed up' varies, with some areas doing a great deal of work at this stage even though the young person may not sign-up for an Activity Agreement.

3.5 The data shows that:

- a total of 2,484 referrals had been made to the end of November 2010, leading to 2,035 Activity Agreements being offered, and 1,450 Activity Agreements that a young person signed up for;
- the overall percentage of young people who signed up to an Activity Agreement having been offered one was 71.3%. Highland and Inverclyde appeared to have had a 100% sign-up rate, while North Lanarkshire had the lowest sign-up rate at 45.8%;
- the average level of Activity Agreements that were declined after being offered was 24.6%. North Lanarkshire had the highest level of declined, with 54.2%;
- on average 23.4% of young people left their Activity Agreement early. The highest level of early leavers was in North Lanarkshire (54.5%) while the lowest was in Highland (1.7%); and
- overall some form of hard progression was judged to have occurred for 35.0% of young people on an Activity Agreement. This varied from 52.7% in South Lanarkshire to 10.0% in Stirling.

Table 3.1: Scottish Government Definitions Return, November 2010

Local Authority	Referrals	Offered	Signed up	% signed up from offered	Declined	% of declined from offered	Early Leavers	% of early leavers from signed up	Hard Progressions	% of hard progressions from signed up
Fife	312 ⁽¹⁾	188	159	84.6%	12	6.4%	35 ⁽²⁾	22.0%	27	17.0%
Glasgow ⁽³⁾	601	299	266	89.0%	33	11.0%	39	14.7%	125	47.0%
Highland	120	120	120	100.0%	2	1.7%	2	1.7%	26	21.7%
Inverclyde	85	66	66	100.0%	8	12.1%	11	16.7%	18	27.3%
North Ayrshire	107	107	97	90.7%	10	9.3%	17	17.5%	31	32.0%
North Lanarkshire ⁽⁵⁾ ⁽⁶⁾	559	649	297	45.8%	352	54.2%	162	54.5%	99	33.3%
Renfrewshire ⁽⁴⁾	186	105	96	91.4%	9	8.6%	14	14.6%	33	34.4%
South Lanarkshire	327	327	203	62.1%	40	12.2%	26	12.8%	107	52.7%
Stirling	56	43	40	93.0%	10	23.3%	10	25.0%	4	10.0%
West Dunbartonshire	131	131	106	80.9%	24	18.3%	23	21.7%	38	35.8%
Total	2,484	2,035	1,450	71.3%	500	24.6%	339	23.4%	508	35.0%

Source: Scottish Government

- (1) Includes 13 re starts
- (2) An additional 52 have completed their AA
- (3) Difference in referrals and offered:
 - 110 inappropriate referrals
 - 112 open referrals – those not yet engaging fully
 - 68 subsequently referred to partner agency to support
 - 12 moved directly onto a hard progression by the Glasgow coaches, without formally signing AA

- (4) Difference in referrals and offered – no contact, leavers referred already had a hard progression
- (5) Difference in referrals and offered due to initial set up period where referrals did not always come through an official route
- (6) Figures skewed due to the North Lanarkshire approach to capturing data ie. North Lanarkshire count the number of engagements with young people where the young person has not officially signed up to an AA

Pilot Area Data

- 3.6 In addition to the above summary analysis, we also asked each pilot area to return detailed statistical information on the characteristics and the destinations of young people.
- 3.7 Although the information requested from each pilot area included the same categories as the information gathered by the Scottish Government, and covered the same period (up to end of November 2010), there were some discrepancies between the information gathered. This is perhaps not surprising, given the wide variety of data monitoring techniques in place in the various pilot areas, and there is a possibility that some pilot areas reported on data gathered after the end November 2010, as submission of data from the pilot areas took place in late January 2011.
- 3.8 The data supplied from each pilot area also varied in quality, with some data missing from certain areas. Appendix 6 gives details of data issues and caveats for each pilot area, and these should be considered when examining the following key findings.

Characteristics of young people

- 3.9 The data requested from each pilot area included information on the characteristics of the young people (their gender, age, and factors that may make young people more likely to disengage from learning). Again there were some discrepancies in the level of data supplied by each pilot area, also detailed in Appendix 6.

Age and gender

- the gender profile of young people referred for, signed up to or making hard progressions from Activity Agreements had slightly more males than females, with 55.6%, 58.5% and 59.7% male compared to 44.4%, 41.5% and 40.3% female respectively for each stage. This compares with 51.3% males and 48.7% females in the 16-19 population in Scotland generally⁹, showing that there is a slight under-representation of females;
- the age profile of young people was also fairly consistent across referrals, those signed up for an Activity Agreement and hard progressions. In each case the majority were aged 16 at the time of referral (51.4% of referrals, 53.1% of those signed up and 53.6% of young people making a hard progression), with those aged 17 at the time of referral the next highest category (25.2% of referrals, 28.5% of those signed up and 27.6% of young people making a hard progression);
- young people who were under 16 at time of referral was the only age category where there was some discrepancy, with 19.1% of those referred in this category, compared to only 11.6% signed up, and 15.1% making a hard progression. In part this may be explained by the school leaving date;

⁹ <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/population/estimates/mid-year/2009/index.html>

- there were relatively few young people aged either 18 or 19 at the time of referral, with only 4.5% of referrals, 6.8% of those signed up and 3.7% of those making a hard progression falling into either of these age categories; and
- these figures compare to 24.1% of young people aged 16-19 in the general population being aged 16, 25.0% aged 17 and 50.8% aged 18 or 19. This demonstrates that proportionally Activity Agreements have focussed more strongly on the younger age group, and it raises questions about the engagement of young people who are not or have not recently been at school.

3.10 The Scottish Government identified a number of factors that are likely to make young people more likely to disengage from learning (see Table 1.1). As Activity Agreements were funded with a view to engaging with some of the 'hardest-to-reach' young people, young people on Activity Agreements may be expected to fall into one/several of these categories. In order to assess whether this is the case, below we analyse:

- whether there are any differences in the characteristics of those referred for, signed up to and making hard progressions from Activity Agreements;
- what the most common factors are at each stage; and
- the differences in the characteristics of young people signed up for an Activity Agreement in each pilot area.

Profile of young people and factors that may make them more likely to disengage from learning

3.11 There were a number of differences in the characteristics of young people at referral, signed up and hard progression stages, including:

- slightly more referrals for winter leavers than those who sign-up or make a hard progression;
- a drop in the percentage of young parents who make a hard progression (1.4%), compared to the number referred (2.3%) or who sign-up (2.3%);
- significantly fewer young people who are persistently truant who sign-up (38.2%) than are referred for an Activity Agreement (51.0%);
- a significant decrease in the number of young people involved in alcohol or drug abuse who are referred (11.5%) or sign-up (11.7%) to those making a hard progression (5.3%);
- a significant decrease from the number of young people with behavioural issues who are referred (22.0%) to those that sign-up (16.7%) or make a hard progression (11.3%);
- a fall from the level of young people with physical and/or mental health problems who sign-up (8.6%) to those making a hard progression (5.3%);
- the proportion of young people who do not sustain an initial hard progression increased from 15.9% of referrals to 17.6% of signed up and 21.2% of those making a hard progression; and
- the most common factors identified for young people were similar across referrals, signed up and young people making hard progressions, with 'young people who are persistently truant', 'young people with low attainment in school' and 'winter leavers' in the top three for all stages.

3.12 In order to gain a sense of whether Activity Agreements are reaching young people with these characteristics, it is interesting to compare the figures for young people on Activity Agreements to the general population of 16-19 year olds in Scotland. Obtaining directly comparable data has proven difficult for a number of the characteristics, and some of the comparator figures below have various caveats (and as such should be treated with caution), which are detailed in Appendix 6. However it is interesting to note that for those signed-up to an Activity Agreement:

- 2.1% were recorded as young carers, compared to 2.3% in the overall 16-19 population;
- 1.5% were recorded as homeless, compared to 4.4% overall in the 16-19 population;
- only 1.7% were recorded as having physical/mental health problems or disabilities, compared to 8.6% in the overall 16-19 population;
- 10.3% were recorded as having additional support needs, slightly above the figure of 9.6% for the overall 16-19 population;
- only 0.5% were recorded as having English as a second language, compared to 3.4% for all 16-19 year olds;
- 0.5% were recorded as from a gypsy/travelling community, compared to 0.01% for the 16-19 age group overall; and
- only 0.8% of young people signed-up for an Activity Agreement were recorded as having a BME background, compared to 4.0% for all 16-19 year olds.

3.13 Analysing the characteristics of young people signed up to Activity Agreements in each area, compared to the overall profile, revealed the following differences in the characteristics of young people in each pilot area:

- Fife – had a significantly higher level of young people with physical/mental health problems or disabilities, additional support needs, behavioural issues, and those from a gypsy/travelling community. There were significantly less young people who were persistently truant (29.9%) and less young parents, young carers, homeless or leaving special school;
- Glasgow – had a significantly higher percentage of young people with low attainment in school (100%) and young people who were persistently truant (90.8%), as well as higher levels of young people who were winter leavers, looked after children/care leavers, and young people from a BME background. Glasgow had lower numbers of young parents, young people who were homeless, those with a physical/mental health problem or disability and those who did not sustain an initial hard progression;
- Highland – had a higher percentage of young people who were young parents, young carers, young offenders, were homeless, had a physical/mental health problem or disability, had additional support needs, were leaving special school, who did not sustain an initial hard progression and for whom English was a second language. Compared to the overall average there were less young people who were winter leavers, had low attainment at school (19.8%), were persistently truant at school (20.6%), or were involved in drug or alcohol abuse;
- Inverclyde – had significantly higher levels of young people with low attainment in school (100%), persistent truants (100%) and young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse (81.1%) compared to the overall average. There were also

significantly more young people who were young parents, young offenders, young people with behavioural issues, those with physical/mental health problems or disabilities, and young people who did not sustain an initial hard progression (90.6%);

- North Ayrshire – data unavailable;
- North Lanarkshire – had significantly more young people who were involved in alcohol or drug misuse and/or had behavioural issues, and slightly more young people who were a risk to themselves or others, compared to the overall average. There were less young people who were winter leavers, looked after children and care leavers, young people who were persistently truant (18.2%) and young people who were homeless;
- Renfrewshire – had a significantly lower percentage of young people Signed up to an Activity Agreement with low attainment in school (10.0%) and young people who were persistently truant (13.6%) compared to the overall average. There were also lower levels of young people who were winter leavers, young parents, young carers, young offenders, those with additional support needs, young people leaving special school, those who were a risk to themselves or others and young people who did not sustain an initial hard progression. There was a slightly higher percentage of young people for whom English was a second language;
- South Lanarkshire – had a fairly similar profile to the overall average, although there were higher percentages of young people who were young carers, homeless, leaving special school, a risk to themselves or others and who did not sustain an initial hard progression (43.0%);
- Stirling – data unavailable; and
- West Dunbartonshire - had a significantly lower percentage of young people signed up to an Activity Agreement with low attainment in school (17%) and young people who were persistently truant (8.9%) compared to the overall average. There were also lower levels of young people who were involved in alcohol or drug misuse, had behavioural issues, with physical/mental health problems or disabilities or leaving special school. This pilot area had significantly higher percentages of young people who were young carers, or for whom English was a second language.

Destinations for young people leaving the pilot

- 3.14 The analysis in this section relates to young people who in consultation with their Trusted Professional reached an agreed end point in their Agreement and had their next step or destination recorded on the management information system; it covers both positive and negative destinations. This section does not include analysis of early leavers who left the pilot before an agreed end point, some of whom, it is known, moved on to other destinations, again both positive and negative. Information on early leavers is covered in the subsequent section and a further section summarises the destinations of leavers and early leavers together.
- 3.15 Pilot areas were also asked to report on the number of young people who had signed up to an Activity Agreement who left at the agreed point and progressed to one of the following destinations:
- Training: Get Ready for Work (GRfW) Lifeskills

- Training: GRfW
- Training: Skillseekers
- Training: Modern Apprenticeship
- Other training
- Employment with training, for example, Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship
- Employment without training
- Voluntary work
- School
- College
- Unemployed seeking employment or training
- Unknown
- Other, for example, prison, caring, sickness

3.16 Destinations information was available for approximately 39% of the young people who had signed up for an Activity Agreement. Analysis of the data returned shows that:

- overall the destination with the highest percentage of progressions was 'Training: GRfW' with 14.0%, followed by 'College' at 12.1%. The next highest destination was 'Employment without training', though this figure was around half of the two highest destinations, at 5.6%. Young people going on to this destination are perhaps more vulnerable to the volatile nature of the low paid/low skilled jobs market;
- the destinations with the lowest number of young people were 'Training: Skillseekers' (0.2%), 'Unknown' (0.7%) and 'School' (0.8%);
- within each pilot area 'Training: GRfW' was one of the top two destinations in every case, as was 'College', except in Inverclyde, where 'Other training' was the second most populated destination, and in North Lanarkshire, where 'Employment without training' and 'Voluntary Work' were the second most populated, behind 'College'. In several areas 'Employment without training' was also fairly high, in some cases equal to either 'Training: GRfW' or 'College';
- progression to 'Training: GRfW Lifeskills' was low at 2.9%;
- of young people on an Activity Agreement who progressed to another destination, overall 90.1% of these were positive, while 9.9% were to a negative destination;
- there was a wide variety in the level of positive progressions between each pilot area, with North and South Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire reporting that of young people progressing from an Activity Agreement 100% had been to a hard progression. In most other pilot areas this figure was between 86.0% to 93.1%, however North Ayrshire had a significantly lower figure (54.9%);
- the area with the highest percentage of young people progressing to a negative destination was North Ayrshire, with 45.1% of young people, compared to the next highest pilot area of West Dunbartonshire, with 14.0%; and
- when comparing the profile of young people progressing to each destination, the following differences emerged:
 - **Training: GRfW Lifeskills** – a greater number of young people aged under 16 and 16 (100.0% compared to 50.1% overall), with no young people aged 17 and 18; higher numbers of young people who were winter leavers (62.2% compared to 21.7% overall), young offenders (21.6% compared to 9% overall), homeless (13.5% compared to 2.6%

overall), with additional support needs (27.0% compared to 7.8% overall) and not sustaining an initial hard progression (27.0% compared to 9.8% overall);

- **Training: GRfW** – significantly more under 16s at referral (35.7% compared to 10.8% overall) and 16 year olds (50% compared to 39.3% overall), and fewer older young people (14.3% aged 17, 18 or 19, compared to 44.3% overall); higher numbers of young people who were winter leavers (44.8% compared to 21.7% overall), with low attainment at school (61.9% compared to 36.6% overall), persistently truant (55.2% compared to 39.9% overall), with behavioural issues (16% compared to 8.1% overall), and young people who do not sustain a hard progression (30.4% compared to 9.8% overall); and lower numbers of young offenders (3.9% compared to 9% overall);
- **Training: Skillseekers** – with only two young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **Training: Modern Apprenticeship** - with only ten young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **Other training** – a higher percentage of young people who were persistently truant (70% compared to 39.9% overall) and looked after children and care leavers (35.0% compared to 12.9% overall); lower levels of winter leavers (12.5% compared to 21.7% overall),
- **Employment with training e.g. Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship** - with only twenty young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **Employment without training** - a higher level of females (50.0% compared to 42.9% overall); all young people in this destination were aged 16 at referral (100.0% compared to 39.3% overall); and fewer young people with low attainment (19.4% compared to 36.6%), persistently truant (16.4% compared to 39.9%) or involved in alcohol or drug misuse (1.5% compared to 6.2% overall);
- **Voluntary work** - with only sixteen young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **School** - with only ten young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **College** – significantly more young people age under 16 at referral (42.9% compared to 10.8% overall), but fewer young people aged 17 or 18 (19.0% compared to 43.4% overall); and a higher level of young people who were persistently truant (46.9% compared to 36.6% overall);
- **Unemployed seeking employment or training** – a higher percentage of young people aged under 16 or 16 at referral (50.0% for both age categories, compared to 10.8% and 39.3% respectively overall); and a lower level of winter leavers (15.8% compared to 21.7% overall);
- **Unknown** - with only nine young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid; and
- **Other e.g. prison, caring, sickness** - with only thirteen young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid.

3.17 The Scottish Government data showed that 35.0% of young people made a hard progression (see Table 3.1). Using data from the pilot areas on the

characteristics of young people, a slightly lower proportion of young people who were claiming EMA made a hard progression (30.8%). Glasgow had the largest difference (47% of all young people making a hard progression, compared to 6.7% of young people receiving EMA), however in three areas (Fife, Highland and West Dunbartonshire) those claiming EMA were proportionally more likely to make a hard progression than young people overall.

Early Leavers

- 3.18 In addition to the data on leavers moving into positive and negative destinations, it is also useful to consider young people who left their Activity Agreement early, to either a positive or negative destination, as this also helps to examine the success of the pilots.
- 3.19 Overall, 6.1% of young people who signed-up for an Activity Agreement left early to a hard progression, while 12.8% left early to a negative destination. The early leavers to a hard progression varied from a high of 49.1% in Renfrewshire to none in Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire. Those that left early to a negative destination ranged from a high of 52.8% in Inverclyde to a low of 2.4% in Highland.

Early Leavers and known destinations combined

- 3.20 In order to gain an overall impression of whether young people who signed-up to an Activity Agreement went on to a positive or negative destination, it is useful to combine the figures on leavers with known destinations and early leavers. This reveals that:
- of the young people who signed-up for an Activity Agreement 40.7% had progressed to a hard progression, while 20.1% had moved to a negative destination. The other young people (39.2%) remain on their Activity Agreement; and
 - within the pilot areas, Renfrewshire had the largest percentage of young people (combining early leavers with those having completed their Activity Agreement) in a hard progression (85.5%), while North Lanarkshire had the lowest level at 9.6%. The area with the highest level of young people (combining early leavers with those having completed their Activity Agreement) progressing to a negative destination was North Ayrshire with 44.3%, while Highland had the lowest level with 7.8%.

4 FINDINGS: PROCESS ISSUES

Summary of key points:

- activities included a very wide range of directly funded and in-kind provision across the pilot areas ranging from personal development to work placements, with a mix of tailored and existing provision, group activity and individual provision;
- many of the activities have been accredited and links to Curriculum for Excellence are strong;
- local authorities have been the main provider of directly funded activities, the third and private sectors have also provided significant input but the role of Colleges as providers has been limited;
- the Activity Agreement pilots all sit within MCMC or 16+Learning Choices within their local authority/Community Planning Partnership, however despite the similar overall structural arrangements there were ten different models being delivered in practice, for example those with a strong school based approach to referral, those with high involvement from CLD, some with large amounts of new provision and others focusing on improving existing provision;
- a co-ordination role exists in all areas and is being fulfilled by an existing member of staff who has added this role to their remit in two areas and by a newly appointed member of staff funded through the Activity Agreement budget in eight areas;
- 45 Trusted Professionals have been funded directly by the Activity Agreement budget;
- there were different approaches to delivering the Trusted Professional function across the pilots;
- feedback from young people on Trusted Professionals was very positive;
- in-kind costs suggest many other staff members associated in delivering the Activity Agreements, in particular Council and SDS staff;
- there has been a range of approaches to referrals;
- the approach to assessment is similar across the ten areas although there are different tools being used;
- partnership work has been an integral part of the pilots, with SDS having a crucial role in particular in many areas;
- the total cost for the Activity Agreement programme at end November 2010, as reported to us, was £5,070,320;
- the average cost per signed up participant was £3,497 which varied from £1,638 in Highland to £5,797 in Stirling; and
- the average cost per hard progression of those who reached the end of their Agreement and those who left early was £8,507 or £8,118 if the later-starting Stirling is excluded.

Introduction

4.1 This chapter covers findings in relation to the following process issues across the Activity Agreement pilots:

- Who are the young people participating in the pilots?
- What activities are on offer to young people?
- How are Activity Agreements delivered and managed?
- What are the costs associated with management of Activity Agreements?

Who are the young people participating in the pilots?

- 4.2 Chapter Three provides an overview of the characteristics of the young people who were referred for, signed up to and made hard progression from Activity Agreements, and Appendix 5 provides an in-depth analysis.
- 4.3 In general Activity Agreements participants have been slightly more likely to be male than female, most likely to be 16 at time of referral, with a significant number also aged 17, some aged under 16 at time of referral, and relatively few aged 18 or 19 at time of referral. It could be argued that focusing on the younger age group is more sustainable in the long run, as earlier intervention may result in fewer negative or 'unknown' destinations later on. However, it raises the question of whether the older age group eligible for Activity Agreements (18 and 19 year olds) have benefited from the pilots to the extent that they could have, with delivery models tending to have been set-up with an emphasis on younger people.
- 4.4 The characteristics of the young people participating in Activity Agreements, in particular the levels of various factors which may increase the likelihood of a young person disengaging from education, suggest that in many cases young people on Activity Agreements were from some of the 'hard-to-reach' categories that the pilot targeted. As Chapter 3 details, the most common factors of young people on Activity Agreements were those with low attainment at school, young people who were persistently truant, winter leavers and young people who did not sustain an initial hard progression. This shows that Activity Agreements were used with a large number of young people for whom mainstream education had not been successful, or who had not managed to move to a hard progression.
- 4.5 Looked after children and care leavers, those with additional support needs, young offenders, those with physical/mental health problems or disabilities and those with involved in alcohol or drug misuse were also prominent in the data. There were limited numbers of young people who were homeless, leaving a special school, a risk to themselves or others, young carers, young parents, from a BME background, for whom English was a second language or from a gypsy/travelling community.
- 4.6 Comparison of young people on Activity Agreements with the overall population of young people aged 16-19 years old presented a mixed picture. There have been proportionately fewer young carers, homeless, with physical/mental health problems or disabilities, from a BME background, and

with English as a second language, approximately the same level have had additional support needs and more were from a gypsy/travelling community. The different approaches adopted across the ten pilots may be a factor here in terms of the engagement of the 'intermediate' and 'hardest-to-reach' groups identified in the MCMC Strategy and this is discussed further in Chapter 5.

What activities are on offer to young people?

- 4.7 A detailed analysis of activities is provided in Appendix 7. The following summarises the key findings.
- 4.8 The Activity Agreement Co-ordinators played an important role in overseeing activities which included mapping existing provision, identifying gaps, liaison with providers to tailor activities to Activity Agreements, commissioning new activities, and collating participant information to monitor performance. The Co-ordinators developed directories of local providers and distributed information to Trusted Professionals who generally appeared to have a good awareness of activities. Given the very wide range of activities available, all professionals involved will benefit from ongoing updating.
- 4.9 Provision includes both directly funded activities and other activities provided "in-kind" i.e. not funded by Activity Agreement budgets. The balance between the two is not clear as the information supplied by the pilot areas, particularly on the in-kind activities, was incomplete. Overall, we surmise that neither directly funded nor existing provision dominate provision across the pilot.
- 4.10 Approximately £1.95 million was spent by the ten pilot areas on 153 directly funded activities to the end of November 2010. This excludes expenditure from other sources such as ESF which we estimate could potentially double the total to approximately £4 million, excluding in-kind activities. Reported spending on directly funded activities varied from approximately £650,000 in South Lanarkshire to less than £10,000 in Inverclyde – reflecting differences in approach and the number of young people in negative destinations. Recorded number of activities ranged from five in Inverclyde to 29 in West Dunbartonshire. Local authorities have been the main recipients (35%) with the third sector accounting for 21% of expenditure and the private sector 15%. A quarter of expenditure was not broken down. Colleges accounted for 2% and this may be an area for further development. Participant data was incomplete and should be interpreted with caution. A total of 1,308 participants took part in the 135 activities; there are some differences in the distribution between sectors compared to the financial information, however some of this may be the result of information gaps.
- 4.11 Information on in-kind provision was not as well reported as the directly funded activities described above and the results should be interpreted with caution. There were 53 in-kind activities reported across the pilots ranging from 23 in Renfrewshire to one in Inverclyde (where there were information gaps). The main reported provider of in-kind activities was the private sector (26 providers) which consisted mainly of employers providing work placements. The third sector accounted for a quarter of the reported in-kind activities. As with the directly funded provision Colleges' involvement was

limited. Participant data was incomplete and should be interpreted with caution. A total of 183 participants took part in these 48 activities (20 of the activities had only one Activity Agreement participants taking part).

- 4.12 Generally speaking, providers across all sectors are those with previous experience of involvement with the Activity Agreement client group. There were some examples of new providers without experience of working with the client group e.g. in Renfrewshire and Fife. Where young people expressed an interest in areas such as working with animals, the pilots generally provided taster sessions and work placements with new providers/employers.
- 4.13 A very wide range of directly funded and in-kind activities are available across the pilot areas ranging from personal development to work placements.
- 4.14 Significantly, providers and Co-ordinators highlighted that provision was generally tailored to the needs of participants. This tailoring of provision allowed participants more time to progress at a speed appropriate to them. It has not been possible to quantify the balance between tailored and existing provision. The activities were a mix of individual support and group based.
- 4.15 Many of the activities were accredited and lead to qualifications or modules that count towards qualifications. The qualifications range from Youth Achievement Awards to SQA and generally cover SCQF Levels 1 and 2 although some of the SQA qualifications are equivalent to SCQF Level 3 and 4. Activities that do not lead to qualifications tended to be work placements and taster sessions rather than unaccredited training courses. Interestingly, Inverclyde employed two development workers whose remit included working with training providers to improve accreditation for their provision.
- 4.16 In general the pilot areas emphasised the need for activities to link to CfE. A number of pilots required providers to specify the links to CfE when mapping services or gathering details for inclusion in their directories. When prompted most of the providers consulted stated that their activities linked to CfE although we were unable to establish what difference this made to content or delivery.

How are activity agreements delivered and managed?

- 4.17 This section sets out the detail of how Activity Agreements are delivered and managed under the following headings:
- structural arrangements;
 - national co-ordination;
 - staffing;
 - referral;
 - assessment;
 - the role of the Trusted Professionals; and
 - partnership working and the role of partners.

Structural arrangements

- 4.18 The Activity Agreement pilots all sit within MCMC or 16+Learning Choices within their local authority/Community Planning Partnership (CPP). The MCMC structure sits within varying parts of the Councils and CPPs: for example in South Lanarkshire it sits within Enterprise Resources within the Council; in Fife and Glasgow it sits within Education; and in North Lanarkshire it sits within the Lifelong Learning Group of the CPP. All areas saw the link with MCMC/16+Learning Choices as essential for the effective delivery of the programme.
- 4.19 Despite these similar overall structural arrangements there were ten different models being delivered in practice as summarised in Appendix 2. They range from those with a strong school based approach to referral to those which have a high involvement from CLD and include some with large amounts of new provision in terms of the activities offered to those with relatively little new provision but with a greater emphasis on helping existing providers meet the needs of this target group.

National Co-ordinator

- 4.20 At the national level, a co-ordinator is based within Youthlink. The co-ordinator's role involved developing a national evaluation framework, developing robust processes for operational management and ensuring effective communication processes were in place for both pilot and non-pilot local authority areas. She had input into the national Guidance document that set out the parameters for the Activity Agreements which included careful defining of the statistics to be gathered in each area, known as the definitions paper.

Staffing

- 4.21 In all areas there is a co-ordination role being fulfilled either by an existing member of staff who has added this role to their remit or by a newly appointed member of staff funded through the Activity Agreement budget. The statistics returned to us by each area about employee costs indicate that eight of the areas had some form of paid co-ordinator from the Activity Agreement budget; in one case, Highland, there are two co-ordinators, to cover the geographical area, and in North Ayrshire the pilot's budget funds 60% of the person's time. The two areas that did not fund a co-ordinator were Inverclyde and Glasgow.
- 4.22 45 Trusted Professionals have been funded directly by the Activity Agreement budget. Only one area, Highland, did not employ any Trusted Professionals through this route.
- 4.23 The in-kind contributions reported to us indicate that there were many other staff members associated in delivering the Activity Agreements either on a full-time or part-time basis. In particular, Council staff and SDS staff have contributed time in many areas.

- 4.24 Table 4.1, below, shows that a total of 100 staff (63 full-time and 37 part-time) were employed paid for through the Activity Agreement budget and that an additional 135 staff (3 full-time and 132 part-time) made some form of in-kind contribution to the process. We are unable to provide full-time equivalents as this information was not universally available.
- 4.25 In the majority of cases the posts paid for by the Activity Agreement budgets were entirely covered by the pilot. However, in North Lanarkshire we are aware that the pilot contributed 60% of the cost of 17 of the 18 full-time staff with other funding covering the remaining 405 of the salary costs; 1 full-time post in North Lanarkshire was 100% funded by the pilot. Taking into account the North Lanarkshire situation, the pilot paid for 93.2 staff.

Table 4.1: Staff employed through AA budget and staff in-kind contributions by pilot areas

	Employed through AA budget (f-t and p-t combined)		In-kind employee contributions (f-t and p-t combined)		Total staff employed involved with Activity Agreements	
	F-T	P-T	F-T	P-T	F-T	P-T
Fife	7	6		27	7	33
Glasgow	6	2		4	6	6
Highland	3			28	3	
Inverclyde	4	4		n/s	4	8
North Ayrshire	8	1		9	8	9
North Lanarkshire	18**	8***		16****	18	26
Renfrewshire	4	8		10	4	12
South Lanarkshire	7		3	23	10	10
Stirling	2	8		13	2	10
West Dunbartonshire	4			2	4	4
Total	63	37	3	132	66	118

Source: Returns submitted by each pilot area

*The amount of part-time work ranges from 5% to 55% across the areas.

** Of the 18 F-T staff 17 had 60% of their costs met through the AA budget.

***In addition to the 8 P-T workers there were various contributions from CLD staff paid for by the AA budget.

**** 40% of the F-T Co-ordinator and 15 of the Trusted Professionals was met from ERDF.

Referral

- 4.26 In terms of referral there is some variance according to the overall approach being taken in each area. For some, referral is mainly focused on early identification of at risk young people in schools (Fife, Glasgow, North Ayrshire, and Renfrewshire). In some the main focus of referral is through CLD (North Lanarkshire, and Inverclyde) while in others there is a broad range of agencies involved, such as social work, CLD, extended outreach and schools. Wherever the referrals come from in most cases they will go through SDS for processing; this is not true in Glasgow where 95% of referrals come directly from schools. Even where the majority of referrals come from one source (school or CLD) there is still the opportunity for referrals from other agencies.
- 4.27 Some areas reported that they had not had the amount of referrals they had expected, for example North Ayrshire and Renfrewshire reported this and the same sentiment was echoed by providers across many areas who felt they

had not had the throughput they expected. To illustrate this, in Renfrewshire, based on information from the Guidance document suggesting that Trusted Professionals should carry a caseload of around 15 young people, they undertook an initial analysis, using SDS data, and decided that it would need to employ ten Trusted Professionals. However because of the lack of numbers of young people being referred it ended up only employing eight and this number was later reduced to six. The evidence shows that these six people only had a caseload of around seven young people each so possibly the area required fewer additional Trusted Professionals.

- 4.28 In some areas both the quantity and the quality of referrals was commented on. In North Lanarkshire for example schools could refer young people to the six local Hubs. It was reported by Trusted Professionals that some schools were reluctant to suggest an Activity Agreement to young people as this would not count as a hard progression in the School Leavers' Destination Report and also when they did refer it was found that some of the young people were not appropriate for Activity Agreements, they were already working in the informal economy or waiting to go to College and the schools were not close enough to them to know this.
- 4.29 Self-referral was positively encouraged in most areas in particular in North Lanarkshire where the model of six "Hubs" based in the local communities coupled with a strong marketing campaign encouraged self-referral.
- 4.30 The number of referrals did not necessarily lead to the same number of offers for Activity Agreements being made as part of the referral process was to check whether the Activity Agreement was the right option for the individual young person or not. In some areas a lot of work would be done at this stage by SDS key workers or Trusted Professionals which might lead to an offer being made for another programme if it was felt the young person could take this on. This is an important part of the Activity Agreement process even though the young person does not end up signing an Activity Agreement.
- 4.31 One of the notable elements of much of the referral processes in place was the level of multi-agency working involved. Where early identification at school is the main approach there is a team of people involved in the identification of those at risk and this worked particularly well in the pilot. In other areas, such as South Lanarkshire, the co-location of the Trusted Professionals alongside the Integrated Children's Service teams allowed for cross-agency working to happen easily. In Highland, where there is a well-established GIRFEC approach, the involvement of multi-agencies is a given.
- 4.32 Each area developed its own referral forms. These would typically cover the personal details of the young person, the reason for referral and an identification of why the young person is considered at risk (based on the 16 characteristics included in the Guidance document).

Assessment

- 4.33 The approach to assessment is similar across the ten areas although there are different tools being used. The broad approach is to cover the young

person's strengths, skills, interests, barriers, wellbeing and forward plans. Often there is some form of sliding scale to allow the young person to make some kind of self-assessment (this can be paper based or use a tool such as the Rickter Scale). The assessment is undertaken by the Trusted Professionals in most areas although in some areas (for example South Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire) there is also some initial assessment by schools/SDS key workers.

- 4.34 Some of the projects (Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire) cover the assessment through use of the Activity Agreement paperwork they have developed themselves or in the case of West Dunbartonshire that they have adopted from SDS (Individual Learner Plan). Three of the projects (Glasgow, Stirling, West Dunbartonshire) have built in using the Rickter Scale with young people but with their own MCMC/Activity Agreement overlay on it: for example in Stirling they refer to it as a Resilience Survey which covers problem solving, sense of purpose, autonomy and social competence. Renfrewshire uses a paper-based scale that young people tick. Glasgow mentions use of Px2 as part of the assessment process (in other areas this is used at the activity stage conducted by providers).
- 4.35 Fife and South Lanarkshire are using versions of a tool developed by educational psychologists based around the phrases: "*I have, I can, I am, I hope, I need*". Fife also refers to the GIRFEC SHANARRI Indicators (Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible, Included) and Glasgow and Highland make reference to the CfE capacities.
- 4.36 Several of the projects mention gathering background information about the young person either through the referral form or through the Child's Plan in Highland (where the young person has one). In many instances there is a multi-agency meeting or case conference to discuss the young person prior to the referral and this information will be passed on. There can also be multi-agency involvement at the assessment stage.
- 4.37 In general, background information about the young person is shared between partner agencies. However the lack of being able to share SDS Insight data was raised as a barrier in several areas, including Inverclyde where the Trusted Professionals and SDS key workers meet but are not able to share information "*due to SDS Insight confidentiality*". As referred to in Chapter Two there is currently a process in place to develop a Data Hub to allow better sharing of information between SDS and local authorities but it has yet to put this sharing in place. This issue of data sharing has come up between other agencies at local level too. In Fife for example, they have recently been discussing data sharing forms and protocols.
- 4.38 The assessment process is seen in many areas as a continuous one with the Trusted Professional and young person returning to it to update and reflect on progress made. It can also form part of the onward referral once the young person is ready to move on.

The role of Trusted Professionals

- 4.39 Trusted Professionals, who play an integral part in Activity Agreement pilots, are known by a variety of names across the pilot areas including “key worker”, “coaches” and “activity or personal advisors”. Whilst staff identified with the term “Trusted Professional” for the purposes of the pilot, the alternative job titles were developed for a number of reasons including believing the term ‘Key Worker’ to be widely known and understood by young people accessing support and noting that some young people reported that they felt the term ‘Trusted Professional’ associated staff with “something akin to Social Work”. This evidence leads us to suggest that it may be useful to consider an alternative to the term ‘Trusted Professional’ with something more client-friendly, such as ‘Activity Agreement Advisor’, if the programme is to continue in the future. Maintaining a distinction between the role and existing positions is important, in our opinion, meaning terms such as Key Worker or Personal Advisor may not be appropriate.
- 4.40 We have identified different approaches to delivering the Trusted Professional function across the pilots. All approaches ensure there is availability of intensive, one-to-one advice and guidance from a Trusted Professional. Three models have emerged:
- employing a team of dedicated staff who are solely employed as Trusted Professionals (including staff who are newly recruited for the role, and those who have been seconded full time to take on the position);
 - arranging for staff from a range of relevant professions to allocate a proportion of time to performing the Trusted Professional role in addition to their usual duties; and
 - a mix between the two models described above.
- 4.41 The number of Trusted Professionals in each area varies widely as do their caseloads. Many of the approaches are sufficient in size to allow flexibility, meaning Trusted Professionals may reassign clients and ‘swap’ cases if it is felt that a different member of staff may be able to offer more appropriate support to the young person in question.
- 4.42 The vast majority of staff employed as Trusted Professionals have extensive experience of delivering support to young people; with previous careers in social work, careers advice, youth work, activity provision, counselling and education support.
- 4.43 The main types of support provided by Trusted Professions to young people are as follows:
- building a positive relationship with the young person and securing their trust and confidence, including visiting and contacting family members;
 - providing young people with assistance in drawing up the Activity Agreement and helping the young person to identify activities they would like to undertake;
 - arranging bespoke activities desired by young people;
 - assisting with transport, for example giving young people lifts, helping them plan journeys, and arranging taxis;

- assisting with finance; supporting young people to make their EMA applications and providing them with entitlements such as the daily allowance;
- providing help to access activities – introducing young people to providers, ensuring that they get out of bed in time;
- ongoing monitoring of progress, through contact with activity providers and young people;
- offering holistic support as needed, for example, attending court appearances or midwife appointment if there is no other adult in the young person’s life; and
- providing crisis support as and when required.

Challenges faced by Trusted Professionals

- 4.44 A number of challenges were highlighted by Trusted Professionals including: structural issues such as time consuming procedures to approve new providers and administrative delays in processing EMAs; the challenge of striking an appropriate balance in caseloads; providing support to a hard-to-engage client group often with behavioural issues and chaotic lifestyles, some of whom become overly dependent on the support; and the ability to provide support to young people who live in remote rural areas.
- 4.45 The amount of training offered to Trusted Professionals varied depending on the pilot area. Some stakeholders identified that Trusted Professionals could have benefitted from more training at the start of the pilot – on matters such as referral protocol, EMA applications, and engaging with bespoke activity providers.

Young people’s views on support from Trusted Professionals

- 4.46 The majority of the feedback from young people on Trusted Professionals was very positive and most Trusted Professionals were described as approachable. Young people also described accessing a range of support from their Trusted Professionals and were impressed by their local knowledge.
- 4.47 Some of the young people who took part in the focus groups already knew their Trusted Professionals prior to engagement in the Activity Agreement. However, this was not always the case and some of the pilots may benefit from a wider range of professionals undertaking the role.
- 4.48 Many of the young people responded in emotional terms to questions about their Trusted Professionals. Several described the role in terms of being “*looked after*” or “*cared for*”. Significantly, some of the young people who had been supported by a range of agencies described the Trusted Professional role as “*different*”. When probed, young people attributed the difference to feelings such as “*more helpful*,” “*more about me*” and “*trust*”. One said “*I suppose it is because you can talk to them more and they are friendlier*”. Young people perceived there to be differences in the level of support provided by Trusted Professionals to individuals. However, when probed, some young people suggested that the amount of contact they received was probably to do with availability of the young person and their level of need for support.

Stakeholder views on Trusted Professionals

- 4.49 The majority of the stakeholders expressed positive views about Trusted Professionals. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of providing a supportive figure for the young people who had the time and inclination to help them not just at the start but throughout their involvement with Activity Agreements. This was seen as especially important given that many of the young people had low confidence and self-esteem and had some negative experiences of their previous dealings with professionals. The positive perception of the Trusted Professionals is demonstrated by comments such as *“they are a great resource,” “very approachable,” “vitally important to the pilot,” “filling a gap in professional services,” “providing holistic support,” “having a keen interest in the progression of young people,”* and *“extremely professional”*.
- 4.50 A small number of stakeholders were critical of the way the role had been interpreted. This was mainly from other professionals working with young people who were not fully aware of the specific role the Trusted Professionals had and therefore questioned the need for the role, particularly newly appointed Trusted Professionals. There was also a view – again a minority one – from some providers that the Trusted Professionals were not preparing young people sufficiently for the activities by discussing and agreeing the young people’s goals and the steps they would take to achieve them.

Partnership working and the role of partners

- 4.51 Partnership working has been an integral part of this work. There have been varying roles for partners including:
- Critical partners: those who play a central part in the overall process. SDS, social work, schools, and CLD tend to be the main partners who play this role, and depending on which area it is these critical partners will vary.
 - Provider partners: the wide range of public, private and third sector partners who deliver the activities through their provision.
 - Steering Group/stakeholder partners who have an interest in the work but are less involved in the actual process.
- 4.52 SDS has had a particularly critical role in most areas acting as the main conduit for referrals (even where the referrals come from other agencies) and acting in some areas as Trusted Professionals as well. This latter role has not always been without tensions: the burden of undertaking what the Trusted Professional is required to do on top of an existing caseload has proved problematic for some SDS key workers. In one area this tension led to the SDS key workers withdrawing from their involvement as Trusted Professionals as they were finding it too time consuming. Two other areas have also commented on difficulties in the relationship with SDS and a third also had problems at the outset.
- 4.53 In other areas there has been a strong reliance on SDS as partner. In Highland for example the 16+ Learning Co-ordinator and Activity Agreement Co-ordinators commented that the pilot could not have been delivered without

SDS who played both the Trusted Professional role as well as being the main referring route.

- 4.54 Other areas talked about the fact that they had been able to build on and improve existing partnerships. A key stakeholder from Glasgow City Council stated:

“Glasgow is always complex to form partnerships in....the Activity Agreements came at just the right time and has improved what was already there”.

A provider in North Ayrshire stated:

“being part of the Activity Agreement has certainly improved partnership working and has encouraged different services to work a lot closer”.

- 4.55 In South Lanarkshire the closer working was helped by physical proximity in that the Trusted Professionals were co-located in the Integrated Children’s Services offices in the four localities. A similar situation was apparent in West Dunbartonshire where local authority staff worked alongside SDS staff.
- 4.56 In Highland and Renfrewshire the partners undertook continuous professional development together which in itself is likely to foster better co-operation as multi-agency training is generally considered a good way to foster multi-agency working. The training in Highland focused on Person Centred Planning and in Renfrewshire was solution focused training.
- 4.57 Overall the strengthening of partnership working was perhaps one of the unintended outcomes of the Activity Agreement pilots.

What are the costs associated with management of Activity Agreements?

- 4.58 A detailed analysis of costs is provided in Appendix 8. The following summarises the key findings and we provide commentary on what the figures imply in the next chapter.
- 4.59 All the costs described in this report are based on the figures supplied by the pilot areas. The cut off point, end November 2010, means that some invoices will not yet have been submitted and so the final costs will be higher than those shown here (current estimated figures mean the overall cost is likely to be over £7 million). There may also be some deviation in what has been counted, for example in what has been included as part of central management supplies and services. Despite these caveats the figures provide interesting information on the spread and variance in approaches and costs. Differences in start date should also be born in mind.
- 4.60 The total cost for the Activity Agreement programme at end November 2010, as reported to us, was £5,070,320. Central programme costs (for the national co-ordinator, management costs at Youthlink where the national co-ordinator is based and central costs) were £154,000.

- 4.61 Based on the end of November 2010 figures there had been 1,450 young people signed up to an Activity Agreement. This gives a total average cost per signed up participant of £3,497. The average cost for signed up participants varies across the ten areas from Highland at £1,638 to Stirling at £5,797.
- 4.62 We have also made the same calculations for the recorded hard progressions. However these figures may be an underestimate. We also know that hard progressions are only one measure of the benefits that Activity Agreements bring (see chapter 5). The total number of recorded hard progressions at November 2010 was 508. This gives an average cost per hard progression of £9,981 which varied from £4,498 in Glasgow to £57,966 in Stirling (where implementation was delayed). If Stirling is removed from this calculation the average cost per hard progression is £9,600. The average cost for a hard progression (at end November 2010) of those who completed their Activity Agreement and early leavers who moved on to a hard progression is £8,507 (and £8,118 if the later-starting Stirling is excluded).
- 4.63 Over time the average costs for sign up and progression may fall due to initial set up costs.

Cost of activities

- 4.64 The average cost for the activities by the number of those signed up for an Activity Agreement varies from £220 in Inverclyde to £3,187 in South Lanarkshire. However it should be noted that in Inverclyde a substantial amount of the activities were delivered in-house (in order to make the whole process more sustainable in the future) and costs for these in-kind activities have not been supplied. Within each area there is huge variation in the actual costs per participant for each activity but in order to undertake a full analysis we would need the number of days spent in each activity (which has been supplied in some but not all cases). We can provide some illustrative examples of the range of costs per participant. For example in Fife the lowest activity cost £106 per participant and the highest £6,666. But when analysed by the number of days the participants spent in the two activities the first was 6 days on average and the second 60 days. This gives a cost range of £18 per day to £111 per day. Taking the cost of activities as a percentage of total costs South Lanarkshire recorded the highest percentage at 70% and Inverclyde the lowest at 8%.

Central management costs

- 4.65 The central management costs in each area have been recorded under property costs and supplies and services. Six areas charged nothing for this element and the total cost for the other four areas was £35,752.
- 4.66 In terms of central costs for supplies and services one area, Inverclyde, charged nothing for this item (and nothing for property costs either) and five other areas charged below £50K. The highest charge for this item was in North Lanarkshire at £353,700.

- 4.67 We have added the two items, property and supplies and services together, and taken this figure as a percentage of the overall cost. This shows that seven of the areas charged less than 10% for these two elements but that one area, Stirling, charged 45% of their total budget for this item. Figures supplied by Stirling suggest that this figure includes £80,000 for Cognissoft, related training and the launch of the Activity Agreements and £25,000 for a management fee.

Employee costs

- 4.68 Employee costs were a significant part of the overall budget for most areas. South Lanarkshire had the lowest percentage of total costs spent on this item at 18% and Inverclyde had the highest at 77%.

In-kind Contributions

- 4.69 We asked each area to supply us with information about employee in-kind costs and activities provided in-kind. Not all areas were able to complete these sections.
- 4.70 The reported information shows that a total of in-kind employee costs of £1,046,429 were made with the largest in-kind staff contribution coming from Highland at £299,700. The reported figures show that an input of £112,798 was made in terms of in-kind contributions, not related to staffing. The highest indicated costs here was from West Dunbartonshire at £71,500. The reported in-kind contributions come to a total of £1,159,227 which is around 20% of the overall Activity Agreement budget costs at end November 2010.

Comparator costs

- 4.71 We have costs supplied by one of the comparator areas, South Ayrshire. For the year 2009-10 the total cost of the STEP programme (including £30K for in-kind contribution) was £197,000. There were 121 referrals to the programme with 102 “engaging” (equivalent to signing up). There were 71 who progressed to a hard progression (with 13 still being supported). Based on the directly funded total of £167,00 this gives a cost per “engaged” of £1,637 and a cost per hard progression of £2,352. The “engaged” cost is almost identical to the lowest cost per signed up in the Activity Agreement pilot areas, Highland. The cost per hard progression is significantly lower than the pilot areas’ average and even lower than the lowest (Glasgow at £4,498).
- 4.72 We provide commentary on what these costs indicate and assess the overall value for money in the next chapter.

5 FINDINGS: OUTCOME MEASURES

Summary of key points:

- as well as quantified outcomes Activity Agreements have led to softer outcomes or benefits which are no less important in areas such as confidence and aspirations, social interaction and life skills, vocational and non-vocational skills, health and wellbeing, and literacy and numeracy;
- overall the majority of young people who had taken part in an Activity Agreement were positive about their experiences;
- overall, 413 young people took up EMA, or 31.9% of those who signed-up for an Activity Agreement and the cost to end November was £150,305;
- there are mixed views as to whether EMA is an incentive for young people, and there were a number of problems with processing EMA applications and payments;
- the pilots have had a positive impact on the local authorities and their delivery partners not least in terms of relationships, renewed focus on MCMC group, service delivery and provision;
- in terms of value for money, the central benefits of the pilots have been a range of hard and soft outcomes for young people who may otherwise not have been engaged, new and improved provision, improved partnerships and shared learning and capacity building with staff;
- if the average percentage figure for hard progressions of early leavers is combined with the hard progressions of those who completed their Activity Agreement the average cost per hard progression is £8,507 (and £8,118 without Stirling); and
- there are no clear patterns emerging from analysis of the cost per hard progression against the characteristics of the young people or the different “models” being used and our sense is that there are too many variables in each area to make this possible.

5.1 This chapter addresses the following outcomes measures:

- young people’s progression;
- measures around young people’s experience of participating in an Activity Agreement;
- impact on pilot local authorities and their delivery partners;
- Education Maintenance Allowance;
- value for money analysis;
- evidence from comparators; and
- sustainability issues.

Short-term/immediate outcomes or benefits in terms of young people’s progression

5.2 Chapter 3 highlighted the hard progressions or immediate outcomes achieved by the young people participating in the Activity Agreements. While these hard progressions are a key element in measuring the impact of the pilot they are only part of the overall evidence base. A cross section of consultees

highlighted the importance of assessing impact in terms of softer outcomes such as motivation, wellbeing and confidence.

- 5.3 The availability of quantitative evidence related to softer outcomes is limited and our analysis relies on qualitative evidence. However, those pilot areas that have undertaken assessments of young people using tools such as the Rickter Scale or similar such as the Resilience Survey in Stirling at different stages of a young person's involvement in Activity Agreements should be able to evidence progress on these measures. Such data has not been gathered for this evaluation and would entail a separate exercise.
- 5.4 We highlight outcomes in confidence and aspirations, social interaction and life skills, vocational and non-vocational skills, health and wellbeing and literacy and numeracy. These issues may be useful for pilot and non-pilot areas as they seek to develop their work with young people.

Confidence and aspirations

- 5.5 Most of the Trusted Professionals and providers who took part in the evaluation commented on the lack of confidence, lack of motivation, low self esteem, and immaturity of many of the young people when they first engaged in Activity Agreements. Interestingly, most of the young people we spoke with did not identify these personal issues as support needs or issues to be addressed. However, many of the comments made by young people who took part in focus groups showed ways in which they had grown as confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. We highlight that the first response to the question 'How has the Activity Agreement helped you?' was usually "*more confidence*". Other comments which suggest that the approach is helping young people to contribute, become responsible and be more confident include comments such as "*I'm less sexist*", "*I don't muck about so much*", and "*I'm treated like an adult so I act like one*".
- 5.6 In two separate pilot areas, young people suggested that they would like to become ambassadors for the approach – saying that they believed it would be useful if they could go back to their school, and tell younger pupils about the opportunities that an Activity Agreement offered. This illustrates a shift in terms of confidence, and signifies a wish to contribute positively to the experiences of other young people in similar situations.
- 5.7 In terms of aspirations, the views expressed by the young people were mixed. Many young people were hopeful of moving on to a hard progression, and talked about progression onto college or employment. However, some were not optimistic about their chances of finding work, commenting on the lack of job opportunities. Trusted Professionals gave several examples of young people, who whilst having no clear aspirations at the start of their Agreements, progressed into individuals with clear interests, experience and ideas about their future.

Social interaction and life skills

- 5.8 A number of young people commented that one of the things they liked best about their involvement in Activity Agreements was meeting new people. Although they did not necessarily equate this with developing new skills themselves, a number of the consultees, particularly the Trusted Professionals, commented on the importance of social interaction for the young people.
- 5.9 More specifically, some of the young people also benefitted from developing life skills such as making their own way to activities, budgeting and shopping which are key skills that some of the participants previously lacked. Consultees in Highland highlighted this as an important outcome for young people who, generally, were more socially isolated than those in other areas.
- 5.10 Development of these skills was particularly important given the participants' characteristics which included a number of hard to reach groups, including offenders. A total of 125 young offenders signed up to Activity Agreements. Many of the young people who participated in our focus groups acknowledged that prior to taking part in the pilot they had *"got into bother with the police"*. One explained it as *"now I've got stuff to do so I'm not up to mischief"*. When asked what they would be doing if they had not taken part in the pilot many said they would still be *"getting into bother"*. This evidence suggests that the pilots have impacted upon the amount of criminal activity the young people engage in. In North Ayrshire a specific programme of activity was provided to young offenders by the PAT youth justice team, which works with persistent or serious offenders. The programme was designed to support young people in the areas of lifeskills, employability and health lifestyles with the aim of moving them closer to the labour market.
- 5.11 One young man, when asked what he would be doing if he had not started his Activity Agreement said *"I'd be in a box in the ground"*. He told us he had already been stabbed a number of times and *"used to hang around with a bad crowd"* – but that this had stopped since he had made new friends through his activities.
- 5.12 Stakeholders highlighted how Activity Agreements had helped social interaction and change the perceptions of local people, saying *"some of the locals told us they'd stopped writing them [the young people] off as 'neds'."*

Vocational and non-vocational skills

- 5.13 As Appendix 7 highlights, many of the activities were focused on occupational areas such as construction, beauty, and catering - mainly through work taster sessions - to reflect the interests and aspirations of the young people. Participants gained vocational skills which should over time enhance their ability to progress in their chosen fields even if this was not yet apparent in the immediate outcomes. A number of young people we consulted commented that they thought their involvement would help them get a job or go to college.

- 5.14 In addition, young people showed a refreshing awareness that even if their participation in activities did not lead to employment they had still gained skills which could be applied to other fields.

Health and well being

- 5.15 We have gathered qualitative evidence which suggests that the pilots contribute to health and well being in the following ways: 1) improved quality of the healthcare experience; 2) addressing alcohol and substance misuse; and 3) increased physical activity. We consider each aspect in turn below:

Improved quality of the healthcare experience

- 5.16 During interviews stakeholders identified a number of ways in which the pilots had improved access to and experience of existing healthcare services such as: earlier intervention; greater engagement with and awareness of existing health services; training and development for Trusted Professionals which promote health and wellbeing being integrated within service provision to young people; increased referrals to existing health services (from Trusted Professionals and Activity Providers); young people being supported to catch up on missed interventions (for example, immunisations they had not received due to low attendance at schools); young mothers accessing appropriate health support during pregnancy from existing services; and incorporating existing mental health support into Activity Agreements.

Addressing alcohol and substance misuse

- 5.17 Some of the young people who took part in pilots had support for alcohol or drug misuse built into their personal programme of activity. For example, in Fife young people accessed existing services from DAPL¹⁰ and Tangent Counselling, both of which support people with alcohol/substance misuse – these services were provided in-kind and were not paid for from the Activity Agreement budget. In total, 116 young people with physical or mental health problems or disabilities signed up to Activity Agreements and 112 experienced drug or alcohol misuse. Adding these two categories together, 228 young people with identified health and wellbeing issues received support in the pilot.

Increased physical activity

- 5.18 Whilst none of the young people we spoke with identified “*improved health*” as a direct outcome from their engagement with the pilots, several mentioned enjoying the physical activities they had taken part in, for example one young woman told us that “*my favourite thing was the Zumba classes*”, another male told us about his enjoyment of the gym membership saying “*I couldn’t afford to go before, now I go most days*”. The converse is also true. In focus groups with young people in Fife when asked whether there was anything else they would like to have done the young people expressed an interest in undertaking more physical fitness activities.

¹⁰ Drug and Alcohol Project Limited

Literacy and numeracy

- 5.19 The pilots include activities designed to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of young people who are assessed to have a need in this area. These activities range from one to one intensive support to group work, and are delivered in a variety of settings – sometimes incorporated within an activity, or offered as a discreet standalone programme of support.
- 5.20 One literacy worker who participated in the research in North Ayrshire told us that *“it has allowed young adults to access literacy and numeracy support who otherwise would not have been interested”*.
- 5.21 Trusted Professionals reported that literacy and numeracy support is a key feature of many of the Activity Agreements. Stakeholders told us that the relationship between young people and Trusted Professionals allow them to address numeracy and literacy issues. For example, a Trusted Professional from North Lanarkshire who told us: *“behavioural issues are often highlighted in the referrals made by schools, but many of our young people use bad behaviour to hide the fact that they can’t read or write – they will disrupt lessons, refuse to hand in work, won’t attend assessments....that sort of thing. The Activity Agreement provides a new opportunity in a fresh setting, without stigma or association with their school days. It allows us to engage the young person on different terms, and assess their baseline levels of literacy or numeracy. Sometimes it takes a while, but once they access ALN support they come on in leaps and bounds”*.
- 5.22 A final point related to literacy concerns young people for whom English is a second language – in total nine young people who signed up to Activity Agreements fell within this category. These types of language support needs were also catered for by Activity Agreements as required, for example private ESOL classes were provided to one young person who engaged with the Glasgow pilot.

Measures around young people’s experience of participating in an Activity Agreement

- 5.23 We conducted focus groups with young people in each area and spoke to a total of 104 young people in these. Appendix 9 reports on the findings in detail which are summarised below.
- 5.24 Overall the majority of young people who had taken part in an Activity Agreement were positive about their experiences. Across the pilots, key points raised by young people include:
- young people value the informal approach and the respect shown to them by staff;
 - young people value the social element of making new friends, enjoying the activities and having fun;
 - some young people were unclear about the purpose of their Activity Agreements;
 - the majority of young people were positive about their experiences of taking part in activities;

- taking part in volunteering helped changed the views of some young people about its value;
- young people are proud of their achievements;
- young people welcomed the interest shown in them by their Trusted Professional;
- participants had friends who would benefit from Activity Agreements;
- young people had taken part in a very wide range of activities;
- young people expressed mixed views about the amount of choice offered to them when signing their Activity Agreement and identified some gaps in the choices available;
- participants were pessimistic about their chances of employment; and
- early leavers' gave a number of reasons for opting out of the agreement.

5.25 When asked what they would be doing if they had not participated in the Activity Agreements, every young person who took part in the focus groups described a negative destination.

Impact on pilot local authorities and their delivery partners

5.26 The pilots have had a positive impact on the local authorities and their partners in terms of relationships, focus, service delivery and provision.

Relationships

5.27 All pilots reported the strengthening of existing relationships and the establishment of new ones. These relationships were between stakeholders within the local authorities and between the local authority and other partners. The internal relationships strengthened within local authorities involved education, social work, employability and youth services; the external stakeholders included SDS, third sector providers, private training providers and businesses offering work placements, and colleges. A number of stakeholders consulted during the evaluation highlighted that they had a better understanding of other services. The strength of the relationships was also demonstrated where CPD training was provided to staff from different organisations in some of the pilot areas.

5.28 Stakeholders also highlighted how relationships were tested at times when challenges arose. Examples included tensions around integrating new Trusted Professionals with existing staff working with the client group and in processing EMA claims for Activity Agreements which function quite differently from existing EMA eligible provision.

Focus on MCMC

5.29 A number of stakeholders from local authorities and their partners commented on the impact that Activity Agreement pilots have had in renewing the focus on the MCMC group. Some stakeholders felt this had particularly focused attention on a specific group of young people – the intermediate group highlighted in the MCMC Strategy.

5.30 As highlighted earlier, Activity Agreement have engaged both the hard to reach groups and the group described in the MCMC Strategy as the

'intermediate group' of young people who are "less likely to be on the radar in terms of other more specialist or targeted interventions. This group may be 'quietly disaffected' and commonly have issues around motivation, confidence and soft skills". Activity Agreements have provided what the MCMC Strategy goes on to describe as 'less intensive, appropriately tailored support and interventions' that 'could make a massive difference to their outcomes on leaving school' for the intermediate group, as well as the hard to reach group.

- 5.31 Although MCMC Partnerships have been working together for a number of years to improve the options available to all young people in or at risk of entering negative destinations, the pilots provided a real focus for attention. A number of stakeholders commented that this renewed focus was timely given the difficult financial situation facing the public sector.

Service Delivery

- 5.32 We gathered evidence from stakeholders which indicated that the Activity Agreement pilots had led to clear improvements in the ways in which services were delivered for young people. Indeed, one of the pilot areas North Lanarkshire, developed a new infrastructure to deliver the activity agreements: the 'hub' model.
- 5.33 In South Lanarkshire, stakeholders commented on the success of the 'co-location' model which was adopted. In this model, Trusted Professionals were based in the Integrated Children's Services teams in four localities across the local authority area. Stakeholders identified a number of advantages in embedding Trusted Professionals in existing support services for young people; greater numbers of referrals, increased awareness of the pilot among relevant agencies, and a sharing of the resource and skills developed by Trusted Professionals, for example, the knowledge of activities available for young people within the local authority area.
- 5.34 The widespread secondment of staff to Activity Agreements as co-ordinators, Trusted Professionals and administrative support could have been detrimental to service delivery but the backfilling of many of the substantive posts limited this impact and demonstrates a commitment to the pilots. The considerable in-kind contributions made by local authorities and the partner organisations highlighted in this report also demonstrate the significant budgetary impact that the pilots had.

Provision

- 5.35 As described in Chapter 4, Activity Agreements investment has widened the range of provision available to young people and changed the way some activities are delivered. This applies to providers from all sectors – local authority, third sector, private sector training providers and colleges.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

- 5.36 Young people entering Activity Agreements are entitled to EMA where eligible. EMA payments were not funded by the Activity Agreement grant allocated by the Scottish Government to each pilot area outlined in Table 1.2. The additional EMA costs of Activity Agreement participants was met directly by the Scottish Government who allocated part of the total budget for this purpose.
- 5.37 The EMA comprises a means tested weekly allowance payable fortnightly during term time and twice yearly bonuses. These are paid directly to the student on satisfactory adherence to a learning agreement made between the young person and the educational establishment¹¹. Currently, 39,000 young people in Scotland are receiving EMA¹². EMA paid to young people in school and further education does not affect Child Benefit and Child Tax Credits. However, as Activity Agreements is a pilot programme and not specifically named in the relevant legislation, participation in an Activity Agreement does not qualify as learning for these Benefits and this has been an issue for some participants and their families.
- 5.38 Table 5.2 sets out the number of young people in each pilot area who took up EMA, and the percentage of young people who signed-up to an Activity Agreement who received EMA. Overall, there were 413 young people who took up EMA, or 31.9% of those who signed-up for an Activity Agreement. Within each pilot area the percentage of young people who signed up for EMA ranged from 64.9% in North Ayrshire to 9.2% in Glasgow.

Table 5.2: EMA Claimants by Pilot Area

Pilot Area	EMA Claimants		Cost
	Number	% of Signed-up	
Overall	413	31.9%	£150,305
Fife	59	35.3%	N/A
Glasgow	26	9.2%	£9,060
Highland	41	32.5%	£27,915
Inverclyde	N/A	N/A	£20,420
North Ayrshire	63	64.9%	£ 18,570
North Lanarkshire	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Lanarkshire	127	41.4%	£26,970
Renfrewshire	60	54.5%	£33,750
Stirling	N/A	N/A	£2,640
West Dunbartonshire	37	33.0%	£10,980

- 5.39 As the table shows, the overall EMA claimant cost for all pilot areas was £150,305. This ranged from £2,640 in Stirling to £33,750 in Renfrewshire.
- 5.40 Table 5.3 below outlines the percentage of young people who signed up to an Activity Agreement who made a positive progression, comparing those receiving EMA to the overall total. As the data shows, in all the pilot areas

¹¹ Scottish Government, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/07/30113243/1>

¹² EMA Scotland, <http://www.emascotland.com/>

combined the proportion of young people making a hard progression was lower for those claiming EMA (30.8%) than for young people overall (35.0%). Glasgow had the largest difference with 47.0% of all young people making a hard progression, compared to 6.7% of young people receiving EMA. There were three areas (Fife, Highland and West Dunbartonshire) in which those claiming EMA were proportionally more likely to make a hard progression than young people overall. It should be noted that in several areas data was unavailable on the percentage of young people claiming EMA who made a hard progression, so the overall statistics should be treated with some caution.

Table 5.3: Hard progressions of those with EMA compared to hard progressions of total

Population	% with hard progression from signed up	
	Overall	Claiming EMA
All pilot areas	35.0%	30.8%
Fife	17.0%	45.0%
Glasgow	47.0%	6.7%
Highland	21.7%	44.4%
Inverclyde	27.3%	N/A
North Ayrshire	32.0%	N/A
North Lanarkshire	33.3%	N/A
South Lanarkshire	52.7%	41.9%
Renfrewshire	34.4%	0.0%
Stirling	10.0%	N/A
West Dunbartonshire	35.8%	38.6%

Source: Overall figures from Scottish Government, EMA figures from pilot area data returns

Views of Activity Agreement staff, local Partners, providers and young people

5.41 There was a wide range of views on EMA which we summarise below:

- Some people felt that the EMA acted as a vital incentive to entice young people to consider an Activity Agreement, and to encourage them to sustain it if they signed-up. Others felt EMA was not particularly important, and in some cases it was argued that it actually acted as a disincentive.
- There were a number of problems with the processing of EMA claims and payments during the pilot period caused by various process issues, including a lack of information from partners when assessing eligibility, the large amount of paperwork required, difficulty gathering attendance information from providers, a lack of guidelines on flexibility, and conflicts/problems with EMA payment software/processes. These issues caused serious problems in processing EMA claims and making payments to young people in several areas, including long delays. These delays had various serious impacts, including:
 - discouraging other young people from signing-up for an Activity Agreement;
 - some young people dropping out of their Activity Agreement;
 - denying Trusted Professionals the opportunity to teach young people about budgeting;
 - decreasing the time Trusted Professionals could spend with the young people (as they spent time processing EMA applications/payments);

- damaging the pilots credibility, and the relationship between young people and Trusted Professionals;
 - young people's families having to subsidise them; and
 - young people receiving a large lump sum of backdated payment, which can cause problems.
- Suggestions for improving EMA administration included making the system simpler and more efficient, enabling EMA applications and payments to be processed all year round, prioritising Activity Agreement EMA applications over other EMA applications.
 - For some young people, the main reason they signed-up for an Activity Agreement was the EMA payment, and they considered this the main incentive for other young people. Other young people felt that they would have taken part in their Activity Agreement without any incentive.
 - A large number of young people expressed the opinion that the EMA payment was too low, and that more young people would be encouraged to take up an Activity Agreement if the payment was higher. Some young people also felt that EMA payments should be universal to all Activity Agreement participants.
- 5.42 To sum up, there are mixed views as to whether EMA is an incentive for young people: for some it has been a necessity to enable them to take part in the Activity Agreement while for others it has not acted as an incentive. The administration of the EMA at local level has been problematic in some areas and could be improved. The fact that the Activity Agreements do not count as learning in relation to Child Benefits and Child Tax Credit has produced difficulties for some families and young people.

Value for Money

- 5.43 The Scottish Government has spent over £5 million on the Activity Agreement pilots to the end of November 2010 and it is estimated that the final cost of the programme will be over £7 million. This is significantly less than the original funding allocated to the pilots. The lower level of spend is due to a number of factors including the slow start up in some areas (some were not operational until early 2010 with the last, Stirling, not operational until April 2010), lower levels of referrals than expected and the fact that in some areas there was already provision that could be used, for example through ESF/ERDF programmes, reducing the expected costs for this element of the pilots.
- 5.44 This section of the report aims to analyse value for money and relate costs to the benefits provided. The analysis is set out under the following headings:
- Outcomes
 - Additionality
 - Added value
 - Collaborative gain
 - Deadweight
 - Displacement

Outcomes

- 5.45 The hard progressions for young people involved in the Activity Agreements are recorded in Chapter 2 of this report. In addition there have been a range of “soft” outcomes from increased self-confidence to better attention to individual health issues (see earlier in this Chapter). These are the central benefits that the pilots have produced. The average cost for a hard progression (at end November 2010) as identified in the previous chapter is £8,507 (and £8,118 if the later-starting Stirling is excluded)¹³.
- 5.46 We have analysed the cost per hard progression in each area against the characteristics of the young people whom they targeted. There are no clear patterns emerging from this analysis and our sense is that there are too many variables in each area to make this possible. Nor is there an obvious pattern between the different “models” being used. For example in Glasgow there was a predominantly school-based model and the main young people targeted there are those with low attainment, a history of truanting and looked after and care leavers. The cost per hard progression is the lowest of all the areas and so it might be tempting to conclude that a school-based model is less costly and targets those who come through the system with low attainment. However if we compare this to Fife, which also had a focus on school-based intervention, it has the second highest cost per hard progression and seems to have mainly targeted those with behavioural problems and those with mental/physical disabilities. There are too many variables, such as who the Trusted Professionals refer to Activity Agreements and what opportunities there are for progression in each area, to make a direct analysis possible.
- 5.47 The average cost per hard progression seems high in comparison to other programmes (such as The Wise Group and the Venture Trust) where a programme with a young person would average between £4,000-£6,000. Our sense looking at the overall figures is that most areas have kept staffing costs to a reasonable level (with one exception, North Lanarkshire, which at £618,000 is more than double the staffing costs of the next highest area). In some areas however the cost of activities appears excessive in comparison to other areas. For example in South Lanarkshire the cost of activities was £647,000 and the cost per participant was £3,187 which is more than double the next highest cost per participant (North Lanarkshire at £1,528). The level of hard progressions do not indicate that these two areas - North and South Lanarkshire - were achieving significantly more than other areas. North Lanarkshire did have the highest number signed up to an Activity Agreement (297) at end November 2010 but Glasgow had thirty less (at 266) at less than half the cost. To sum up our sense is that the cost for activities has been excessive in some areas and the same or similar results could be achieved with a smaller budget for activities. This is an important point for any potential roll out.

¹³ This figure relates to hard progressions of early leavers and hard progressions of those who completed their Activity Agreement.

Additionality

5.48 The view of many of those we have interviewed (stakeholders at local and national levels) is that the role of the Trusted Professionals, with a clear focus on the individual young person and their needs, linked with the flexibility of the approach (in terms of both the time commitment the young person has to make and the range of activities being offered) has meant that they have been able to work with young people who would otherwise not have been engaged. The Activity Agreements are different from their nearest equivalent, the ad hoc Lifeskills programme, because they are not constrained by programme operating rules and because of the resource input from the Trusted Professionals. Without the funding to put the Trusted Professionals in place (or free up time for existing staff to undertake this role) plus the resource to build in flexibility around provision it is unlikely that the young people would have been engaged when they were.

Added Value

5.49 The funding for the pilots has brought added value in terms of:

- new providers of activities/existing providers being able to develop their offer to meet the needs of this target group;
- new systems in place in some areas (for referral, assessment, monitoring);
- the shared learning that has been possible between areas, facilitated through the national co-ordinator; and
- capacity building with staff.

Collaborative Gain

5.50 Improved partnership working has been well illustrated in the previous Chapter of this report and could be seen as an unintended outcome of the pilot programme. Many of the areas have commented on the opportunities to develop and improve working relationships that this has brought about. This has been a strength of these pilots bringing with it a host of benefits for the young people concerned as already well-documented in the overall GIRFEC approach.

Deadweight

5.51 Would the outcomes have occurred without the input of the AA funding? This is difficult to measure but from the evidence it is certainly likely that the young people with whom the pilots have worked would not have become engaged in any activity as soon as they did and some might not have been engaged at all but there is no hard evidence to substantiate this.

Displacement

5.52 Has there been a decrease in other programmes because of the Activity Agreement pilots? We have had some anecdotal evidence that there has been a reduction in Lifeskills/GRfW referrals in some of the areas which has been attributed to the existence of the Activity Agreements but it is not

possible to prove this. Other evidence suggests that the existence of the Activity Agreements has actually increased referrals as it has provided a first route in to engaging for many disaffected young people.

Value for Money Summary

- 5.53 To sum up our overall sense is that the Activity Agreements have provided value for money overall and more so in some of the ten areas than others. For example Glasgow, Highland and West Dunbartonshire have each delivered hard progressions for less than £8K per participant. It is impossible to place a value on the range of “soft” outcomes that have occurred but we recognise the importance of these in any programme of this nature.

Evidence from Comparators

- 5.54 The Scottish Government has collected information on three comparators to benchmark Activity Agreement progress over the course of the pilot. The comparator initiatives also aim to engage disaffected young people in learning, training and employment. The comparators were located in Moray, South Ayrshire, Lanarkshire and Dundee. The quantitative performance of the comparators was included in Chapter 3. Appendix 10 highlights the comparator areas in detail which are summarised below. Comparable financial data was not available and is therefore not included in this report.
- 5.55 Moray has implemented an approach which mirrors key aspects of the Activity Agreements and has done so without additional funding. A new group based project called Moving Forward has been developed by the Council which aims to build confidence in the MCMC group through a series of team working activities. Participants work towards Youth Achievement Awards over 12 weeks. The project is resourced by existing Council Youth Workers and SDS staff. With the agreement of the Scottish Government, Moray offered young people Activity Agreements including EMA payments for eligible participants and four young people have signed up to date. Moray has identified a ‘main contact’ for young people signing up to Activity Agreements to fulfil the Trusted Professionals role. The majority of the Moving Forward participants have not signed up to Moray’s Activity Agreements; they are being supported by a youth worker who runs the course and in many ways acts as a Trusted Professional although time is limited. Moray’s approach has been informed by the absence of GRfW Lifeskills in the area. Excellent relationships exist between the local authority and SDS; in addition the 16+ Learning Choices lead officer who has played a key role developing a directory of local provision. The application of GIRFEC principles has been prominent.
- 5.56 In South Ayrshire, Skills Towards Employment Project (STEP) develops employment and personal development skills for vulnerable young people and adults. Projects for young people include GRfW (including Lifeskills) and a ‘New Futures’ programme which is similar to aspects of an Activity Agreement. New Futures is open to 15-21 year olds particularly disadvantaged young people and is intended to be a stepping stone to other provision such as GRfW. It assists about 20 young people at a time who receive the national training allowance of £55 per week. Similar to Activity

Agreements, referrals come from a range of sources and the project works with young people to look at their interests, support needs, and options that combine both fun and learning, which are agreed with the young people. New Futures offers a range of activities including individual support, group work and activities, a personal development programme, work experience, and college tasters. Support Workers are similar to the Trusted Professionals. The project uses the Rickter scale to measure progress on softer skills, as well as literacy and numeracy assessments. Impact is evident in improved attendance, timekeeping, confidence, and health and in the longer term in employability and personal skills. Funding comes from a range of sources and there is a strong relationship with SDS.

- 5.57 We also interviewed GRfW Lifeskills providers in Lanarkshire and Dundee while a number of providers consulted in the pilot areas are also involved in GRfW Lifeskills delivery. Some providers noted that in their experience there was a difference between the young people on Activity Agreements and other provision such as Lifeskills with the Activity Agreements young people described as being far more challenging and having multiple and complex issues such as being in care/carers drug misuse and homelessness. Another provider with experience of both clients felt there was no real difference between the two. All providers with experience of GRfW Lifeskills felt there were two key differences in the approaches. Firstly, the flexibility allowed by Activity Agreements that was not available under GRfW Lifeskills contracts enables young people – many with chaotic lifestyles - to progress at a pace that suits them at that time. Secondly, the added support available to young people on Activity Agreements from Trusted Professionals which was not available to the same degree for other young people allows them to discuss their options, review progress and address problems.

Sustainability issues

- 5.58 Sustainability has been a prominent issue. Those involved in overseeing the planning and delivery of the pilots have been very aware of the need to consider sustainability from the outset as the pilots had a two year fixed term. As a result, the pilots have included the following measures to minimise the impact of the fixed life funding:
- Secondments – the majority of pilots have seconded staff to key roles such as the Co-ordinators and Trusted Professionals. For example, Renfrewshire's Co-ordinator, four of the six Trusted Professionals, and the administrator are seconded and should be able to return to their substantive posts at the end of the pilots. Where Activity Agreement staff return to their substantive posts the expertise is retained in the organisation and may be applied to their existing posts. Seconding staff during fixed life programmes also has the advantage that they are less likely to leave before the end of the programme as has been the case previously such as with the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund¹⁴ for example. The impact on the organisations where the secondees have come from has mainly been minimised by the backfilling of their posts. It should be noted

¹⁴ See 'Recruitment and Retention Issues in the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund' (Scottish Government, 2004)

however that not all pilots have seconded staff and such an approach may mean that the expertise is lost if the staff move on, Stirling for example has employed a Co-ordinator and two part-time Trusted Professionals on fixed term contracts.

- Building on existing provision – some pilots set out to maximise the use of existing provision rather than commission new activities which they may not be able to sustain at the end of the pilot. The 16+ Learning Choices Co-ordinator at Inverclyde for example, stated that they only commissioned new activity where it was absolutely necessary and did not duplicate existing – as a result the Inverclyde pilot spent less than £10,000 on new activities. Other pilots that have spent significant amounts on activities may find it difficult to continue the services unless additional resources are secured.
- Using existing staff as Trusted Professionals – some pilot areas minimised the costs of taking on additional staff as Trusted Professionals by maximising the use of existing staff. For example, Highland has not employed any additional staff as Trusted Professionals with SDS' existing staff fulfilling the role for approximately 85% of participants and other staff mainly from Highland Council supporting the remaining young people. The continuation of Activity Agreements will be aided by this approach compared to the pilots where new staff have been employed.

5.59 Partly as a result of the above, the pilots have not spent all of the funding that was made available to them from the Scottish Government.

5.60 Recognition of the benefits of the pilots in each area has been such that they are all seeking to continue the approach beyond the end of March 2011 when the initial funding ends. Some pilots are seeking to mainstream some activity for example, North Ayrshire highlighted that it may be possible to continue the work in 2011/12 as its Community Learning and Development services is re-prioritising the MCMC group. Some pilots are also seeking external funding to continue activity, for example, North Lanarkshire, Highland and West Dunbartonshire are applying for ESF funding.

5.61 Consultees across the pilots highlighted the following as being the key elements to sustaining Activity Agreements:

- a named individual to oversee the initiative (it was felt that ideally this would be a dedicated resource but where this was not possible it was felt the role should fall within the remit of appropriate staff such as the 16+ Learning Choices lead officers);
- appropriate staff to support young people as Trusted Professionals (again the view was that ideally this should involve some additional capacity as well as existing resources); and
- flexible individually tailored provision.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 This final chapter sets out our final conclusions and recommendations for the future. We start by addressing whether the pilot programme has succeeded in meeting its objectives which are:

- the availability of intensive one-to-one advice and guidance from a Trusted Professional;
- strong processes for assessing the needs and interests of young people, building on information already collected about them;
- a wide range of learning activity available from a range of providers so that a tailored package can be created which meets the young person's needs; and
- the availability of financial support, through the Education Maintenance Allowance programme administered by local authorities.

6.2 We then address some of the key issues arising from the evaluation covering:

- the different models;
- the delivery processes;
- national co-ordination (operational management, monitoring and evaluation, communication);
- resources;
- policy and context;
- outcomes and progression; and
- overall conclusion.

6.3 The final section contains our recommendations on the way forward.

The availability of intensive one-to-one advice and guidance from a Trusted Professional

6.4 The evidence from this evaluation (see Chapter 4) shows that the Activity Agreements have made available one-to-one advice and guidance from a variety of people working as Trusted Professionals. They have come from a range of professional backgrounds including youth work, social work, education and SDS. They have demonstrated the ability to form strong relationships with the young people involved, to handle a wide range of issues that the young people present with, to provide information about the range of opportunities available and to establish credibility with other partners working with the young people.

6.5 This role of Trusted Professional has been a hallmark of the programme and the intensity of the inputs, both practical and emotional, from the Trusted Professionals has meant that these young people have received support which is significantly different from any other programme on offer for this age and target group. This level of input does require resources of time and capacity to deal with the issues each young person faces but has been shown

to bring positive benefits both in terms of hard progressions but also softer outcomes such as increased confidence, wellbeing and socialisation.

Strong processes for assessing the needs and interests of young people, building on information already collected about them

- 6.6 There are strong processes in place for assessing the needs and interest of young people (see Chapter 4) and in general these are able to build on information already collected about them. One outstanding issue in relation to building on information already gathered, currently being addressed, is the sharing of SDS Insight data with other partners so that those working with young people can access it. There are other local issues in some areas about data sharing between agencies which are being discussed and hopefully will be resolved.
- 6.7 The assessment processes in place tend to have a similar broad approach and use a variety of tools including multi-agency meetings, case conferences, rating scales and observational statements. They are used as a form of continuous assessment and review by Trusted Professionals. Our sense is that there is further work to be undertaken to emphasise the need for identified individual outcomes (not just action points or goals) and the mechanism to report back centrally on whether these have been achieved or not. This would allow for more comprehensive monitoring of the “soft” outcomes for the young people involved. We comment further on this in the section about monitoring and evaluation.

A wide range of learning activity available from a range of providers so that a tailored package can be created which meets the young person’s needs

- 6.8 There has clearly been a wide range of learning activity available from a range of providers as evidenced in Chapter 4 of this report including activities which focus on in-depth personal development to those which are about physical or arts activity to those which are more directly skill/workplace related. New providers have been commissioned to provide activities as well as existing providers adjusting their provision to meet the needs of this client group. The young people who contributed to the research for this evaluation had generally valued the activities provided. The providers mostly appeared to understand the need to move young people on but also understood that what “moving on” might mean varies from individual to individual. In some cases the providers had less understanding about the need for progression and were less clear about what outcomes they were hoping to achieve with each young person.

The availability of financial support, through the Education Maintenance Allowance programme administered by local authorities

- 6.9 Financial support through the Education Maintenance Allowance has been available to those eligible for it with 32% of those on Activity Agreements receiving it. There is mixed evidence as to how much of an incentive the EMA has been with some young people saying they would have undertaken the Activity Agreement anyway and others saying that it was a major incentive for

them. This may depend on the individual circumstances of those involved. There have been significant administrative problems with EMA (outlined at Chapter 5) linked to issues relating to means testing, and the application process which require to be addressed.

The different models

- 6.10 As evidenced in Chapter 4 there are different delivery models in place with the main differences being those that are predominantly school-based and those that are CLD based. It is not possible to compare and make value judgements about the ten different pilots themselves because they are each part of their own local context, started at different times and have different histories of working with young people and partner agencies. However it is possible to make some general observations about the different models. The school-based model has the advantage of early intervention and of identifying those young people at risk of having no destination after school so that they can be supported before they become too disengaged. This model also allows for relatively easy sharing of information as the different partners meet within the school. The downside with this model (which areas with this model have tried to address by putting other mechanisms in place such as outreach within the community) is that it is less good at identifying those who fall out of a hard progression after school and who may then become one of the “unknowns” recorded on the SDS Insight database or who are unknown without first moving into a hard progression.
- 6.11 The CLD model is the opposite in that it is less effective at early intervention but more effective at identifying those who have become disengaged once this has happened after they have left school.
- 6.12 Ideally a mixture of the two models above will work most effectively and several areas have tried at least some form of combination. However, our sense is that most areas tend to have a stronger leaning to one or other rather than an even balance between the two.
- 6.13 The other interesting “model” is that of co-location. In one sense the schools approach identified above is a version of co-location and there were other examples including South Lanarkshire’s co-location with Integrated Children’s Services and West Dunbartonshire’s co-location with SDS staff. This co-location supports multi-agency working which underpins the GIRFEC approach.

The delivery processes

- 6.14 Each area has generally put in place effective delivery with processes for referral, assessment, commissioning of activities and review in place. There has been strong partnership working and the evidence of the in-kind costs that have been contributed demonstrates the willingness of partners to engage with this agenda. SDS has been a crucial partner in many areas but it also true to say that there have been tensions around the role of SDS Key Worker/Trusted Professional which have been problematic in some areas.

- 6.15 The area that has been more difficult has been in the gathering of monitoring information in particular about the characteristics of the young people and their outcomes. With no consistent approach put in place from the start there is a mixture of information held, in different forms, within each area. Some have developed their own sophisticated databases, others have decided to buy in new software to help with the management of information (at significant cost) and others have struggled with more temporary spreadsheets. The nature of the information gathered has also varied. This is something that, from our experience, often happens with pilots and links to the need to try and set clear guidance at the outset for monitoring and evaluation with shared understanding of what information should be collected and what evidence will be required linked to outcomes. This central guidance did work effectively for the definitions of the broad statistics to be gathered (see next section).

National co-ordination (operational management, monitoring and evaluation, communication)

- 6.16 It has been useful to have a national co-ordinator to act as central source of information and support. This role has supported the operational development of the Activity Agreements across the ten areas and helped produce the important Activity Agreement Guidance document, the definitions (of the key terms and what they cover which is definitely good practice in programmes of this nature where jargon can easily be misinterpreted) and the evaluation framework. The last of these, which was compiled with the help of the pilot areas, while it offers some useful questions to consider, does not provide a robust monitoring and evaluation framework linking the inputs, interventions and outputs to the desired outcomes, including soft outcomes. Had this been put in place it might then have been possible to guide the pilot areas more closely in terms of the information they needed to gather and the evidence that would be required for the final evaluation. We have a general sense that national pilots would benefit from involving professional evaluators at an early stage, for a small time input, to help put such a framework in place.
- 6.17 The other main remit, that of communication, has been well addressed with the building of good relationships with each area, the sharing of practice across the areas through regular meetings and the sharing of practice more widely through attending non-pilot focused meetings and conferences. The semi-independence of the role appears to have helped maintain strong communications with the pilots and the location of the role within a youth related organisation (Youthlink) helped ensure the focus of the programme was also maintained.

Resources

- 6.18 The overall resources allocated to the ten pilots were in excess of what was required. This is useful learning. From our work in the comparator areas we are aware that Activity Agreements can be put in place without additional cost at all (cf Chapter 5 - Moray Moving Forward where existing resources within CLD and SDS were used although admittedly this was a smaller scale version). However, we are also aware that in the current economic climate this kind of in-kind contribution (as with all the in-kind contributions made to

the Activity Agreements themselves) are more likely to be constrained given staff cutbacks and added remits to already busy roles.

- 6.19 Our sense is that if Activity Agreements are to be rolled out the key resources that are needed are to ensure that Trusted Professional support is in place with some resource to allow for flexibility and tailoring of provision. We would also advocate for resources to ensure that monitoring and evidence collection is put in place consistently across all areas with support to do this as required.
- 6.20 Our understanding is that the existing resource was allocated to local authority areas and they were given responsibility to monitor the spend. We think that in pilots of this nature it is important to have some form of central auditing, possibly once a year, to provide some central assurance that the money is being spent as national government intended.
- 6.21 The pilot nature of the programme ensured that the funding - to local authorities on behalf of the MCMC Partnerships - was ring fenced exclusively for Activity Agreements. Generally speaking, the additional resources led to supplementary support for young people - not least through the Trusted Professionals – and it also focused the attention of local partners on young people facing a number of difficulties. Going forward, discussions regarding the means of allocating future funding to local areas should seek to maintain the impact and focus created in part by clearly additional funds. Our sense is that allocation models that are closer to the mainstream resources of either local authorities or SDS could potentially lead to a dilution of the impact. One option is to commission a third party, such as Youthlink Scotland, to oversee the funding allocations.

Policy and context

- 6.22 Our report has referred to the other programmes in place with GRfW Lifeskills being closest in terms of the target group that Activity Agreements are trying to reach and engage. Many of those we spoke to stated that they saw Activity Agreements as reaching a group of young people who were not ready even for Lifeskills. The main differences highlighted between the two programmes are that the Activity Agreements are focused on the individual, provide the intensive Trusted Professional support and have the flexibility to allow the young person to do only a couple of hours a week, to leave the Agreement but to come back again and to find provision/activities that are suited to where that young person's needs and interests lie. Lifeskills is a formal programme that has to run by operating programme rules that is based mainly on group provision for a set number of hours a week without the intensive support or flexibility offered by the Activity Agreements; even Lifeskills Ad hoc provision does not have the flexibility of the Activity Agreements. Our sense is that the two are not interchangeable but that the Activity Agreements provide a first step for some young people who are most disengaged without the necessary personal and skill capacity to undertake even a Lifeskills intervention.

Outcomes and progression

- 6.23 There are some issues around outcomes and progression emerging from the evaluation evidence. This links back to the need for a more robust monitoring and evaluation framework with a clear logic model that shows what the short term outcomes are that the young people within the Activity Agreements are trying to achieve, linking from these to medium and longer term outcomes that would show an element of progression. While there is anecdotal evidence of the short term “soft” outcomes that young people have achieved there is no comprehensive gathering of information about outcomes (although we recognise that some is gathered by individual pilots) or about how these fit with local Single Outcome Agreements or the National Outcomes. With this target group of young people the “soft” outcomes are particularly important and we need to provide clear evidence of what is being achieved. This should also help in the development of progression for each young person where the evaluation evidence suggests that while some providers have a clear focus on the individual’s progression routes others have less focus on this and instead are more focused on the provision of the activity.

Overall conclusion

- 6.24 Our overall conclusion is that the ten Activity Agreement pilots have been well delivered and have achieved good results for the young people involved with them. They have reached and engaged with the intended target groups of at risk young people although inevitably there are still some harder to reach groups of young people (for example those from BME communities) who are not being so well engaged.
- 6.25 They have built on partnership working and enhanced it and have developed appropriate provision of a wide range of activities. As any pilot should do, they have tested out different approaches and processes, each area developing in a way that suits local circumstances.
- 6.26 The role of the Trusted Professionals and the flexibility of the pilots have been central to their success and any future model would do well to incorporate these two elements.

Recommendations

- 6.27 Based on our evaluation we make the following recommendations:
- a) The Activity Agreements approach should be rolled out across Scotland with a clear monitoring and evaluation framework put in place based on short, medium and longer term outcomes. The link with local and national outcomes should be added to the Guidance document.
 - b) We are aware that there is a potential budget for this roll out of £4 million. We recommend that consideration is given to the continuation of discrete allocations to local areas to maintain a focus among partners.
 - c) A national co-ordinator post is maintained to support the roll out and provide ongoing support and communications with the local areas.

- d) The issues of data sharing with SDS Insight should be resolved as soon as possible.
- e) The Education Maintenance Allowance should be kept (if it is kept for all other forms of 16+ provision in Scotland) as although it is not a huge incentive it does make a great difference to some young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds. Local issues around the administration of EMA to help streamline it should be addressed.
- f) The roll out of Activity Agreements should encourage a mixed school-CLD model to gain the best from both models.
- g) Co-location should be encouraged wherever possible (this could be with any of the key partners).
- h) The resource should be allocated to the Trusted Professional role, maintaining some flexibility of provision and to effective monitoring and evaluation.
- i) There should be some central monitoring of spend put in place.

APPENDIX 1: ACTIVITY AGREEMENT GUIDANCE

Version 4.0 – 30 August 2010

What is an Activity Agreement?

1. An Activity Agreement is an agreement between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment. The young person may receive an allowance in return for complying with this agreement.

What does this guidance do?

2. This document provides guidance on the development of pilots of Activity Agreements in Scotland. It explains what an Activity Agreement is, the context for developing Activity Agreements, the principles that will be applied in developing the pilots, and sets out some key operational guidelines. It has been developed based on the responses received to the 16+ Learning Choices: First Step Activity and Financial Support consultation and the experiences of the pilot areas.

3. This guidance forms the basis of more detailed operational plans in the ten pilot areas. As such, it is aimed principally at More Choices, More Chances partnerships, as well as learning providers and support agencies who work with vulnerable young people. It will be subject to regular review.

Why are we developing Activity Agreements?

4. Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3-18, firmly focused on the needs of the child and young person whatever their circumstances and wherever their learning takes place. This includes an entitlement to a coherent senior phase of learning from 16 to 18.

5. Some young people are not ready or able to access formal learning as they reach their school leaving date. They may face multiple barriers to participation, need support to build their confidence and social skills, or need opportunities to develop team-working skills and self-esteem.

6. Building the Curriculum 3 makes it clear that all young people are entitled to an offer of learning which meets their needs. This includes an entitlement to a senior phase of learning. For the most vulnerable young people, non-formal learning will be the most appropriate way of continuing to develop their skills and the four capacities, and progress towards more formal learning and potentially qualifications. This means that non-formal learning should be as mainstream a part of the learning landscape as participation in school or college or workbased learning is to young people for whom those are the right options.

7. Building the Curriculum 3 also sets out young people's entitlement to personal support to help them take part in learning. For the most vulnerable young people, intensive advice and guidance will have to be a central element of their activity -

particularly when their learning activity must fit in with other issues such as healthcare.

8. Our development of Activity Agreements is focused on ensuring that these entitlements are met for those young people who, post-16, learn in a non-formal, community or third sector setting. This is a critical element of our development of 16+ Learning Choices; it should improve the planning for the senior phase of learning for the most vulnerable young people.

9. We know that young people who experience a period of unemployment, or disengagement from learning, during this formative stage of their lives are much more likely to be unemployed in later life and to suffer the various health and social implications associated with unemployment and poverty. Our goal in developing Activity Agreements is to engage and support a far greater number of vulnerable young people in learning at this crucial transition point; this will help to improve those young people's choices and chances over their lifetime.

10. As Activity Agreements will be focused on supporting our most vulnerable young people, it will be important to ensure that equalities issues are addressed in developing the model. Our equality impact assessment clearly identified a need to focus on transitions for young people with disabilities, as well as the likelihood that more young men than women will access Activity Agreements; through the pilots, we will identify whether there is a particular impact on young people due to race, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

11. It will be important to ensure throughout the development of Activity Agreements that clear links are made to, and learning shared with, the development of Curriculum for Excellence and, within it, 16+ Learning Choices.

How will we develop Activity Agreements?

12. We will work with ten local partnerships – Fife, Highland, Inverclyde, Stirling, Glasgow, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire, and Renfrewshire – as well as a national Steering Group of key delivery partners, to develop the guidance. The ten local partnerships will be able to access grant funding to help them develop Activity Agreements.

13. We will also establish a national Steering Group. We anticipate that this will include the ten local partnerships, Skills Development Scotland, Youthlink, Young Scot, Community Learning and Development Managers Scotland, Youth Scotland, Jobcentre Plus, Inspiring Scotland, HMIE, the Scottish Training Federation, the Supported Training Action Group, Volunteer Development Scotland and the Brite Initiative. We will work with Young Scot and the local partnerships to ensure that young people are directly involved in the development and design of Activity Agreements and that their views are properly reflected.

14. We have appointed a National Development Manager, based in Youthlink Scotland, who will support the operational development of the pilots and lead on many of the actions set out in this guidance designed to support the pilots.

15. The Steering Group has agreed an Evaluation Framework, which is attached to this guidance at Annex E. It will inform the report of the external evaluators and, in turn, advice to Ministers on any future national rollout.

Key features and principles

16. An Activity Agreement is an agreement between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment. This will form a key element of the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence for some of our most vulnerable young people.

17. The success of Activity Agreements will be judged by the extent to which they assist young people to progress into, and sustain, more formal learning or employment. The Evaluation Framework at Annex E sets out more details criteria for evaluation of success.

18. The initial target group for Activity Agreements are young people entering a negative destination when they leave school – there were around 8,000 such young people across Scotland in 2007-08. However, it is important to note that:

- Some young people who initially enter a negative destination will not be in need of additional support – e.g. because they have a deferred offer, or already have a clear and realistic expectation of what they want to do and are pursuing opportunities. Activity Agreements are not targeted at those young people.
- Some young people will initially enter a positive destination but not sustain it. An Activity Agreement may be more appropriate, following drop-out from another option, for some of those young people if they would benefit from additional support.
- Some young people will have disengaged from school well before their school leaving date; there will therefore be a significant element of outreach work in engaging those young people in Activity Agreements.

19. The basis of an Activity Agreement should be an assessment of a young person's needs and interests. The level and intensity of support needed by young people will vary. There should be a common process for this assessment across a local partnership area. While some groups of young people are at higher risk of disengaging post-16, and are therefore more likely to need support through Activity Agreements before they are ready to engage with more formal learning or employment, this should be based on an assessment of the needs of individual young people – not assumptions based on other factors in their lives. This also requires robust protocols for sharing information about young people's needs and interests, so the services they access can be appropriately tailored.

20. For the most vulnerable young people, a strong relationship with a trusted professional, acting in an advisory and guidance role, will be a critical element of participating in and sustaining learning. This advisory role is central to Activity Agreements. While SDS has a crucial role to play, there are others who will carry out this advisory role for specific young people, depending on their needs. The development of this guidance will ensure a close alignment to Getting It Right For Every Child.

21. In every local authority area, there will be a wide range of agencies – in the public, private and third sectors – who have a role in supporting vulnerable young people, and whose learning or support services might form part of an Activity Agreement. The development of Activity Agreements offers an opportunity to make that range of services more coherent, and to consider the way those services are funded.
22. Activity Agreements will work best where those trusted professionals who are fulfilling the advisory role are able to access accurate information about the range of learning opportunities and support – in the public, private and third sector – which are available in the local area. Our development of the e-prospectus will underpin this.
23. Young people who are participating in Activity Agreements should have access to financial support in the same way as young people learning in more formal settings. This is an important part of meeting those young people’s entitlement to support, set out in Building the Curriculum 3.
24. There is a wide range of activity – and routes to recognition or accreditation – which might help young people to develop towards more formal engagement with learning or employment – some of which is not explicitly focused on employability. While this guidance signposts some of these opportunities, it does not prescribe any particular activity or route – the right intervention for any young person should be determined by an assessment of their needs.
25. Where no existing options are right for a young person, the trusted professional carrying out the advisory role should be able to use the detailed information that they have about the young person’s needs and interests to inform the commissioning of specific activity for that young person. The pilots will identify effective mechanisms for carrying out that commissioning process.
26. Activity Agreements, and young people’s participation in them, should not be developed in isolation. They must take account of young people’s previous experiences, both in school and outside; they must recognise the wide range of influences on vulnerable young people’s lives; and they must form a clear pathway towards more formal engagement with learning or employment. This will also require an understanding of the local labour market and of the expectations of employers.

Young people’s eligibility for Activity Agreements

27. Activity Agreements are focused on young people who are leaving school and likely to enter a negative destination.
28. The planning for Activity Agreements should begin at the point where it becomes clear that a young person does not have a positive destination lined up post-16. For some young people, it will be helpful to begin planning earlier than this.

29. Where young people are still in school in the lead-up to their school leaving date, their participation in an Activity Agreement should begin as soon as possible after they leave school.

30. Where young people pre-16 are not attending school, or are attending special schools or other specialist provision, it is more likely that they will not make a direct transition to a formal learning option post-16. Local planning should therefore have a particular focus on these young people; this may include provision which begins post-16 and spans the transition point.

31. For the purposes of the Activity Agreement pilots, an “Activity Agreement” only begins when a young person has left school. For individual young people, it is good practice for the learning they undertake while still of compulsory schooling age to form part of a coherent experience which carries on post-16, and planning should take account of this; however, the focus of the pilots is on young people’s post-school experience.

32. **Annex A** provides a non-exhaustive, and non-prescriptive, list of factors which make young people more likely to disengage from learning. Local planning should include consideration of these high-risk groups of young people – though without any assumptions about those young people that are not based on an individual assessment of need.

33. Young people’s participation in Activity Agreements should be based on an assessment of their needs and interests, which identifies their current skills and experience and identifies what will be needed to help them engage in and sustain learning, moving towards more former engagement and ultimately employment.

Advisory role

34. Vulnerable young people’s choice of learning, and their ability to sustain that learning, will often require intensive advice and guidance. That advice must come from someone who:

- has, or can build, a strong relationship with a young person;
- has an awareness of the learning and support opportunities available locally;
- has an awareness of the local labour market;
- can act quickly at point of contact with a young person;
- is able to deal with a range of young people, many of whom will display challenging behaviour or have complex needs;
- has credibility with the organisations who work with a young person;
- has the ability to negotiate and advocate on behalf of the young person;
- takes a solution-focused, non-judgemental approach.

35. Skills Development Scotland has an important role to play in this, both in terms of its key worker service – critical to providing advice and guidance to vulnerable young people – and its capacity-building role.

36. However, there are other professionals who engage with vulnerable young people, and who may carry out this role. Many young people entering an Activity

Agreement will already have established links and relationships with agencies. In some cases these may be simply with the universal education service. Others will have more complex needs, with inputs from, for example, the NHS, social work, or youth justice workers. Local authority youth work services will also be an important element of this; for young people for whom volunteering is the most appropriate option as part of an Activity Agreement, Volunteer Centres will also have a key role. Where there is multi-agency intervention and support, the Getting It Right approach points to the identification of a lead professional to ensure action is co-ordinated and followed through.

37. The caseloads involved in delivering Activity Agreements will be critical to their success. Although there are a range of workers who might deliver an Activity Agreement to a particular young person (among other responsibilities), where delivering Activity Agreements is the main focus of work, we expect a caseload of no more than 15 clients. We will monitor this closely through the pilots.

38. We will work with the ten pilot areas and Skills Development Scotland to identify the likely workforce in each local authority area who will carry out this advisory role. Resources are available to ensure that additional capacity – both in terms of numbers of advisors, and in terms of skills of existing advisors – can be provided. We will monitor this closely through the pilots, and actively pursue opportunities to ensure the advisory role is carried out in a way that reflects the principles of Getting It Right For every Child and builds on other approaches – e.g. a potential role for health workers.

39. This partnership approach is likely to have significant CPD implications for those workers involved in carrying out the advisory role. We will work with the pilot areas and the Steering Group to identify and develop the resources needed.

Assessment of need

40. Activity Agreements must be based on an assessment of the needs of an individual young person. This will require a common approach at local authority level. It should build on existing data about young people's needs which has been gathered during their school career. Many young people for whom an Activity Agreement is the most appropriate option will have a past history of support and planning. Where support has been required in a single or multi-agency setting, it is good practice for this to be delivered on the basis of a single plan shared by the agencies concerned where relevant. This is the approach advocated by Getting It Right For Every Child (and young person). Where a young person already has such a plan, the contents of the Activity Agreement to be agreed with the young person should then flow naturally from, and form part of, that plan.

41. The Common Assessment Framework, which has been developed by the Scottish Government, is one such model that offers this. This model is already used extensively by Skills Development Scotland, Get Ready For Work providers and colleges to build on existing data already gathered from the young person. The model is attached at annex C. We will work with the pilot areas, where appropriate, to develop this further.

Participation in activity

42. A young person should make an Agreement with their advisor about the programme of learning and support that will help them to move towards more formal engagement with learning or employment.

43. The key driver for determining the most appropriate activity for a young person should be the assessment of that young person's needs and interests. The activities form part of the young person's entitlement to a senior phase of learning, and should respond to the other entitlements set out for young people in Building the Curriculum 3 – they should provide opportunity to continue to develop the four capacities, as well as the opportunity to develop the young person's skills for learning, life and work, with a continuous focus on literacy, numeracy, health and well-being. Young people are also entitled, in this senior phase of learning to opportunities to obtain qualifications. The Agreement the young person makes should describe how the activity in which they plan to participate helps them to develop the four capacities, their skills for learning, life and work, and their health and well-being. Where appropriate, it should also describe how the activity will help them to develop their literacy and numeracy or provide opportunities to obtain qualifications. For some young people, participation in an Activity Agreement will be a first step towards more formal learning which will include qualifications; this might be usefully reflected in the Agreement where the young person has identified a clear goal.

44. The Agreement should reflect, and build on, young people's previous experiences – both within and outwith school. This is a critical element of fulfilling young people's entitlement to a coherent curriculum from 3 to 18.

45. Community learning and development opportunities – in both the public and the third sector – as well as volunteering opportunities will be key aspects of the offer to young people.

46. For many young people, the main focus of participation in an Activity Agreement will be to help them find a job. Developing an understanding of the world of work will therefore be an important element of Activity Agreements; this will require a focus on the local labour market and the expectations of employers. However, the main focus should remain on those who are most disengaged; other options including Get Ready for Work should act as progression routes for those young people who have taken part in Activity Agreements and are ready for extended work placements.

47. The Life Skills strand of Get Ready For Work will also be an important element of Activity Agreements. Working with an existing Life Skills provider will be the most appropriate route for some young people. We will work with the ten pilot areas, and Skills Development Scotland, to determine how Life Skills provision best fits, alongside the development of Activity Agreements, as a pathway for young people into more formal engagement with learning or employment.

48. Young people's participation in non-formal learning is not currently classed as a positive destination for the purposes of the School Leaver Destinations Return,

which informs the national indicator on school leaver destinations. This means that young people who take part in Activity Agreements during the pilots will technically be classed as being in a negative destination. One of the purposes of the pilots is to develop a clear definition of participation in non-formal learning which will inform any future change to the classifications within the SLDR.

49. **Annex B** provides a more detailed, though non-exhaustive, list of the types of opportunities which might be included in an Activity Agreement; this is intended as a guide for planning purposes rather than a prescription.

50. Many services which are already provided to young people – through local authorities, third sector organisations, the NHS and others – may be directly relevant to young people’s progression towards formal learning or employment, and therefore may form part of an Activity Agreement. Similarly, a number of existing funding streams exist – including European Structural Funds, Cashback, Inspiring Scotland and the Fairer Scotland Fund – which will fund activity for young people which might help them to progress into formal learning or employment. The development of Activity Agreements should build on these existing resources where relevant. We will work with the ten pilot areas to build a clear picture of the relevant services and existing funding arrangements in each area.

51. The success of Activity Agreements will depend on advisors – and local partnerships – having a clear understanding of the range of learning and support services which exist in the local area for young people. There is a clear link to be made to the development of the e-prospectus, and we will work with Skills Development Scotland and some of the pilot areas to develop this.

52. In the pilot areas, the Activity Agreement grant may be used to improve or enhance the range of available provision, where this will be the most appropriate way of meeting the needs of young people. We expect this to be used to enhance the existing range of provision that the majority of young people are likely to access.

53. Some young people will have disengaged from school well before their school leaving date. Where these young people are contacted or found after their school leaving date – e.g. through outreach work, or through their engagement with other services – an Activity Agreement may be an effective way of re-engaging them in learning. Other young people will make an initial positive transition but be unable to sustain that destination; at the point of dropping out, an Activity Agreement may be an appropriate route.

54. Where no existing options are right for a young person, the detailed information that the professional carrying out the advisory role has about the young person’s needs and interests should be used to buy specific activity for that young person. In the ten pilot areas, a grant will be made to the More Choices, More Chances partnerships to buy such activity.

55. Longer-term, we expect that the data collected by partners about young people’s interests and needs should inform the range of learning options available in the local area. This will be a key part of offering personalisation and choice to young people. As this improves, we might expect that reprioritisation and more accurate

targeting within universal services should reduce the need for specifically-commissioned activity on an individual basis.

Management information

56. It is important to ensure that, when young people are moving between different learning providers, they are not lost. This means that, as well as a common process for assessing young people's needs, there should be a system for ensuring that information from existing systems is drawn on to support a young person's participation in an Activity Agreement, and for appropriately reflecting their participation and progression. We will work with Skills Development Scotland and the ten pilot areas to develop this, complementing wider work to establish Skills Development Scotland as the data hub for information about young people. . An important part of this will be monitoring young people's progression when they leave an Activity Agreement; this will require close working with other learning providers. We will work with the ten pilot areas, analytical colleagues, and the Steering Group to establish an appropriate measure of success based on young people's progression from Activity Agreements into more formal learning or employment.

57. For evaluation purposes, it will be important for the pilot areas to record the number of young people participating in Activity Agreements; a broad analysis of the barriers those young people face, including equalities issues; the provision that young people access; and young people's progression into more formal learning options. The Evaluation Framework at Annex D sets out the data required in more detail.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation

58. There is a key role for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in assessing the quality of learning provision for young people. We will work with the ten pilot areas and HMIE to develop this role, building on the existing framework for inspection and self-assessment in community learning and development.

59. Existing local measures for quality assurance and improvement will already govern some of the services and learning provision which might form part of an Activity Agreement. We will work with the ten pilot areas to ensure that, where there are effective existing procedures for monitoring quality, these are built on.

60. We will continue to involve young people in the design and development of Activity Agreements during the pilots, to ensure that the services developed are responsive to young people's needs. We will work with Young Scot to ensure that young people's views are taken into account, building on existing good practice in the pilot local authorities.

61. The entitlements set out for young people in Building the Curriculum 3 – described at paragraph 35 above – should shape the activities in which a young person takes part. There are many ways in which a young person's learning in a non-formal context might be recognised or accredited. Decisions on how best to recognise or accredit a young person's learning should be taken at an individual level, based on the assessment of that young person's needs and interests. Where

appropriate, this may include initial engagement with young people which is then accredited retrospectively, rather than requiring young people to be working towards accreditation from the beginning. The “Amazing Things” document (linked at **Annex B**) is a useful guide to the range of options for accreditation for both advisors and providers.

62. Longer-term, there is need to better understand the way that the distance travelled by young people, and their development of soft skills, can be measured. There are a number of existing areas of work which will have a direct impact on this, both through Curriculum for Excellence and with a current focus on adults. We will work with the pilot areas, Learning and Teaching Scotland, and the Steering Group to develop the necessary links.

Administration

63. The assessment of a young person’s needs should determine the minimum requirements for taking part in an Activity Agreement. For some young people, the initial stage of an Activity Agreement will be largely or entirely focused on intensive advice and guidance, before appropriate learning activity can be identified. For those young people, that guidance process should be recognised as part of the Agreement.

64. Initially, there will be no minimum amount of engagement required for a young person to participate in an Activity Agreement. This should be determined on the basis of each young person’s needs. Through the pilots, we will identify whether a minimum level of engagement is helpful in encouraging young people’s participation and progression.

65. Within this flexibility, there must be a clear focus on the young person’s progression towards more formal learning or employment. This carries an expectation that a young person’s participation in Activity Agreements might evolve or become more demanding as they progress.

66. Initially, there will be no maximum amount of time for which a young person may participate in an Activity Agreement. For the majority of young people, we expect an Activity Agreement to be a short, focused intervention which helps them to become ready for more formal learning or employment. For some young people, however, a longer timeframe is needed. Expectations on progress should be set with young people through the Agreement. Through the pilots, we will identify whether a maximum amount of time is helpful in encouraging young people’s participation and progression.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

67. The allowance paid to young people participating in Activity Agreements will be based on the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) programme as it operates in schools and colleges. Existing guidance on EMA (available on the www.emascotland.com website) will dictate young people’s eligibility for allowances in terms of date of birth, residency, and impact on receipt of DWP benefits.

68. While young people in receipt of most DWP benefits can receive EMA additionally to their benefits, this is not the case for Jobseeker's Allowance. Young people aged 16 or 17 in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance are required to engage regularly with Skills Development Scotland. In the pilot areas, participation in an Activity Agreement may constitute that engagement, but young people in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance will not be able to apply for EMA.

69. The EMA is means tested and eligibility will depend household income and whether there is more than one dependent child in the household. The same rules for income assessment applies to young people on Activity Agreements as those receiving an EMA in school or college and is based on Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Tax Credits Awards, which also takes into account household income.

70. Most EMA applicants will be able to provide a Tax Credit Award Notice (TCAN) or P60 as proof of household income. If they do not have a TCAN or P60, details of income can be completed on the application form. EMA contacts within local authorities will be able to provide guidance on how to complete the forms. If a current TCAN is available then this will reduce the amount of the form that has to be completed.

71. If household income is £20,351 or less, the young person will be eligible, and will be awarded a weekly allowance of £30. Young people from households with more than one dependent child and where the household income is £22,403 or less will also be eligible for a weekly payment of £30 per week.

72. A dependent child is one who is 16 or under or is between 16 and 25 years old and is in full-time further or higher education.

73. If a young person is estranged from their parents or carers, they should be assessed on their own income and is therefore likely to be eligible for EMA. Young people in care or leaving care should automatically be awarded EMA.

74. Payment of EMA will normally be restricted to a maximum period of 3 years and recipients must be between 16 and 19 years old. Vulnerable young people may be eligible for up to 4 years support.

75. For the pilots, payments can be made for up to 52 weeks per year. Young people on Activity Agreements can receive payments out-with the normal school and college term-time as their learning may not follow the academic year.

76. Young people on Activity Agreements can have their EMA payments backdated, to the day of first engagement in the relevant activity.

77. Vulnerable young people may require extra support in the application process and in developing the learning agreement as well as throughout the duration with their course work. For the purpose of Activity Agreements, all young people will be considered as vulnerable.

78. Flexibility should also be afforded to these young people in terms of timetabling and the range of provision they can access. Any specific guidelines can

be built into the young person's agreement. This may include a low level of engagement in the activity to begin with and progressing towards greater engagement.

79. The young person's advisor or learning centre is responsible for authorising or stopping payments. For young people undertaking an Activity Agreement, we would generally expect trusted professional to make this decision, although for some there may be someone else who is more appropriate. In all cases, the pilot areas should ensure there is a clear process – similar to the process which operates between schools and the local authority – for authorising or stopping payments.

80. Local Authorities need a record of young people on Activity Agreements receiving EMA. We would suggest that this information is recorded in the same way as for young people attending independent schools or who are home educated. This may be that a dummy student candidate number (SCN) is assigned to each young person so that they can be included in the information management system.

81. Bonus payments previously formed part of the EMA programme in schools and colleges, but from academic year 2010-11 will no longer be offered. Pilot areas have scope within their Activity Agreement Pilot grant to continue a bonus system for young people on Activity Agreements.

Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit

82. Child Benefit legislation specifies programmes of learning which qualify a young person for Child Benefit – those are school, college, Get Ready for Work, Skillseekers and Modern Apprenticeships. Activity Agreements do not count as eligible learning for the purposes of child benefit and child tax credit.

83. However, young people continue to be eligible for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit for up to 20 weeks after they leave school, college or a Get Ready for Work programme. This is referred to as the run on period. This means that young people who start to take part in Activity Agreements within 20 weeks of leaving school will continue to be eligible for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit at the start of their engagement. It is important to note that these young people are eligible for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit because they have recently left school, not because they are taking part in an Activity Agreement.

84. One of the purposes of the pilots is to develop a clearer definition of the range of learning a young person might take part in and we might expect "Activity Agreements" to be specified in future legislation depending on our evaluation of the pilots.

Annex A

High-risk groups of young people

- The consultation on 16+ Learning Choices: First Step Activity and Financial Support identified a number of groups of young people who were more likely to disengage from learning and were, therefore, more likely to participate in Activity Agreements.
- The groups of young people identified are listed below.
- The purpose of this list is to inform local planning, as there will be existing support arrangements, planning, or other arrangements which might apply to young people which should be taken into account in planning their participation in an Activity Agreement. It is not meant as an indication that assumptions should be made about any individual young person based on other factors in their lives.
- The following groups of young people were identified as being at higher risk of disengaging:
 - Looked after children and care leavers
 - Young carers
 - Young parents
 - Young offenders
 - Young people with low attainment in school
 - Young people who are persistently truant
 - Young people with physical or mental health problems or disabilities
 - Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse
 - Young people with behavioural issues
 - Young people with additional support needs
 - Young people for whom English is a second language
 - Winter leavers
 - Young people leaving special schools
 - Young people who are homeless
 - Young people who are a risk to themselves or others
 - Young people who do not sustain an initial positive destination

Annex B

Opportunities which might form part of an Activity Agreement

- The consultation on 16+ Learning Choices: First Step Activity and Financial Support identified a range of learning opportunities and activities which might form part of an Activity Agreement.
- The range of opportunities identified is listed below.
- The purpose of this list is to inform local planning, as there will be a range of existing policies and resources which are already focused on engaging young people. It is for local authorities and their community planning partners to determine their own priorities. We will work with the pilot areas to identify areas where further national guidance on the potential for joining up some of the services below would be welcome.
- This list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive; it is not meant as an indication of the most appropriate route for any individual young person.
- The following learning opportunities and activities were identified:
 - Local authority CLD provision
 - Third sector CLD provision
 - Volunteering opportunities
 - Community-based school provision
 - the Life Skills strand of Get Ready For Work
 - Inspiring Scotland-funded provision
 - Cashback-funded provision
 - ESF-funded provision
 - ILA-accredited provision
 - Literacy and numeracy
 - Team-building activity
 - Outward bound activity and outdoor recreation
 - Confidence-building
 - Activity focused on improving self-esteem
 - Peer learning
 - Peer research
 - Information literacy
 - Home-based learning options and distance learning
 - Local employability programmes, particularly “pre-Get Ready for Work” activity
 - Activity focused on ethical behaviour and active citizenship
 - Workplace engagement
 - Work shadowing
 - Anger management
 - Health-related activity, particularly related to mental or sexual health and addictions
 - Outreach activity through police, fire, and armed services
 - Arts and culture-related activity
 - Sporting activity
 - Housing provision
- As well as the wide range of activity described above, there are many ways in which a young person’s learning and progression might be recognised or accredited. The “Amazing Things” document, produced by Youth Scotland, is a useful guide to options for this and can be found online at <http://www.youthscotland.org.uk/resources/free-downloadable-resources-.htm>

Annex C

A model for shared common assessment of needs

Who should consider this model?

This framework is aimed at those responsible for supporting children and young people, particularly at points of transition - including teaching and management staff in schools, quality improvement and strategic managers in Local Authorities as well as partner agencies that work with school age and post school young people. The latter includes Scotland's colleges, Universities, training providers, Educational Psychologists, Social Workers, community support workers including the voluntary sector / employers etc.

Why you should read this:

It is important to reflect upon current practice of shared assessment and intervention across settings and to consider whether current arrangements are of the highest quality to ensure positive and sustained outcomes for learners. Aspects of partnership working can present challenges with regard to effective joining up, especially given the interdependent nature of working around transition and times of change. This framework focuses on the practical implications of shared assessment and intervention processes, in a dynamic policy setting. It has particular relevance to the process of developing and delivering Activity Agreements.

What you can use this framework to do:

Consider the staged model and the self evaluation questions that arise, as part of a quality assurance check. Where possible, do this in partnership with relevant agencies and maintain a cycle of reflection on current state and distance travelled. Identify good practice as well as working points for individual agency / shared activity.

Do your policies and practices result in positive outcomes for all young people, as a result of maximising the totality of supports / resources available? What evidence do you have? If not, there is a need as part of continuous improvement to identify where changes are needed, to result in improved sharing of planning and intervention resulting in better outcomes for targeted individuals and groups (eg those looked after and accommodated).

Self Evaluation checklist

The following self evaluation questions are designed to help all those involved in transitions to reflect on current practices, in the light of the shared model, building on current practices. Complementary self reflection questions and/or good practice exemplars can be found in Building the Curriculum 3, HGIOS3, Improving our Curriculum through self evaluation. We're Still Here, Code of Practice ASL, 16+ Learning choices, and We Can and Must Do Better.

Self reflection provides an opportunity to consider ways to improve partnership working, tracking and information flow in the process of preparation for transitions (e.g. to post school). For example, the need for direct assessment by one partner can be reduced by the sharing of high quality information at point of referral/transfer. Further, activity that promotes ongoing sharing of information through review, will assist subsequent transitions through next steps and into sustainable outcomes.

Answers to relevant questions to your context, can serve to highlight and reinforce good practice. Changes and developments in local partnership working can be supported by reference to ongoing systemic reflection and review.

1. **Presentation & Background (prior information and information sharing):**
 - Are key partners in the post school arena clearly identified and mechanisms in place for collaborative working?
 - Are there shared policies and procedures to support transition of young people, school to school, transition between phases of schooling and from school to post- school?
 - Are there adequate record keeping and profiling methods allowing early identification and tracking, so that information can accompany the young people at transition points?
 - Are there agreed processes and protocols regarding information exchange with key partners post school? Can you access reports from partner agencies that help provide background?
 - Are clearly identified (additional) support needs/interventions communicated to partners?
 - Do partner agencies have opportunity to undertake prior assessment / induction to be aware of young person need, before receiving them?
 - Are there good transition links with relevant key partners for both entry and next steps ?
 - Is there a clear knowledge of the continuum of choices post school and are these clearly communicated to young people, parents and carers?
 - How is progress after school monitored and tracked eg take up of 16+ Learning Choices offer and subsequent outcome?

2. **Observation (& third party feedback):**
 - What ongoing opportunities are there for structuring, observing and recording outcomes for a young person in a learning, work experience / training setting?
 - How are skills for employability supported? Are work-based and / or community-based activities incorporated within a young people's programmes?
 - Are there good links between specific agencies to share information and planning for Review?
 - How do partners plan for extended transition for vulnerable young people, including looked after children, as part of a staged intervention process, starting, for example, by S3?

3. **Ongoing assessment: (building the understanding)**
 - What assessment strategies are available to make judgements about the changing needs of a young person in the context of specific skills / tasks?

- How is this information gained and collated?
- Is information on personal qualities / attributes such as motivation, interpersonal skills, reliability employability, etc, gathered; is this profile recorded / shared with the young people and relevant (post school) partners?
- Where young people are having needs met across settings, what is the process of information sharing with partners eg in colleges, training providers, work placements?

4. Specialist assessment: (when questions about individual need still remain)

- Which specialist services are accessible, in order to confirm suspicions of particular needs / barriers?
- Which services can be consulted in order to discuss emerging 'hypotheses' regarding a young person's needs?

Cyril Hellier and Ron Crichton Post School Psychological Services Strategic Officers
 Scottish Government Enterprise & Employability for young People / More Choices, More Chances

ANNEX D

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK – ACTIVITY AGREEMENTS

Area	Key Questions	Methods	Responsibility
1. Policy Context	<p>How do Activity Agreements sit within a broader policy context (ie. Skills Strategy, Curriculum for Excellent, 16+ Learning Choices, GIRFEC EMA, SOAs)?</p> <p>What is the level of financial support available to young people?</p> <p>What is the impact of the EMA on participation?</p>	Literature Review	External Evaluator/ Scottish Government
2. Process (What are the inputs to Activity Agreements?)	<p>How are Local Authorities engaging with young people?</p> <p>How are they targeting specific groupings in each LA area</p>	Face-to-face interviews Focus groups (questionnaire)	External Evaluator/Local authorities/partners
	<p>What assessment processes are being used?</p> <p>What additional assessment processes have been developed?</p> <p>How do these integrate with other forms of assessment?</p>	<p>Review of current methodologies –</p> <p>Face-to-face interviews (questionnaire/survey monkey)</p>	<p>LAs/SDS/partners</p> <p>LAs/SDS/partners</p>
	<p>What current provision and activities work well with young people?</p> <p>What has worked less well?</p>	Face-to-face interviews Focus Groups	Local Authority/ Participants/providers
(What is the added value of roles within Activity Agreements?)	<p>What staff are involved in assessment, co-ordination and delivery of AA's (TPs, existing LA staff, SDS key workers, others?)</p> <p>What are the roles & responsibilities of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the trusted professional? 	Face to face interviews	Evaluator 4

Area	Key Questions	Methods	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information, Advice & Guidance? - Other partners <p>How well are the new posts integrated into the LA team structure?</p> <p>How (well) do the partners work together?</p> <p>What are the CPD issues emerging?</p>		
(What new and additional processes have been developed during pilot phase?)	<p>What are the interventions being delivered?</p> <p>How are wider services integrated in delivery?</p> <p>How do local partners contribute to planning and delivery?</p>	<p>Face-to-face interviews</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>	<p>LA/partners/local service providers/STAG/STF</p> <p>LA/partners/local service providers/STAG/STF</p> <p>LA/partners/local service providers/STAG/STF</p>
	<p>What additional financial resources contribute to the delivery of Activity Agreements?</p> <p>How are (partnership) decisions made about resource allocation in each area?</p>	<p>Face to face interviews</p> <p>“</p>	<p>Local Authority/Evaluator</p> <p>“</p>
<p>3. Impact</p> <p>(What is the additional impact of Activity Agreements?)</p> <p>(What are the outcomes that will signal successful delivery and impact of Activity Agreements?)</p>	<p>What impact do activity agreements have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on young people's transitions and destinations - On LAs and delivery partners management, capacity and financial resource <p>No of young people referred</p> <p>No of young people offered</p> <p>No of young people sign up</p> <p>No of young people declined (definitions will be developed and shared)</p> <p>What is the profile of participants?</p>	<p>Local Authority recording systems & processes (data sharing of top line stats)</p> <p>Face-to-face interviews</p> <p>Insight/Cognisoft/Other</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>	<p>Local Authority</p> <p>Evaluator</p> <p>Local Authority/SDS</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p>

Area	Key Questions	Methods	Responsibility
	<p>Are the pilots reaching those they are targeted at?</p> <p>How is progression being measured? (definitions will be developed and shared)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soft progressions - Hard progressions <p>How are achievements being recorded?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soft achievements - Hard achievements <p>What effect is this having on SLDRs?</p> <p>What effect is this having on MC, MC stats?</p>	<p>Local Authority recording systems & processes Equal opportunities monitoring</p> <p>Variety of tools, developed or off the shelf/Insight</p> <p>Variety of tools, developed or off the shelf/Insight</p> <p>SLDR database</p>	<p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>SDS</p> <p>Scottish Government</p>
	<p>What is the impact on the intended client group when they decline to participate?</p> <p>What are the barriers to participation?</p>	<p>Local Authority tracking processes/SDS Insight/Young Scot</p>	<p>Local Authority/SDS/Young Scot</p>
<p>(What has been the participant's experience?)</p> <p>4. Comparators</p> <p>(How can we share our experiences and learn from others?)</p>	<p>What do participants think of the services they receive?</p> <p>(this will reflect content of Young Scot video diaries and on-line questionnaire currently under development)</p> <p>What are the outcomes from LA areas operating similar model and approaches and not participating in pilot phase?</p> <p>What other models are being delivered to this client group outwith LA structures?</p>	<p>Video diaries</p> <p>On-line questionnaires (to be completed by participant at the beginning/middle & end)</p> <p>Local Authority participants at local level</p> <p>Local Authority data capture</p>	<p>Young Scot/participants</p> <p>Young Scot/participants</p> <p>Local Authority</p> <p>Local Authority Evaluators Post 16 providers outwith LAs</p>

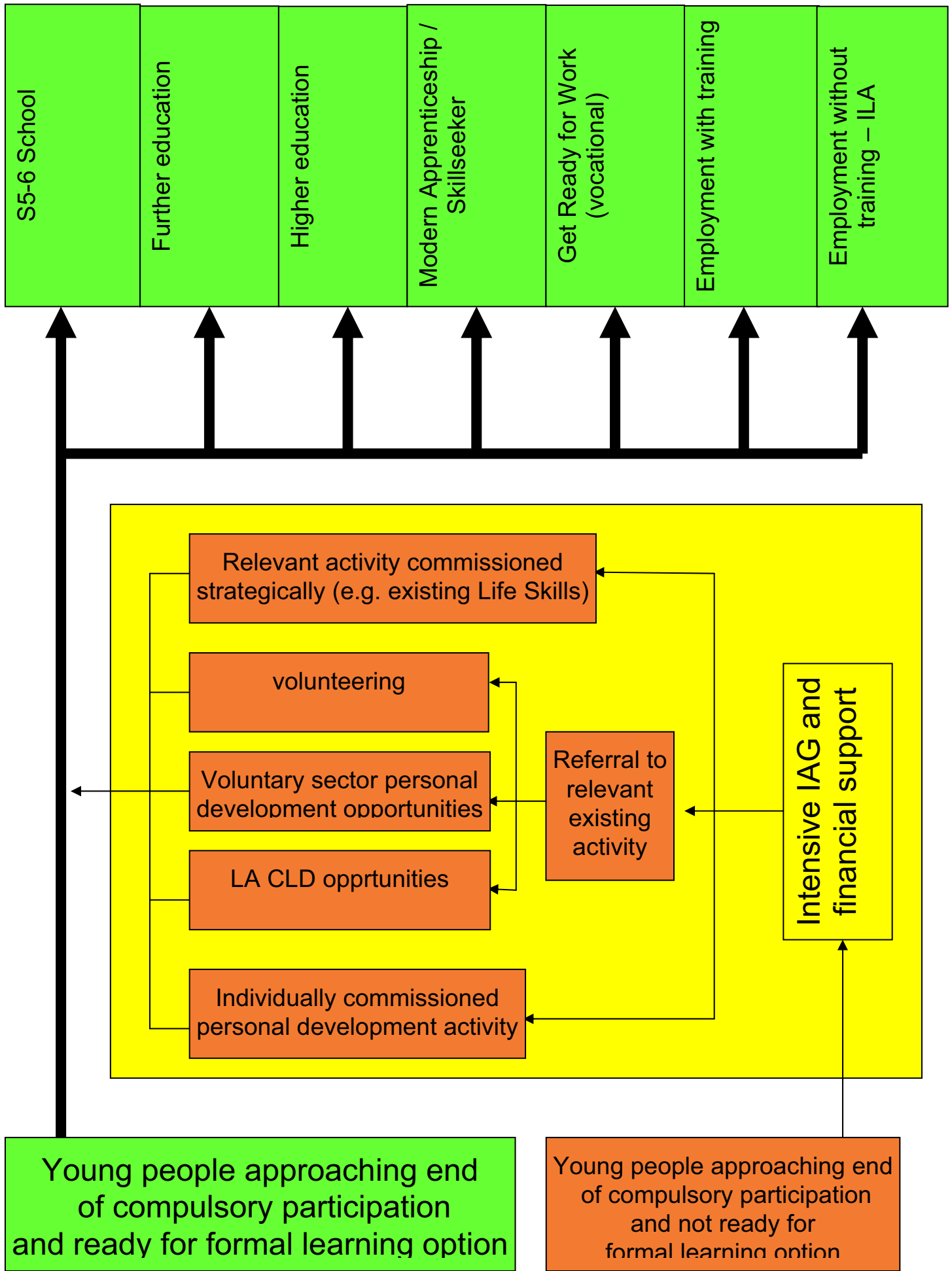
Area	Key Questions	Methods	Responsibility
	<p>What are their outcomes for young people?</p> <p>What data is available from previous 16-24 interventions?</p> <p>What data is available from other countries?</p> <p>Is there any international evidence available?</p>	<p>Desk research/face-to-face interviews.</p> <p>Desk based research</p> <p>Desk based research</p>	<p>“</p> <p>“</p>

ANNEX E: DEFINITIONS

		Numbers	Comments (if any)
Referrals	Those young people whose names, and where appropriate background information, have been forwarded to LAs and subsequent contact made. Referrals can be from any source, including self or peer-referrals. (Those who have previously undertaken an AA, disengaged and been re-referred, should be recorded as a new referral and flagged as having previously engaged)		
Offered	When an offer of an Activity Agreement is made directly to the young person, either verbally or in writing.		
Sign Up	When a young person commits, either verbally or in writing, to engage in an Activity Agreement.		
Declined	When an offer of an activity agreement has been made and the young person, for whatever reason, decides not to engage.		
Early Leavers	Those young people who has committed to undertaking an AA and before completion, for whatever reason, decline to continue to participate.		
Hard Progressions	Where the young person leaves an AA and enters one of the positive destinations currently defined in the SLDR – ie. Further or higher education, voluntary work, national training programmes, or employment with or without further training. (In addition, a young person's return to school should be counted as progression)		

Additional Comments:

(Please detail any general issues you had in collating this information)



APPENDIX 2: TEMPLATES

Pilot area	Fife
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive approach to early implementation of 16+ Learning Choices.
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MCMC 16+ Learning Choices Project Team co-ordinates the process under the strategic direction of the MCMC Partnership.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff paid for by the AA budget: MCMC Co-ordinator; One Project Co-ordinator; two Trusted Professionals; two admin staff; one development worker; six part-time integrated children's services workers. Other staff make in kind contributions including 5 SDS Key Workers and inputs from CLD Education workers, team leaders and admin support.
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trusted Professionals are known as 'AA key workers' and come from a small number of core agencies within SDS, Fife Council. There are two paid Trusted Professionals from the AA budget but others dedicate part of their time to this role.
Date referrals started	Fully operating since January 2010 (with a handful starting on the pilot from November 2009)
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Fife approach begins with the 16+LC process in schools which aims to identify those most at risk before they leave, so most referrals for Activity Agreements are initiated through the school system. The young person at risk will be discussed at the School 16+LC Group which will use the Risk Identification Guide (which they have been testing out as part of this pilot) to help assess risk and facilitate multi-agency problem solving (a GIRFEC approach). Referral forms are completed by guidance staff and forwarded to the appropriate agreed agency. There are also three area post-school multi-agency monitoring groups which meet every six weeks to identify those who might have dropped out after school, focusing mainly on the "unknowns" in the SDS Insight database. Re-engagement strategies may result in referrals for keyworker support (and possible Activity Agreement participation) being required for those not previously identified through the school process.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before they leave school the Risk Identification Guide process (see above) may have been used to assess and quantify support needs. Once assigned to an AA key worker assessment and planning is undertaken between the young person and the key worker. It is based on the following headings: <i>"I have, I can, I am, I hope, I need"</i>. It also encourages the key worker to have in mind the GIRFEC SHANARRI indicators. It is aimed at being a person-centred, solution focused approach (we were also told it was under review when we interviewed). The AA keyworker will discuss participation on an AA programme as a possible option but they may find that they are able to support the young person directly onto a formal option instead – so not all AA keyworker referrals will result in an AA being agreed. When this is felt by both parties to be the best first step, an AA programme will be negotiated with the aim to start as soon as possible after the official school leaving date.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a broad range of activities including CLD provision (rolling programme and Routefinder 16+), adult basic education, College provision (Stepping Stones and Choice Px2) motorcycle and car mechanics and driving 4 success tasters, Fire and rescue service, volunteering opportunities, self-esteem building courses through social enterprises (BRAG and West Fife Enterprises) and other third sector bodies such as Rathbone and YMCA.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around 20 different providers/types of provision have been involved including the public sector (CLD programmes), third sector (such as Rathbone) and the private sector (such as Knockhill Racing Circuit).

Pilot area	Fife
	There have been volunteering opportunities at places such as the Ecology Centre. Carnegie College has offered Choice Px2 courses and Community LEAP courses. Adam Smith College has offered Stepping Stones.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a dedicated staff member responsible for a comprehensive database. There is no overall monitoring and evaluation system in place as yet although there are a number of sources of anecdotal evidence including case studies. They are currently undertaking their own evaluation on-line with schools and with partners.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 159 Young people signed up • 27 Hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without Scottish Government money it will be difficult to sustain this input. The process has grown because of the input of funding. The school side would not be costly to continue but the key worker/activities component requires funding. Also the school 16+LC process identifies those who need support but if onward referral was significantly reduced it could be difficult to maintain momentum for the process as it currently operates. The monitoring side also requires funding and to be better co-ordinated.

Pilot area	Glasgow
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A planned initial focus on a small number of young people who participate in the Enhanced Vocational Inclusion Programme in S4 (expanded during the pilot);
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MCMC Partnership oversaw the bid, and Activity Agreements are now implemented by the 16+ Learning Choices Team which sits within Education in Glasgow City Council. It focuses strongly on engaging vulnerable young people, particularly identifying and working with those in last 6 months of education who are disengaged from school. The pilot has embedded a school based partnership approach to identify which young people should be referred for an Activity Agreement, before they are of school leaving age. GIRFEC: Feel they have tried to take on board principles of GIRFEC, with the AA coach acting as the liaison between YP and other agencies/professionals, and acting as an advocate, mentor, chasing up YP if need be. CfE: The Activity Agreement assesses each YP against key outcomes from CfE, so this is embedded in approach. Regularly reviewed against these.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16+ Learning Choices Team Leader for Glasgow has management responsibility for Activity Agreements. Seven Activity Agreement 'coaches' (6 FT and one P/T). Five of the seven are secondments (3 from SDS, 1 from Glasgow SE Regeneration Agency, 1 from Glasgow Community Safety Services) Two of the AA coaches were redeployed from Family Support Mediation Service, and one came from a post at Quarriers. AA funding also contributes to the posts of 16+ Learning Choices Co-ordinator (Team Leader) (33%), 16+ Learning Choices Administrator (33%), and two 16+ Learning Choices Co-ordinators (33%). Coaches posts are fixed term contracts .
Trusted professionals (coaches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five of the seven Coaches are deployed geographically (in each of the five former strategic planning areas of Glasgow), and the other two are specifically assigned to work with people outside of mainstream schooling. Role involves overseeing the 7 key stages of Activity Agreements that they have identified (Tracking, Engagement, Assessment & Guidance, Core Skills, Employability Skills, Vocational Skills, Transition).
Date referrals started	December 2009
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main route for referrals (95%) is directly from schools. Other services, parents/carers and young people themselves can also refer. A Partnership approach has been embedded in schools, with monthly meetings between the 16+ Learning Choices lead, pastoral care, employability officer, SDS Careers Advisor and AA coaches to look at which young people are due to leave in the next six months, identify those they are concerned about, and decide who the most appropriate person to take lead is. A Risk Matrix has been in development that will be used to identify at risk young people at an earlier stage (possibly as early as S2). This is currently being tested at several schools, and will be adopted universally across all schools by the end of the pilot.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They use an extensive referral form to record information, including identification of at risk/vulnerable groups, other agency involvement, health issues and reasons for referral. They also assess each young person's soft skills using a RICKTER

Pilot area	Glasgow
	<p>baseline, and use PX2 to explore and set goals with each young person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Activity Agreement form also assesses each young person against the competencies set out in Curriculum for Excellence.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixture of tailored individual provision and group work over a number of weeks or months. Took a non-traditional approach to commissioning activity, deciding not to commission a lot of different programmes, but rather commission bits of work for individuals once a cohort of young people was in place and needs assessed. Spent time developing an approved providers list for Activity Agreements. New provision developed included the 'Try it Out' programmes - 8 week programmes with 4 weeks of prep work and 4 weeks of work experience, in industries such as construction, care, horticulture and health and beauty.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes community and voluntary sector provision, such as Inspiring Scotland Ventures, and public sector, for example Glasgow City Council Peer Mentor Supported Volunteering Programme. Private sector provision also on offer, from Employment Enterprise and the Three Sisters Restaurant
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially they lacked a sufficient information system for logging progress of young people, and focused on the face-to-face work and ongoing assessment with young person. There have also been some issues with information sharing with SDS, as Council staff were using SEMIS and did not have access to Insight, and vice-versa. They purchased new database software (Insight Online) from Cognisoft in August 2010, which uses the same software as SDS's Insight, allowing them to exchange information more easily. The new database has also allowed much better monitoring of progress of each Young Person.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 266 young people signed up 125 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original idea was that if they could evidence the success of the pilot they could then approach partners to help with future funding, but economic circumstances make this original model redundant. In process of exploring options for funding of posts, including private sector investment, linking into Glasgow's ESF Priority 5 funding bid, and possibly mainstreaming the Coaches that were redeployed from other GCC department. Hope for some further financial support from SG to fund posts. All of these options depend on steer from SG about future funding for Activity Agreements. They are hoping that Inspiring Scotland Ventures will re-align some of their referral processes and activities with Activity Agreements in mind, so they will become the first port of call for provision. Also in talks with Glasgow Life with view to a similar arrangement, with cost for provision coming from their budget. Control of Activity Agreements likely to be kept in Education Services.

Pilot area	Highland
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	The opportunity to build on their experience as the GIRFEC Pathfinder.
Overview	The pilot is based in Education Culture and Sport Service in Highland Council and is overseen by the Lead Officer for More Choices More Chances, who also oversees 16+ Learning Choices. SDS is the main partner responsible for the majority of referrals and trusted professionals. GIRFEC principles are applied placing young people at the heart of a process of flexible support. A targeted approach on vulnerable young people has been emphasized from the start. Two area co-ordinators lead on implementation. A Steering Group consisting of representatives from Highland Council oversees the pilot. EMA is claimed by the majority of young people (although this does not show up on the information supplied to us for the end November 2010 as there are still a large number of claims being processed) with bonus payments made from the pilot's budget; there have been delays in processing EMA within Council.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highland Council's Lead Officer for MCMC oversees the pilot (not AA funded). • Two full-time AA co-ordinators employed on fixed term contracts to cover the North and South of the Highland area (AA funded). Both are seconded from Highland Council – one is an Active Schools Co-ordinator, the other a Substance Misuse Worker in Social Work; 1 substantive post has been backfilled and the other will be in April if the project continues. • A full-time administrator is also seconded from the Council to support the team.
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known as Personal Advisors in Highland. • No new staff have been appointed to the role. • Approximately 85% of young people have Personal Advisors from SDS' existing staff (key workers, careers advisors and personal advisors). SDS time with young people varies with some acting as case managers and project staff taking on some of the support role for young people. • In the more rural areas where SDS' reach is less, other professionals take on the role mainly Council staff. • Over 20 staff are involved in the role of Personal Advisor.
Date referrals started	Limited number of referrals until Co-ordinators came into post at end January/start of February 2010.
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vast majority of referrals come via SDS and school-based assessment. • Partners including SDS, schools, the 16+ Learning Co-ordinator, and Social Work discuss potential beneficiaries looking at issues such as attendance, ASN, carers, young parents, and destinations. • Barnardo's Springboard project is a source of referrals for care leavers.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a young person has a Child's Plan their assessment comes from that. • Using person centred planning to give young people choice - Advisors work with young people to identify issues and goals. • Paperwork produced to record assessment and goals . • Transition Guides being used to establish need.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinators have audited and use a directory of approximately 35 learning options; if young people are interested in something not included in the directory, the AA co-ordinators will try to procure it (H&S and Enhanced Disclosure checks undertaken). • Activities cover a range of provision from work placements (for example, on farms), training (for example, Microcom), arts projects, outdoor

Pilot area	Highland
	<p>projects (for example, Abriachan Forest Trust) and community projects (for example, Pulneytown Peoples Project).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions cover both individual and group activities. • Provision is an issue in some rural areas so funding used to transport young people or bringing provision to them.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant presence of third sector providers. Some are not charging for AA participants where they join existing provision. • Some private sector training providers and businesses (for work placements) involved. • Limited input from local authority as a provider. • Large geographical area means new provision has had to be commissioned in some local communities.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information gathered from young people and recorded on an Excel spreadsheet. A comments field is used to record characteristics such as care leaver, health issues, ASN. • Activities recorded in individual Plans but not the time spent. • Costs are recorded on separate spreadsheets.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 signed up • 26 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast track application to Highlands and Islands ESF programme.

Pilot area	Inverclyde
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An existing hotspot with good practice on, among other areas, joint working between Careers and youth work staff.
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot sits within Education and Communities Services, in the MCMC 16+ LC section, though delivery is done by CLD Team. No dedicated Co-ordinator, responsibility shared between MCMC Development Officer and CLD Senior Worker. Strategy has been to build on partnerships and provision already in place, as felt this would be more sustainable. Pilot has looked at existing structures, provision and partnerships, and strengthened these, rather than starting from scratch. MCMC Development Officer oversaw the bid, in consultation with MCMC Partnership CfE: no mention of CfE.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 CLD Senior Worker – 16+ Activity Agreements (F/T) Four Trusted Professionals (3 P/T – 19 hours, 17hours, 12 hours, 1 F/T) – 1 previously a teacher, 3 previously Adult Literacy Tutors in CLD Team 2 Development Workers (F/T) 1 Administrator All staff are on fixed term contracts to end March
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role involves personalised directed support, being the main point of contact for young person, building rapport/trust with young person, co-ordinating support and activities, and delivering some of the provision on offer. Development Workers - work full-time on building up literacy and numeracy delivery capacity of providers, and ensuring that courses run by providers have the maximum level of accreditation attached to activity that YP take part in. Also creating a resource bank of materials for providers to use on literacy/numeracy.
Date referrals started	Sept 2009
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of partners refer young people to SDS, who then look at each case and decide whether they are suitable for an Activity Agreement. If the Activity Agreement team agrees that the young person is suitable for an AA then they proceed with a meet and greet with the young person. They use youth outreach workers, detached youth workers and MCMC youth workers to engage with hard to reach young people. The CLD workforce are seen as a really important link between young people and SDS as a hub for employability support (including Activity Agreements).
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trusted Professionals have a meeting with SDS Key Worker prior to meeting young person to discuss their needs, though not able to access information from SDS Insight due to confidentiality issue. There is a 'meet and greet' with Trusted Professionals and the young person, sometimes also attended by a key worker from SDS plus staff from CLD team. The Activity Agreement form includes assessment of goals, possible steps, and development of a plan of action. A review of the Activity Agreement is carried out every 4-6 weeks with the Trusted Professional and the young person.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial starting point of 1:1 meetings with Trusted Professional, then the young person looks at the programme of activities available (HYPE), which tends to be group activity. There is ongoing contact with Trusted Professional as needed.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HYPE programme includes provision developed in-house, as well as some provided by external providers.

Pilot area	Inverclyde
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trusted Professionals have developed provision on literacy support, mental health, budgeting, gang culture, communication, make-up skills, personal presentation, life skills and personal development. • CLD team have offered arts and crafts, fitness and employability skills. • External providers provide various taster courses for different job sectors e.g. 'Try It Out', a 5 week taster course in construction, Impact Arts covering interior decorating and woodwork, Youth Build and Positive Futures (Sports Coaching).
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily tracking of each young person on an Activity Agreement, updating their progress, looking at status and destination.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66 young people signed up • 18 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach taken has been to build on existing provision to make the pilot as sustainable as possible. • Current period of uncertainty and potential/probable cuts to budgets and service. • The model has been based on working and building on what was already in place, but they are not sure how much of that will be left in place after March, when financial decisions are made. • Would still need to be some form of protected funding to carry on what they are doing. • Currently evaluating what resource would be needed to keep model going. • Idea is that they have mapped and improved provision in the area significantly, mainstreamed approach and improved capacity of providers/partners involved, so whoever ends of delivering interventions for NEET YP will be doing so from strengthened position.

Pilot area	North Ayrshire
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An existing hotspot whose recent performance against the national indicator on positive and sustained destinations has been relatively poor.
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Activity Agreement Sub Group reports to the MCMC group which in turn reports to the Economic and Learning Partnership.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Activity Agreement Co-ordinator was seconded to start with but she returned to her substantive post in July 2010 and the co-ordination is now part of the remit of the MCMC/16+ Learning Choices/DTS Co-ordinator. There are 6 Trusted Professionals, one administrative staff and one combined Trusted Professionals /provider role within social services.
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trusted Professionals (known as Key Workers) were identified in SDS and internally in the local authority's services from the Extended Outreach Team (education) Throughcare (social services) and Programme Approach Team (social services). There are around 12 in total (five of whom are in kind staff employed at SDS). Two additional members of staff were recruited in the Extended Outreach team to free up experienced workers to carry out this role. (Some of the Trusted Professionals, most notably those from SDS have found the administrative aspects of this provision very burdensome and report that they are unable to carry out some of their required tasks because of this.)
Date referrals started	September 2009
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals come from the schools or, for those already disengaged from school, referrals come from SDS, Extended Outreach, CLD, social services, and the Community Employment Initiative Service (CEiS).
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment is based around the completion of the AA paperwork which includes sections around the young person's hobbies/interests, areas of strength, areas to improve on and hopes for the future. It has evolved to also include a section about health issues and a small section for the evaluation of key core skills.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are four CLD courses: Building Skills for your future (personal development-14 weeks); Three Towns Motor Project (mechanics-21 weeks); 16:9 Media project (digital skills); Journeys (personal development themed around outdoor activities and fitness). Volunteer Centre (volunteering plus Px2). Adult Literacies (one to one and group activities). Springboard (into work in Scottish Hospitality-12 weeks). The Social Services Programmes Approach Team runs a programme for those involved in the youth justice system, focusing on lifeskills and employability.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainly by CLD and the Volunteer Centre. The Social Services Programmes Approach team runs a programme with highly individualised support. There is also adult literacies on a one to one basis. Springboard, a registered charity and skills organisation for the hospitality and leisure industry (was identified as result of the interest in cooking/hospitality from a significant number of young people). Apart from Springboard the providers had already been involved. They have not used the private sector but feel that this makes it more sustainable.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDS Insight/education files for those at school. An informal database (not part of a bigger system) for Activity Agreements.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 97 Signed up 31 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It might be possible to continue this next year as CLD is re-prioritising the MCMC group. Also it has been kept lean. It will depend on what happens with CLD.

Pilot area	North Lanarkshire
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their role as the next GIRFEC Pathfinder (jointly with South Lanarkshire) and also due to the impact of the economic downturn on the area.
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The North Lanarkshire Activity Agreement is led by an MCMC Sub Group which reports to the Lifelong Learning Group of the CPP. Operational work is managed by the 16+Learning Choices – Activity Agreement group which meets every six weeks. The group includes the 16 +LC Co-ordinators (2 x 0.5 FTE), CLD Locality Managers / Learning Hub Managers (x6), CLD Development Officer, SDS Team Leader, Routes To Work Operations Manager, V.A.N.L. Volunteering Development Services Manager, Learning and Leisure Services Development Officers and other relevant members of the MCMC Sub Group. Six Learning Hubs have been created within local venues to deliver the NL Activity Agreement, phased in between August 2009 and January 2010. Each of the six Hubs is managed by a CLD Locality Manager and works in association with the local CLD Partnership to create Activity Agreement provision which is tailored to the local community.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the 16+LC Co-ordinators, CLD Development Officer and Learning & Leisure Services Development Officers supporting the pilot, two full time CLD staff have been allocated as Key Workers in each Learning Hub (their posts are not new but money has been used to deal with increasing capacity of the service). Three new Employability Advisors have also been appointed (through Routes to Work) and one Key Worker (volunteering) based at VANL. SDS have allocated Careers Advisors to link in with the hubs and staff from other providers, such as the NHS Youth Counselling Service work as part of the extended team
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In terms of creating and supporting individual Activity Agreements, the CLD Key Workers are the Trusted Professionals. The staff engage with participants using a youth work approach and many of the staff are already known to young people, and the wider community, which has helped. The Trusted Professional stays with the young person throughout once assigned. All of the staff listed above though are also seen as trusted professionals in the wider sense, as each works with a relevant case load of clients and has direct contact with participants.
Date referrals started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 2009. All six Learning Hubs operational by January 2010.
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDS is the preferred referral route. Some referrals come from other agencies, such as social work, but, where this is the case, each young person is supported to meet with an SDS Advisor within two weeks of their referral, to ensure that an Activity Agreement is indeed their best option. Schools are also involved in referrals and CLD has a Home School Partnership Officer based in each High School. There is a high percentage of self referrals to the Activity Agreement in North Lanarkshire. These have steadily increased over the past year due to positive feedback, word of mouth and a series of local marketing campaigns such as the current 'Next Factor' campaign using radio, outdoor adverts, online promotion, etc.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They perform a standard needs assessment and a background information form is also used if other agencies have been involved. A baseline assessment form has been piloted, using a sliding scale measurement. It is hoped that this will measure personal progression over time.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of activities offered including literacy and numeracy, sports and fitness, volunteering, work placements, First Aid training, Duke of Edinburgh Award, advice guidance and counselling, painting and decorating and construction skills, outdoor activities and team building.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skillforce, Routes to Work, Forward Training (deliver work placements),

	Reeltime (music production) YMCA, Coatbridge/Cumbernauld/Motherwell Colleges (computing, PX2, Sports leadership, etc), Focus Youth Project (mountain biking course), VANL (volunteering opportunities), North Lanarkshire Council-Sports Development (fitness and health workshops and work towards leadership qualification), NL Leisure, LAMH Recycle, etc.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed progress reports every quarter. In the process of putting everything on Cognisoft which will make it easier to pull report from.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 297 signed up 99 hard progressions.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A local evaluation of the pilot is currently being carried out which will form the basis of a sustainability plan to continue this area of work in North Lanarkshire.

Pilot area	Renfrewshire
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	To build on good practice in terms of client information management, and links into adult employability support.
Overview	MCMC Partnership overseeing the pilot and the key partners are Renfrewshire Council, Skills Development Scotland, Reid Kerr College, Scottish Training Foundation, Paisley and Johnston Training, Renfrewshire Workforce Plus-Mentoring Support Project, Youth Justice, Jobcentre Plus, Education Psychological Services, Pupil Support Services, Volunteer Centre. Universal approach adopted targeting young people across Renfrewshire with referrals from school and other agencies. Interim Sub-groups set up for the four priorities, for example Identification of YP, and Learning Provision & Support Group. Approximately a quarter of young people in receipt of EMA; bonuses paid from AA funds. Renfrewshire Council Psychological Services undertaking formative evaluation.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renfrewshire Council More Choices More Chances Coordinator oversees the Pilot (not AA funded). • Full-time Activity Agreement Co-ordinator seconded from Renfrewshire Council (post backfilled). • Full-time Administrator (AA funded) seconded from Renfrewshire Council (post backfilled). • Trusted professionals are a mix of new and existing posts (see below)
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently six new full-time staff employed by Renfrewshire Council (four of the posts backfilled). Staffs have a variety of backgrounds, for example, HomeLink, Mentoring Support Project Apex, CLAD, Renfrewshire Workforce Plus-Equal Access. On average they work with seven young people and spend between 5-10 hours a week with each. Up to 10 new Trusted Professionals (including a supervisor) envisaged at the outset dependent on demand – at one stage eight were employed. • Five existing SDS Key Workers also fulfil the role. • SDS staff work with young people nearest the labour market and Council staff work with those with more significant barriers. • SDS and Renfrewshire Council working to improve integration of Trusted Professionals.
Date referrals started	Referrals started in January 2010 when Trusted Professionals were in post.
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two prong referral process (school and external) with majority through schools including Extended Support Team and Careers Advisor help identify potential participants. Non-school routes include Social Work, Restoration & Mediation, and self-referral. (RAMPs) • Standard referral form used includes identification of needs. • Co-ordinator spoke to MCMC Partnership and third sector organisations, for example, local Youthlink Partnership, Youth and Sports Development Team, Training Providers, Renfrewshire Council for Voluntary Services, Enable, Community Health Partnership, Renfrewshire Drug and Alcohol Services to raise awareness. • SDS receives all referrals and signpost to the appropriate Key Worker.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Assessment Form has been devised which includes significant detail on personal characteristics and self-assessment of skills and strengths, barriers, wellbeing, as well as hobbies and interests.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of activities available across Renfrewshire including: sports, life coaching, literacy work, financial capabilities, arts & crafts, work placements, training, College. • Co-ordinator discusses activities with providers to tailor to AAs.

Pilot area	Renfrewshire
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers asked to identify how activity links to Curriculum for Excellence.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A provider's event sought out potential activities and led to a directory. Factsheet completed by all providers and circulated among KWs. • Directory includes details of over 60 providers • Providers drawn from all sectors: Colleges, Renfrewshire Council, third sector, private sector trainers and businesses for work placements. • Some new providers involved.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially the pilot hoped to use SDS Insight for information sharing but this did not materialise. • Renfrewshire Council developed an in-house database to record details which are shared with SDS via monthly meetings.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 110 young people signed up • 40 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renfrewshire Council are discussing options however it is likely that AA will be part of the wider MCMC, and will operate under the umbrella of Renfrewshire Workforce Plus (RWf+)

Pilot area	South Lanarkshire
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their role as the next GIRFEC Pathfinder (jointly with North Lanarkshire) and also due to the impact of the economic downturn on the area. • To build on existing good practice on youth involvement and CLD.
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an MCMC Strategy Group and an AA Action Group as a sub group of that. The MCMC team sits within Enterprise Resources within SLC.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCMC Development Officer has overall responsibility. The AA budget pays for an AA Officer and six Trusted Professionals. There is significant in kind employee support including Trusted Professionals based at Youthstart, Work it Out and formerly (see next box) at SDS plus various contributions in kind from SLC staff (including 40% of time for the MCMC Development Officer).
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are six Trusted Professionals (known as AA Advisers) based at the four Integrated Children's Services bases. (There used to be SDS workers acting as AA Advisers but following a review this stopped in June 2010.)
Date referrals started	Oct-Nov 2009
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every school is required to complete the "Early Identifier of Risk Factors Matrix" to help identify those without a positive progression following their school leaving date. The 16+ Learning Choices link teacher from each school together with the SDS worker will use this information to identify young people who will be eligible for an Activity Agreement as they reach their school leaving date. Direct referral is made to the AA team by the relevant SDS assigned school Careers Adviser (following joint meetings between school, SDS, ICS and 16+ and anyone else relevant to that individual). Young people who have dropped out of their initial post school destination are referred to AA team by SDS. They also have case meetings every six weeks or so in the four local areas to discuss young people with difficulties. The relationship with the ICS teams is seen as a big strength and a GIRFEC approach is followed. There are also some referrals from social work.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are just starting to use the Framework for Assessment and Intervention for Resilience (FAIR) which covers key strengths and aspirations, core skills, four capacities, and identifies appropriate activity, from a menu. It is similar to the process used in Fife and contains statements such as "I have, I can, I am". (Prior to this they used an Individual Learning Plan that came from SDS.)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core activities are: H20 a personal development 12 week programme run by Youth learning Services; Pure, Dead, Brilliant a volunteering with mentors programme offered by SoLVE the volunteer centre; CLD literacy and numeracy which is offered 1:1 or through group work; Regen FX a sports coaching programme where they train young people as sports coaches and then they go out to the local community to teach younger children; Bantam Returns project a motorcycle maintenance repair programme. In addition to these there are up to 50 other providers (but doing a proper procurement process just now so it will end up about 20) who can offer bespoke/one off provision.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of providers including Youth Learning Services; SoLVE; CLD; Regen FX and Bantam Returns plus the pool of around 20 other providers.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a monthly monitoring spreadsheet. Cognisoft has been purchased and at time of interview they were just incorporating it.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 203 signed up • 107 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have an ESF bid in but it is difficult as European programmes focus

Pilot area	South Lanarkshire
	on employability which is different from positive destinations for the 16+ age group. Also ESF does not have the flexibility of the AAs pilot. However there is a sense that even without European funders the area will continue something along these lines through Youthstart an SDS.

Pilot area	Stirling
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build on existing good practice on youth involvement and CLD.
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pilot sits within Youth Services in Stirling Council. It focuses strongly on engaging vulnerable young people including 18 and 19 year olds and has strong links with learning disability, care leavers, offending and homelessness services for example. MCMC Partnership oversaw bid and now implementation.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full-time co-ordinator (filled by a former SDS employee). Two part-time Trusted Professionals undertake outreach work. A full-time administrator. Contribution to the salary of Council's MCMC Information Officer. All posts fixed term contracts.
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two part-time Trusted Professionals undertake outreach work using SDS data to engage potential beneficiaries. Also, MCMC Information Officer undertook a significant piece of research that identified over 150 young people that were no longer in contact with SDS. Existing staff from Youth Services and other organisations also take on Trusted Professionals role where appropriate.
Date referrals started	April 2010
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals from a range of organisation such as PLUS (a learning disabilities project), Social Work, Youth Services, The Bridge project (homeless young people), Criminal Justice, and Kickstart. Self-referral. Limited number of referrals from SDS and schools.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilience Survey using the Rickter scale measures a young person's ability to deal with a range of issues and illustrates progress on: problem solving, sense of purpose, autonomy and social competence. Paper based assessments establish needs and goals.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixture of tailored individual provision and group activities over a number of weeks. Group activities include new provision such as a 10 week Personal Development course and existing provision some of which is tailored to Activity Agreements such as expansion of NHS Forth Valley Streetsport project.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes community/voluntary sector, for example Rural and Urban Training Scheme (RUTS) and public sector, for example NHS Forth Valley. Also includes private sector training providers such as Developing Nation.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records of individuals contain characteristics such as ASN, homelessness etc. Spreadsheet records basic information including young people referred who do not sign up but does not include characteristics. Information being transferred to Cognisoft and will contain detailed information covering personal characteristics, activities, Resilience Survey, and outcomes.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 young people signed up 4 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The approach taken has been to build on existing provision to make the pilot as sustainable as possible.

Pilot area	West Dunbartonshire
Contributing factor to pilot status highlighted by Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An existing hotspot whose recent performance against the national indicator on positive and sustained destinations has been relatively poor.
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AAs Steering Group is part of the MCMC/16+ Learning Choices structure.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an AA Co-ordinator. They also appointed three new TPs and seconded one. There is also a support worker funded through the Future Jobs Fund.
Trusted professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The four Trusted Professionals who come from different relevant backgrounds (social work, FE, education)
Date referrals started	January 2010
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All referrals from whichever source they come go through SDS. Referral source include MCMC co-ordinators in schools, the Throughcare team and Youth Justice team at Social Work.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Rickter Scale with an MCMC overlay. They also use the standard skills development form which covers core skills, personal development, learning and vocational skills and any health issues.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of activities has been provided: personal development courses, bead making, introduction to hairdressing and nail care, childcare, sailing, horse riding, professional coaching, music, flower design, mechanics, stress/relaxation, hospitality and introduction to cooking, fire reach, radio skills. Finding volunteering opportunities has proved challenging. They couldn't provide "gaming" as an activity which someone wanted but in talks with College about it.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 providers have offered bespoke provision. These include the FE College, CLD, Strathclyde Fire, private sector providers such as MI Technology and third sector providers. In addition there is also provision available that does not have to be paid for out of this budget including CLD core skills, Army Taster day, Venture Trust programme, Celtic Football Club, Impact Arts.
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They have a database developed for the AAs. This provides detailed information. They ask the young people to provide feedback on every activity so that they can use it to improve what is offered.
Progress to end November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 106 signed up 38 hard progressions
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are very dependent on the funding. They have put in a bid for European money for 45% of it but would still require 55%.

APPENDIX 3: DESTINATIONS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS FROM PUBLICLY FUNDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND BY LOCAL AUTHORITY 2008-09

Local Authority	Total Number of Leavers	Positive Destinations
Orkney Islands	245	93.9%
East Renfrewshire	1,273	92.9%
Shetland Islands	303	91.7%
East Dunbartonshire	1,379	90.6%
Aberdeenshire	2,728	90.1%
Inverclyde*	861	89.9%
Dumfries & Galloway	1,658	89.7%
Perth & Kinross	1,321	88.7%
Eilean Siar	307	88.4%
Moray	1,036	88.3%
South Ayrshire	1,226	88.1%
Stirling*	978	88.0%
Argyll & Bute	972	87.5%
Scottish Borders	1,199	87.5%
Angus	1,175	87.4%
South Lanarkshire*	3,242	86.6%
Clackmannanshire	544	85.7%
Fife*	3,888	85.7%
North Lanarkshire*	3,546	85.7%
Highland*	2,559	85.0%
East Ayrshire	1,318	84.8%
Renfrewshire*	1,993	84.8%
North Ayrshire*	1,520	84.4%
Glasgow City*	5,135	84.0%
East Lothian	941	83.4%
West Dunbartonshire*	974	83.0%
Aberdeen City	1,730	82.6%
City of Edinburgh	3,443	82.3%
Falkirk	1,577	82.1%
West Lothian	1,878	82.0%
Dundee City	1,550	81.5%
Midlothian	947	78.3%
Scotland	53,532	85.7%

Source: Destinations of Leavers from Scottish Schools 2008-09 (Scottish Government, 2009)

* Activity Agreement pilots

APPENDIX 4: AGREED DEFINITIONS

Referrals	<p>Those young people whose names, and where appropriate background information, have been forwarded to LAs and subsequent contact made. Referrals can be from any source, including self or peer-referrals.</p> <p>(Those who have previously undertaken an AA, disengaged and been re-referred, should be recorded as a new referral and flagged as having previously engaged).</p>
Offered	When an offer of an Activity Agreement is made directly to the young person, either verbally or in writing.
Sign Up	When a young person commits, either verbally or in writing, to engage in an Activity Agreement.
Declined	When an offer of an activity agreement has been made and the young person, for whatever reason, decides not to engage.

It is acknowledged that there are some additional stages to the process from the first point of contact through to the young person's participation and completion.

Assessment	<p>Assessment is at the point where a formal assessment of needs is undertaken to ascertain the suitability of the young person to engage in an Activity Agreement.</p> <p>Assessment and referral may take place simultaneously depending on the referral route.</p>
Early Leavers	Those young people who has committed to undertaking an AA and before completion, for whatever reason, decline to continue to participate.
Contacts	This is work done in the time before a young person agrees to an assessment or referral and subsequent offer is made.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESSION DEFINITIONS

<p>Soft Achievements/ Progression</p> <p><i>The purpose of this distinction is not to suggest that for any individual young person it is more appropriate to follow a route leading to accreditation, but rather to allow us to see, across all the pilot areas, the extent to which young people's engagement and achievement can be measured using our current indicators</i></p>	<p>Progress and achievements by a young person against goals set out in their Agreement, but which do not lead to accreditation.</p> <p>This may be progression identified and achieved through appropriate measures eg. Rickter, Cognisoft, tools developed in-house. (These approaches and tools may differ in each LA area)</p> <p>This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal & learning skills Literacy & numeracy Core skills (communication, numeracy, problem solving, information technology & working with others) Essential skills Vocational skills Effective time management Planning & organising Oral & written communication Problem solving Undertaking tasks or submissions at short notice Working with others to achieve common goals Ability to think critically and creatively Ability to learn and continue to learn
<p>Hard Progression</p>	<p>Where the young person leaves an AA and enters one of the positive destinations currently defined in the SLDR – ie. Further or higher education, voluntary work, national training programmes, or employment with or without further training. (In addition, a young person's return to school should be counted as progression).</p>
<p>Hard Achievements</p>	<p>Any activity which is certificated or accredited.</p> <p>Eg, SVQ modules, Youth Achievement Awards, Certification ie. First Aid, Hygiene etc.</p> <p><i>(When collecting information on this it will be important to distinguish between SCQF rated certificates or awards and those which are not SCQF rated. The purpose of this distinction is to be able to comment on how comprehensively our formal range of qualifications are able to meet the needs of young people, not as comment on the appropriateness of a choice for any individual young person)</i></p>

APPENDIX 5: TECHNICAL APPENDIX - QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This Technical Appendix provides an in-depth statistical analysis of Activity Agreements, expanding on Chapter 3 of the main report.

Our statistical analysis of Activity Agreements is provided in two parts. Part one analyses summary information gathered by the Scottish Government, while part two analyses more detailed information gathered during this evaluation. The analysis of both data sets covers the period up to the end of November 2010.

Scottish Government Statistics

Table 1 overleaf shows the latest Scottish Government definitions returns data on Activity Agreements, with information on the number of referrals, Activity Agreements offered, taken up and declined, levels of early leavers and the number of Activity Agreements that are considered to have led to 'hard progression' for the young person involved. The agreed definitions are shown in Appendix 4.

It should be noted that the interpretation of definitions varies between pilot areas. For example, in some areas there is no difference between 'Referrals' and 'Offered', as the approach does not allow for this, with everyone who is referred immediately being made an offer. Similarly the approach to recording 'Offered' and 'Signed up' varies, with some areas doing a great deal of work at this stage even though the young person may not sign-up for an Activity Agreement.

Referrals and offers

In total 2,484 young people were referred to the Activity Agreement pilot by the end of November 2010. Glasgow and North Lanarkshire had the greatest number of referrals, with 601 and 559 respectively, almost twice the level of the next highest pilot area, South Lanarkshire, with 327 referrals. The area with the least referrals was Stirling, with 56, where meaningful delivery did not commence until April 2010.

Of the 2,484 referrals (up to end November 2010), 2,035 Activity Agreements had been offered, leading to 1,450 Activity Agreement "sign ups" (71.3% of referrals). North Lanarkshire had by far the highest number of Activity Agreements offered, with 649, followed by 327 offers in South Lanarkshire and 299 offers in Glasgow. Stirling offered the least, with 43.

Sign up rates

Across the pilot areas, the average percentage of young people who signed up to an Activity Agreement having been offered one was 71.3%. Looking at the areas individually, Highland and Inverclyde appear to have had a 100% sign-up rate, and Stirling (93%), Renfrewshire (91.4%), North Ayrshire (90.7%) and Glasgow (89%) also had high sign-up rates. North Lanarkshire had the lowest sign-up rate at 45.8%, and South Lanarkshire also had a relatively low rate of 62.1%.

The variation in the number of young people who sign up to an Activity Agreement offer is a reflection of the different delivery approaches adopted, as well as some variation in the way statistics were collected, detailed below Table 3.1.

In the comparator areas the sign-up rate varied from 100.0% for Forward Training in North Lanarkshire to 64.0% for Forward Training in South Lanarkshire. On average the sign-up rate in the comparator areas was 84.2%.

It should also be noted that a number of young people who have signed-up to an Activity Agreement are still participating in it, which is why the numbers of offers and young people signed-up are significantly higher than the figures for early leavers and hard progressions.

Activity Agreement declined

The average level of Activity Agreements that were declined after being offered was 24.6%, with Highland having a low of 1.7%, and Fife (6.4%), Renfrewshire (8.6%) and North Ayrshire (9.3%) also having low levels. North Lanarkshire had by far the highest level of declined, with 54.2%, and Stirling (23.3%) and West Dunbartonshire (18.3%) also had relatively high levels.

In the comparator areas the level of offers declined varied from 36.6% for Forward Training in South Lanarkshire to 5.7% for Moray Council. On average the declined rate in the comparator areas was 20.8%.

Early leavers

In each pilot area there were a number of young people who started an Activity Agreement but who left early, before completion. The average level of early leavers across all the pilot areas was 23.4%, with the highest level by far in North Lanarkshire (54.5%) and the lowest in Highland with only 1.7% leaving early. It should be noted that early leavers may move into positive as well as negative destinations.

In the comparator areas the level of early leavers varied from 57.9% in Forward Training in North Lanarkshire to 13.6% in South Ayrshire Council. The average percentage of early leavers was 33%.

Hard progression

Of the young people who signed up for an Activity Agreement across all pilot areas, 35% have experienced some form of 'hard progression'. In the individual pilot areas, South Lanarkshire (52.7%) and Glasgow (47.0%) had the highest levels of 'hard progression', while Fife (17.0%) and Stirling (10.0%) had the lowest levels.

Hard progressions in the comparator areas varied from a high of 69.1% in Rathbone, Dundee, to a low of 18.8% in Forward Training in South Lanarkshire (data for South Ayrshire was unavailable).

Table 1: Scottish Government Definitions Return, November 2010

Local Authority	Referrals	Offered	Signed up	% signed up from offered	Declined	% of declined from offered	Early Leavers	% of early leavers from signed up	Hard Progressions	% of hard progressions from signed up
Fife	312 ⁽¹⁾	188	159	84.6%	12	6.4%	35 ⁽²⁾	22.0%	27	17.0%
Glasgow ⁽³⁾	601	299	266	89.0%	33	11.0%	39	14.7%	125	47.0%
Highland	120	120	120	100.0%	2	1.7%	2	1.7%	26	21.7%
Inverclyde	85	66	66	100.0%	8	12.1%	11	16.7%	18	27.3%
North Ayrshire	107	107	97	90.7%	10	9.3%	17	17.5%	31	32.0%
North Lanarkshire ⁽⁵⁾⁽⁶⁾	559	649	297	45.8%	352	54.2%	162	54.5%	99	33.3%
Renfrewshire ⁽⁴⁾	186	105	96	91.4%	9	8.6%	14	14.6%	33	34.4%
South Lanarkshire	327	327	203	62.1%	40	12.2%	26	12.8%	107	52.7%
Stirling	56	43	40	93.0%	10	23.3%	10	25.0%	4	10.0%
West Dunbartonshire	131	131	106	80.9%	24	18.3%	23	21.7%	38	35.8%
Total	2484	2035	1450	71.3%	500	24.6%	339	23.4%	508	35.0%

Source: Scottish Government

- (1) Includes 13 re starts
- (2) An additional 52 have completed their AA
- (3) Difference in referrals and offered:
 - 110 inappropriate referrals
 - 112 open referrals – those not yet engaging fully
 - 68 subsequently referred to partner agency to support
 - 12 moved directly onto positive destination by the Glasgow coaches, without formally signing AA
- (4) Difference in referrals and offered – no contact, leavers referred already had positive destination
- (5) Difference in referrals and offered due to initial set up period where referrals did not always come through an official route
- (6) Figures skewed due to the North Lanarkshire approach to capturing data ie. North Lanarkshire count the number of engagements with young people where the young person has not officially signed up to an AA.

Pilot Area Data Returns

In addition to the above summary analysis, we also asked each pilot area to return statistical information on the characteristics and the destinations of young people.

Although the information requested from each pilot area included the same categories as the information gathered by the Scottish Government, and covered the same period (up to end of November 2010), there were some discrepancies between the information gathered. This is perhaps not surprising, given the wide variety of data monitoring techniques in place in the various pilot areas, and there is a possibility that some pilot areas reported on data gathered after the end November 2010, as submission of data from the pilot areas took place in late January 2011.

The data supplied from each pilot area also varied in quality, with some data missing from certain areas. Appendix 6 gives details of data issues and caveats for each pilot area, and these should be considered when examining the analysis that follows.

Characteristics of young people on Activity Agreements

The data requested from each pilot area included information on the characteristics of the young people (their gender, age, and factors that may make young people more likely to disengage from learning). Again there were some discrepancies in the level of data supplied by each pilot area, also detailed in Appendix 6.

Gender and Age profile

As Table 3 shows, the gender profile of young people referred for, signed up to or making positive progressions from Activity Agreements had slightly more males than females, with 55.6%, 58.5% and 59.7% male compared to 44.4%, 41.5% and 40.3% female respectively for each stage. This shows that the gender balance is fairly consistent at each stage, with a ratio of between 1.3 and 1.5 males to females for the different stages. This compares with 51.3% males and 48.7% females in the 16-19 population in Scotland generally¹, showing that there is a slight underrepresentation of females.

The age profile of young people is also fairly consistent across referrals, those signed up for an Activity Agreement and hard progressions. In each case the majority are aged 16 at the time of referral (51.4% of referrals, 53.1% of those signed up and 53.6% of young people making a hard progression), with those aged 17 at the time of referral the next highest category (25.2% of referrals, 28.5% of those signed up and 27.6% of young people making a hard progression). These figures compare to 24.1% of young people aged 16-19 in the general population being aged 16, and 25.0% aged 17, demonstrating that proportionally Activity Agreements have focussed more strongly on this age group.

Young people who were under 16 at time of referral was the only age category where there was some discrepancy, with 19.1% of those referred in this category, compared to only 11.6% signed up, and 15.1% making a hard progression. In part this could be to do with the school leaving date.

¹ <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/population/estimates/mid-year/2009/index.html>

There were relatively few young people aged either 18 or 19 at the time of referral, with only 4.5% of referrals, 6.8% of those signed up and 3.7% of those making a hard progression falling into either of these age categories. This compares to 50.8% of all young people aged between 16 and 19 in the general population being either 18 or 19. This is a significant finding as it raises questions about the engagement of young people who are not or have not recently been at school.

Given that the age and gender profile of young people appears similar across referrals, young people signed up to an Activity Agreement, and those making hard progressions, in analysing differences between each pilot area we have chosen to focus on young people signed up to an Activity Agreement.

As Table 3 shows, in terms of gender, Highland and North Ayrshire had a slightly higher proportion of males to females than the overall ratio of 1.4 males to females, with a ratio of 1.8 in Highland and 1.9 in North Ayrshire. Conversely Stirling, West Dunbartonshire and Inverclyde (all with a ratio of 1.2) and South Lanarkshire (a ratio of 1.1) had a slightly more balanced gender profile. In all areas, however, more males than females signed up to an Activity Agreement.

Analysis of the age profile of young people signed up for an Activity Agreement in each pilot area, compared to the overall profile, reveals that:

- Fife had a far higher number of young people aged under 16 at the time of referral, with 43.7% compared to 11.6% overall. As may be expected there were far fewer 17, 18 and 19 year olds at the time of referral in this area. This reflects their school-based referral model;
- Glasgow also had fewer 17, 18 and 19 year olds at the time of referral than the overall age profile, with a focus on younger participants, with those aged under 16 at the time of referral representing 19.7% and those aged 16 at the time of referral representing 61.6%;
- Highland had less of a focus on young people aged under 16 at referral than the overall profile, with only 7.1% of young people at the time of referral in this category. There were significantly higher numbers of 18 and 19 year olds at the time of referral than found anywhere else, with 11.8% and 2.4% of young people in these age categories respectively;
- in Inverclyde there were significantly higher numbers of older young people, with 11.3% aged 18 at referral and 3.8% aged 19, while there were no young people aged under 16 at time of referral;
- in North Ayrshire the age profile was older than the overall profile, with significantly more 18 and 19 year olds at the time of referral (8.2% and 1% of young people);
- in North Lanarkshire there were no young people aged under 16 at time of referral, but significantly more young people aged 19, with 6.8% in this category;
- in Renfrewshire young people age 16 at referral were the largest category, with 70% falling into this category. There were slightly fewer young people aged 17 than the overall profile, and no young people aged 18 or 19 at referral. This shows the pilot's school based referral route dominates;

- South Lanarkshire had a low number of under 16s at the time of referral, with only 1.6% of young people in this category, and a slightly lower number aged 16 at the time of referral (40.4%) than the overall profile. There were significantly higher numbers of 17, 18 and 19 year olds at the time of referral (51.1%, 5.9% and 1% respectively) than the overall age profile;
- in West Dunbartonshire there were no young people signed up to an Activity Agreement aged 18 or 19 at the time of referral, however there was a significantly higher number aged 17 at the time of referral (42%) than the overall figure for this age category (29%); and
- data on age profile for Stirling was unavailable at the time of our analysis.

Table 3: Gender and Age profile of those referred, signed up and hard progressions*

Stage of Activity Agreement	Gender			Age at referral				
	Male	Female	Ratio M:F	Under 16	16	17	18	19
Referred	55.6%	44.4%	1.3	19.1%	51.4%	25.2%	4.0%	0.5%
Signed up	58.5%	41.5%	1.4	11.6%	53.1%	28.5%	5.1%	1.7%
Hard Progression	59.7%	40.3%	1.5	15.1%	53.6%	27.6%	3.1%	0.6%

Source: Pilot area data returns

* Data on gender for hard progressions missing from N Ayrshire

* Data on referred and hard progressions missing from N Lanarkshire. Figures on age for signed-up from North Lanarkshire for 18 and 19 year olds split evenly from a combined count.

* Data on age missing from Stirling

Table 4: Profile of Gender and Age at the Time of Referral profile of young people who have signed up to an Activity Agreement, for each pilot area*

Pilot Area	Young people signed up for an Activity Agreement							
	Gender			Age at referral				
	% Male	% Female	Ratio M:F	Under 16	16	17	18	19
Pilot Areas Combined	58.5%	41.5%	1.4	11.6%	53.1%	28.5%	5.1%	1.7%
Fife	61.7%	38.3%	1.6	43.7%	44.9%	10.8%	0.6%	0.0%
Glasgow	62.0%	38.0%	1.6	19.7%	61.6%	17.6%	1.1%	0.0%
Highland	64.8%	35.2%	1.8	7.1%	59.1%	19.7%	11.8%	2.4%
Inverclyde	54.7%	45.3%	1.2	0.0%	47.2%	37.7%	11.3%	3.8%
North Ayrshire	64.9%	35.1%	1.9	10.2%	49.0%	31.6%	8.2%	1.0%
North Lanarkshire	57.9%	45.3%	1.3	0.0%	58.9%	27.1%	7.1%	6.8%
Renfrewshire	58.2%	41.8%	1.4	10.9%	70.0%	19.1%	0.0%	0.0%
South Lanarkshire	53.1%	46.9%	1.1	1.6%	40.4%	51.1%	5.9%	1.0%
Stirling	54.5%	45.5%	1.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West Dunbartonshire	53.6%	46.4%	1.2	10.7%	47.3%	42.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: Pilot area data returns

* Figures on age for signed-up from North Lanarkshire for 18 and 19 year olds split evenly from a combined count (20 for 'aged 18' and 19 for 'aged 19').

* Data on age missing from Stirling

Profile of young people and factors that may make them more likely to disengage from learning

The Scottish Government identified a number of factors that are likely to make young people more likely to disengage from learning. These included:

- Winter Leavers
- Young Parents
- Looked after children and care leavers
- Young carers
- Young offenders
- Young people with low attainment in school
- Young people who are persistently truant
- Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse
- Young people with behavioural issues
- Young people who are homeless
- Physical/mental health problems
- Additional support needs
- YP leaving special schools
- YP who are a risk to themselves or others
- YP who do not sustain an initial positive destination
- YP for whom English is a second language
- YP from gypsy/travelling community
- YP from a BME background

As Activity Agreements were funded with a view to engaging with some of the 'hardest-to-reach' young people, young people on Activity Agreements may be expected to fall into one/several of these categories. In order to assess whether this is the case, below we analyse:

- whether there are any differences in the characteristics of those referred for, signed up to and making hard progressions from Activity Agreements;
- what the most common factors are at each stage; and
- the differences in the characteristics of young people signed up for an Activity Agreement in each pilot area.

Differences in the characteristics of those referred, signed up and making hard progressions

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show statistics on the number of young people that fall into one of the factors that are likely to make young people more likely to disengage from learning, given as a percentage of referrals, young people signed up to an Activity Agreement and hard progressions.

As the tables show, there are a number of differences in the levels of each factor between the three stages (referrals, signed up and hard progressions), including:

- slightly more referrals for winter leavers than those who sign-up or make a hard progression;
- a drop in the percentage of young parents who make a hard progression (1.4%), compared to the number referred (2.3%) or who sign-up (2.3%);
- significantly fewer young people who are persistently truant who sign-up (38.2%) than are referred for an Activity Agreement (51.0%);
- a significant decrease in the number of young people involved in alcohol or drug abuse who are referred (11.5%) or sign-up (11.7%) to those making a hard progression (5.3%);
- a significant decrease from the number of young people with behavioural issues who are referred (22.0%) to those that sign-up (16.7%) or make a hard progression (11.3%);
- a fall from the level of young people with physical and/or mental health problems who sign-up (8.6%) to those making a hard progression (5.3%); and
- the proportion of young people who do not sustain an initial positive destination increased from 15.9% of referrals to 17.6% of signed up and 21.2% of those making a hard progression.

Comparison to general population of 16-19 year olds

In order to gain a sense of whether Activity Agreements are reaching young people with these characteristics, it is interesting to compare the figures for young people on Activity Agreements to the general population of 16-19 year olds in Scotland.

Obtaining directly comparable data has proven difficult for a number of the characteristics, and some of the comparator figures below have various caveats (and as such should be treated with caution), which are detailed in Appendix 6.

However, it is interesting to note that for those signed-up to an Activity Agreement:

- 2.1% were young carers, compared to 2.3% in the overall 16-19 population;
- 1.5% were homeless, compared to 4.4% overall in the 16-19 population;
- only 1.7% had physical/mental health problems or disabilities, compared to 8.6% in the overall 16-19 population;
- 10.3% had additional support needs, slightly above the figure of 9.6% for the overall 16-19 population;
- only 0.5% had English as a second language, compared to 3.4% for all 16-19 year olds;
- 0.5% were from a gypsy/travelling community, compared to 0.01% for the 16-19 age group overall; and
- only 0.8% of young people signed-up for an Activity Agreement were from a BME background, compared to 4.0% for all 16-19 year olds.

Table 5.1: Overall characteristics of those referred, signed up and hard progressions

Stage of Activity Agreement	Key Characteristics of Young People (Overall) %										
	Winter Leavers	Young Parents	Looked after children and care leavers	Young carers	Young offenders	Young people with low attainment in school	Young people who are persistently truant	Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse	Young people with behavioural issues	Young people who are homeless	
Referred*	39.8%	2.3%	16.9%	2.5%	10.4%	50.4%	51.0%	11.5%	22.0%	4.5%	
Signed up*	29.0%	2.3%	14.1%	2.9%	10.2%	47.0%	38.2%	11.7%	16.7%	4.4%	
Hard Progression*	33.7%	1.4%	15.2%	2.9%	10.7%	46.5%	44.9%	5.3%	11.3%	4.1%	

Source: Pilot area data returns

* Data on referrals and hard progressions missing from North Lanarkshire

* Data on hard progressions missing from North Ayrshire

Table 5.2: Overall Characteristics of those referred, signed up and hard progressions

Stage of Activity Agreement	Key Characteristics of Young People (Overall) %								
	Physical/ mental health problems	Additional support needs	YP leaving special schools	YP who are a risk to themselves or others	YP who do not sustain an initial positive destination	YP for whom English is a second language	YP from gypsy/ travelling community	YP from a BME background	
Referred*	10.8%	10.7%	4.6%	3.4%	15.9%	0.7%	0.5%	1.3%	
Signed up*	8.6%	9.6%	4.6%	3.7%	17.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.8%	
Hard Progression*	5.3%	9.5%	4.3%	2.7%	21.2%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	

Source: Pilot area data returns

* Data on referrals and hard progressions missing from North Lanarkshire

* Data on hard progressions missing from North Ayrshire

Most common factors at each stage

Table 6 on the following page shows the same data as Tables 5.1 and 5.2, but re-arranged to show what the most common factors identified for young people were across referrals, signed up and young people making hard progressions. As the table demonstrates, the most common factors were fairly consistent, with 'young people who are persistently truant', 'young people with low attainment in school' and 'winter leavers' in the top three for all stages.

Around half of all young people at referral stage were 'young people who are persistently truant'. This figure dropped to 38.2% of young people who signed-up, but was closer to half of young people making a hard progression (44.9%). 'Young people with low attainment in school' was also one of the most common factors, with 50.4% of young people referred in this category, which only slightly reduced for the signed up and hard progression stages (47.0% and 46.1% respectively). Winter leavers comprised 39.8% of all of those referred, but were slightly less for signed up (29.0%) and hard progressions (33.7%).

At the other end of the scale, the factors that applied to the least number of young people were also fairly consistent across referrals, young people signed up to an Activity Agreement and those making a hard progression. Young carers (2.5%, 2.9% and 2.9% respectively), young parents (2.3%, 2.3% and 1.4% respectively), young people from a BME background (1.3%, 0.8% and 0.8% respectively), young people with English as a second language (0.7%, 0.6% and 0.8% respectively) and young people from a gypsy/travelling community (0.5%, 0.5% and 0.8% respectively) were all consistently the least common factors.

Table 6: Most common factors likely to make young people disengage from learning, by referrals, young people signed up and hard progressions

Most common factors					
Referrals		Signed up		Hard Progression	
Factor	% of referrals	Factor	% of signed up	Factor	% of hard progressions
Young people who are persistently truant	51.0%	Young people with low attainment in school	47.0%	Young people with low attainment in school	46.1%
Young people with low attainment in school	50.4%	Young people who are persistently truant	38.2%	Young people who are persistently truant	44.9%
Winter Leavers	39.8%	Winter Leavers	29.0%	Winter Leavers	33.7%
Young people with behavioural issues	22.0%	YP who do not sustain an initial positive destination	17.6%	YP who do not sustain an initial positive destination	21.2%
Looked after children and care leavers	16.9%	Young people with behavioural issues	16.7%	Looked after children and care leavers	15.2%
YP who do not sustain an initial positive destination	15.9%	Looked after children and care leavers	14.1%	Young people with behavioural issues	11.3%
Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse	11.5%	Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse	11.7%	Young offenders	10.7%
Physical/mental health problems	10.8%	Young offenders	10.2%	Additional support needs	9.3%
Additional support needs	10.7%	Additional support needs	9.6%	Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse	5.3%
Young offenders	10.4%	Physical/mental health problems	8.6%	Physical/mental health problems	5.3%
YP leaving special schools	4.6%	YP leaving special schools	4.6%	YP leaving special schools	4.3%
Young people who are homeless	4.5%	Young people who are homeless	4.4%	Young people who are homeless	4.1%
YP who are a risk to themselves or others	3.4%	YP who are a risk to themselves or others	3.7%	Young carers	2.9%
Young carers	2.5%	Young carers	2.9%	YP who are a risk to themselves or others	2.7%
Young parents	2.3%	Young parents	2.3%	Young parents	1.4%
YP from a BME background	1.3%	YP from a BME background	0.8%	YP for whom English is a second language	0.8%
YP from gypsy/travelling community	0.5%	YP for whom English is a second language	0.6%	YP from gypsy/travelling community	0.8%
YP for whom English is a second language	0.7%	YP from gypsy/travelling community	0.5%	YP from a BME background	0.8%

Source: Pilot area data returns

Differences in the characteristics of young people signed up for an Activity Agreement in each pilot area

As with the age and gender profile of young people, in order to examine differences in the characteristics of the young people on Activity Agreements in each pilot area we have analysed the most and least common factors identified for young people at the Signed up for Activity Agreement stage, as Tables 3.7.1 and 3.7.2 show.

Compared to the overall average, the main differences in each pilot area were as follows:

- Fife – had a significantly higher level of young people with physical/mental health problems or disabilities, additional support needs, behavioural issues, and those from a gypsy/travelling community. There were significantly less young people who were persistently truant (29.9%) and less young parents, young carers, homeless or leaving special school;
- Glasgow – had a significantly higher percentage of young people with low attainment in school (100%) and young people who were persistently truant (90.8%), as well as higher levels of young people who were winter leavers, looked after children/care leavers, and young people from a BME background. Glasgow had lower numbers of young parents, young people who were homeless, those with a physical/mental health problem or disability and young people who did not sustain an initial positive destination;
- Highland – had a higher percentage of young people who were young parents, young carers, young offenders, were homeless, had a physical/mental health problem or disability, had additional support needs, were leaving special school, who did not sustain an initial positive destination and for whom English was a second language. Compared to the overall average there were less young people who were winter leavers, had low attainment at school (19.8%), were persistently truant at school (20.6%), or were involved in drug or alcohol abuse;
- Inverclyde – had significantly higher levels of young people with low attainment in school (100%) and young people who were persistently truant (100%) and young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse (81.1%) compared to the overall average. There were also significantly more young people who were young parents, young offenders, young people with behavioural issues, those with physical/mental health problems or disabilities, and young people who did not sustain an initial positive destination (90.6%);
- North Ayrshire – data on these characteristics was unavailable at time of analysis;
- North Lanarkshire – had significantly more young people who were involved in alcohol or drug misuse and/or had behavioural issues, and slightly more young people who were a risk to themselves or others, compared to the overall average. There were less young people who were winter leavers, looked after children and care leavers, young people who were persistently truant (18.2%) and young people who were homeless;

- Renfrewshire – had a significantly lower percentage of young people Signed up to an Activity Agreement with low attainment in school (10.0%) and young people who were persistently truant (13.6%) compared to the overall average. There were also lower levels of young people who were winter leavers, young parents, young carers, young offenders, those with additional support needs, young people leaving special school, those who were a risk to themselves or others and young people who did not sustain an initial positive destination. There was a slightly higher percentage of young people for whom English was a second language;
- South Lanarkshire – South Lanarkshire had a fairly similar profile to the overall average, although there were higher percentages of young people who were young carers, homeless, leaving special school, a risk to themselves or others and who did not sustain an initial positive destination (43.0%);
- Stirling – data on these characteristics was unavailable at time of analysis; and
- West Dunbartonshire - had a significantly lower percentage of young people signed up to an Activity Agreement with low attainment in school (17.0%) and young people who were persistently truant (8.9%) compared to the overall average. There were also lower levels of young people who were involved in alcohol or drug misuse, had behavioural issues, with physical/mental health problems or disabilities or leaving special school. This pilot area had significantly higher percentages of young people who were young carers, or for whom English was a second language.

Table 7.1: Factors identified in young people signed up to an Activity Agreement that may be likely to cause disengagement from learning, by pilot area

Signed up	Key Characteristics of Young People (%)										
	Winter Leavers	Young Parents	Looked after children and care leavers	Young carers	Young offenders	Young people with low attainment in school	Young people who are persistently truant	Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse	Young people with behavioural issues	Young people who are homeless	
Total	29.0%	2.3%	14.1%	2.9%	10.2%	47.0%	38.2%	11.7%	16.7%	4.4%	
Count	457	36	222	46	161	741	602	185	263	69	
Fife	35.9%	0.6%	15.6%	0.0%	10.2%	44.9%	29.9%	8.4%	25.7%	0.6%	
Glasgow	53.5%	0.4%	32.7%	2.1%	7.0%	100.0%	90.8%	6.3%	15.1%	0.4%	
Highland	23.0%	4.0%	14.3%	6.3%	13.5%	19.8%	20.6%	3.2%	18.3%	7.1%	
Inverclyde	N/A	9.4%	N/A	N/A	24.5%	100.0%	100.0%	81.1%	69.8%	5.7%	
North Ayrshire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
North Lanarkshire	15.4%	2.5%	4.3%	2.9%	12.9%	51.8%	18.2%	26.1%	21.1%	2.5%	
Renfrewshire	13.6%	1.8%	15.5%	0.9%	5.5%	10.0%	13.6%	5.5%	14.5%	3.6%	
South Lanarkshire	37.1%	3.9%	14.0%	5.5%	14.3%	42.0%	45.3%	7.5%	12.1%	12.7%	
Stirling	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
West Dunbartonshire	39.3%	2.7%	11.6%	5.4%	7.1%	17.0%	8.9%	3.6%	4.5%	4.5%	

Source: Pilot area data returns

Table 7.2: Factors identified in young people signed up to an Activity Agreement that may be likely to cause disengagement from learning, by pilot area

Signed up	Key Characteristics of Young People (%)									
	Physical/mental health problems or disabilities	Additional support needs	YP leaving special schools	YP who are a risk to themselves or others	YP who do not sustain an initial positive destination	YP for whom English is a second language	YP from gypsy/travelling community	YP from a BME background		
Total	8.6%	9.6%	4.6%	3.7%	17.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.8%		
Count	135	152	72	59	277	9	8	13		
Fife	19.2%	40.7%	0.0%	N/A	N/A	0.0%	1.2%	1.2%		
Glasgow	2.1%	N/A	5.3%	N/A	0.0%	1.1%	1.1%	2.8%		
Highland	16.7%	28.6%	15.1%	3.2%	25.4%	1.6%	2.4%	1.6%		
Inverclyde	28.3%	N/A	3.8%	3.8%	90.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A		
North Ayrshire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
North Lanarkshire	6.8%	N/A	3.6%	7.1%	16.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Renfrewshire	8.2%	5.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%		
South Lanarkshire	10.1%	8.8%	8.1%	10.7%	43.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%		
Stirling	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
West Dunbartonshire	1.8%	13.4%	0.9%	N/A	17.0%	1.8%	0.0%	N/A		

Source: Pilot area data returns

Hard progression and EMA claimants

Table 8 below outlines the percentage of young people who signed up to an Activity Agreement who made a hard progression, comparing those receiving EMA to the overall total.

As the data shows, in all the pilot areas combined the proportion of young people making a hard progression was lower for those claiming EMA (30.8%) than for young people overall (35.0%). Glasgow had the largest difference with 47.0% of all young people making a hard progression, compared to 6.7% of young people receiving EMA.

There were three areas (Fife, Highland and West Dunbartonshire) in which those claiming EMA were proportionally more likely to make a hard progression than young people overall.

It should be noted that in several areas data was unavailable on the percentage of young people claiming EMA who made a hard progression, so the overall statistics should be treated with some caution.

Table 8: Hard progressions of those with EMA compared to hard progressions of total, by pilot area

Population	% with hard progression from signed up	
	Overall	Claiming EMA
All pilot areas	35.0%	30.8%
Fife	17.0%	45.0%
Glasgow	47.0%	6.7%
Highland	21.7%	44.4%
Inverclyde	27.3%	N/A
North Ayrshire	32.0%	N/A
North Lanarkshire	33.3%	N/A
South Lanarkshire	52.7%	41.9%
Renfrewshire	34.4%	0.0%
Stirling	10.0%	N/A
West Dunbartonshire	35.8%	38.6%

Source: Overall figures from Scottish Government, EMA figures from pilot area data returns

Analysis of destinations

Pilot areas were also asked to report on the number of young people who had signed up to an Activity Agreement who had progressed to one of the following destinations:

- Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills
- Training: Get Ready for Work

- Training: Skillseekers
- Training: Modern Apprenticeship
- Other training
- Employment with training, for example, Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship
- Employment without training
- Voluntary work
- School
- College
- Unemployed seeking employment or training
- Unknown
- Other, for example, prison, caring, sickness

Table 9 shows the numbers and percentages of young people signed up to an Activity Agreement who progressed to each of these destinations, both overall and in each pilot area. It should be noted that these figures do not include early leavers – data on this is presented later in this chapter.

Of the 1,576 young people who signed up to an Activity Agreement (reported to us during this evaluation), the data returns from the pilot areas provide information on the destinations of 617 young people, or 39.1% of those who had signed up for an Activity Agreement. The information is therefore incomplete and should be interpreted with caution.

As the table shows, overall the destination with the highest percentage of progressions was 'Training: Get Ready for Work' with 14.0%, followed by 'College' at 12.1%.

The next highest destination was 'Employment without training', though the figure was around half of the two highest destinations, at 5.6%. Young people going on to employment without training are perhaps more vulnerable to the volatile nature of the low paid/low skilled jobs market, with its high levels of staff turn-over.

The destinations with the lowest number of young people were 'Training: Skillseekers' (0.2%), 'Unknown' (0.7%) and 'School' (0.8%). The destinations are not unexpected and demonstrate that Activity Agreements enable young people to make appropriate progress.

Within each pilot area 'Training: Get Ready For Work' was one of the top two destinations in every case, as was 'College', except in Inverclyde, where 'Other training' was the second most populated destination, and in North Lanarkshire, where 'Employment without training' and 'Voluntary Work' were the second most populated, behind 'College'. In several areas 'Employment without training' was also fairly high, in some cases equal to either 'Training: Get Ready for Work' or 'College'.

The proportion of young people progressing to 'Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills' was low at 2.9%. In Highland, North Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire no participants moved to this destination and the highest percentage was 4.1% in North Ayrshire. The relatively low numbers of young people progressing to this destination

is slightly surprising, as in several areas Activity Agreement staff spoke of Activity Agreements in terms of a 'pre-Get Ready For Work – Lifeskills' level, the suggestion being that the young people on Activity Agreements may in future progress to Get Ready For Work – Lifeskills provision.

In North Ayrshire there were an exceptionally high percentage of young people going on to the 'Unemployed seeking employment or training' destination, the most populated destination for that pilot area with 19.6%. The Activity Agreement Co-ordinator in North Ayrshire mentioned a lack of employment opportunities as being a particular challenge in North Ayrshire, which may be a contributing factor to this high figure.

Within each area other destinations with relatively high levels included: 'Training: Get Ready for Work: Lifeskills' in Fife (2.9%); 'Other training' in Glasgow (4.3%); 'Training: Get Ready for Work: Lifeskills' in highland (5.6%); 'Voluntary work' in Inverclyde (11.3%); 'Employment without training' in North Ayrshire (9.3%); 'Voluntary work' in North Lanarkshire (1.1%); 'Employment without training' in South Lanarkshire (9.4%) and Renfrewshire (8.2%); and 'Other training' in West Dunbartonshire (8.9%).

Table 9: Destinations of young people signed up to an Activity Agreement, by pilot area

Area	Destinations (% of signed up)												
	Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills	Training: Get Ready for Work	Training: Skillsseekers	Training: Modern Apprenticeship	Other training	Employment with training e.g. Skillsseekers or Modern Apprenticeship	Employment without training	Voluntary work	School	College	Unemployed seeking employment or training	Un-known	Other e.g. prison, caring, sickness
Overall	2.9%	14.0%	0.2%	1.0%	3.1%	1.8%	5.6%	1.6%	0.8%	12.1%	2.9%	0.7%	1.0%
	37	181	2	10	40	20	67	16	10	147	38	9	13
Fife	2.9%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%	0.0%	5.1%	1.0%	0.2%	0.0%
Glasgow	1.1%	21.8%	0.0%	1.8%	4.2%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	1.1%	14.8%	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Highland	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	1.6%	5.6%	0.0%	0.8%	7.1%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Inverclyde	3.8%	28.3%	3.8%	0.0%	24.5%	0.0%	5.7%	11.3%	3.8%	11.3%	0.0%	0.0%	7.5%
North Ayrshire	4.1%	9.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	9.3%	1.0%	4.1%	9.3%	19.6%	7.2%	6.2%
North Lanarkshire	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	1.1%	1.8%	1.8%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
South Lanarkshire	3.9%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	5.5%	9.4%	0.3%	0.0%	10.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Renfrewshire	0.0%	8.2%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	8.2%	0.0%	0.0%	16.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Stirling	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West Dunbartonshire	3.6%	8.9%	0.0%	0.9%	7.1%	0.0%	3.6%	0.9%	0.0%	8.0%	3.6%	0.0%	1.8%

Source: Pilot area data returns

In order to get a sense of the levels of young people who signed up for an Activity Agreement who progressed to a positive destination, we have grouped the above destinations into positive and negative destinations as follows:

- Positive destinations: Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills, Training: Get Ready for Work, Training: Skillseekers, Training: Modern Apprenticeship, Other training, Employment with training e.g. Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship, Employment without training, Voluntary work, School and College; and
- Negative destinations: Unemployed seeking employment or training, Unknown and Other, e.g. prison, caring, sickness.

Table 10 shows the level of positive and negative progressions overall and by each pilot area. Of young people on an Activity Agreement who progressed to another destination, 90.1% of these were to a positive destination, while 9.9% were to a negative destination.

As the table shows, there was a wide variety in the level of positive progressions between each pilot area, with North and South Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire reporting that of young people progressing from an Activity Agreement 100% had been to a positive destination. In most other pilot areas this figure was between 86% and 93.1%, however North Ayrshire had a significantly lower figure of 54.9%.

The area with the highest percentage of young people progressing to a negative destination was North Ayrshire, with 45.1% of young people, compared to the next highest pilot area of West Dunbartonshire, with 14.0%.

Table 10: Known positive and negative destinations for young people that signed up to an Activity Agreement, by pilot areas

Area	% of Destinations				
	Positive Destinations		Negative destinations		Ratio of positive to negative destinations
	Count	%	Count	%	
Overall	546	90.1	60	9.9	10.1
Fife	51	91.1	5	8.9	10.2
Glasgow	135	93.1	10	6.9	13.5
Highland	27	90.0	3	10.0	9.0
Inverclyde	42	91.3	4	8.7	10.5
North Ayrshire	39	54.9	32	45.1	1.2
North Lanarkshire	27	100.0	0	0.0	N/A
South Lanarkshire	148	100.0	0	0.0	N/A
Renfrewshire	40	100.0	0	0.0	N/A
Stirling	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
West Dunbartonshire	37	86.0	6	14.0	6.1

Source: Pilot area data returns

Profile of young people for each destination

In addition to examining the destinations most likely for young people on Activity Agreements, it is also useful to consider whether particular destinations are populated by young people with specific demographics or characteristics.

Tables 11.1, 11.2 and 11.3 outline the gender, age and characteristics profile of young people for each destination (where the number of counts for a destination were below 30, we have not analysed this data, as the figures are less reliable).

Compared to the profile for destinations overall, the key differences by destination were:

- **Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills** – a greater number of young people aged under 16 and 16 (100.0% compared to 50.1% overall), with no young people aged 17 and 18; higher numbers of young people who were winter leavers (62.2% compared to 21.7% overall), young offenders (21.6% compared to 9% overall), homeless (13.5% compared to 2.6% overall), with additional support needs (27.0% compared to 7.8% overall) and not sustaining an initial positive destination (27.0% compared to 9.8% overall).
- **Training: Get Ready for Work** – significantly more under 16s at referral (35.7% compared to 10.8% overall) and 16 year olds (50.0% compared to 39.3% overall), and fewer older young people (14.3% aged 17, 18 or 19, compared to 44.3% overall); higher numbers of young people who were winter leavers (44.8% compared to 21.7% overall), with low attainment at school (61.9% compared to 36.6% overall), persistently truant (55.2% compared to 39.9% overall), with behavioural issues (16% compared to 8.1% overall), and young people who do not sustain a positive destination (30.4% compared to 9.8% overall); and lower numbers of young offenders (3.9% compared to 9% overall);
- **Training: Skillseekers** – with only two young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **Training: Modern Apprenticeship** - with only ten young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **Other training** – a higher percentage of young people who were persistently truant (70% compared to 39.9% overall) and looked after children and care leavers (35.0% compared to 12.9% overall); lower levels of winter leavers (12.5% compared to 21.7% overall),
- **Employment with training e.g. Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship** - with only twenty young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **Employment without training** - a higher level of females (50.0% compared to 42.9% overall); all young people in this destination were aged 16 at referral (100.0% compared to 39.3% overall); and fewer young people with low attainment (19.4% compared to 36.6%), persistently truant (16.4% compared to 39.9%) or involved in alcohol or drug misuse (1.5% compared to 6.2% overall);
- **Voluntary work** - with only sixteen young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;

- **School** - with only ten young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid;
- **College** – significantly more young people age under 16 at referral (42.9% compared to 10.8% overall), but fewer young people aged 17 or 18 (19.0% compared to 43.4% overall); and a higher level of young people who were persistently truant (46.9% compared to 36.6% overall);
- **Unemployed seeking employment or training** – a higher percentage of young people aged under 16 or 16 at referral (50.0% for both age categories, compared to 10.8% and 39.3% respectively overall); and a lower level of winter leavers (15.8% compared to 21.7% overall);
- **Unknown** - with only nine young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid; and
- **Other e.g. prison, caring, sickness** - with only thirteen young people in this destination statistical analysis not valid.

Table 11.1: Gender and age profiles by destinations*

Destination	Characteristics of Young People (%)							
	Gender			Age at referral				
	% Male	% Female	Ratio M:F	Under 16	16	17	18	19
Destinations Combined	68.8	42.9	1.6	10.8%	39.3%	38.9%	4.5%	0.9%
Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills	58.3	41.7	0.8	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Training: Get Ready for Work	64.3	35.7	1.2	35.7	50.0	14.3	0.0	0.0
Training: Skillseekers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Training: Modern Apprenticeship	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other training	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Employment with training e.g. Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship	100.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Employment without training	50.0	50.0	0.5	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Voluntary work	100.0	0.0	N/A	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
School	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
College	52.4	47.6	0.6	42.9	38.1	19.0	0.0	0.0
Unemployed seeking employment or training	25.0	75.0	0.1	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Unknown	100.0	0.0		100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other e.g. prison, caring, sickness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Pilot area data returns

*Data missing from North Lanarkshire

Table 11.2: Characteristics of young people by destinations*

Destination	Characteristics of Young People signed up to an Activity Agreement by destination (%)										
	Winter Leavers	Young Parents	Looked after children and care leavers	Young carers	Young offenders	Young people with low attainment in school	Young people who are persistently truant	Young people involved in alcohol or drug misuse	Young people with behavioural issues	Young people who are homeless	
Destinations Combined	21.7%	1.8%	12.9%	2.3%	9.0%	36.6%	39.9%	6.2%	8.1%	2.6%	
Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills	62.2%	0.0%	10.8%	5.4%	21.6%	45.9%	40.5%	10.8%	13.5%	13.5%	
Training: Get Ready for Work	44.8%	1.1%	14.9%	4.4%	3.9%	61.9%	55.2%	10.5%	16.0%	3.3%	
Training: Skillseekers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Training: Modern Apprenticeship	30.0%	0.0%	20.0%	10.0%	20.0%	50.0%	70.0%	20.0%	10.0%	0.0%	
Other training	12.5%	0.0%	35.0%	0.0%	5.0%	35.0%	70.0%	2.5%	5.0%	2.5%	
Employment with training e.g. Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship	30.0%	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	15.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	
Employment without training	16.4%	4.5%	10.4%	3.0%	10.4%	19.4%	16.4%	1.5%	7.5%	0.0%	
Voluntary work	12.5%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	12.5%	31.3%	31.3%	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%	
School	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	30.0%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
College	29.3%	0.7%	15.0%	2.0%	10.2%	38.8%	46.9%	4.1%	12.9%	4.8%	
Unemployed seeking employment or training	15.8%	0.0%	15.8%	0.0%	7.9%	36.8%	31.6%	10.5%	5.3%	0.0%	
Unknown	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%	
Other e.g. prison, caring, sickness	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	

Source: Pilot area data returns

* Data from North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and Stirling missing

Table 11.3: Characteristics of young people by destinations (cont)*

Destination	Characteristics of Young People signed up to an Activity Agreement by destination (%)									
	Physical/mental health problems or disabilities	Additional support needs	YP leaving special schools	P who are a risk to themselves or others	YP who do not sustain an initial positive destination	YP for whom English is a second language	YP from gypsy/travelling community	YP from a BME background		
Destinations Combined	3.2%	7.8%	1.8%	1.6%	9.8%	0.9%	0.2%	1.4%		
Training: Get Ready for Work Lifeskills	2.7%	27.0%	5.4%	5.4%	27.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Training: Get Ready for Work	7.7%	5.5%	1.1%	3.9%	30.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Training: Skillseekers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Training: Modern Apprenticeship	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Other training	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	2.5%	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Employment with training e.g. Skillseekers or Modern Apprenticeship	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Employment without training	1.5%	4.5%	1.5%	1.5%	14.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Voluntary work	6.3%	12.5%	0.0%	6.3%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%		
School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%		
College	2.7%	11.6%	4.8%	1.4%	10.2%	2.0%	2.7%	1.4%		
Unemployed seeking employment or training	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Unknown	0.0%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		
Other e.g. prison, caring, sickness	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		

Source: Pilot area data returns

* Data from North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and Stirling missing

Early Leavers

In addition to the data on positive and negative destinations, it is also useful to consider young people who left their Activity Agreement early, to either a positive or negative destination, as this also helps to examine the success of the pilots.

Table 12 presents the data on early leavers. It shows that overall 6.1% of young people who signed-up for an Activity Agreement left early to a positive destination, while 12.8% left early to a negative destination. The early leavers to a positive destination varied from a high of 49.1% in Renfrewshire to none in Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire. Those that left early to a negative destination ranged from a high of 52.8% in Inverclyde to a low of 2.4% in Highland.

Table 12: Early leavers to positive and negative destinations, by pilot areas

Area		Early Leavers	
		Positive Destinations	Negative destinations
		% of signed up	% of signed up
Overall	Count	96	201
	%	6.1%	12.8%
Fife		5.4%	16.2%
Glasgow		0.0%	15.1%
Highland		1.6%	2.4%
Inverclyde		16.7%	42.4%
North Ayrshire		6.2%	11.3%
North Lanarkshire		N/A	N/A
South Lanarkshire		3.3%	11.4%
Renfrewshire		49.1%	19.1%
Stirling		10.0%	25.0%
West Dunbartonshire		0.0%	20.5%

Source: Pilot area data returns

Early Leavers and known destinations combined

In order to gain an oversight of whether young people that signed-up to an Activity Agreement went on to a positive or negative destination, it is useful to combine the figures on early leavers and known destinations.

Table 13 shows the positive and negative destinations, whether from an early leaver or someone having completed their Activity Agreement. Of the 1,576 young people who signed-up for an Activity Agreement 642 (40.7%) had progressed to a positive destination. This compares to 35.0% of young people who signed-up to an Activity Agreement who were judged to have made a 'hard progression' in the Scottish Government figures outlined at the start of the chapter.

In contrast 261 (20.1%) had moved to a negative destination. The other young people (39.2%) remain on their Activity Agreement.

Within the pilot areas, Renfrewshire had the largest percentage of young people (combining early leavers with those having completed their Activity Agreement) in a positive destination (85.5%), while North Lanarkshire had the lowest level at 9.6%. The area with the highest level of young people (combining early leavers with those having completed their Activity Agreement) progressing to a negative destination was North Ayrshire with 44.3%, while Highland had the lowest level with 7.8%.

Table 13: Early leavers and those completed their Activity Agreement progressing to positive and negative destinations, by pilot areas

Area	Early Leavers and Destinations Combined			
	Positive Destinations		Negative destinations	
	Count	% of signed up	Count	% of signed up
Overall	642	40.7	261	20.1
Fife	60	14.6	32	7.8
Glasgow	140	47.5	53	18.7
Highland	29	23.0	6	4.8
Inverclyde	43	65.2	28	42.4
North Ayrshire	45	46.4	43	44.3
North Lanarkshire	27	9.6	N/A	N/A
South Lanarkshire	163	51.5	35	11.4
Renfrewshire	94	85.5	23	19.1
Stirling	4	10.0	10	25.0
West Dunbartonshire	37	33.0	31	25.9

Source: Pilot area data returns

APPENDIX 6: CAVEATS ON DATA FROM PILOT AREAS

Pilot Area Returns

Pilot Area	Data Limitations	
	Characteristics	Destinations
Fife	None	None
Glasgow	<p>Activity Agreement staff in Glasgow wished to clarify why there is a fairly high difference between the number of referrals and the number of Activity Agreements offered.</p> <p>Of 626 referrals :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 284 have been offered an Activity Agreement • 342 have not because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 109 were inappropriate referrals - 121 were open referrals still in tracking/engagement level and not yet ready for an AA - 58 were referred out to Partner Agencies - 43 were Early Leavers - 11 were Young people who progressed without signing up for an AA <p>No data was gathered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people with additional support needs • Young people who are a risk to themselves or others 	None
Highland	None	None
Inverclyde	No data was available on the number of young people signed-up to an Activity Agreement who were claiming EMA	none
North Ayrshire	<p>Data on characteristics of young people, (other than age and gender) only estimated for referral stage.</p> <p>This was the best information available in the timescale provided. Some of the information was (a) not gathered at all (b) not gathered in a format that is easily transposed into our data collection headings.</p> <p>Activity Agreement staff in North Ayrshire commented that they have absolutely followed the guidelines to the letter, so have not used AA provision for young people who are NEET because of lack of other suitable provision in the area. It has only been offered on a selective basis to those who have real barriers or are furthest from the labour market. Lack of numbers under some headings does not mean that they don't apply.</p>	Data on characteristics of young people, (other than age and gender) unavailable.

Pilot Area	Data Limitations	
	Characteristics	Destinations
North Lanarkshire	<p>Date submitted after deadline and not in format requested. Activity Agreement Co-ordinator from North Lanarkshire commented that they record participant information in a different format to the database we requested, so populating our database would be difficult.</p> <p>The information supplied was in the form of quarterly snapshots covering January to September 2010, rather than the total to November 2010. The snapshots also only related to those who had signed-up to an Activity Agreement, so no data was available on the characteristics of young people for referrals, offers, declined, hard progressions or early leavers.</p> <p>We have used the data available from the snapshots to estimate the profile of all of those who signed-up to an Activity Agreement in North Lanarkshire.</p> <p>Data on age of young people signed-up to an Activity Agreement for 18 and 19 year olds was combined, so this was split evenly between each category.</p>	<p>Information on destinations was also limited to headline figures supplied in each snapshot report. These figures were used to estimate destinations for North Lanarkshire, however it is unclear whether all progressions are covered, and the data must be treated with some caution.</p>
Renfrewshire	None	None
South Lanarkshire	None	None
Stirling	<p>No data on age of young people at signed-up stage.</p> <p>Only information on characteristics for referral stage and hard progressions only.</p>	<p>No information on destinations supplied, though there were only 5 hard progressions.</p>
West Dunbartonshire	None	None

Comparative figures for general population of young people aged 16-19

Characteristic of young people on Activity Agreement	Statistic	Caveat	Source
Young carers	2.1%	Data only for 16 and 17 year olds	<p>Scottish Government, Caring Together – The Carers Strategy for Scotland 2010-2015, , 2010, http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/07/23153304/49</p>
Homeless	1.5%	Figure extrapolated from the % of young people in Scotland aged 16-24 accepted as homeless, 2007-8	<p>Youth homelessness in the UK - A decade of progress? Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2008, http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/2220-homelessness-young-people.pdf</p>

Characteristic of young people on Activity Agreement	Statistic	Caveat	Source
Physical/mental health problems or disabilities	1.7%	Figure extrapolated from the % of pupils who are assessed or declared as disabled, 2009	Scottish Government, Pupils in Scotland, 2009, http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/05112711/15
Additional support needs	10.3%	Figure extrapolated from the % of pupils with ASN, 2009-10	Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland, No.1 - 2010 Edition, Scottish Government, http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/12/01091355/11
English as a second language	0.5%	Figure extrapolated from the % of pupils with English as an additional language, 2009-10	Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland, No.1 - 2010 Edition, Scottish Government, http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/12/01091355/11
From a gypsy/travelling community	0.5%	Data for Gypsy/Travellers aged 16-19 living on Council or Registered Social Landlord sites – does not include those living in mainstream housing, living on privately owned sites and unauthorised encampments	Gypsies/Travellers in Scotland: The Twice Yearly Count - No. 16: July 2009, Scottish Government, http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/08/18105029/0
From a BME background	0.8%	Data for Jul 2008-Jun 2009	Annual Population Survey

APPENDIX 7: ACTIVITIES

Type of provision

Provision includes both directly funded activities and other activities provided “in kind” i.e. not funded by Activity Agreement budgets.

The balance between directly funded activities and existing provision is not clear from the information supplied by the pilot areas primarily because the detail of the in kind activities is not comprehensive. We know from our consultations that the balance varies from area to area: in some provision is weighted very much in favour of existing activities, such as in Inverclyde, in other areas provision is weighted towards new activities, such as in South Lanarkshire, and in some areas provision is more evenly divided between the two, such as in Renfrewshire. Overall, we surmise that neither directly funded nor existing provision dominate provision across the pilot.

Directly funded provision

Approximately £1.95 million was spent by the ten pilot areas on 153 directly funded activities to the end of November 2010. This figure equates to expenditure from the Activity Agreement budget and does not include expenditure on the activities from other sources such as ESF which was not gathered. Glasgow estimated that the full cost of activities funded with Activity Agreement support was approximately twice the contribution from the pilot’s budget and if repeated across the ten pilots would put the total expenditure on activities at approximately £4 million, excluding in-kind activities. A number of pilot areas highlighted that there are outstanding invoices and the figure will therefore underestimate the full spend.

The reported Activity Agreement spending on directly funded activities varied significantly from approximately £650,000 in South Lanarkshire to less than £10,000 in Inverclyde. This reflects the different approaches adopted by the pilots and differences in the scale of the programmes which relate to the number of young people in negative destinations. Inverclyde, for example, set out to support young people to overcome barriers to existing services with direct spend on activities limited to where it did not already exist, South Lanarkshire on the other hand funded a number of activities including significant financial contributions to two activities (H2O and Youth Jobs Fund).

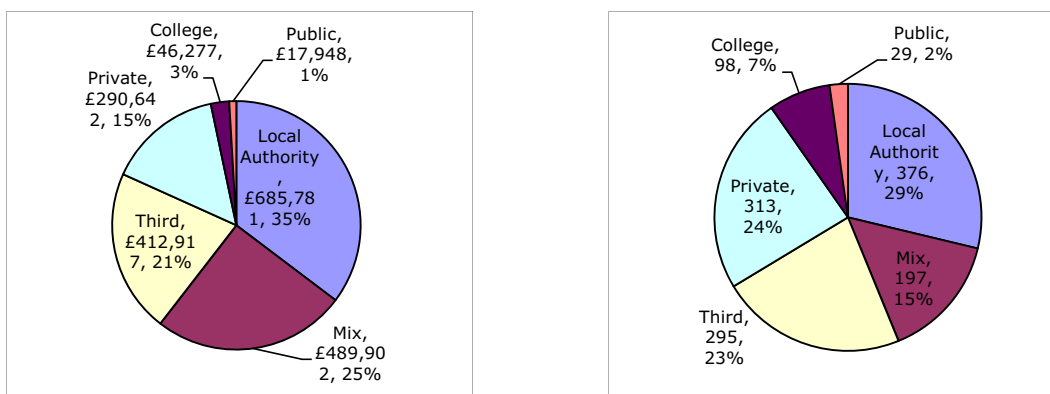
Providers from all sectors have benefited from the directly funded activities; the total per sector varies significantly however as shown below in Figure 4.1.

Local authorities have been the main recipients of direct funding on activities accounting for 35% of the total. The ‘mix’ category is the second largest (25%) although it is accounted for by Glasgow’s expenditure on the Positive Destinations Fund and North Lanarkshire’s Learning Hubs; the recipients of this funding were not broken down further for the purposes of this evaluation. Providers from the third sector (21%) and private sector (15%) account for the bulk of the remaining expenditure on directly funded activities.

The role of Colleges as activity providers is highlighted as Figure 7.1 shows they accounted for 2% of the Activity Agreement expenditure on directly funded activities. Colleges were funded in five pilot area - Fife, Glasgow, Highland, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire to provide: taster courses, short vocational courses, and personal development courses. The involvement of Colleges may be an area for further development.

Across the 10 pilot areas over 150 activities were directly funded – the exact total is not known as Glasgow’s Discretion Fund and North Lanarkshire’s Hubs funded an unspecified number of activities. Recorded number of activities directly funded ranged from five in Inverclyde to 29 in West Dunbartonshire.

Figure 7.1 – Expenditure on directly funded activities by provider



Participant data was supplied on 135 of the 153 directly funded activities and the analysis of it is therefore incomplete and should be interpreted with caution. A total of 1,308 participants took part in these 135 activities to the end of November 2010. There are some differences in the distribution between sectors compared to the financial information. However, some of this may be the result of information gaps particularly with the mix category.

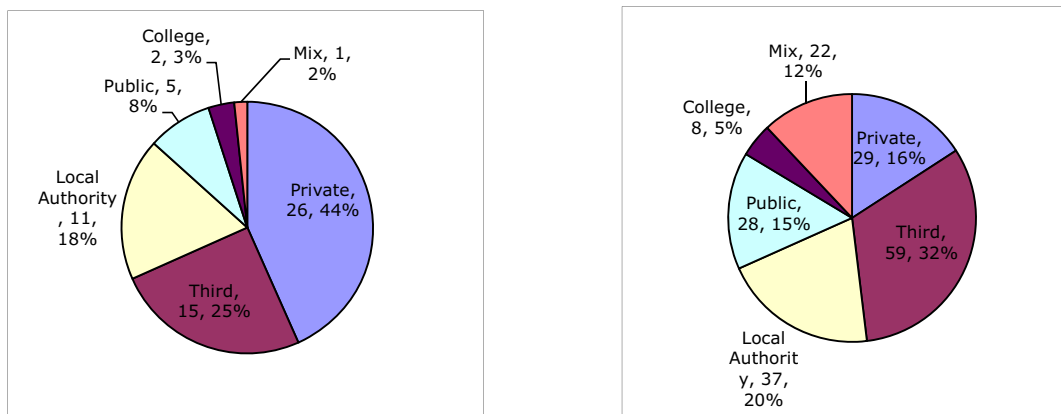
In kind provision

Information on in kind provision was not as well reported as the directly funded activities described above. Glasgow and North Lanarkshire supplied no information on in kind provision. In addition, the information supplied by a number of the other pilot areas under-reports the full extent of the in kind provision; for example, Inverclyde reported only one in kind provider but did not include details of Activity Agreement participants who benefited from the many other activities available in the area, Stirling also did not supply details of young people taking part in existing CLD courses. The following is therefore a partial analysis of the in kind provision and should be interpreted with caution.

There were 53 in kind activities reported across the pilots ranging from 23 in Renfrewshire (where comprehensive information was supplied) to the one in kind activity in Inverclyde highlighted above.

Figure 7.2 shows that in kind activities were provided by all sectors. The distribution between the sectors is different from the directly funded activities shown above. The main reported provider of in kind activities was the private sector (26 providers) which consisted mainly of private sector employers that provided work placements for young people. The third sector accounted for a quarter of the reported in kind activities. As with the directly funded provision Colleges' involvement was limited.

Figure 7.2 – In kind activities by provider



Participant data was supplied on 48 of the 53 in-kind activities and analysis is therefore incomplete and should be interpreted with caution. A total of 183 participants took part in these 48 activities to the end of November 2010 – the low total of participants compared to direct expenditure activities stems mainly from the fact that 20 of the activities for which information was supplied related to individual Activity Agreement participants taking part in activities. There are some differences in the distribution between sectors compared to the financial information. However, some of this may be the result of information gaps.

Providers' experience with young people

Generally speaking for both directly funded activities and in kind activities, providers across all sectors are those with previous experience of involvement with the Activity Agreement client group.

There were some examples of new providers without experience of working with the client group such as a third sector training provider in Renfrewshire (Key Enterprises) with a history of working with clients with mental health issues and a private sector provider in Fife (Knockhill Driving Circuit) with very limited experience of working with vulnerable young people. In addition, where young people expressed an interest in areas such as working with animals, the pilot areas were

generally successful in providing taster sessions and work placements with new providers/employers.

Range of activities

A very wide range of directly funded and in kind activities are available across the pilot areas, both collectively and in each area. Categorising such a wide range of activities is not straightforward but recurring elements include:

- personal development including life coaching, confidence building, life skills, stress management workshops and motivational courses;
- employability skills courses including interview practice, CV development, conduct at work;
- health and wellbeing activities including anger management and counselling;
- physical activities related provision including gym membership, sports leaders courses, dance courses, and outward bound activities;
- motor vehicle related activities including motor mechanic courses and off road biking;
- construction related courses including welding, tiling and woodworking;
- music related activities including guitar lessons and music production courses;
- art related activities including art tuition and screen printing courses;
- beauty related activities including make-up artistry courses, aromatherapy, hairdressing, and nail therapy;
- other vocational courses such as catering and hospitality;
- literacy and numeracy support, including ESOL and computer literacy classes;
- volunteering; and
- work placements in a wide variety of settings.

Activity Agreement co-ordinators developed directories of local providers which have included proactive work to include as wide a range of providers as possible. Renfrewshire for example held a providers' event to raise awareness of the pilot and generate interest. The National Learning Opportunities Database (NLOD) was highlighted as an aid to the availability of information on activities.

Glasgow spent some time on the procurement process establishing an 'approved providers list' for Activity Agreements. This enabled them to match needs with providers while retaining the flexibility to work outside this list if need be. This was reportedly a time consuming and challenging process – with associated resource implications - but one that has benefitted the pilot.

Awareness among Trusted Professionals of the range of activities available generally appeared to be good. Co-ordinators distributed information on new activities to the Trusted Professionals. However, given the very wide range of activities available, all professionals involved in Activity Agreements will benefit from ongoing updating.

Significantly, a number of providers and Activity Agreement co-ordinators highlighted that provision was generally tailored to the specific needs of the Activity Agreement participants. The main tailoring of provision involved allowing participants more time to progress at a speed appropriate to them. Examples of tailored activities include:

- Sports Leaders course in Renfrewshire which allowed participants who initially had difficulty working in groups to progress at their own pace;
- Rathbone doubled the length of time allocated to their Activity Agreement programme in Fife to eight weeks to allow young people to dip in and out and included elements such as independent living skills and social skills;
- North Ayrshire Volunteer Centre extended the length of the programme offered and tailored activities precisely to the young people's level of ability;
- SoLVE in West Dunbartonshire provided a bespoke mentoring service which matched mentors to the specific needs and interests expressed by young people;
- In Glasgow, Youth Coach Scotland offered intensive individualised 'youth coaching' with young people who had particularly low self-esteem and ambition;
- In Inverclyde YouthBuild designed a bespoke course to prepare participants for their full programme; and
- bespoke personal development course (RAT NAV) in Stirling was specifically designed to challenge the client group and operate on days and times that forces them to consider their lifestyle.

It has not been possible to quantify the balance between tailored and existing provision.

The activities were a mix of individual support and group based. Generally speaking the individual support was provided by the Trusted Professionals, SDS (to address employability issues) and work placement providers and the group based provision were the training courses or activities.

Qualifications

Many of the activities were accredited and lead to qualifications or modules that count towards qualifications. The qualifications vary greatly and include:

- SQA e.g. Handtools in Fife, Adult Literacy and Numeracy in South Lanarkshire;
- Youth Achievement Awards, e.g. North Lanarkshire;
- Construction Scheme Certification Scheme (CSCS), e.g. Renfrewshire;
- ASDAN e.g. North Lanarkshire;
- Pacific Institute PX2 e.g. Glasgow and Fife
- REHIS e.g. Elementary Food Hygiene in North Ayrshire
- Sports Leader UK Award e.g. Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire; and
- Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, e.g. South Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire.

The qualifications generally cover SCQF Levels 1 and 2 although some of the SQA qualifications are equivalent to SCQF Level 3 and 4. This appears appropriate given the participants' characteristics.

Interestingly, Inverclyde employed two development workers whose remit included working with training providers to accredit their provision. This is particularly noteworthy as Inverclyde's approach was to maximise the use of existing provision rather than commission new activities and the work of the development workers will have a lasting impact.

A number of pilots such as Stirling, South Lanarkshire and North Ayrshire highlighted that they apply the How Good Is Our Community Learning and Development (HGIOCLD) framework to quality assure in-house provision.

Activities that do not lead to qualifications tended to be work placements and taster sessions rather than unaccredited training courses. There were however a small number of courses which do not appear to have been accredited.

Links to Curriculum for Excellence

We highlighted in chapter 2 that Activity Agreements are a key part of CfE highlighting the capacities, principles, entitlements and experiences/outcomes.

In general the pilot areas emphasised the need for activities to link to CfE especially the four capacities. A number of pilots required providers to specify the links to CfE when mapping services or gathering details for inclusion in their activity directories. When prompted most of the providers consulted during the evaluation stated that their activities linked to CfE although we were unable to establish what difference this made to content or delivery. Links to CfE were also apparent in the work with young people. Some areas such as Glasgow, Renfrewshire and Stirling linked young people's assessments and then subsequent reviews to the four capacities. Links to CfE were prominent throughout the Highland pilot.

APPENDIX 8: COSTS

We provided a template to the pilot areas for the financial costs we wished to examine and all the costs described in this report are based on the figures supplied to us by the areas. We recognise that our cut off point, end November 2010, means that some invoices will not yet have been submitted and so the final costs will be higher than those shown here (current estimated figures mean the overall cost is likely to be over £7 million). We also recognise that there may be some deviation in what has been counted, for example in what has been included as part of central management supplies and services. Despite these caveats the figures provide interesting information on the spread and variance in approaches and costs.

The other key point to note before examining the costs in more detail is that we are not comparing like with like: each area had a different starting point when it actually became operational varying from September 2009 for the earliest and April 2010 for the latest. This variance was due to local circumstances, whether new staff were being appointed and if so, how quickly this was able to be put in place.

The tables on the following pages set out a summary of the costs and analysis of costs across the ten areas. We comment on these in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 8.1: Activity Agreement Costs

	Fife	Glasgow	Highland	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	Total
Total employee pay costs	£289,314.00	£196,073.00	£69,841.43	£136,823.00	£126,690.00	£617,800.00	£286,182.00	£165,437.00	£65,539.00	£132,592.00	£2,086,291.43
Total cost of activities	£152,247.00	£308,613.00	£92,748.08	£14,500.00	£132,346.00	£453,700.00	£47,961.00	£646,994.00	£57,879.00	£89,558.28	£1,996,546.36
EMA: total cost	£19,495.00	£9,060.00	£27,915.00	£20,420.00	£18,570.00	£30,500.00	£33,750.00	£26,970.00	£2,640.00	£10,980.00	£200,300.00
Travel expenses total cost	£20,796.00	£6,875.00	£4,847.21	£4,305.44	£7,718.00	£19,500.00	£1,755.00	£24,267.00	£402.00	£3,518.00	£93,983.65
Property (central management) total cost	£23,497.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,897.00	£0.00	£3,358.00	£6,000.00	£35,752.00
Supplies and services (central management) total cost	£20,000.00	£41,648.00	£1,216.50	£0.00	£13,340.00	£353,700.00	£59,575.00	£55,920.00	£102,047.00	£10,000.00	£657,446.50
Total cost to Nov 2010 (as reported by area)	£525,349.00	£562,269.00	£196,568.22	£176,048.44	£298,664.00	£1,475,200.00	£432,120.00	£919,588.00	£231,865.00	£252,648.28	£5,070,319.94

	Fife	Glasgow	Highland	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	Total
EMA: Number of young people receiving it	47	26	41	20	58	101	60	85	6	35	479

Table 8.2: Costs per participant

	Fife	Glasgow	Highland	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	Total
No. signed up at end Nov 2010	159	266	120	66	97	297	96	203	40	106	1,450
Average cost per signed up participant	£3,304	£2,114	£1,638	£2,667	£3,079	£4,967	£4,501	£4,530	£5,797	£2,383	£3,497
No. of hard progressions at Nov 2010	27	125	26	18	31	99	33	107	4	38	508
Average cost per "hard progression" participant	£19,457	£4,498	£7,560	£9,780	£9,634	£14,901	£14,003	£8,594	£57,966	£6,649	£9,981

Table 8.3: Cost of activities

	Fife	Glasgow	Highland	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	Total
Total cost of activities	£152,247.00	£308,613.00	£92,748.08	£14,500.00	£132,346.00	£453,700.00	£47,961.00	£646,994.00	£57,879.00	£89,558.28	£1,996,546.36
Average cost of activities per signed up participant	957	1,160	773	220	1,364	1,528	499	3,187	1,446	845	1,377
Cost of activities as % of total	29%	55%	47%	8%	44%	31%	11%	70%	25%	35%	39%

Table 8.4: Employee costs as % of overall costs

	Fife	Glasgow	Highland	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	Total
Total employee pay costs	£289,314.00	£196,073.00	£69,841.43	£136,823.00	£126,690.00	£617,800.00	£286,182.00	£165,437.00	£65,539.00	£132,592.00	£2,086,291.43
Employee costs as % of total costs	55%	35%	35.5%	77%	42%	42%	66%	18%	28%	52.5%	41%

Table 8.5: In-Kind Contributions (where supplied)

	Fife	Glasgow	Highland	Inverclyde	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbartonshire	Total
Employee In Kind Costs	£131,685	£49,885	£299,700	Not supplied	£60,493	£182,200	£42,107	£176,647	£84,346	£19,366	£1,046,429
No. of staff involved (usually as % of their time)	27	4	28	Not supplied	9	16	10	26	13	2	119
Activities provided In Kind – no of participants who have benefited	37	-	30	6	11	Not supplied	30	7	7	55	183
Estimated cost per participant (based on an average £300 per participant except where an actual figure has been given shown as *)	£11,100	-	£9,000	£1,800	£1,023*	-	£9,000	£4,375*	£5,000*	£71,500*	£112,798
Total in kind costs	£142,785	£49,885	£308,700	£1,800	£61,516	£182,200	£51,107	£181,022	£89,346	£90,866	£1,159,227

The total cost for the Activity Agreement programme within the ten local areas at end November 2010, as reported to us, was £5,070,320. Central programme costs (for the national co-ordinator, management costs at Youthlink where the national co-ordinator is based and central costs) were £154,000.

Based on the end of November 2010 figures there had been 1,450 young people signed up to an Activity Agreement. This gives a total average cost per signed up participant of £3,497 (set out in Table 4.4). The average cost for signed up participants varies across the ten areas with the lowest being Highland at £1,638 and the highest being Stirling at £5,797.

We have also made the same calculations for the recorded “hard progressions”. However there are a number of points to be made about this. Firstly the figures for hard progressions may be an underestimate as they are taken from the local authority returns which only record the immediate destination for a young person after the Activity Agreement is completed. It may be that after an elapse of time the young person does enter a positive destination but it may not be recorded as such by the local authority. (SDS Insight captures some of this information but the task of tracking specific individuals to check this would take more time than is available.) Secondly we know that “hard progressions” are only one measure of the benefits that Activity Agreements bring (see chapter 5). There are many other benefits which will hopefully support the young person’s progression in the medium to long term including confidence building, improved literacy and numeracy skills, socialisation and general living skills, including health.

The total number of recorded hard progressions at November 2010 was 508. This gives an average cost per hard progression of £9,981. Within the areas however there is significant variation: the lowest average cost per hard progression is in Glasgow at £4,498 and the highest is in Stirling (where there are only four recorded hard progressions to date, mainly because the pilot was not operational until April 2010) at £57,966. If Stirling is removed from the above table the average cost per hard progression is £9,600.

The pilot areas incurred initial set up costs which contribute to the above figures. Where delivery commenced relatively late such as in Stirling these costs represent a significant proportion of the overall spend. Over time the average costs for sign up and progression may fall.

Cost of activities

The average cost for the activities by the number of those signed up for an Activity Agreement varies from £220 in Inverclyde to £3,187 in South Lanarkshire. However it should be noted that in Inverclyde a substantial amount of the activities were delivered in-house (in order to make the whole process more sustainable in the future) and costs for these in-kind activities have not been supplied. Within each area there is huge variation in the actual costs per participant for each activity but in order to undertake a full analysis we would need the number of days spent in each activity (which has been supplied in some but not all cases). We can provide some illustrative examples of the range of costs per participant. For example in Fife the lowest activity cost £106 per participant and the highest £6,666. But when analysed

by the number of days the participants spent in the two activities the first was 6 days on average and the second 60 days. This gives a cost range of £18 per day to £111 per day.

Taking the cost of activities as a percentage of total costs (see Table 4.5) South Lanarkshire recorded the highest percentage at 70% and Inverclyde the lowest at 8%.

Central management costs

The central management costs in each area have been recorded under property costs and supplies and services. Table 4.3 shows that in terms of property costs six of the ten areas charged nothing for this element and the total cost for the other four areas was £35,752.

In terms of central costs for supplies and services one area, Inverclyde, charged nothing for this item (and nothing for property costs either) and five other areas charged below £50K. The highest charge for this item was in North Lanarkshire at £353,700.

We have added the two items, property and supplies and services together, and taken this figure as a percentage of the overall cost. This shows that seven of the areas charged less than 10% for these two elements but that one area, Stirling, charged 45% of their total budget for this item. Figures supplied to us by Stirling suggest that this figure includes £80,000 for Cognisoft, related training and the launch of the Activity Agreements and £25,000 for a management fee (general management and support; the delayed start in Stirling may also contribute to the proportion of the total accounted for by these one off costs.

Employee costs

Employee costs were a significant part of the overall budget for most areas (see table 5.3). South Lanarkshire had the lowest percentage of total costs spent on this item at 18% and Inverclyde had the highest at 77%.

In Kind Contributions

We asked each area to supply us with information about employee in-kind costs and activities provided in kind. Table 4.7 records the information we have received: not all areas were able to complete these sections.

The reported information shows that a total of in kind employee costs of £1,046,429 were made with the largest in kind staff contribution coming from Highland at £299,700.

The reported figures show that an input of £112,798 was made in terms of in kind contributions, not related to staffing. The highest indicated costs here was from West Dunbartonshire at £71,500.

The reported in kind contributions come to a total of £1,159,227 which is around 20% of the overall Activity Agreement budget costs at end November 2010.

Comparator costs

We have costs supplied by one of the comparator areas, South Ayrshire. For the year 2009-10 the total cost of the STEP programme (including £30K for in-kind contribution) was £197,000. There were 121 referrals to the programme with 102 “engaging” (equivalent to signing up). There were 71 who progressed to a positive destination (with 13 still being supported). Based on the directly funded total of £167K this gives a cost per “engaged” of £1,637 and a cost per positive destination of £2,352. The “engaged” cost is almost identical to the lowest cost per signed up in the Activity Agreement pilot areas, Highland. The cost per positive destination is significantly lower than the pilot areas’ average and even lower than the lowest (Glasgow at £4,498).

APPENDIX 9: RESEARCH WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

We conducted focus groups with young people in each area and spoke to a total of 104 young people in these.

General views on their experiences of taking part in Activity Agreements

Overall the majority of young people who had taken part in an Activity Agreement were positive about their experiences. Across the pilot areas, young people reported that they value the informal approach and the respect shown to them by staff.

As highlighted above, a clear highlight for many of the young people is the social element of Activity Agreements and a large number of focus group participants mentioned making new friends, enjoying the activities and having fun.

Two young people who had not taken part in an Activity Agreement were about to sign up. These young people told us they had *“heard good things”* about Activity Agreements from their peers and Trusted Professionals. When probed about the reasons for not yet signing an Agreement the two young people’s first response was *“I don’t know”*, but after probing said *“I haven’t got round to it yet”* and *“I thought I would be doing something else but it fell through”*.

The young people who were categorised as ‘early leavers’ gave a number of reasons for opting out of the agreement. These included *“don’t know”*, *“I had to look after x [child/parent]”*, *“met my boyfriend and stopped turning up”*, *“got bored”*, *“something came up”*, *“got pregnant”*, and *“got a job”*. Many of the early leavers had either returned to undertake a new Activity Agreement, or expressed the intention of doing so.

Significantly, some of the young people who participated in the evaluation were unclear about the purpose of their Activity Agreements. They described activities in terms of *“having something to do”*, *“fun”* and *“getting me out of the house”* rather than as activities designed to bring about progression. Those that were able to articulate the purpose of the Activity Agreement generally talked about it in terms of *“getting a job”* or *“getting into college or training”*. In general, aspirations expressed by the young people were mixed. Some were hopeful of moving on to a positive destination, and talked about progression onto college or employment. However many were not optimistic about their chances of finding work, commenting on the lack of job opportunities.

The majority of young people were positive about their experiences of taking part in activities, however a few young people criticised staff at the providers for reasons such as *“he took against me”*, *“she was too pushy”* and *“I just didn’t like them”*.

Many of the young people described feeling proud of their achievements through the Activity Agreements. In several areas, young people referred to their enjoyment of the various ‘celebration’ events that had taken place, explaining that they like the certificates, being taken for lunch, and getting dressed up smartly.

A number of young people said they *“liked”* the fact that their Trusted Professional *“checked up on them”* with their providers – with comments such as *“I know she’s interested cos she phones up to check how I’m getting on”* and *“I like to know she is asking after me”*. There were sensitivities about the amount of *“attention”* Trusted Professionals paid to young people, with some feeling that Trusted Professionals were *“more interested”* in others. However most young people seemed to accept the level of contact from Trusted Professionals was connected to each individual’s level of need for support.

When asked what they would be doing if they had not participated in the Activity Agreements, every young person who took part in the focus groups described a negative destination. Typical responses included *“getting into bother”*, *“messaging about”*, *“on the broo [Job Seekers Allowance]”*, *“playing X Box”*, *“lying in bed”*, *“in the house”*, *“doing nothing”* and *“smoking”*. One young person said she would probably be in HMP Cornton Vale, two others said they *“probably be in jail”* and another said they would be dead.

The young people showed limited awareness of any other support for 16-19 year olds other than that offered through the Activity Agreements – a few made comments such as *“you could maybe go to the Prince’s Trust or something”*.

Understandably, young people were reluctant to talk about their support needs in the focus group setting. Some young people described challenges related to their responsibilities for example *“I’ve got a baby to look after”* or *“I’m a carer – I look after my mother”*. Some talked openly about the fact they have special needs and had received support previously.

We identified that young people in North Lanarkshire have a strong connection with the *“hub”* brand for Activity Agreements. We were told that the phrase *“hubbin it hubbin it hubbin it”* was used by the young people and that they liked wearing the branded hoodies with the Activity Agreement logo. Some of the young people were critical of a local advertising campaign for Activity Agreements which used the slogan *“join the next factor”* – they felt it was not clearly connected to the Activity Agreements, and expressed disappointment at the fact they had not been consulted on the campaign.

Young people identified gaps in terms of who the Activity Agreements are reaching. In several areas, young people suggested that they knew friends who could *“benefit”* from taking part in an Activity Agreement. When asked why these young people were not being reached, explanations included *“they’re just neds and not interested”*, *“because they don’t know about it”*, *“they might do it when they’ve heard that it gets you a job”* and *“I don’t know”*. One young person in South Lanarkshire said he felt there was a gap for young people in supported accommodation, explaining that *“they’re doing nothing. One of my pals is in accommodation and he just sits there, he’s got fat and depressed”*. However, we highlight that it is not possible to determine whether or not these ‘missing’ young people have been identified as potential Activity Agreement beneficiaries and note that it may be possible that they had rejected previous referrals to the pilot.

Types of activities

The types of activities young people described were varied and wide ranging and included both one to one support and group activities. The length of time for the activities they had taken part in varied considerably; some were delivered intensively in a week, others were attended for four hours per week over a three month period.

Below we describe some examples that were described by the young people who took part in our focus groups:

An example of bespoke activity: dog walking

One young person in Stirling told us that she joined the Activity Agreement because *“I wasn’t really sure what I wanted to do”* and that she signed up *“because otherwise I would just be doing nothing and staying in the house”*. She said that her Trusted Professional had suggested a number of different activities *“but I wasn’t really that bothered about any of them”*. However, after a while she got to know the Trusted Professional and told her how much she enjoyed looking after her dog. She said *“my worker asked if I’d ever thought about trying to do something with dogs and I said no, I never knew I could do that”*. The Trusted Professional then arranged a work placement for her at a local pet rescue centre. The young person explained *“at first, they wanted me to take the dogs for a walk, but I was worried I’d do something wrong so my Activity Advisor came for the walks with me the first few times ‘til I got the hang of it”*. She is continuing with her voluntary placement and hopes to build up enough experience to get a job with animals in future.

An example of a work based activity: volunteering

A young person who secured a voluntary placement through SoLVE in South Lanarkshire told us *“I think that was the best bit of my activity agreement, yeah definitely it was. Not just the volunteering part but getting to meet people who’ve been there and seen it all. It was a laugh with them and they showed me how to do stuff. It was good to hear they were in the same boat once”*.

An example of a taster activity: music course

A young person who took part in the activity offered by Impact Arts in West Dunbartonshire described his enjoyment of the programme. He approached our researcher after the focus group, explaining *“I didn’t want to take up too much time talking about me in the focus group but just wanted to emphasise how good the music course was. I enjoyed every minute of it and it gave me confidence and helped me build up a portfolio. I had lots to say in my interview at college and got a place on a course which starts soon, I’m really looking forward to it. It wasn’t just the stuff we did, but also the staff helped me a lot. I’d be really happy to take part in more research if you like – you could do a case study or something”*.

An example of a basic skills industry activity: catering

A young person who was taking part in the Springboard provision of activity in North Ayrshire spoke of the range of experiences incorporated within the programme. He said *“we’re not just in the classroom...we get out and about and see what it’s like in*

the real world, in hotels and kitchens and that...and we get classes so we've got skills to put on our CVs. The trainers are nice and we have a laugh. It's much more than I expected when I first heard about it.... when I'm finished I hope to get a job in the industry".

Young people's views on choice

Young people expressed mixed views about the amount of choice offered to them when signing their Activity Agreement. Some agreed that they were asked about their interests, and that their Trusted Professionals had tried to find them relevant activities if there was nothing suitable on the list of available provision. Others did not seem clear that they had a choice, expressing views such as *"my Key Worker told me to do it"*. One young person said *"my Advisor told me you've got two choices....aye or aye. I enjoyed the activities she signed me up to though"*.

It is worth highlighting that we discussed choice in Activity Agreements in detail with the Trusted Professionals, who said they often encountered young people who *"simply didn't know what they wanted to do and couldn't identify anything they were interested in"*. They explained that in these cases, they would often sign the young people up to a range of accessible activities *"to get the young person started"* and that once a relationship had developed, support staff got to know the young person better and there was more insight into activities that might help their progression.

One provider gave an example of a young person who was extremely quiet and expressed no interest in any of the activities he was undertaking, however at one session, he arrived on his brother's motorbike, and was very excited about it. When probed, he revealed that he loved motorbikes – so the provider sourced a work experience placement at a motorbike repair shop. He responded immediately, and progressed to do an apprenticeship at the shop. The provider said *"you wouldn't recognise him now; he's a cheery chatty thing. Sometimes it just takes that one bit of knowledge to turn things round"*.

Young people identified some gaps in the choices available. One group in Fife said they would have liked more on the fitness side of things for example martial arts classes. Several young people said they thought activities *"started too early in the morning"* and should be pushed back to the afternoon.

Feedback on the EMA

Feedback from young people on EMA was mixed and at times contradictory.

Whilst the EMA payment was not usually raised as the main reason for taking part in the Activity Agreements, *"money"* was frequently described as a key positive aspect of the pilot. There were mixed views on the EMA as an incentive for engaging in the pilots – for some young people it was crucial, whereas others indicated that they would probably have taken part in the Activity Agreement without the payment (some suggested that there were in effect taking part without payment as their EMA payments were taking such a long time to be processed).

Young people felt that the amount of EMA (£30 per week) was too little and many criticised the payment system saying *“two weeks is too long to wait – we should get it weekly”*.

Two significant negative issues were raised by young people – means testing and the application process.

Means testing

The overwhelming view among young people was that all of those taking part in Activity Agreements should receive EMA payments and that it should not be means tested.

One of the main problems means testing raised is that young people who were not eligible because of their household income then rely on others for an income and in some cases this was not forthcoming. This can then result in young people taking part in Activity Agreements without any income and some young people told us that they knew of others who had dropped out of the Activity Agreement when they realised they were not eligible for the EMA payment.

A number of young people described how their family or the family of other young people they knew had been reluctant to divulge income information on the EMA form which had prevented them from applying. As above this had left some young people participating in Activity Agreements without an income.

Application process

A large number of young people who were eligible for EMA described delays in waiting for payments and several referred to *“the hassle”* of completing the EMA forms.

Employment

Many of the young people who took part in focus groups were pessimistic about their chances of employment, with a number expressing views such as *“I’d like one but there are no jobs”*. The stakeholders who participated in the evaluation emphasised the challenges that these young people face, particularly the *“tough competition”* in the labour market, in which there are limited employment opportunities. One stakeholder said *“some of those that do get jobs find themselves on the margins – informal work, casual stuff, sometimes with shady employers who don’t treat them well. Those sorts of set backs can be off putting for the young people who have struggled so hard to find a job”*.

A small number of young people who had found employment took part in our focus groups, and we discussed their progression with them. One of these young people attributed finding a job to getting *“more experience, more confidence and a quality CV”* through the Activity Agreements. However, he said that the company that employed him had *“gone under”* six weeks after he started work, so he had resumed his job searching. Another told us that he had started a job which *“paid only commission”* – but said he had struggled to secure any sales, and felt exploited, and

left the job after a few weeks. He then returned to his Activity Agreement because it would “pay off in the long run” and help him get a “proper job where you don’t get shafted”.

One of the young women who had secured part time work told us “I’m a walking advertisement for Activity Agreements because you should have seen me when I first started – not a chance in hell that anyone would employ me and I didn’t even want a job anyway...I think the activities got my confidence up and started me thinking about what I could do with the money if I did find a job. In one of the activities we did a CV and I put some of the stuff I’d done in my activities on it. I sent it off to a few places they told me about and a few weeks later they [the employer] got back to me. I started off just doing one day a week and now I’m up to three days a week and I love it.....it’s good to be out of the house and obviously I love the money!”

Volunteering

One Activity Provider explained that young people’s views about volunteering often changed once they had undertaken some training. They said “*when the young people first come they just equate voluntary placements with working in a charity shop alongside grannies..... we show them the full range of opportunities in the community, and how they can link these in with their interests. The feedback has been brilliant*”.

A number of the young people who took part in the evaluation told us about their enjoyment of volunteering activity. One young woman, who had been reluctant to speak in a focus group setting, requested a one on one discussion with our researcher. She said “*I was a bit shy in the focus group but I really wanted to let you know how good it (the voluntary placement at a dance centre) was. I thought I should tell you about it so you’d let everyone know. They were kind to me, and it was fun, and now I’ve got enough experience to go to college! I’m going to keep on volunteering even though my activity agreement has finished. I’m really excited and very grateful to them and to my Activity Advisor for arranging it for me. Please tell that to the Scottish Government*”.

Other issues raised

Two young people said there was “*too much evaluation*” during their Activity Agreement. They explained “*each week for each activity we have to fill in forms telling them what we enjoyed, what we’ve learned, ideas for improvement....blah blah blah. It’s boring and a waste of time. I just write ‘nothing’ in each box and hand it in*”.

APPENDIX 10: COMPARATORS

Moray

Moray was one of the MCMC Partnerships that applied to the Scottish Government to pilot Activity Agreements but was not among the ten selected. Nonetheless, Moray has provided lessons for other areas as it has implemented an approach which mirrors key aspects of the Activity Agreements and has done so without additional funding.

A new group based project called Moving Forward has been developed by the Council which aims to build confidence in the young people through a series of team working activities. It operates two days per week for three hours a day and lasts 12 weeks in total. To date there have been three intakes of approximately 12 young people per intake. SDS provides employability input over the last four weeks of the project to support participants' next steps. SDS is also responsible for the majority of referrals. The referral form includes need for literacy and numeracy support and simple assessment of personal qualities; the Council's Literacy worker is involved one day per week. External funding enabled Moray Council to include a week's residential at the end of the latest course as a reward and to further build the young people's capacity. Similar to much of the Activity Agreement provision, Moving Forward has engaged young people such as care leavers and those with poor school attendance who are willing to commit to less intensive opportunities. Participants work towards Youth Achievement Awards; the Council is considering using SQA First Steps in the future. Moving Forward had received no additional funding and is resourced by existing Council Youth Workers and SDS staff. Although Moray College has not been directly involved to date it is providing the venue for future intakes and will add 20 hours taster sessions which will further strengthen the offer.

Although not one of the ten pilot areas, Moray has – with the agreement of the Scottish Government – offered young people Activity Agreements including EMA payments for eligible participants and four young people have signed up to date. As well as adding Moving Forward to the range of existing post 16 options, Moray has identified a 'main contact' for young people signing up to Activity Agreements to fulfil the Trusted Professionals role.

The majority of the Moving Forward participants have not signed up to Moray's Activity Agreements. They are being supported by a youth worker who runs the course and in many ways acts as a Trusted Professional although the time available to support the young people is limited compared to the pilots where funding has enabled additional staff to take on this role.

Moray's approach is typified by excellent relationships between the local authority and SDS – as a number of the pilots are. Similar to the Highlands pilot, Moray's approach has been informed by a recognized gap in provision –the absence of GRfW Lifeskills or similar. A further similarity with the pilots has been the key role of the 16+ Learning Choices lead officer who has developed a directory of local provision. There is a recognition in Moray – as there is in a number of the pilot areas – of the need to apply GIRFEC principles and integrated services for young people.

The staff involved in Moving Forward felt the organic development and absence of external targets allowed for appropriate young people to be referred which compares to the experience of some pilot areas where the pressure for participants led, at least at the start, to some inappropriate referrals.

South Ayrshire

STEP (Skills Towards Employment Project) develops employment and personal development skills for vulnerable young people and adults. The project offers educational transitions support for young people with complex needs, GRfW provision (including Lifeskills) and a 'New Futures' programme which is similar to aspects of an Activity Agreement.

New Futures is open to 15-21 year olds particularly disadvantaged young people such as those in care, homeless, criminal justice, with health issues, and those not ready for provision such as GRfW; it is intended to be a stepping stone to other provision such as GRfW. New Futures has two part time and three full time support workers assisting about 20 young people at a time, with varying intensity. Referrals come from a range of sources, including schools, social work, youth justice, through care team, mental health team, psychological services, and self-referrals. Within schools, meetings between partners every two months track at risk young people and discuss appropriate destinations. The involvement of schools led to a significant increase in the number of referrals. SDS Key Workers can refer young people who have already left school. Young people receive the national training allowance of £55 per week.

Funding comes from a range of sources including New Futures money, Better Integrated Children's Services funding, and Fairer Scotland Fund. In 2009/10, New Futures cost approximately £197,000 of which approximately £30,000 was in-kind contribution from the local authority.

Once referred STEP follows a similar process to Activity Agreements where the project works with young people to look at their interests, support needs, and options that combine both fun and learning, which are agreed with the young people. Similar to Activity Agreements, New Futures offers a range of activities including individual support, group work and activities, a personal development programme, work experience, and college tasters. Some of the provision is bespoke and that tends to be developed in-house by STEP rather than externally commissioned, although the project does work with some providers to offer activities such as outdoor education and art-based provision. Young people usually have one individual session with a Support Worker each week, and two or three activities to attend which equates to a time input of 5 to 15 hours per week. The length of support is unlimited and linked to milestones and progression with four to eight months typical. The Support Workers role is similar to the Trusted Professionals as it involves engagement, support and action planning, involvement in delivering the activities, and reflection with the young people; the workers have a background in care and working with young people. The young people we spoke to were very positive about the support workers.

Similar to Activity Agreements there is a strong relationship with SDS. STEP has been in place for a number of years and relationships have been developed over

many years. The project is hoping to sign an information sharing agreement with SDS to share information from SDS Insight database.

The project uses the Rickter scale to measure progress on softer skills, as well as literacy and numeracy assessments. Impact is evident in improved attendance, timekeeping, confidence, and health and in the longer term in employability and personal skills.

As with Activity Agreements, the future of the project is being considered. STEP is making a case to the Council to mainstream the services although funding is clearly an issue in the current financial climate. Alternatives such as Lottery funding are also being considered.

Interestingly, consultees highlighted that GRfW Lifeskills is moving further away from the target group of STEP as providers are increasingly selective, which is making it more difficult to help young people move on.

Lifeskills

GRfW was described in the context section of this report (Chapter 2). We interviewed GRfW Lifeskills providers in Lanarkshire and Dundee while a number of providers consulted in the pilot areas are also involved in GRfW Lifeskills delivery.

Providers in South Lanarkshire noted that in their experience there was a difference between the young people on Activity Agreements and other provision such as Lifeskills with the Activity Agreements young people described as being far more challenging and having multiple and complex issues such as being in care/carers drug misuse and homelessness. Another provider with experience of both clients felt there was no real difference between the two.

All providers with experience of GRfW Lifeskills felt there were two key differences. Firstly, the flexibility allowed by Activity Agreements that was not available under GRfW Lifeskills contracts which enables young people – many with chaotic lifestyles - to progress at a pace that suits them at that time. Secondly, the added support available to young people on Activity Agreements from Trusted Professionals which was not available to the same degree for other young people that allows them to discuss their options, review progress and address problems.



**The Scottish
Government**

© Crown copyright 2011

ISBN: 978-1-78045-277-7 (web only)

APS Group Scotland
DPPAS11816 (07/11)

w w w . s c o t l a n d . g o v . u k