Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

Consultation on a Strategy for Education & Training

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form must be completed and returned with your response.

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

☐ Individual

X Organisation

Full name or organisation’s name

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Phone number

0141 228 5958

Address

2nd Floor, 151 West George Street, Glasgow

Postcode

G2 2JJ

Email

scotland@equalityhumanrights.com

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

x Publish response with name

☐ Publish response only (anonymous) – Individuals only

☐ Do not publish response

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

X Yes

☐ No
Questionnaire

Consultation Question – Definition

1. Do you agree with the definition provided of STEM for the purposes of this Strategy?

Yes

Consultation Question – Aims and Priorities

2. Do you think the aims of this Strategy and the four priority themes are the right ones to address the challenges identified?

Yes. We agree with the aims and priorities stated in the consultation however we would caution against using the word ‘equity’ which infers treating everyone exactly the same and does not recognise differences that some protected groups may have. Instead use Equality, which is widely used in Scottish public policy and is well understood, and has a legal basis. In our view, equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality recognises that historically, certain groups of people with particular characteristics e.g. race, disability, sex and sexuality, have experienced discrimination.

Consultation Question – Outcomes

3. Are these success criteria right? If not, tell us what criteria we should use instead.

The only change we would suggest to the outcomes is that in number 3 there is increased emphasis on the need to improve the participation of disabled people and people from ethnic minorities as well as girls and young women. This approach would better link and support the work that SDS are doing to increase representation of these groups in modern apprenticeships and is set out in their Equalities Action Plan.

Consultation Question – Scope

4. Do you think the scope of the Strategy is right? Tell us if you think it should exclude something or include anything else. For example, should it include training
and development that employers provide for their workforce?

Yes, the scope seems appropriate for this strategy but there should be complementary activity within Scottish Government economy and employment strategies to ensure that there are businesses and job opportunities to link in with this increased focus on STEM education.

Consultation Questions – Current actions

5. Give us your views on whether you think the actions already underway across the sectors on STEM fit well with the Strategy and will contribute positively to it.

n/a

6. Tell us about activity currently ongoing – either included in this document or not – that you think could be adapted or stopped and why.

Scottish Public Bodies listed for the Public Sector Equality Duty are able to use this required to pay due regard to the need to advance equality, eliminate discrimination and promote good relations. This should be referenced in the strategy.

The strategy would also benefit from a reference to the potential that positive action has to address inequality in STEM education, training and employment.

Consultation Questions – Implementation

7. Do you agree with the principles set out for implementation?

Yes

8. What else should Government do to ensure a more coherent approach and maximise impact?

n/a
Consultation Questions – Proposed Actions

9. Overall, do you think this Strategy is clear and action focused? Do you think that the actions that we propose to take nationally will achieve the aims and intended outcomes?

The strategy is clear and focused, we would like to see greater emphasis on increasing participation of disabled people, people from ethnic minorities as well as girls and young women.

10. Will this Strategy improve equity of outcomes? If not, tell us what else it should include, in particular for women and girls and other groups of people – disabled people, care leavers and minority ethnic communities.

We are of the view that public authorities can use positive action more effectively to address disadvantage that girls/young women, disabled people and ethnic minority people currently face.

11. What could schools, colleges, universities, community learning and development, the voluntary sector, science engagement providers and museums do to support the areas for action?

Again, we are of the view that these bodies could use positive action more effectively to support the areas of action within the strategy.

12. What could professional organisations and bodies and third sector organisations do to support the areas for action? This includes, in particular, the General Teaching Council for Scotland, the CLD Standards Council, the teaching unions and representatives and the Learned Societies.

13. What more could science centres and festivals do to complement and enhance

n/a

STEM formal education, to inspire scientists of the future, and to ensure their activities support those of the Scottish Government and its agencies.

n/a

14. Should this Strategy identify more actions for particular sectors, for example in
relation to workplace and work-based training and development? Please make suggestions on what these actions could be.

It would be helpful if the strategy required bodies to consider the current diversity of the workforce in any given sector and set rolling targets to increase access for underrepresented groups in line with the requirement to “advance equality of opportunity”.

**Consultation Question – STEM Improvement Framework**

15. Tell us what you think about this Improvement Framework. How can we best ensure uptake of this Framework in early years learning settings, schools and clusters?

n/a

**Consultation Question – Collaboration**

16. Tell us what you think of our proposal for developing a model of collaboration between schools, colleges, universities and employers. How should we now take this forward?

n/a

**Consultation Question – STEM ambassadors:**

17. Tell us what you think of our proposals for a Scottish STEM ambassador network. How should we now take that forward?

n/a

**Consultation Questions: Partnerships**

18. What other groups, organisations or people need to be involved in delivery of this strategy?
19. Tell us about what you are doing in your organisation, establishment or community that supports the aims and priorities of this Strategy.

n/a

20. What could employers do to attract and retain more diverse STEM talent?

n/a