

# National Discussion Toolkit for Young Adults: Guidance Notes for Facilitators

## The National Discussion: Let's Talk Scottish Education

### Background

- Twenty years ago, Scotland held a national debate on the future of education, and this led to the development of Curriculum for Excellence
- The recent [Muir Review](#) (2022) recommended holding a national discussion to agree a clear vision for the future of Scottish education
- Scottish government is inviting everyone who has an interest in the future of our education system to join 'Let's Talk Education' – Our National Discussion. This includes children and young people, parents and carers, adults, practitioners, and those in the community.
- Professor Alma Harris and Professor Carol Campbell, members of the International Council of Education Advisers, have agreed to facilitate the process. They have developed eight core questions to support the National Discussion.
- The key principles underpinning the national discussion are that:
  - it is inclusive
  - it is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which states that children and young people should be at the heart of the process.
  - parents and carers are involved and meaningfully engaged in the process as outlined in the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.
- The resources can be used either independently or by facilitators to support conversations.
- The resources can be adapted to best meet the needs of different contexts.
- Evidence from conversations can be collected and submitted in a whole range of formats – video, audio, presentations, online conversations, posters. Those working with children and young people are best placed to judge how, where and when conversations take place and the nature of the evidence that is collected. See 'Submitting Responses' section at the end of this document.

- Recent reports and consultations on education have produced valuable insights and will also be used to complement evidence collected from the National Discussion.
- The National Discussion will lead to a **‘Call to Action’** with clear priorities for the future of Scottish education.

## **Purpose of the Toolkit and this guidance**

This toolkit contains adaptable resources that could be used with groups of young adults to support them to think about and engage in the National Discussion questions. All of the resources are optional and adaptable. They should help to create opportunities for discussion and reflection before participants then answer some or all of the questions. The activities will also allow young people to produce artefacts (posters, drawing, video clips etc.) that can also be submitted as responses.

Focus groups of educators from schools, colleges and CLD told us they would prefer a menu of activities to choose from, with a range of activities from open-ended, idea generation tasks to more structured activities with some scaffolding and ideas to comment on. We have tried to do this and to offer activities which can support a range of different lengths and processes of engagement: a single task in Form Time or Assembly, or something longer. Facilitators are invited to choose any, all of none of these activities, to adapt them as required, and to suggest others that may be useful.

## **General Guidance**

- There is no requirement to cover all the questions.
- The Toolkit and text in this Facilitator’s Guide is for exemplification only.
- Facilitators might include youth workers, parents & carers, teachers, educators, adults who work with children and young people and young people themselves.
- Facilitators are welcome to adapt the toolkit activities or use their own group activities, or those from the other toolkits, to support discussion and exploration of the questions. Facilitators will know their participants’ needs best.
- It is inevitable that in discussing the future shape of education in Scotland that learners may well refer to the current situation, including the current situation in their own school. It will therefore be important to set boundaries around what might and might not be raised – for example, ensuring that individual learners and teachers are not named and that all discussion around learners’ current experience of education is sensitive and respectful.
- It is equally important to establish protocols, such as respect and honesty, for your group discussions to ensure that everyone’s voice is heard.

- It is important to ensure that the video from Professors Campbell and Harris is shown at the outset of the session, if possible, to ensure a consistent understanding of the National Discussion.
- Facilitators are encouraged to complete the survey from their perspective.

### **Task 1: Draw the perfect learning place of the future (50 mins)**

#### Purpose

This session supports participants to draw and then discuss the perfect learning place of the future. Learners work individually at first, then in pairs. They move into larger teams of 4-6 to write a vision statement that draws on their drawings. Facilitators are encouraged to group discussion and each stage.

Learners can then answer the survey questions online.

The drawings and vision statements learners have created can be shared

#### Outline

##### Introduction: Facilitator sets the context (5 mins)

- Show the images depicting the megatrends (currently slide 7) to prompt reflection and discussion about how the world is changing. More information about the megatrends, which are just one way of opening the discussion, can be found here: [www.w2050.org](http://www.w2050.org)
- Show the images of before, now and future cars and education (currently slide 8) to prompt discussion about change. We know that the cars of the future will be self-driving and might well fly, but we don't yet know what the future of Scottish education will look like. Reinforce that learners have a chance to shape this and influence the vision.

##### Think, Pair, Share (10 mins) (Currently slides 10-13)

- Learners are asked to draw, on their own and in silence, their ideal learning place of the future. Give 3 or 4 minutes, extend if required. No talking. No text or words – only images.
- Learners move into pairs. Each person has 2 minutes to explain their drawing while the other practises active listening.

##### Group task (currently slide 13)

- Pairs join with one or two more pairs (to make a team of 4-6)
- Learners share the main points from their drawings and generate word lists to describe key themes

### Whole group discussion (currently slides 14-17)

- Facilitator leads whole group discussion on the words and themes so far. The facilitator could use the key and additional questions as prompts to surface areas that might not have come up: our learning, our equity, our wellbeing, our rights, our future world.
- Encourage learners to think of straplines or slogans they can identify e.g. McDonald's "I've lovin it" or Tesco's "Every Little Helps". Discuss why some organisations have these.
- Explain / discuss that other organisations might have a vision statement instead of or as well as a slogan. Can learners identify or remember any? (Examples: "To provide access to the world's information in one click" (Google); "We work to build a better world for every child, every day, everywhere. We provide more children with clean water, life-saving food and vaccines, education and protection from violence than any other humanitarian organisation" (Unicef); "We believe that the business of business is to improve the state of the world, and we work to make sure we are a platform for change through serving the interests of all our stakeholders — employees, customers, partners, communities and the environment" (Salesforce).
- Discuss why organisations have vision statements and how they are different to slogans. Can we agree a definition of what a vision statement is (e.g Future-oriented, aspirational / ambitious, describes how things will be, change, improvement, linked to values, actions, outcomes etc

### Group task: writing a vision statement for Scottish education (currently slide 18)

Learners can now complete the survey questions. Drawings and vision statements could also be submitted as responses to the national discussion, as described above.

### **Task 2: Imagine If**

This option sees learners generate and critique scenarios for future learning.

#### *Outline*

Facilitator-led context setting: what it means to be successful and ICEA report (10 mins)

Individual, pair or group idea generation options (15 mins):

- Mind-map
- ABC Avalanche
- Tomorrow's News

Facilitated discussion (10 mins)

Time to respond to survey questions and summarise responses (15 mins)

### *Anticipated outputs*

Ideas list from class or groups – our top ideas

Summarised ideas

Photos or scans of mind-maps, ABC grids or Newspaper covers

Readiness to complete survey questions

### **Task 3: UNCRC for me?**

This option sees learners reflect on their Right to an education that develops their personality, talents, mental & physical abilities to their fullest potential.

#### Outline

Facilitator-led context setting: the UNCRC (10 mins)

Group knowledge capture task (15 mins)

Facilitated discussion (10 mins)

Time to respond to survey questions and summarise responses (15 mins)

#### Anticipated outputs

Knowledge capture grids

Summary statements or bullet points

Readiness to answer the national discussion's consultation questions

### **Task 4: Open-ended & creative individual or group responses**

#### Outline

These slides suggest a range of ways learners could respond in more creative ways.

These could be built into form time, assemblies or lessons over a series of days or weeks, with considerable autonomy given to learners.

#### Anticipated outputs

This might include creative writing, films, podcasts, blogs, drawings, songs or more.

### **Submitting responses**

Thank you for taking part in the National Discussion.

These tasks will have helped us all think about some of the National Discussion questions.

Learners should now either work in groups – or with the facilitator - to complete their group's response via the following link: <https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/national-discussion-feedback>

Or, complete their own personal response via the following link:

<https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/national-discussion-on-education>

If neither of these options fit your group's needs, you can instead choose to email a summary to: [nationaldiscussiononeducation@gov.scot](mailto:nationaldiscussiononeducation@gov.scot), or post on social media #TalkScottishEducation (via Instagram or Twitter). Please remember to include a rough description of who was in your group and how many people took part.

