

National Outcome:
We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.

Dyslexia Scotland Strategic Aim

To provide and promote high quality services for children, young people and adults with dyslexia

How Good is our Third Sector Organisation? Quality Indicator:

2.1 Impact on Participants

Career Development Service Outcomes:

1.
Dyslexic individuals are better equipped in career management skills

2.
Dyslexic individuals are making progress toward their career goals

3.
Dyslexic individuals are more aware of their skills, strengths and achievements

4.
Dyslexic individuals develop positive networks and connections to support their career development

5.
Dyslexic individuals are more confident in their career planning and management



About the Dyslexia Scotland Career Development Service

Work with employers and career practitioners to improve dyslexia support

Work with national, strategic employability groups and partnerships

Answering UK and Scottish Government consultations on careers and employment

A core service of personalised individual coaching and mentoring in:

- Understanding strengths
- Career pathways
- Strategies for applications forms and CVs
- Preparing for interview
- Accessing opportunities to help progress

Championing dyslexia-aware career guidance and education

Working with others to create career development opportunities for dyslexic people

Blogs, articles and media on dyslexia-related career matters

Arts Award for children and young people

career skills development group workshops and seminars

This work relates to national policy and strategy, including, but not limited to:

- The Fairer Scotland Action Plan
- A Curriculum for Excellence
- The Adult Learning Statement of Ambition
- The National Youth Work Strategy
- Scotland's Labour Market Strategy



What did we do this year for participants?

Between 1 April and 31 March 2019 Dyslexia Scotland's Career Development Service's full time Career Coach and 6 Career Mentor Volunteers worked with 34 individuals across 15 local authorities. In addition, this year the service also collaborated with key partners to deliver career development group workshops on self-employment, interview skills and creative enterprises; and introduced Arts Award as a provision to support children and young people to develop early awareness of their skills and talents.

Help most commonly asked for this year was:

- Planning a career path
- Help with application forms
- Help to prepare for an interview

The core service worked with 20 women and 14 men. A majority of participants were in the 25-34 age bracket.

11 participants and 4 volunteers took part in a formal evaluation of the service. Participants also contributed impromptu feedback throughout the year.

Our priorities for the year were to:

- Provide more intensive support to participants, even if this meant working with fewer people
- Develop an information handbook about the service for participants
- Rebrand as the Career Development Service (formerly Employment Service)
- Recruit 2-3 volunteers for Glasgow and Aberdeen areas
- Deliver group workshops in career management skills and topics

Overall Self-Evaluation score (within the How Good is our Third Sector Organisation framework): 4.8



Outcome 1: Dyslexic individuals are better equipped in career management skills

"Your guidance really helped me complete an application form."

"Getting help with applications and interview has changed a few mentalities that I had ingrained. It's been a great help!"

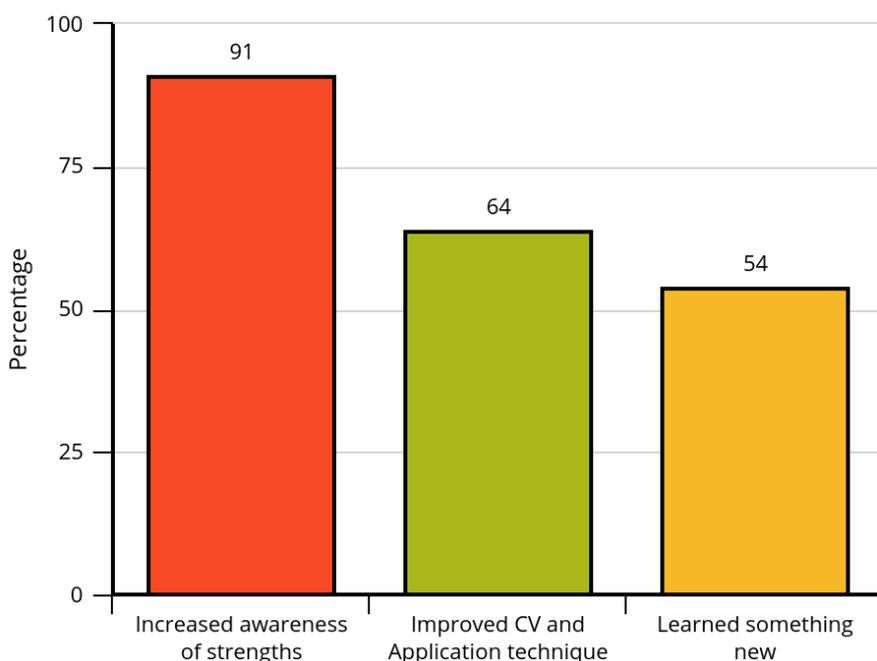
"Thank you for highlighting [suggested changes to my application form] in red and yellow. It is important to me to see how I can rephrase. Thank you."

"The mentor helped me understand my own dyslexia and how to improve my writing skills in applications."

91% of participants say they are more aware of their strengths and achievements.

64% said they improved their application and CV technique.

Better career management skills

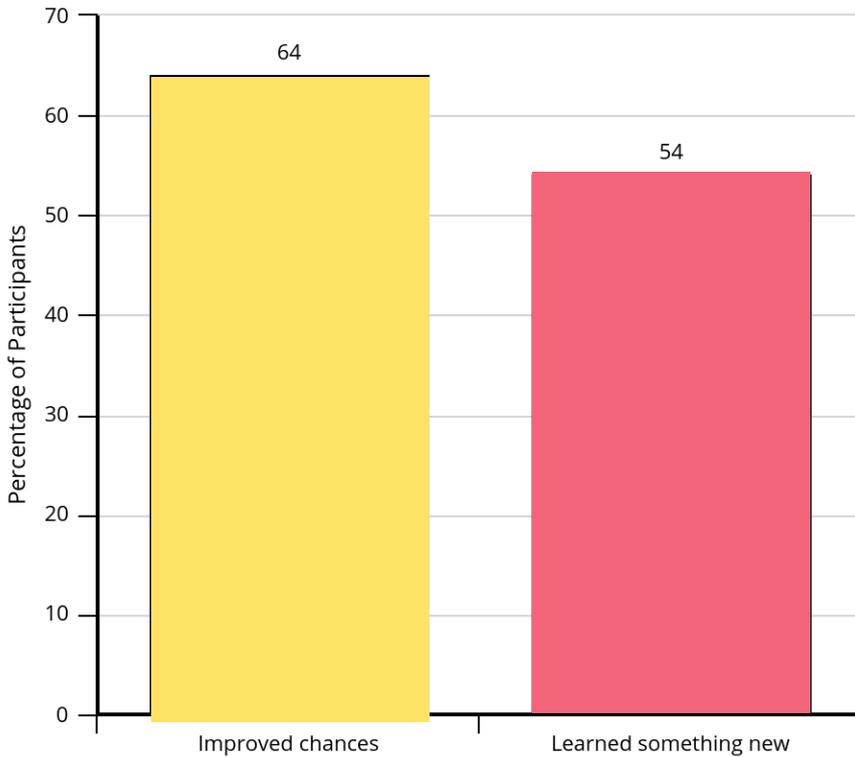


Career management skills including help to make a CV, construct an application statement and improve interview skills are the types of help most asked for. The service provides dyslexia-friendly support and creative learning approaches to develop strategies for these.

Self-Evaluation score:
5 - very good

Outcome 2: Dyslexic individuals are making progress toward their career goals

Making progress



64% of participants said they felt they had a better chance of achieving their goals.

54% said they had learned something new to help them in their career

"The style of coaching really works for me. I am making progress and becoming more resilient to setbacks."

"I got offered both jobs. It turns out jobs are like buses. I tried to get one for ages then two come at once. Thank you! "

Without your help I wouldn't be where I am now. I am in a better job and studying something that I am passionate about."

"The service put me back on track for looking for employment after graduation."

"I got a job in IT. I have spoken to Access to Work about my dyslexia and they are making adjustments for me. You were really supportive."

Self-Evaluation score:
5 - very good

Outcome 3: Dyslexic individuals are more aware of their skills, strengths and achievements



90% of participants said they have become more aware of their skills, strengths and achievements

"The service is excellent. I can improve things at my own pace, allowing time for things and knowledge to bed in."



54% said they had gained a new skill

38 young people attained an Arts Award certificate

"I've learned how to do an elevator pitch about myself as well as getting a better understanding of how to approach creative jobs."

Self-Evaluation score:
5 - very good

Outcome 4: Dyslexic individuals develop positive networks and connections to support their career development

“[the best thing was] meeting other individuals who are going through, or have gone through, similar things as me, with dyslexia.”

“A very inspiring day. I feel more confident to move forward and now I have the contacts who can help me”

The service aims to help participants expand their networks, to increase social capital and widen access to career development opportunities. Around two thirds of participants didn't feel the service had achieved this for them. We need to consider ways to develop this.

Just 36% of participants from the core service said they had made useful new contacts and networks.

At the Creative Dyslexic Network seminar 92% made at least one useful new contact, and 72% said the same at the self-employment workshop.

Self-Evaluation score:

4: good

Outcome 5: Dyslexic individuals are more confident in their career management

72% of participants said they feel more confident as a result of being involved with the service.

Recognising that many dyslexic people experience on-going low confidence, development of this in relation to career development is a key focus of the service. This outcome draws from Curriculum for Excellence capacities, aligning with the national youth work strategy and adult learning ambitions for Scotland. We enable confidence increases through a highly person-centred approach to career development activity, addressing the individual needs of each participant and supporting them to develop positive strategies and networks for their career development.

"The service empowered me, gave me confidence. Thank you so much."

"A very inspiring day. I feel more confident to move forward now."

"You helped me improve my CVs, applications and cover letters. I really appreciate that you designed templates specifically for me, showed me how to structure answers. The best thing about the service was the feedback you gave on my CV/application/letter writing; you would show me an improved version of what I was trying to say by highlighting the change and putting them next to each other, so I could compare the difference. This is so much better than just correcting or deleting what I was saying and that's been the most important thing to help me learn. I think this is important for anyone who is dyslexic. I'm confident doing CVs and applications myself now and I know how to make my answers more relevant and thorough. The personal aspect of the service is what made the difference for me above other career services I've been to, who have a template approach. If I hadn't gotten help from this career service, I'd probably still be really stressed. My CV would be the same as it was, and I wouldn't be getting much help anywhere. Thank you!"

Self-Evaluation score:
5: very good

Summary of key strengths and areas for improvement

Key strengths

90% of participants have increased awareness of their skills
72% have a more positive view of themselves
64% feel they have a better chance of attaining their goal
72% feel more confident
81% are completely satisfied with their own progress

Participants commonly reported

- Increased awareness of their strengths
- Increased confidence
- Improved skills
- That without the service they could not have moved forward

Recurring themes in feedback include appreciation of:

- A dyslexia friendly career service
- Help to improve writing skills
- The highly personalised/non-template nature of the service
- The coaching approach

38 young people attained an Arts Award Discover

The service worked in partnership with many organisations to improve dyslexia-friendly career and employment support, including with NHS Jobs and BECTU.

The service provided mutually beneficial work taster opportunities including guest designers for our magazine covers and e-commerce sales bringing in revenue for Dyslexia Scotland.

Areas for Improvement

Participants asked for the service to be promoted more - we have to strike a balance between supply and demand, so this may not be possible to address.

We haven't attracted as many career-coaching experienced volunteers as we had hoped. We will continue to recruit and to build capacity in other career development organisations to provide more dyslexia-friendly support.

Few clients reported developing positive networks and connections to support their career development and social capital. We need to develop awareness of and access to useful connections.

Just one third of participants took part in a formal evaluation of the service. We need to identify ways to increase this in future.

Unintended Outcomes and other relevant activity in 2018/19

- Dyslexic Career Mentor Volunteers accessed CPD to support their own professional development
- We hosted a dyslexic Careers Guidance student on a two week work placement. They have since become a volunteer for us.
- We provided a number of micro-volunteering opportunities to give dyslexic people experience in their areas of interest; including delivery of workshops at an education event, hosting pop-up shops and trying out e-commerce
- The Career Coach was shortlisted for the UK CDI Awards 2019 in recognition of the service's contribution to the Career Development sector; the Career Coach also completed the Technical Apprenticeship in Career Development
- We became a Fair Start Forth Valley provider and a listed supplier to the Department of Work and Pensions for Job Centre Plus in Scotland
- We collaborated with BECTU to help make their recruitment processes more dyslexia friendly, and with NHS Jobs to support development of a more dyslexia friendly recruitment platform
- We wrote to, and received a reply from, the UK Home Office regarding accessibility of the Life in the UK test for dyslexic people looking to live and work permanently in the UK, now published on our website



Key priorities for the year ahead:

Raising awareness, capacity building and supporting best practice in the Career Guidance sector around dyslexia:

- Produce more career-focussed blogs, articles and media
- Develop access to dyslexia training and resources for practitioners
- Explore alignments with and seek to influence the emerging national careers strategy and related partnerships

Early Careers

- Continue to offer access to Arts Award. Build on last year's numbers.
- Aim to provide at least one higher level Arts Award (above Discover entry level)
- Promote dyslexic career journeys to inspire and inform young people about maximising dyslexic potential at work and managing challenges.

Volunteers

Continue to work with the Volunteers Manager to recruit, retain and develop volunteers to deliver dyslexia-friendly one-to-one career mentoring

Report by Katie Carmichael, Career Coach

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