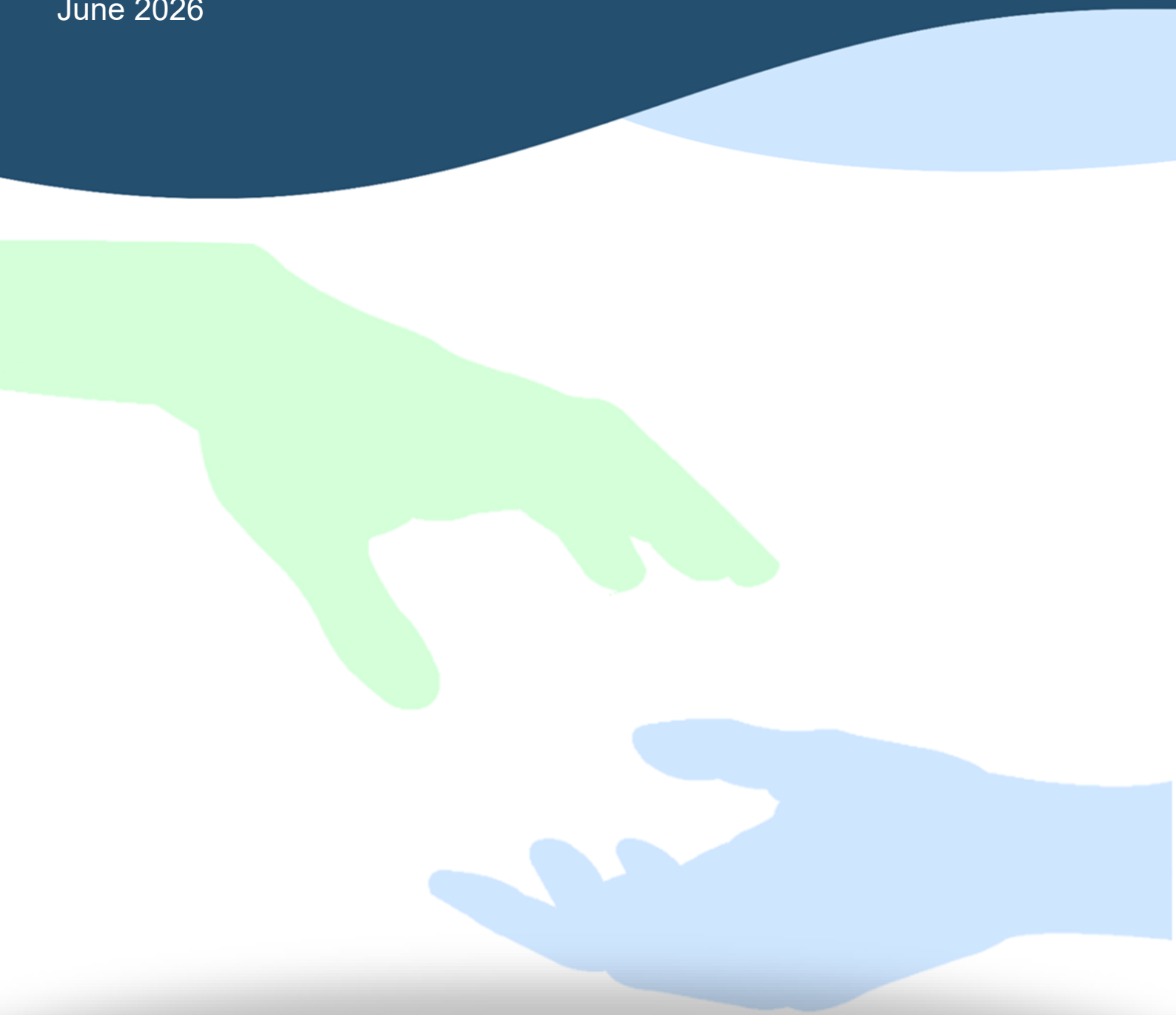


No One Left Behind

Communications Plan
June 2026



**Developed in partnership with key
stakeholders from
across the employability landscape**

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1. Introduction & Context

No One Left Behind is our shared approach to delivering an all-age, place-based, person-centred model of employability support in Scotland. It promotes a strengthened partnership approach where **Scottish and Local Government work together with public, private, and third sector organisations** to design and deliver services.

This means Local Employability Partnerships across all Scottish local authorities, agree and fund a diverse range of services relevant to local needs of the economy and communities.

No One Left Behind has been supporting people across Scotland since April 2019. Whilst the numbers of people being supported by this approach are increasing year on year, we recognise that there are people in Scotland who are not aware of the support available or have not accessed services to help them on their journey to work.

A variety of communication challenges contribute to this including overwhelming or hard-to-access information, lack of awareness of available services, inconsistent language and difficulties in reaching diverse audiences effectively.

[The No One Left Behind: Employability Strategic Plan 2024 to 2027](#), published on 13th September 2024, outlines seven key priorities for No One Left Behind for the lifetime of the Plan. The Plan sets out 25 short, medium and long-term actions to deliver on these priorities, with a focus on continuous improvement and delivering better outcomes for people using services.

Three of the Employability Strategic Plan actions specifically relate to improving communications. These are:

- We will lead a collective approach including the development of a communication plan to ensure information on employment support is communicated in a clear, consistent and accessible way, so that people are fully aware how to access the range of support and advice available.
- We will work with partners across our communities to ensure provision is diverse, inclusive, and responsive to community need and to raise awareness of employability services and improve access for those who are currently not engaged, including those economically inactive.
- We will work in partnership to review, improve and if necessary, develop communication tools and platforms to ensure a consistent and effective approach to sharing information and good practice.

A Cross-sector Employability Communications Working Group was established to drive forward activity to deliver progress against these actions.

The Group's membership includes Scottish Government, Local Government, COSLA, Improvement Service, Third Sector, Department for Work and Pensions,

Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Training Federation, and lived experience panel members to ensure outputs are informed by a wide range of perspectives.

This plan aims to help ensure that everyone in Scotland has timely access to the right support for their journey to work, through improving approaches to accessible information, including consistency of language at both national and local levels.

2. Audience

In recognition that there are a range of audiences that may benefit from improved communications and messaging relating to No One Left Behind, this Plan sets out who the primary audience is. However, by setting out clear and consistent language for partners, we intend for the Plan to be useful for all people and organisations who may be interested in finding out more about or accessing employability support.

No One Left Behind is a tailored, person-centred approach which is responsive to local needs, therefore whilst the Plan sets out high level messaging about the approach and policy intent, it is critical that local areas develop their own plans to raise awareness of the support available locally.

The Plan provides guidance and information which will be useful for:

- Local Authorities
- Scottish Government
- Local Employability Partnership (LEP) members
- Employability Providers/Partners

A separate Employer Engagement Plan is in development which will contain key messages for employers. The high-level messaging in section 4 provides core messages on No One Left Behind and may be helpful to employers in aiding their understanding of how employability support is helping people towards employment and how it can benefit them.

3. Communication Plan Objectives

This Plan provides a national, overarching context, to support and complement local communications strategies and plans. It has been created to ensure national coherence and a shared commitment to effectively communicate with partners, stakeholders and existing and potential service users.

Communication in relation to No One Left Behind can be considered to have four core purposes, each of which have different audiences and require different tools, platforms and approaches:

1. Raising awareness of employability support to potential participants so that more people get the right support at the right time.
2. Raising awareness of employability support with local and national stakeholders (e.g. Skills Development Scotland, Criminal Justice, Health) to encourage collaboration, improve integration of services and increase reach.
3. Recognising the impact of No One Left Behind funding at local and national level to raise awareness of the value of employability funding and services on wider policy priorities such as child poverty and economic growth.
4. Communicating with employers to support creation of accessible fair work opportunities and increase positive job opportunities and outcomes for participants.

This Plan focusses on the first three of these purposes, setting out:

- messaging and communication platforms at a national level,
- clarifying roles and responsibilities of partners at both national and local levels and
- identifying both core and enhanced elements that can be included in local communications plans.

This is a live document and will be reviewed regularly and updated with key information and activity.

4. No One Left Behind Key Messages

The core messaging below can be used for articles, presentations and on local and national websites and directories. These have been adapted to suit the three core audiences: potential participants, stakeholders and employers (see [No One Left Behind Communications Tool](#)).

OVERARCHING POLICY CONTEXT

- Supporting people into work, as set out in the No One Left Behind Employability Strategic Plan, is important to the economic health of our nation and is a priority in a number of policies and strategies, including: the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, Tackling Child Poverty, Community Wealth Building, Fairer Futures Partnerships.
- No One Left Behind Employability Services are for people of all ages offering personalised and tailored support to individual circumstances, including access to wider public services as required, on their journey towards employment.
- Services aim to ensure people are supported into work that meets their needs and aspirations, and that aligns to their personal circumstances. The support delivered under our devolved employability offer will align with commitments we co-designed with experts with lived experience in our [Customer Charter](#).

FOR ALL

- Access to fair work is good for us as individuals, for our health, our communities and our economy

FOR PARTICIPANTS

- Employability Services are available across Scotland to help you take steps to find work
- Employability Services are for people of all ages and are free, friendly, flexible and focussed on your needs
- Where possible, employability services will support you to access other relevant support – such as health, childcare, housing and careers advice.
- Taking part is voluntary and will move at your pace

FOR STAKEHOLDERS

- The Scottish Government provides funding to Local Employability Partnerships in all areas of Scotland to commission locally relevant Employability Services.
- No One Left Behind encourages partnership working and local delivery, with partners across the public, third and private sector delivering the support based on local need.
- Expertise from the third, private and wider public sector supports the effectiveness of the employability system.

FOR BUSINESSES/EMPLOYERS

- The Scottish Government provides funds for Employability Services to support people into work in all areas of Scotland
- Employability Services can help join up people looking for work with employers looking for people
- Employers can benefit a great deal from engaging with employability services to help meet their local workforce needs.
- There is no cost and no obligation to take part.

A Note On Language

Language matters when it comes to employability. Employability itself is a term open to confusion and mis-interpretation. Employability refers to an individual's ability to gain and maintain employment. It can be affected by both personal circumstances and the environment in which the person is seeking work. We recommend using phrases such as 'support to gain work', 'building skills for work' or 'improving employment opportunities'.

Similarly, words like 'pipeline' can lead people to feeling like they are on a production line rather than being treated as humans. Instead, we recommend using phrases such as 'pathway' or 'eco-system' of services.

This list is not exhaustive, and communication leads should seek feedback from Lived Experience participants when developing new communication resources.

Case Studies - Bringing Practice to Life

Case studies play an important part in the No One Left Behind communications approach, providing a clear and tangible way to demonstrate the impact of employability services across Scotland. They help translate policy into practice, showcasing how local areas are delivering support, improving outcomes, and responding to the needs of individuals and communities.

To strengthen the visibility and shared learning of this work, regular Employability Case Study thematic workshops will be delivered, creating a structured opportunity for local partners to present and discuss their case studies. Invitations to these workshops will be issued to partners once sessions have been arranged, and shared more widely with those who may find them useful. While workshops are expected to take place broadly twice a year, scheduling will remain flexible and partners will be informed when appropriate.

These workshops will support a more consistent and collaborative approach to developing and sharing good practice across Scotland, strengthening learning, supporting continuous improvement, and clearly communicating the value of No One Left Behind. Please visit the Employability in Scotland [Case Study's webpage](#) for more examples and information.

5. National Communication Activity

Whilst No One Left Behind services are commissioned and delivered locally, national communication activity can play a key role in ensuring consistent messaging and providing nationally visible landing spaces for people to find out where to go for help and information.

Local level guidance is outlined at Section 6.

Several national partners have key roles to play including Scottish Government, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Public Health Scotland, DWP, COSLA and the Improvement Service.

Each of these commits as part of the plan to supporting the following elements of communication activity.

National Activity	Lead partner	Key Audience
Hosting and updating the Employability in Scotland Website with information on national policy, research, tools and links to local area information	Scottish Government	Policy colleagues and national and local stakeholders
Collating and distributing the Employability in Scotland e-bulletin quarterly – with national and local positive news stories of funding implementation, as well as funding and research announcements	Scottish Government	National and local employability policy leads, employability providers
Supporting and sharing national campaigns (See Appendix A)	Scottish Government, DWP, SDS & others	Potential participants & employers
Promote a Scottish Employability Day with media and events	Scottish Government & all	Potential participants and employers
Develop shared national tools such as a social media clip and poster	In development	LEP Leads
Ensuring links to employability support in appropriate health-related websites	Public Health Scotland	Employers and health colleagues

6. Guidance for Local Communication Plans

It is for each Local Authority, in partnership with their LEP to devise a local Communications Plan relevant to their area. A template Communications Plan can be found at Appendix B.

Local areas will have three primary audiences:

1. Potential participants
2. Local stakeholders and providers
3. Employers in the area

Different channels and methods of communication will be more appropriate for specific audiences or specific activities. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' when it comes to communication and it will be critical for plans to include multiple routes of engagement.

Below are some suggestions grouped into core and enhanced activities:

Core Local Activities	Purpose	Audience
<p>Accessible and friendly online website with directory of services.</p> <p>Good practice guidance for websites and online directories can be found in the No One Left Behind Communication Tools Update</p>	Creates an accessible and easily updated foundation of knowledge on the range of services in an area	Frontline staff Potential referrers Potential participants
Targeted online media activity for the whole local pathway and/or key services	Can be adapted and targeted to particular localities or communities	Potential participants
Regular Local, in-person Provider Network/Forum	Raise awareness of the range of support in the area, build trust and encourage inter-agency referrals. people more likely to get the right service for them	Frontline staff and managers
Engagement with/attendance at wider stakeholder training sessions and events, creating stronger links between services	Raise awareness of the range of support in the area amongst partners, build trust and encourage inter-agency referrals. Develop more integrated and aligned support to help people to get the right service for them	Related local services such as health, community justice and education
Co-produce materials for key target audiences	Ensures messaging is right for particular target client groups and their needs	Harder to engage potential participants

Enhanced Activities	Purpose	Audience
Hard copy directory of services/leaflets/posters which can be distributed with training and to wider stakeholders	Good for people who are not digitally connected. Can be left in public spaces or taken out and about.	Frontline staff and people who are not digitally confident. People who are accessing other public spaces
Cost neutral local promotional activity supporting national awareness raising campaigns (see Appendix A for suggested dates)	Make use of existing awareness raising campaigns	Potential participants Funding Leads
Paid for Marketing: Radio, TV, bus-stop campaigns* <i>*it is critical if using these that resources are in place to meet demand</i>	Creates wide awareness – generates large scale participant uptake	Reaching potential participants at scale
Attendance at <i>other</i> community-based in-person events to enhance awareness of services	Builds awareness in non-employability spaces, builds relationships with other stakeholders	Potential participants, Potential referral partners
Partnership working with community organisations to enhance referral pathways	Helps reach those furthest from labour market	Potential participants who are NOT engaging with mainstream services
Positive news stories in local press outlets	Creates hope and positive stories around work	Potential participants
Annual Awards ceremonies for all funded services and their participants	Creates hope and positive stories around journey to work Validates importance of funding	Wider stakeholders, funding leads and potential participants
Shared promotional information for employers on support services in the area	Gives employers clarity on where to go for what, creates sense of a coordinated approach	Employers who may offer jobs to participants

7. Oversight of this plan and learning

The Scottish Government and the Cross-Sector Communications Group will be responsible for oversight of this plan, including regular review and update.

Scottish Government, with support from partners, will review any national campaign activity it supports to evaluate impact including improvement to reach and engagement of key audiences and any lessons learned.

LEPs will be responsible for developing their local communication plans and reviewing the impact of local tools and campaigns to evaluate their impact locally, particularly any improvement in reach and engagement of key target audiences.

APPENDIX A –Timetable of Key Dates for Local and National Campaigns

Scottish Employability Day

The Communications Group agreed that establishing a Scottish Employability Day as a recurring event each September presents a strong opportunity to coordinate national and local communications activity, raising awareness of employability support.

Building on the positive experience of a similar approach in 2024, partners have expressed support for a dedicated national moment and, following consultation through appropriate governance channels, including the Partnership Assurance Group (PAG), it has been agreed that the first Scottish Employability Day will take place on **Thursday 10 September 2026**.

Local Employability Partnerships may wish to expand on this and host a series of events over a longer period of time, but we would encourage the start or culmination of this activity to coincide with the annually agreed date.

The aim of this approach will provide a consistent, annually recognised focal point to align messaging, amplify good practice across sectors, and strengthen collective engagement with individuals, employers and communities.

Key dates diagram

The diagram below provides a timetable of national dates of interest across the year. This timeline is not exhaustive and should be used alongside any local dates of interest.

Quarter 1			Quarter 2		
January	February	March	April	May	June
Poverty Awareness Month	National Apprenticeship Week	Employee Appreciation Day	Stress Awareness Month	International Workers Day	Pride Month
National Jobshare Day	LGBTQ+ History Month	International Woman's Day	World Day for Safety and Health at Work	Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week	Volunteers Week
Parent Mental Health Day	Race Equality Week	Single Parents Day		Mental Health Awareness Week	Carers Week
	Time to Talk Day			International Day of Families	Refugee Week
Quarter 3			Quarter 4		
July	August	September	October	November	December
Alcohol Awareness Week	International Youth Day	Scottish Employability Day	Black History Month	Scottish Careers Week	International Day of People with Disabilities
	Women's Equality Day	International Equal Pay Day	National Work Life Week	Enterprise Week	National Workplace Day of Remembrance
		International Week of Happiness at Work	Challenge Poverty Week	Carers Rights Day	
			Child Poverty Day	International Men's Day	
			National Parents Week		
			World Mental Health Day		

APPENDIX B – Communications Plan Template

When planning national No One Left Behind communication activity, this template should be used to clarify roles, responsibilities, timing and frequency of messaging. The version below includes examples from Scottish Government Employability. A blank, editable version of the template is available on the Employability in Scotland website [template](#).

Objective What is your communication activity trying to achieve?	Audience Who is the campaign aimed at?	Message What is the content you are sharing with them?	Channels What format/ tools/ media will you use?	Frequency/Key Dates When and how often?	Evaluation How will you measure success?
<i>EXAMPLE: Inform people that the Employability Strategic Plan annual report is published.</i>	<i>Employability partners, employers and the public</i>	<i>On 13 September 2024 we published the Employability Strategic Plan 2024-2027. This plan outlines the key priorities for employability over the next three years and identifies the action that Scottish and Local Government, along with other partners, will take to deliver this next phase of No One Left Behind. We are now pleased to share the first Annual Report updating on progress towards the priorities.</i>	<i>It will be published on www.gov.scot It will be promoted on EIS website and in the Employability E-Bulletin Winter edition (Jan 26) It will be shared through various networks such as SLAED People, TSEF, TSIs, LEPS.</i>	<i>The annual report will be published in winter – annually – each year until 2027</i>	<i>We will monitor how many times the link was visited through the website and ebuletin analytics. We will request feedback from partners.</i>
<i>EXAMPLE: Promote and share the Employability E-Bulletin</i>	<i>Employability partners, Elected members, employers and the public</i>	<i>National and local news, events and case studies that have happened in the last quarter.</i>	<i>Sent by email to subscribers and through networks. Archive hosted on the EIS website.</i>	<i>This will be shared quarterly</i>	<i>Analytics and subscription numbers.</i>