

# Young People's Education and Skills Board

## Learner Voice London

Item no: 9

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**Job title:** Promotions Officer

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### Summary

This report provides an overview for the Board of the progress so far with Learner Voice London and proposes a programme of engagement activity to be undertaken over the next six months.

### Recommendations

Board members are asked to:

- continue to support the learner voice work to ensure the YPES strategy reflects the needs of young London learners and that young people have a way to ensure their voice is heard;
- endorse the programme of activities for the next six months to proactively promote the Learner Voice London work using both online tools and offline means to increase engagement by young people and to increase responses and discussions.

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 Following the consultation with young people on the best way in which young London learners could contribute their opinions and thoughts on their learning experience, the Learner Voice London site was created in late 2011.
- 1.2 Designed to help young people exchange their ideas and experiences of learning between the ages of 14 to 19 and to make comments and suggestions of how improvements might be made, Learner Voice London is now live and has an active blog supported by social media.

## 2 Current position

- 2.1 The site allows all young people with internet access to contribute their thoughts and opinions on their education, apprenticeship and work-based learning experiences. Topics currently live and in discussion are careers guidance, employability and financial support.
- 2.2 These three topics are supported by 3 minute videos, featuring young London learners from colleges, sixth forms and work-based learning providers talking about their experiences, what they would like to see for future learners and encouraging others to contribute their thoughts.

- 2.3 The videos were launched on 11, 14 and 15 May 2012 on the Learner Voice London site ([www.learnervoice london.org.uk](http://www.learnervoice london.org.uk)) and so far have been viewed over 200 times. The careers guidance and employability videos have been shown by the YPES team at a number of conferences and seminars e.g. *Careers Education and Guidance - delivering results in schools* (Westminster Briefings and Cegnet) and the *London Employment and Skills Convention* (Inclusion).
- 2.4 Learner Voice London is supported primarily by social media networks; these include Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.
- Twitter account - @learnervoice ldn
  - Facebook page - [www.facebook.com/learnervoice london](http://www.facebook.com/learnervoice london)
  - YouTube page - <http://www.youtube.com/user/LearnerVoiceLondon?feature=mhee>
- 2.5 These highlight when new posts are made, and enable us to tweet, share like-minded work and talk to similar organisations and individuals on these sites to help promote the blog.
- 2.6 The Twitter account now has over 115 followers, mainly comprised of organisations working with young people, schools and colleges, and young people themselves. Some examples are:
- Apprenticeships UK
  - Notgoingtouni
  - Student Voice UK
  - UK Youth
  - Careersbox
  - Partnership for Young London
  - UK Youth Parliament London
  - SQ Magazine
  - Live Magazine
  - Youth Media Agency
  - 10 MYPs
- 2.7 Twitter is the main way in which the team are getting the messages out to young learners, based on research that shows this is where young people tend to get a lot of their information.
- 2.8 We have also been asking organisations, schools, colleges and work-based learning providers to help us reach our target audience of 14 to 19 year old London learners in a number of ways, which include:
- Encourage young people to use the blog and comment
  - Follow us on Twitter
  - Re-tweet (RT) us
  - Like us on Facebook
  - Share on Facebook
  - Talk about us to other providers, students, friends and family
- 2.9 Face to face meetings have also taken place with UK Youth Parliament London and the Education and Employers Taskforce. Meetings will be taking place shortly with other organisations including Student Voice UK and Centrepont Parliament.

### **3 Next steps**

3.1 The online work has been very successful in beginning the task of raising awareness of this resource for young London learners but cannot be done independently of offline work e.g. talking directly to students and those working with students. With this in mind the following activities are proposed to take place over the next six to nine months:

- Following discussions with the agency that we commissioned to produce the videos and youth parliamentarians, work on a small programme of 'roadshows' going into targeted schools and colleges in London (those involved in the videos have expressed an interest in this) to reach young people directly to inform and engage them in the learner voice work and to encourage them to use the networks available.
- Alongside this to produce small items of printed promotional material, such as postcards to send to all schools, colleges and work-based learning providers in London, primarily to marketing and careers guidance officers asking them to post materials around their buildings and to hand to students (these can be designed in-house to keep costs at a minimum).
- Using Twitter, identify up to a dozen key organisations/people to contact regarding the learner voice work with the aim of a face-to-face meeting to discuss how we can work with them on learner voice, and hopefully in other areas of YPES work.
- Online work will include maintaining and increasing the current profile on the four major social media networks and work on developing the blog itself e.g. linking to other blogs in this field, creating blogrolls and a weekly round-up of key pieces of news and information on learner voice to be posted on the Learner Voice London site.

### **4 Recommendations**

4.1 Board members are asked to:

- continue to support the learner voice work to ensure the YPES strategy reflects the needs of young London learners and that young people have a way to ensure their voice is heard;
- endorse the programme of activities for the next six months to proactively promote the Learner Voice London work using both online tools and offline means to increase engagement by young people and to increase responses and discussions.