



# Youth Steering Group

2019

YSL Case Study





# About

The Young STEM Leader (YSL) Youth Steering Group (YSG) has been established to support the delivery and ongoing development of the YSL Programme across Scotland. The group represents the voice of young people and provide essential feedback on the YSL Programme.

The types of activities the group are involved in includes:

- Reviewing and commenting on delivery materials
- Advising on training activities for young people
- Supporting marketing and promotional activities including development of social media channels
- Representing the YSL Programme nationally across a range of platforms





# Kalina

Kalina is the YSL Youth Steering Group Chair.

She is the Design Editor for a geological magazine and has worked on numerous projects connected to STEM and the wider participation of young people, as well as volunteering for a range of large Scottish youth organisations.

She joined the YSL Youth Steering Group so that she could “be at the forefront of making an impact” and is particularly interested in helping “to get more young people excited in STEM.”





# Fatima

Fatima is the YSL Youth Steering Group Vice Chair.

She is a modern apprentice in Software Engineering and has been heavily involved in various Youth Parliament groups. She has worked on a range of projects aiming to ensure that Scotland's youths are given the opportunities they deserve.

Fatima joined the YSL Youth Steering Group so that she could “bring about major changes at all levels, from grass roots scale to policy making.”





# First Meeting

The YSL Youth Steering Group were given the opportunity to consider how the existing frameworks and criteria will be used to devise course content for the Third Level and Level 5 Awards.

This is a crucial part of The YSL Project Team's next steps for developing a course that is created for young people, by young people.

*“It's a good opportunity to help to shape something - you don't get to do that very often.” Ruby, YSG Participant*





The YSG felt that in the Third Level course there needs to be more emphasis on the term 'STEM' itself to continue to challenge the common stereotypes and misconceptions.

They felt the award should be related to a more specific STEM area to encourage learners who have completed Second Level to focusing on both areas of interest, as well as to explore things which are unfamiliar to them. They suggested this could be done by adding two new areas (or Badges) which focus on the qualities and behaviours of good leadership and look at the different jobs and challenges people face in STEM.

“People think you get natural born leaders and that’s not the case - it’s completely a skill and it’s good to teach that it’s about technique and knowing what you’re doing.” Benjamin, YSG Participant





“We want the YSLs to try at least one of the other things while they’re in school, so that have the wider skillset and by the time they’ve got to 6th year, they’ve tried a bit of everything and can say, ‘the one I most like is...’ It’s about having the overall experience and having stuff to add to their CV as well.” Fatima, YSG Vice Chair

The YSG noted that it’s important to include practical activities, guidance and examples to ensure they’re able to progress. Furthermore, they should be encouraged to work in groups to promote teamwork and “bounce ideas off of one another.” They placed huge emphasis on celebrating the achievements of YSLs who complete the award.





For the SCQF Level 5 Award, the YSG felt that it was essential the course retain practical elements, instead of the more theoretical aspects which are contained in the SCQF Level 6 Award.

They would like to see new areas of research, particularly into the field of careers in STEM and different pathways to achieving them, with more emphasis about what follows after school (college, university, apprenticeships, jobs...)

“There’s a misconception that if you’re doing STEM, you’re going to university and that you have to have an education to be able to do it - if you don’t have “this” qualification you can’t go onto to do, I don’t know, robotics in a lab...” Sophia, YSG Participant





They feel strongly about the reiteration of skills required in leadership and the different styles to enable learners to be able to take initiative inspire others.

They expect that by Level 5, YSLs will be capable enough to lead their own activities and should be given the opportunities to do so. They should be trusted to be independent and share their knowledge with others.

The YSG placed particular focus on exam preparation and felt that there should be less tasks in the Level 5 course than in Level 6, so that it is more manageable in light of exam preparation.





And finally, they really want to make the award achievable for as many young people as possible. They request keeping the paper resources and YSL Log for people from more disadvantaged areas (who might not be able to afford computers), as well as ensuring that accessibility is maintained for young people with additional support needs.

“STEM is something really dear to me. I work as an engineer, I’ve studied this for 5 years and beforehand I didn’t think I could do it but because of all the inspirational people in my life - my Maths teacher - and the support of my family, I realised that I can push myself.

STEM isn’t really what it seems, so I am really passionate about the project and I wanted to get involved based on my own experiences, so that I can change the views and make it a more accessible field.” Kalina, YSG Chair





# YOUNGSTEM

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The Young STEM Leader Programme