

Queen Margaret's Academies programme is a big success



Scotland's leading youth employment initiatives have been highlighted as examples of excellence, as part of a major €2.3m European study.

Led by Queen Margaret University (QMU), the 'Academies' programme for 14–18 year olds, and the Third Sector Internships Scotland (TSIS) project for university students, have been singled out as pioneering partnerships which are delivering significant results for Scotland's young people. TSIS is funded by the Scottish Funding Council and is being delivered in partnership with The Open University in Scotland and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), with support from other institutions.

'The Edinburgh Guarantee' has also been identified as a shining example in the report. Led by City of Edinburgh Council, The Guarantee encourages partnership across the entire city of Edinburgh to ensure all young people who leave school have a choice of job, training or are offered further educational opportunities.

Dr Marion Ellison, Senior Lecturer in Sociology at QMU, is leading the major European labour study in Scotland.

Dr Ellison's work is part of the INSPIRES (Innovative Social and Employment Policies for Inclusive and Resilient Labour Markets in Europe) project, which includes 12 other leading European universities. Academics across the partner universities are pulling together innovative knowledge, technology and policy approaches that improve the resilience and active inclusion of labour markets for young people and other vulnerable groups across Europe.

Commenting on the report, Dr Ellison, said: “We’re really pleased that QMU has played a major role in bringing these pioneering Scottish initiatives to the attention of a broader European audience. INSPIRES is about making a difference to the lives of young people across Europe by anticipating the future challenges they face when making the transition between education and employment. This requires close partnership between the public, private and third sectors to creative innovative initiatives which will engage young people and help them secure work opportunities.

“QMU continues to successfully deliver initiatives which help the transition between education and employment for young people across Scotland, including Academies programme and the Third Sector Internships Scotland project. INSPIRES recognises the positive outcomes for young people that have been achieved as part of these QMU initiatives.”

Dr Ellison and her colleagues from QMU presenting the latest national employment report, ‘Informing Innovative Employment Policies for Scotland’, at a recent Scottish Parliament event chaired by Chic Brodie MSP.

The INSPIRES Project is aimed at young people under the age of 25 years and includes ethnic minorities and disabled groups. The Scottish researchers are collaborating with various sectors and organisations including the Scottish Government; regional councils; SCDI; local businesses; education sector; employer associations and Scottish Trades Union Congress.

For more information on the INSPIRES Project, visit: www.inspires-research.eu