YOUNG STEM leader led by sserc

Case Study

University of Strathclyde Glasgow



The Young STEM Leader Programme (YSLP) led by SSERC, partners with many other organisations and Award programmes to ensure that young people already engaged in excellent STEM learning and leadership can gain additional recognition through an 'Auto-Award' for the Young STEM Leader programme. The YSLP team works closely with partners to align the outcomes and criteria of the partner programmes to the YSLP frameworks.

Introduction

Dr Sharon Macnab
Young STEM Leader Programme Manager

Partnering with other STEM Learning providers to build the Young STEM Leader Awards community, ensures that learners pathways are enriched. Through the Young STEM Leader Award, learners are encouraged to reflect, take ownership and communicate their learning gaining valuable leadership skills.

Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) in Scientific Technologies is one of the frameworks offered by East Lothian Works to secondary students across the region. It has been a pleasure for SSERC to work closely with David Dickson (Education Support Officer, STEM) on an Auto-Award agreement. The FA programme aligns fantastically with the Young STEM Leader Award at Level 6 (YSL6). YSL6 carries SCQF credit and is levelled via the SQA. It is a valued award for young people and their delivering centre.

Next we hear from John, with comments from two of his course leaders.

John Cochrane
Teaching Fellow, University of Strathclyde and Associate Regional Trainer and Verifier (ARTAV), SSERC - YSLP

Raising participation in STEM and, in turn, increasing the number of young people entering STEM-related fields and/or employment has been a long-term goal of all involved in Scottish education. The Young STEM Leader Programme (YSLP) has been immensely beneficial in trying to achieve these lofty goals. Taking advantage of my role as an Associate Regional Trainer and Verifier (ARTAV) for YSLP, we at the University of Strathclyde undertook a programme to embed Tutor Assessor training in the course programme for all initial teacher education students from session 2025/2026 onwards. This includes all PGDE primary and secondary students, as well as those studying undergraduate "with teaching" degrees. We also offered training to all BA Primary Education students in years three and four. Overall, this resulted in 600 new Tutor Assessors being trained and ready to launch YSLP in their centres upon completing their studies.

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AUTHOR PROFILE

John Cochrane is a teaching fellow with the Strathclyde Institute of Education, University of Strathclyde, with responsibility for the PGDE Chemistry cohort. Prior to taking up this post, he was a chemistry teacher for 18 years with North Lanarkshire Council and a previous PSDO within the RAiSE programme. A current ARTAV within the Young STEM Leader Programme, providing support for training development and quality assurance.

Our main rationale for this programme was to allow students to gain experience of a nationally recognised programme early in their careers. It allowed everyone the opportunity to get involved in the programme while on placement, an opportunity a number of them took. One particularly eager PGDE primary student ran YSL2 with two different classes during a six-week placement and will aim to finish it off before the end of the year. Three PGDE chemistry students also took part in the programme in a community setting, organised by the University of Strathclyde, working with primary pupils in P5, 6 and 7 on YSL2. They all commented that they found the experience beneficial and aim to continue their own YSLP journey during their NQT year and beyond.

Building on the success of this pilot programme, it has been agreed that Tutor Assessor training will now be added to the timetable for all ITE programmes at the University of Strathclyde going forward. BA Primary students will be offered training as part of a dedicated STEM module, which they complete as part of their year three studies.

This approach will ensure that all probationers graduating from the University of Strathclyde will be able to bring this National Programme and the opportunities for learners to schools across Scotland.

Jackie Marshall, BA(Hons) Primary Education course leader:

"I was delighted to hear from a student and their school placement on how they had been using their YSLP training during their placement. This training has definitely helped students to develop self-efficacy within science which schools are recognising."

Debbie McLeod, PGDE course leader:

"The Young STEM Leader training programme is a valuable addition to the PGDE programme and has been highly successful in enhancing student teachers' confidence and capability in delivering engaging STEM learning experiences. Through the programme, students developed key leadership skills and improved their ability to design interactive, pupil led STEM activities. Feedback from student teachers highlighted increased confidence and encouragement in creating a more inclusive approach to STEM education, supporting wider participation among learners. Overall, the programme's success demonstrates its value in preparing future teachers to inspire and lead effective STEM learning in schools."

Get involved

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It's easy to get involved and deliver the programme by attending a FREE (up to 2 hour) training session (usually online).

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gov.scot

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