



Young People's Rights Review

Reece Harding MSYP - Equal Pay for Equal Work

Good afternoon everyone,

My name is Reece Harding and I'm the Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament for Clydesdale.

When I surveyed my constituents on issues affecting their rights the response that came back was Zero Hour Contracts and the National Minimum Wage.

Therefore, I wish to focus on young people's rights to equal pay for equal work in this speech.

It's protected by Article 32 of the UNCRC which calls on States to provide for appropriate regulation of the conditions of our employment, as well as to prevent us from economic exploitation. I also refer you to Article 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which protects our rights to equal pay for equal work. Age too is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

Although both ZHC and NMW issues are reserved to Westminster, the Scottish Government has backed action on wages via the Living Wage which currently sits at £8.75 per hour - a voluntary rate to be paid to all workers over the age of 18. However, the National Minimum Wage is set at £7.83 for those who are 25 and older.

In Scotland, you're classed as a young person between the ages of 12-25, but you become an adult at the age of 16.

The minimum wage for people under 18 is £4.20 and for apprentices it's £3.70.

In my constituency of Clydesdale, many young people reported to me that they have undertaken an apprenticeship after school, leading them to a positive destination. However, with the cost of living rising every year, how can we expect a young person to survive on just £3.70 per hour? Let's say, for example, they work a 9-hour shift 5 days a week - over a full week that rounds up to £167.

The Committee on Economic and Social Rights in its 2016 review of the UK in paragraph 37, recommended that:

The State party ensure that the national minimum wage is periodically reviewed and set at a level necessary to provide all workers and their families with a decent standard of living. It also recommends that the State party extend the protection of the national minimum wage to those under the age of 25.

Therefore, while I commend the action in the Scottish Government's Children and Young People's Rights Action plan in 6.20- to explore the idea of a citizen's basic income, and in 6.23- to work with the Poverty Alliance towards making Scotland a Living Wage Nation - **I further recommend that you include an action in this plan to extend the living wage to those under 18, and ensure that employers hiring young people especially are incentivised to give the living wage. I also recommend the Scottish Government call on the UK Government to ban zero hour contracts and make the National Minimum Wage universal for all ages, including apprentices.**

Thank you.