



CAREERS ENGLAND SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMITTEE OF EDUCATION, SKILLS AND THE ECONOMY INQUIRY INTO CAREERS, INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE.

Careers England Ltd is the sole trade association for organisations involved in the provision of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) products and services in England for people of all ages. Our members provide aspects of some, or all, of the four components of CEIAG:

- Careers Education (Career Learning)
- Careers Information
- Careers Advice
- Careers Guidance

The members of Careers England Ltd comprise the majority of prime and sub-contracted deliverers of the National Careers Service. They also deliver careers guidance services for local authorities, schools and colleges across England.

Most of our members are charities and social enterprises. We also have a number of sole traders and other organisations who, although not delivery services, are engaged with the careers sector. Full details of all Careers England members, our activities and our publications can be found at <http://www.careersengland.org.uk/>

We welcome the establishment of the Committee and the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry, and we are very willing to provide further oral evidence. Careers England has long campaigned for joined up thinking and policy development relating to CEIAG at Government level, as you will see from the evidence presented in this submission.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF KEY MESSAGES

- There has been little growth in the number of schools investing in good CEIAG since the introduction of the statutory guidance in September 2012. Schools that are providing CEIAG programmes have generally improved their offer.
- The present arrangements of CEIAG delivery for young people and adults taking place across four government departments is wasteful and inefficient. New developments such as the Careers and Enterprise Company have the potential to further complicate the landscape, as there is concern that the company is not sufficiently focused on the careers agenda.
- The adoption of the Gatsby benchmarks by the DfE and Careers and Enterprise Company is a positive initiative. The three pronged approach to quality assuring careers work is needed - i.e. careers advisers delivering services must be qualified to at least level 6, providers must have achieved the matrix standard and must have achieved a careers quality standard that meets the national framework of the Quality in Careers Standard.

- Many careers service companies have downsized again and the number of professionally qualified careers advisers is at an all-time low.
- Engagement of employers is very important but only part of the solution. The full answer lies in career professionals, school staff and employers all working together to deliver careers and employability programmes. There are concerns that many schools have limited capacity to engage employers and/or the local businesses in some areas do not have the time to contribute to supporting this agenda, resulting in a 'patchy' picture relating to employer engagement.
- There are good examples of local initiatives to support careers delivery for young people. This is, however, the exception rather than the norm.
- Meeting the three million new Apprenticeships target will require significant increases in impartial, independent careers guidance delivered in schools.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Update the current statutory guidance to move beyond statements such as 'should', 'many' and 'can' to say:
 - ALL careers advisers MUST be qualified to level 6
 - ALL careers service providers MUST be accredited with the matrix standard
 - ALL schools, colleges and training providers MUST achieve a career quality award which meets the Quality in Careers Standard framework.
2. Convene a cross-departmental review of activities and funding streams that impact on all career education and guidance to ensure a more cost effective, fair and equitable system.
3. Put a greater focus and investment on building capacity throughout the system and within schools to support the delivery of high quality career education and guidance.

QUALITY AND IMPARTIALITY OF CAREERS PROVISION

In November 2012, Careers England gave evidence to the Education Select Committee. The highlight of our evidence was the findings of a survey of our members where we reported that only one in six schools in England were providing the same level of careers help to their students; by definition five out of six schools were providing less careers help to their students.

In September 2012, a statutory duty for schools to secure independent and impartial careers guidance for all year 9 to year 13 pupils was introduced (extended to year 8 pupils in September 2013). In their thematic survey, Ofsted reported that it was proving difficult for schools to manage the new duty. It went on to say few schools had purchased an adequate service from external services.

A further survey of Careers Education and Guidance in schools and links with employers undertaken by the Career Development Institute and Careers England found that progress was still very slow. Forty percent of the schools that responded said that careers advice was not provided by a careers adviser qualified to level 6, and 24% of schools used a member of staff, often someone who was not a teacher and not holding any careers qualification. A further smaller survey undertaken on behalf of the Careers and Enterprise Company found similar results.

Additional reports by the Sutton Trust and the National Careers Council provide further evidence that careers provision for young people in schools continues to be patchy in terms of quality and availability.

<http://www.suttontrust.com/researcharchive/advancing-ambitions/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/355473/bis-14-1080-taking-action-achieving-a-culture-change-in-careers-provision.pdf

Nicky Morgan has been quoted as saying ‘there has never been a golden age for careers advisers’ which has been referenced before by other Ministers. However, just two decades ago in the early nineties, we had mandatory quality standards required of providers, a national, robust specification of the services to be provided under contract, mandatory professional standards required of careers advisers required to deliver the services, and pretty decent funding. If there ever was a golden age that was it. There was a contractual requirement in each of the 67 careers service contract areas in England for the provider to demonstrate appropriate localisation of services, and strong local contact with and involvement of employers (both by the service becoming knowledgeable about local labour markets, as well as leading employers being directly involved in the strategic and corporate governance of many of the contractors). This was a time when all students were able to get careers advice and mentoring, and schools had professionals managing careers provision.

From reviewing what has worked in the past, Careers England advocates three clear and simple measures to take forward. They are:

- Professional standards - careers advisers delivering services must be qualified to level 6 as specified by the Career Development Institute (this is the accepted professional standard).
- Service standards for careers guidance providers – i.e. the matrix standard
- Organisational standards for schools, colleges and training providers i.e. the Quality in Careers Standard (QICS) which provides a national validation framework for currently thirteen quality awards.

Careers England believes that a sharper and greater focus should be given by the Government to this three pronged approach to quality assuring careers delivery. That said, Careers England welcomes the ‘renewed interest in careers’ by the DfE. We particularly support the endorsement by the DfE of the eight benchmarks for providing good careers guidance as detailed in the Gatsby Report, ‘Good Careers Guidance’. We also look forward to contributing to the development of the National Strategy for Careers being developed by the DfE. Our view is that the strategy should require schools and colleges to be working to the eight benchmarks and adopt the three pronged approach to quality assuring careers work. This requirement will have the greatest impact on improving the quality of careers provision at a time when competition between providers of learning is the fiercest in history. This competition now includes a choice of school at age 14 as well as appropriate learning and progression route at ages 16 and 18.

HOW CAREERS ADVICE IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES CAN HELP MATCH SKILLS WITH LABOUR MARKET NEED.

Careers England believes that good quality careers information, advice and guidance contributes significantly to social mobility, achievement and economic wellbeing. In our paper The Economic Benefit of Careers Guidance by Dr Tristram Hooley we gather in one place the evidence both nationally and internationally which demonstrates the impact and contribution careers guidance makes to economic

development and regeneration. A large element of economic growth is having the right people with the right skills in the right places. The Economic Benefits of Careers guidance demonstrates the opportunity cost of not having systems of careers education, information advice and guidance that is delivering in every school.

<http://www.careersengland.org.uk/documents/public/Careers%20England%20Research%20Paper%20-The%20Economic%20Benefits%20of%20Career%20Guidance%20-%20July%202015.pdf>

Since we last gave evidence to the Education Select Committee there has been further reductions in funding for careers companies, resulting in restructures, redundancies and company closures. Indeed, recent reductions in local government funding have further impacted on companies delivering careers information, advice and guidance. Careers England members believe that the professional workforce will have reduced by 66% compared to five years ago, and there is a danger that there will not be the capacity to meet the economic need for careers work in the days ahead.

Careers England would like to share with the Committee our Policy Commentary – Careers Provision for Young People, who are NEET, produced by Dr Deirdre Hughes. In this commentary we focus on the scale of the skills problem and the impact it is having on productivity plus the legacy of underachievement among many young people and the need for young people to be guided through the increasingly complex jobs and skills landscape. A key aspect of this is good use of Labour Market Information which is a key component of a professional careers adviser's toolkit. The paper concludes with some policy measures that could easily be implemented to improve the quality of careers help our young people receive and help overcome the skills mismatch. These can be summarised into three areas:

- Update and closely monitor the statutory guidance for schools and colleges to ensure that young people have access to independent, professional and quality assured guidance
- Convene a cross departmental review of activities and funding streams that impact on all career education and guidance to ensure a more cost effective, fair and equitable system
- Put a greater focus and investment on building capacity throughout the system and within schools to support the delivery of high quality career education and guidance.

<http://www.careersengland.org.uk/documents/Public/Careers%20England%20Policy%20Commentary%2032%20-%20Careers%20provision%20for%20young%20people%20where%20next%20-%20Dec%202015.pdf>

THE ROLE OF THE CAREERS AND ENTERPRISE COMPANY AND RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER BODIES SUCH AS THE NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

The Careers and Enterprise Company has done much to engage and communicate with key partners in the careers sector. Their focus however, has been very much on the enterprise agenda to date, hence it has come across more as an 'Enterprise and Careers Company'. However, as the company is one year old and the Chief Executive has been in post for six months, it is still early days. We await the announcement by the Careers and Enterprise Company of the successful bids to its £5m careers investment fund. Our hope is for this funding to be targeted towards front line delivery of professional careers support. We have an abundance of websites relating to careers.

From the views of our members the careers landscape is an increasingly confused picture. In addition to the work of the DfE there is the National Careers Service with an Inspiration Agenda as part of its remit; the role of local government relating to careers work with the most vulnerable and NEETs, and recently the announcement of the work Jobcentre Plus will undertake with schools. Careers England in its policy paper 'The Future of Careers Guidance' argues that this is a wasteful, complicated and expensive approach and that great improvements can be made to careers delivery without additional cost if there was more cross departmental working and thinking at Government level. Careers England firmly believes that existing public funds devoted to careers can do so much more if they are deployed wisely.

<http://www.careersengland.org.uk/documents/Public/Careers%20England%20Position%20Paper%20June%202015.pdf>

Our additional observation in this theme is the very unhelpful way in which the National Careers Service pays their providers. The National Careers Service pays providers on outcomes, which is a perfectly acceptable position. However, the outcomes are so focused on long term unemployed that there are serious problems in referrals to the service and achieving outcomes (including the very stringent evidence for outcomes). The net effect is that the National Careers Service is not making the impact it should.

THE BALANCE BETWEEN NATIONAL AND LOCAL APPROACHES TO CAREERS ADVICE.

Careers England has already highlighted the confused state of national policy and initiatives in its Policy Paper – [The Future of Careers Guidance](#). There are local initiatives emerging which have a great deal of merit. One example is the London Ambitions initiative which Careers England looks at in detail in our policy commentary. This has the potential to deliver a first rate careers support system to all young people in London. It is locally designed and driven and in many ways is being achieved despite national initiatives and shortcomings in policy.

<http://www.careersengland.org.uk/documents/Public/Policy%20Commentary%2031-%20London%20Ambitions%20-%20Shaping%20a%20Successful%20Careers%20Offer%20For%20All%20Londone rs.pdf>

The view of many of our members is that local initiatives are developing to compensate for the unsatisfactory progress in developing national policies and programmes.

Again, in the Careers England policy commentary – [Careers Provision for Young People – where next?](#), we detail the three main policy initiatives that are needed, i.e. strengthening statutory guidance, better use of existing funding streams and building of capacity to deliver careers help.

CAREERS ADVICE AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Careers England strongly supports the target of three million Apprenticeship starts by 2020. We regularly see our clients succeeding and developing into high performing employees as a result of their Apprenticeship training.

The achievement of the three million target will depend on young people and their parents being aware of the value and availability of Apprenticeships. Our experience is that this knowledge and expertise does not currently exist in all schools, indeed Apprenticeships are seen as a threat to sixth form numbers in some schools.

There are a number of new policy initiatives needed to ensure the take up of Apprenticeships (particularly amongst 16-18 year olds) increases. These include:

- The policy measures detailed in the Careers England policy commentary – [‘Careers Provision for young people, where next?’](#)
- A refocusing of the targets of the National Careers Service to incentivise providers to place clients into Apprenticeships.
- Better promotion of the value of Apprenticeships to parents and young people by including them as a defined progression route in the destinations data of young people.

The national [Work Experience Quality Standard](#) accreditation, which covers all experiences of work, from Apprenticeships to Traineeships, internships, volunteering and more traditional work experience placements, could provide a potential solution. Funded by UKCES, and developed by national charity Fair Train in partnership with the DfE and Ofsted, as well as a range of industry employers and learning providers, the Work Experience Quality Standard aims to ensure that organisations deliver an experience that is well planned and valuable, and meets legislative and inspection requirements, ultimately helping participants to become more employable. The Standard has been in operation for a couple of years now, and is already established within the sector, with a number of high profile employers and learning providers such as Sky, Spirit Pub Group, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, Lancashire County Council, and North Bristol NHS Trust proudly promoting their accreditation.

As well as acknowledging those organisations already providing high quality work experience (including Apprenticeships), the standard has been designed to be used as a framework for development, which organisations can use to help them design, implement and evaluate their own high quality programmes in house. Fair Train offers additional advice and support for organisations to assist with this, if necessary.

These changes could be made at little or no extra cost to Government.

THE POTENTIAL FOR EMPLOYERS TO PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN CAREERS ADVICE

Employers contributing to inspiring young people and playing a key role in careers and employability programmes in schools is not new. Indeed the innovative and creative curriculum activities in the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative of the 1990s and development of Education Business Partnerships was acclaimed by both the education sector and businesses as exemplary progress.

The Careers England Policy Statement on working with employers recognises the valuable contribution employers make to preparing young people for working life. However, as the statement describes, employers are only a part of the solution. The whole answer lies in school staff, careers professionals and employers all contributing and working together to develop and deliver careers and employability programmes that meet the needs of students in schools.

<http://www.careersengland.org.uk/documents/Public/Careers%20England%20updated%20policies%20-%20young%20people,%20adults%20and%20employers%20-%20March%202015.pdf>

One challenge to be overcome is the leadership and management arrangements in each school to careers and employer links. For those not involved in schools on a day to day basis, the workings of a school (timetable, curriculum and structure) is a complicated and complex issue. What is needed is for there to be an accountable person who is a member of the school leadership team who can make things happen.

The Careers England/Career Development Institute survey of careers education and guidance in schools and links with employers in May 2015 found that only 35% of schools had a senior leader with responsibility for school business links; just 45% of schools who responded had a middle leader with responsibility for careers education and 37% had a Governor for careers and employer links. In short, we have more to do to ensure schools have the leadership and management capacity to make best use of the employer offer.