

SUBMISSION TO THE SOCIAL MOBILITY COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS REGARDING THE TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK FOR 14-24 YEAR OLDS.

SUBMITTED BY CAREERS ENGLAND SEPTEMBER 13TH 2015.

INTRODUCTION

Careers England is the national 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 (that is ‘career learning’)
- Careers information
- Careers advice
- Careers guidance

Our members 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.

Our associate members include a growing number of smaller partnerships and sole traders in the careers profession, as well as a number of organisations not directly providing CEIAG services but wishing to be associated with Careers England.

Full details of all Careers England members, our activities and our publications can be found at www.careersengland.org.uk

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Social Mobility Committee of the House of Lords. As the informed employer voice of careers guidance organisations in England our contribution is from the perspective of the impact high quality CEIAG makes to social mobility and the economic health of the nation.

QUESTION 1 – What are the most significant factors that affect the social mobility and employment outcomes of young people in the transition from school into the work place?

A major component of successful transition and progression of young people into the labour market is good quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG). Essentially this is made up of:

- Careers information on courses, occupations and career paths (including labour market information)
- Careers education, as part of the curriculum in which attention is paid to helping groups of individuals to develop their awareness of the world of work, their self-awareness (strengths, interests and values) and competencies for managing their career development. This should include work experience and other activities with appropriate preparation and follow up.
- Career counselling (advice and guidance) conducted on a one to one basis or in small groups in which attention is focused on the distinctive issues faced by individuals.

Good quality careers preparation of young people is made up of all three elements. However currently there is growing concern that our young people are not receiving the careers help and support that they need. This is evidenced by the concerns raised by employers relating to the poor preparation for employment of young people whilst still in compulsory schooling. As the Director General of the CBI John Cridland stated: *“Careers help in schools is currently on a life support machine”*.

This downward step change in careers preparation came via the Education Act 2011 when the Coalition Government introduced the biggest change in careers support for young people in almost 40 years. Local authorities were no longer required to provide a

universal careers service – instead schools and colleges were given a new statutory duty to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for their pupils and students. Schools and colleges were expected to fund the provision of careers guidance from their existing delegated budgets and were free to commission services from any provider of their choice.

A survey undertaken by Ofsted in 2013 found that the policy was not working well and only 20% of schools were effective in ensuring that all their pupils were receiving the level of careers information, advice and guidance they needed to support decision making.

A further survey commissioned by Careers England and the Career Development Institute in March 2015 found [similar results](#). A survey into the views of parents on the career preparation of their children conducted by GTI highlighted strong [concerns by parents](#).

In addition to these changes to careers preparation there was a further change introduced by the Government in 2011. This was the decision to remove the duty to deliver work related learning and careers education at Key Stage 4. This was despite views to the contrary including clear evidence of the benefits of pre-16 work experience (*Mann.A (2012) Work Experience Impact and Delivery – Insights from the evidence. London Education and Employers Taskforce*).

These regrettable changes to the careers and employment preparation have affected the economic and social mobility of many young people especially the group highlighted by the Select Committee.

QUESTION 2 – THERE IS A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 14-24 WHO DO NOT FOLLOW THE A-LEVEL AND HIGHER EDUCATION ROUTE, AND ARE NOT CLASSIFIED AS NEET. WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE GROUP – WHO ARE THEY, WHY ARE THEY IN THIS POSITION AND WHAT ARE THEIR CAREER TRAJECTORIES?

The Department for Education's National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) provides the best source of information about this group during their progression up to age 19. This is despite the fact that in some local authority areas there are high levels of unknown destinations of some 16-18 year olds (120,000 at the June count).

We know that:

- The overwhelming majority of year 11 students progress into learning at school, college or with an employer (apprenticeship).
- Only a small number of year 11 leavers enter an apprenticeship at aged 16.
- Those students who do not achieve Maths and English at GCSE grade C or above (or equivalent) have huge challenges to overcome in securing a level 3 learning opportunity and a quality employment offer.
- There are large numbers of young people who do not complete A-Level courses and leave after a year. The Local Government Association estimated the cost of 6th form drop out to be £800 million per annum. Many of these young people would have benefitted from careers support to assist them to find a more suitable employment/learning opportunity; e.g. an apprenticeship.
- Many young people feel unprepared for the world of work and have low employability skills. This inhibits their ability to compete successfully in the job market

- The number of 19-24 year olds in jobs with no training are receiving low wages and have very few job progression opportunities. This group does not receive any help from Jobcentre Plus or the National Careers Service as they are in employment. If they were able to access good career advice and guidance they would be greatly assisted in developing the skills to move up the job market.

QUESTION 3 – DOES THE CURRENT TRANSITION SYSTEM SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DO NOT FOLLOW THE A-LEVEL AND HIGHER EDUCATION ROUTE TO PERFORM BETTER IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES? IF NOT, WHY NOT? WHAT CHALLENGES DO THESE YOUNG PEOPLE FACE IN THEIR ABILITY TO TRANSITION SUCCESSFULLY INTO THE WORKPLACE?

The current system to support young people aged 14-24 to make the right career and learning choices is complicated and confused. Currently there are five Government Departments involved in some aspect of careers guidance. These are:

- The Department for Education
- The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- The Department for Communities and Local Government
- The Department for Work and Pensions
- The Ministry of Justice

In addition there is the new Careers and Enterprise Company which is developing its role in the careers agenda.

This complicated landscape has resulted in wasteful duplication and confusion and at the same time many young people in the group identified and focused on by the House of Lords Select Committee are not receiving the help they need. The Careers

England position paper [‘The Future of Careers Guidance’](#) advocates a radical rethink about how we can better deliver accessible high quality careers education and guidance to people of all ages. It provides recommendations on the stepping stones to improving the current system.

From an individual’s perspective, there is an abundance of website information which is very valuable for those who are very motivated, confident and have good research and decision making skills.

For those young people who are NEET or in Higher Education, there are careers and employment services available. However, for the group identified by the Select Committee, the availability of a service such as Connexions or the careers service before that is dependent on where an individual lives and whether there is local funding to provide such a service.

Here are case studies of real young people who have had their lives changed by contact with such services:

1. ‘B’ is a 19 year old single mother. ‘B’ approached Routes as she was considering going back to college to undertake a hairdressing course. I encouraged her to contact the College for more information. Once this additional information from College arrived we supported ‘B’ in completing the application forms as well as looking into the best form of childcare available for her situation. ‘B’ was successfully accepted onto the course but was still concerned about funding for childcare, transport and course equipment e.g. hairdressing kit. We supported ‘B’ with writing letters to various local charities and trusts to see if they can help/support ‘B’ financially, enabling her to start course. After lengthy discussions with the College we were granted a bursary for childcare costs. Alongside this ‘B’s application to the Bridge Educational Trust was successfully which meant receiving a grant of £500 to pay for travel and equipment. This support meant ‘B’ was able to apply and succeed in gaining a place at college and pursue a career to support herself and her child.

2. XX joined a Careers South West programme aimed at supporting young people who were not realising their potential, after dropping out of her qualification. She had started a L2 Health & Social Care qualification at the local FE College but as she did not enjoy college was looking for employment instead.

After discussing all of Client XX's options she decided that the best options for them would be to look at employment or an apprenticeship in Retail or Health and Social Care. Client XX also showed an interest in Hospitality when we looked at the similarities of skills/experience in this field compared with Retail and Care. She explored and registered on the National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service and we contacted Training Providers. She attended appointments regularly and made several apprenticeship applications via NAVMS for Retail and Care.

Client XX's attendance and engagement dropped during the end of January to mid-March. Her sporadic engagement was due to a family member having medical treatment coupled with Client XX being unwell. She had been due to attend an open day with a Hospitality Training Provider and attend a 5 day short course in Customer Service, both of which were missed.

When I met with Client XX in mid-March she felt she was in a much better place and were keen to engage to find employment or an apprenticeship. She continued to use NAVMS to apply for apprenticeship vacancies and look on various job searching websites. At the end of March they had an interview for a Customer Service apprenticeship; we worked on interview skills and preparation. She was unsuccessful in gaining this position.

Client XX continued to apply for various vacancies when we met on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Through NAVMS in mid- April she applied for a Care Assistant apprenticeship, was invited for an interview, she attended the interview and was successful. Client X then had to complete two trial days within the care home. Client X completed this and felt it went well and really enjoyed the experience. Client X was successful in gaining the position and once her DBS check was completed she started in her new role of Care Assistant Apprentice.

3. I recently worked with 2 young people (a couple aged 18 and 19), they had been LAC young people and had moved about a lot and unsuccessfully tried several college courses in Dorset and other areas. I started working with them as they had just moved back to Wimborne and wanted to look at their options. R was keen to start doing customer service or childcare and S was interested in an apprenticeship possibly in motor vehicle or something practical and outdoor such as gardening, etc. S was from a traveller background and both were living together and DWP were keen for them to get support as they were relying exclusively on benefits including housing, JSA and ESA.

We looked at this and discussed their options, they weren't keen on college as they had both tried it and not enjoyed it.

They didn't have CV's and hadn't worked before. Together we produced CV's and applied for several jobs and apprenticeships. This included helping them complete the additional information on the application forms about previous experience and the reason for applying for specific jobs, etc. which they found very difficult and often explained that they missed out entirely before because they didn't know what to write and didn't want to spend the time completing.

They were both really happy with their CV's and S commented that looking at it all on paper he felt like he'd achieved more than he realised and he felt more confident looking for work. We also discussed interview techniques and spent time looking at possible questions, etc.

R got an interview for a customer service sales role at a local charity and was offered the job straight away, which she was very excited about. It was full time and a good wage and after her first week rang to tell me how much she was enjoying it.

I continued to work with S and a couple of weeks afterwards he found a job in Environmental Services which he sent his CV off for with a cover letter we wrote together. The manager rang the next day to say he was very impressed with both, he offered him an interview and following that he got the job. He was very excited and again has kept me updated with his work, which he seems to be enjoying.

DWP were also happy because they had been so reliant on benefits that both having full-time paid work was a real bonus to them.

4. L is 16 years of age and has recently left school, she is keen to go to college and would like to work with animals. L lives at home with her mum and dad and has a good relationship with them. L left school in June 2014; she didn't particularly enjoy school as found school work a struggle particularly understanding and processing information. She achieved 6 GCSEs at grades D-G. L has suffered with anxiety/panic attacks in the past and is waiting for a GP referral to a counsellor to help with this.

L was able to identify that she would like to go to Sparsholt College as they offer a L1 animal care course that she was really interested in. KC approached college and an interview was set up for L to attend and find out more about the course. The college were able to offer L a place on the L1 animal care course with additional support with her English and maths.

L was able to progress quickly onto a college course which I felt helped her as she was worried that she wouldn't be able to go because of her low grades. I felt that because of her anxiety issues this was useful as she was able to have a smooth transition therefore not causing any further upset for her.

QUESTION 4 – HOW CAN THE TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK BE IMPROVED FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT GO ON TO STUDY A-LEVELS AND HIGHER EDUCATION? HOW CAN EMPLOYERS BE ENCOURAGED TO EMPLOY MORE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THIS GROUP?

Good quality Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance is a major contributor to social mobility and economic development at an individual level, a locality, a regional

perspective and for the nation as a whole. This is demonstrated in the Careers England sponsored publication, [‘The Economic Benefits of Careers Guidance’](#) produced by Professor Tristram Hooley of the Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby.

Currently whether a young person receives the help they need to be clear on their chosen career path and help to develop their employability skills to demonstrate their value to a prospective employer depends on whether the school or college they attend has invested in providing this service. In short there is a national postcode lottery in careers and employability support for our young people.

One recent development which seeks to resolve this issue on a regional basis is the announcement from the London Mayor’s Office relating to the Careers Offer for young people in London. Known as [London Ambitions](#), it sets out the basic entitlement every young person in London can expect in terms of careers and employability support and how this should be delivered.

In the short term a review of the roles of key organisations in the careers field such as the National Careers Service, Careers and Enterprise Company, local authorities, schools, colleges and Jobcentre Plus should be undertaken to reduce duplication and ensure there is clarity and focus on all young people, especially including the group that the Select Committee is highlighting.

In the medium term a more detailed rethink is required along the lines detailed in the Careers England Position Paper – The Future of Careers Guidance.

In terms of encouraging employers to employ young people there is a great deal more to be done to improve the job readiness and employability of young people. This needs to happen whilst young people are still in full time education as discussed in question 1, but also whilst young people are still in post-16 employment and/or learning. For many young people in a job without training there is no service they can turn to for careers and employability help.

QUESTION 5 – WHO SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPROVING THE SYSTEM TO SUPPORT THE TRANSITION INTO WORK FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS?

Given that the legislation relating to the provision of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance lies with the remit of the DfE, Careers England believes this is the Government Department that should drive forward change. Indeed we are encouraged by the recent demonstration of interest in revisiting this agenda by the DfE. Longer term improved arrangements would emerge from a much needed radical review of the current arrangements as advocated in our position paper.

There must also be recognition of local and regional arrangements such as LEPs and combined authority proposals which are developing strong strategies relating to skills which include CEIAG. The DfE should develop the careers offer, framework and legislation (if required) and the regional structures should oversee delivery and assess the impact and review progress against targets relating to social mobility in LEP and combined authority skills strategies.

An immediate challenge is to help teachers, lecturers and other key influencers of young people understand what apprenticeships

are, and the difference they can make to a young person's life. Employers have a role to play in this alongside careers advisers, teachers, etc.