

Mr Simon Hughes, MP
Government Advocate for Access to Education
Abbey 2, 7th Floor
1 Victoria Street
London, SW1H 0ET

18th March 2011

Dear Simon

Better Access to FE and HE through high quality career IAG

Many thanks for meeting the delegation from the UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum about the current funding crisis for careers services to young people. See attached our notes from the meeting. By way of follow-up, I'd like to inform you of the following developments:

Providing information to young people and their parents/guardians

See attached reports prepared for the UKCES which capture in detail the excellent work being undertaken by a wide range of organisations involved in career IAG service provision to young people. The reports also explore the potential for technology, especially social media, to be used as a communications platform to engage young people about subject choices, careers choices and more general personal and education opportunities. Notwithstanding the potential for using technology, we do not wish to see the value and use of face-to-face advice and guidance being diminished.

I strongly encourage your team to consider this evidence as you explore the possibility of a 'marketing campaign' for young people, their parents/guardians and schools. If you would find it helpful to have a further meeting with you and colleagues dedicated to this specific issue, we will be happy to do so. In these budget-constrained times, we cannot afford for the State to "reinvent the wheel" on this one - there is plenty of expertise that could be leveraged and supported by your work to ensure the required outcomes are achieved.

Connexions service closures

As mentioned by Denise Bertuchi from Unison, there is grave concern about the lost of talented professional advisers due to the current raft of closures of Connexion services. Current data shows that **8,000 careers advisers are losing their jobs**. Only a few Local Authorities have maintained their commitment to continue funding career IAG services notwithstanding the budget cuts. One example is North Yorkshire County Council which has commissioned careers guidance for schools and colleges to 31st March 2012. There has been no Government guidance to Local Authorities to inform any change to this. The contract end date links to the development of the all age careers service which is planned to start from 1st April 2012.

In closing, we look forward to the announcement about the replacement for EMAs and hope that your conversations with Ministers, especially Michael Gove, have emphasised the importance of careers education and guidance for young people. We would welcome the opportunity to brief you and Ministerial colleagues about these issues.

Best regards



Keith Herrmann
Convenor
UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum

Chair: Sir Martin Harris

Convening Committee: Keith Herrmann (Convenor), Ian Borkett (TUC-unionlearn), Vivienne Brown (Skills Development Scotland), Margaret Dane (AGCAS), Dr Deirdre Hughes (Careers Profession Alliance)
Prof Tony Watts



cc:

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Chair, Careers Profession Task Force

Brian Lightman
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