



Careers advice increases social mobility

How do you move up the social ladder if you don't know what the rungs look like?

Careers advice transforms possibilities into opportunities.

Social mobility is both a desire and an economic necessity in the post-Brexit environment that the UK is about to enter. Careers England represents organisations that each year, deliver personalised advice to over 130,000 young people in 1,100 schools and colleges, as well as to over 340,000 adults. This work increases social mobility but we need much more of it to unlock a true meritocracy. This statement outlines our approach to achieve that.

The connection between increased levels of social mobility and increased levels of high quality careers advice is clear.

The Sutton Trust found in 2014 that career guidance can impact on attainment at school, engagement, successful transition to further learning and work, and longer-term life success¹. These findings were consistent with many other studies.

High quality, consistent career education, information, advice and guidance is a pre-requisite for sustained social mobility to take place, adding up to £2,000 pa to individuals' future earnings².

However, research shows that to make a tangible difference to social mobility levels, we need to do three things:

- **Increase the volume of careers advice**
- **Ensure the breadth of the offer made**
- **Increase the consistency of its quality**

¹ 'Advancing Ambitions: The role of career guidance in supporting social mobility', 2014, The Sutton Trust

² Career Education that works: an economic analysis using the British Cohort Study.

Volume

Whilst increased efficiencies in delivery arrangements are always sought, a meaningful volume of high quality activity requires investment. Careers England will strive to enhance public investment in careers education, information, advice and guidance, based on our strong and clear view that this will increase social mobility and be of benefit to the public purse.

To do this, we will strengthen the recognition of the link between careers guidance and social mobility. We will collect and promote evidence of where investment in careers education, information, advice and guidance has resulted in barriers to progression being removed. As well as collecting such primary evidence and promoting secondary sources of research, we will align our work with influential research bodies and think tanks on an ongoing basis.

Careers England will promote the need for careers guidance in areas of work that will generate the greatest impact on social mobility. For example, students undertaking vocational pathways receive less careers advice than those pursuing academic curriculum choices. Boys are 1.27 times more likely than girls to receive careers education and guidance. White young people are more likely to receive careers support than Black and Minority ethnic young people. We believe that such disparities exacerbate social immobility and will use our collective intelligence to influence the shape of interventions so that they have the greatest impact on social mobility.

Breadth

The Government, Careers England, the Carer Development Institute, Assessment Services Ltd, the Quality in Careers Standard and The Careers & Enterprise Company all endorse the eight benchmarks established by the Gatsby Report, which are as follows:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

We believe however, that you cannot cherry pick which ones of these benchmarks to implement if we are to really impact on social mobility. To equip someone without any family connections to the professions, without an understanding of the inherent connection between education and advancement, **without social capital**, we need to deliver on all of these benchmarks.

Quality

As a membership based organisation, our success is dependent upon the contribution of the organisations that we represent. The success of the careers education, information, advice and guidance sector in supporting increased social mobility will be founded on our network of members placing quality of support as a key criterion of their success. This materialises in a number of ways. The impartiality of careers guidance in promoting the needs of every individual is a unique strength that our network must promote. Alongside this, our ability to turn labour market information into user friendly, accurate labour market intelligence alongside the ability to prepare individuals to be able to manage their careers in a rapidly changing world are other key indicators of quality that we must protect and promote.

Our network covers support for all ages. We believe that careers education, information, advice and guidance supports increased social mobility for all age groups. It also benefits from national frameworks that enable local initiatives to flourish.

We will only secure the recognition and investment for careers education, information, advice and guidance to promote social mobility that we wish to if these principles are consistently demonstrated. As a body, we will use the strengths of our members in each of these values to promote our sector and strengthen the impact that we can make on society.

Half measures will not achieve results. The evidence is clear that careers advice makes a positive impact on social mobility when delivered appropriately.

With all stakeholders supporting the need for increased volume, breadth and quality of careers advice, we will make a significant difference to lives and the economy during this period of uncertainty.