

Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Dear colleagues

We welcome the *Plan for Jobs*, but we still need your help to get a Career Guidance Guarantee

We want to thank you for supporting our open letter to the Secretary of State for Education Gavin Williamson, calling for the government to publicly commit to a new **Career Guidance Guarantee**. The Guarantee will ensure that everyone, including young people and adults, those in education, work and who are currently unemployed or NEET, will be able to access the professional career guidance that they need.

We have scored a major victory, but the funding announced by the Chancellor does not equate to the **Career Guidance Guarantee** that we were hoping for. We are writing to ask you to keep up the pressure.

The government clearly heard our message. As the Chancellor said *'the evidence says careers advice works, so we'll fund it.'* He announced that the National Careers Service will receive an additional £32million over 18 months to provide career guidance services to adult clients. This additional support is critically important as many more adults will be seeking support with careers and employment.

However, while this announcement is good news, it is not a **Career Guidance Guarantee**. We believe that professional career guidance should be available to everyone who needs it in this country. That must include young people and adults and those in education and outside of it.

The new funding has been channelled into the National Careers Service which is operating with funding rules that were defined before lockdown. The government urgently needs to look at these funding rules and make sure that they are fit for the post-Covid labour market.

We anticipate that the government will want to make further announcements to support employment over the summer and in the Budget in the autumn. As the government develops its approach over the next few months it needs to answer the following five questions in order to deliver a **Career Guidance Guarantee** that will work for everyone.

1. **How can more adults be supported to access career guidance?** Access to the National Careers Service is limited by age and employment status. Given the crisis these limits need to be relaxed.

2. **What resources are available to support unemployed and NEET young people?** Young people, below the age of 19, have been left out of current arrangements. New funding needs to be found to ensure that they have the support that they need once they have left school or college.
3. **Do schools and colleges need more support to continue to improve their provision of career guidance?** Less than 7% of schools are delivering career guidance at the standard defined by the Gatsby Benchmarks. Next year will put schools and school budgets under enormous pressure following the lockdown. If recent improvements in the provision of career education and guidance are going to be maintained it is important that new funding is found and personal guidance is prioritised.
4. **Where should recent graduates go for support with their careers?** Graduates currently have no clear entitlement to career support. There is a need for new funding to provide support to this group to ensure that their skills are not lost to the economy.
5. **How can career guidance be integrated into Kickstart?** The Kickstart scheme is an important new initiative from the government, but young workers will need a lot of support to make it work. The provision of career guidance interviews at the start and end of each Kickstart placement will help young people to find their way to meaningful opportunities and then make the most of those opportunities.

If the government is able to address these five areas it will have gone a long way to establishing the **Career Guidance Guarantee** that is needed to meet the current crisis. It could then move to build on this in the medium term with a new Careers Strategy. A new strategy is needed to address the fragmentation in career support between young people and adults and the education and employment system.

Your support has been critical in getting career guidance onto the political agenda. We have made enormous progress, but we need to keep up the pressure. Please write to your MP or use any other access that you or your organisation has, to engage with government and politicians to ask these five questions. If you are active on social media keep writing about the need for career guidance and using the hashtag **#CareerGuidanceGuarantee**.

Together we can make sure that both young people and adults have the guidance they need to manage the challenging times ahead, achieve their potential and contribute to society and the economy.

Yours faithfully

On behalf of the Career Development Policy Group