

Careers Sector Stakeholders Alliance

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

26 February 2014

Partnerships needed to get careers guidance in schools and colleges working

More than 'inspiration' needed

Following the recent Ofsted report on careers guidance in schools which found that '...links with employers were the weakest aspect of career guidance in the 60 schools visited', this new report from the Careers Alliance highlights the importance of collaboration between professional careers advisers, employers and schools and colleges in providing careers advice and guidance to young people.

This call for collaborative action is made by the Careers Alliance, which is made up of more than twenty of the country's largest skills and education organisations.

It comes at a time when the Government's recent Inspiration Vision Statement alongside its Careers Guidance Action Plan have placed emphasis on contributions from employers and people in jobs to inspire and motivate young people in schools and colleges about the world of work, but make little reference to the role of careers advisers, nor explain how such links between employers and schools and colleges can best be brokered.

More is needed than 'inspiring young people'. Careers Alliance Convenor, Keith Herrmann, said: 'Young people in schools and colleges need professional support to help them make informed choices about subjects to study, qualification pathways and routes into employment. Professional careers advisers have a crucial role in working with schools and employers to provide brokerage, manage careers programmes and provide professional career guidance.'

The Careers Alliance paper notes that Government policy statements have set up an unhelpful dichotomy between the career support provided by careers advisers and the career learning opportunities that are provided by interactions with employers. In contrast, the report explains how the roles of employers and professional careers advisers are distinctive and complementary.

Ongoing disconnect between employers and schools

Commenting on the report, Dame Ruth Silver, Chair of the Careers Alliance, said: 'There remains a disconnect between education and the world of work. But it is unhelpful for Ministers to suggest that employers can do it all. We ask employer bodies to endorse this call by the Careers Alliance for partnership working to get careers guidance in schools and colleges right.'

Sorting out career guidance in schools and colleges is clearly an urgent issue. Tony Moloney, Head of UK Education & Skills at National Grid, said: 'Employers and working people can help young people by providing information, inspiration and advice about the world of work. Employers can provide work placements, visits, inspiring talks and can help with CV writing workshops, mock interviews and enterprise programmes.'

Getting the balance right

Professor Tony Watts, a leading international expert on career guidance and CSSA adviser, said: 'If employer contributions are to be effective, they require logistical support, curriculum space, and receptive schools and young people. They also need to be an integral part of well-planned careers programmes.'

Commenting on the report, Dr Tessa Stone, CEO of Brightside and Chair of the Bridge Group, said: 'We welcome this report from the Careers Alliance as it clearly spells out the distinctive contributions of employers and careers advisers. The employers we work with are actively engaged in working with schools and colleges. They value the role of professional careers advisers in managing careers education

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and guidance programmes within schools which incorporate and support the contributions of employers and people at work, so enhancing their value and ensuring their effectiveness.’

The Careers Alliance report concludes that employers (and people at work) and careers advisers both have distinctive and complementary contributions to make to the career development and career planning of young people. Working together, within a planned programme of careers education and guidance, they can provide far more effective help to young people than either could do on their own.

Context

Leading UK employers, unions, and skills and education providers are calling for more collaboration between schools, employers and careers advisers to give better careers advice to young people. Too often, young people are bombarded by a hoard of information online and from employers, from their peers and from their school or college.

Teachers can’t be expected to do it alone, nor should employers be expected to shoulder the sole responsibility. Employers working with schools are crucial to providing opportunities for students to see what working life is like. Professional careers advisers need to work with schools and employers to help young people learn about their options, such as apprenticeships and work experience.

The Government has said a lot about careers advice lately. Stubbornly high youth unemployment at around 1 million continues to be a problem despite numerous Government schemes. A call by the British Chambers of Commerce for the Chancellor, George Osborne, to put young people at the heart of the next budget highlights the importance of getting young people into work.

Besides improving youth employment, preparing young people for the world of work is crucial. The findings of a City & Guilds survey of 1,000 employers shows that almost 80% of employers think work experience is essential to ensuring young people are ready for work, yet 60% of employers remain uncertain on how to deliver the most effective work experience placements and would welcome guidelines and support.

The Careers Alliance welcomes the recently launched UKCES and CIPD employer guides on making work experience work for young people and employers. These reports offer practical advice to employers about offering high-quality work experience and encourage more employers to get involved. Work experience opportunities can help young people learn about the world of work, open their eyes to the range and variety of career opportunities open to them, and connect their learning at school or college to the world of work.

For more information or interviews, please contact:

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Notes to Editor:

Keith Herrmann and Prof Tony Watts are available to author a comment piece on current changes in career guidance in schools and colleges.

Careers Sector Stakeholders Alliance

The Careers Sector Stakeholders Alliance (Careers Alliance) is established to formulate a national strategic framework for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) to address the issues of access, transparency, quality, equality, and continuity, and to identify areas where UK-wide co-ordination would be helpful. The Careers Alliance will promote increased co-ordination, collaboration and co-operation among stakeholders in the careers sector and be a collective voice for the careers sector.

Twitter: [@careersalliance](https://twitter.com/careersalliance) and [@keith_herrmann](https://twitter.com/keith_herrmann)

Web: www.careersalliance.wordpress.com

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Careers Alliance Membership

The Careers Sector Stakeholders Alliance membership is drawn from a wide range of stakeholder organisations from the careers profession, the business sector, trade unions, and many educational organisations. Members of the Careers Alliance include:

- Association of Colleges (AoC)
- Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)
- Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)
- Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR)
- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- The Bridge Group
- British Chambers, (BCC)
- Careers England
- Career Development Institute (CDI)
- Careers Wales
- City & Guilds
- HECSU
- International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS)
- National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC)
- National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)
- Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)
- The Pearson Think Tank
- The RSA
- The Science Council
- Tertiary Colleges Group
- TUC
- Unison
- Universities UK (UUK)

Associate members:

- UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)

Convening Committee:

Dame Ruth Silver (Chair, former Chair of the Government's Careers Profession Task Force), Keith Herrmann (Convenor), Ian Borkett (TUC), Vivienne Brown (Scotland), Sarah Finnegan-Dehn (Careers Wales), Paul Redmond (AGCAS), John Wastnage (British Chambers), Prof. Tony Watts

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