



Careers England Policy Statement: March 2015

Introduction

Careers England advocates the establishment of an all age careers service. This policy statement is constructed to reflect the current approach to providing careers information, advice and guidance to young people and adults in England, as well as employer engagement.

It is supported by case studies and examples of good practice from our members.

Part One: Careers England's policy on Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance for young people

- 1. Future careers support for all young people must support their achievement, participation in further learning, and progression into work – thereby supporting the growth of the country's economy.**
2. We believe that the current Statutory Guidance (April 2014) - in respect of the Education Act 2011 placing a statutory duty upon all schools to '*secure access to independent careers guidance for the students*' - remains insufficient to secure these benefits, as it does not create the *conditions* required to bring the consistency of independent careers guidance provision to which all young people should be entitled across the country. This is further reinforced by the need to meet the new SEN code of practice. Hence below we set out some of the key *conditions* we believe are essential to redress these inconsistencies.
3. The current provision is extremely patchy. There is good provision in some schools (and we have been pleased to highlight some in the case studies¹ on the Careers England website) - but regrettably not in all. This disadvantages many young people and has a detrimental economic and social future effect upon the country - the nation cannot afford to waste the talent of any young person. **The increased emphasis upon employer engagement in the**

¹ <http://www.careersengland.org.uk/careersguidance.php?page=casestudies>

April 2014 Statutory Guidance is welcomed; but to bring the benefits envisaged by increased employer contributions, such engagement must be embedded into high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) provision.

4. The fact is the current policy is not working well everywhere (as Ofsted and many others, including surveys of our own members, have shown). Therefore, we call upon the current Government (or, if current HMG fails to do so, then the future administration after the May 2015 General Election) urgently to take the following steps to redress these inconsistencies.
5. Firstly, it must be made clear that HMG **requires** all secondary/special schools, providing education for young people over the age of 11 years, to work towards and achieve a CEIAG quality award which is nationally validated by the Quality in Careers Standard² (QiCS). This will ensure every school's CEIAG provision offers consistent support (including the crucial underpinning knowledge, skills and confidence which come from a coherent careers education curriculum) to all young people everywhere, irrespective of where they attend school and the nature of the secondary/special school attended.
6. Secondly, in addition to the internal provision schools establish, HMG must **require** all schools to secure access for all of their students to independent external careers advice and guidance. Within the overall quality assured CEIAG provision of every school, professional careers guidance must be provided by careers guidance professionals - who as a minimum requirement should be qualified to - or working towards - QCF level 6 in a recognised career development qualification, and preferably should be on the national Register operated by the Career Development Institute³.
7. And, thirdly, where careers guidance professionals are employed by external organisations, HMG must **require** all such organisations to meet the national IAG standard which HMG already **requires** of the National Careers Service providers (i.e. the matrix Standard⁴).
8. To enable all schools to follow and implement these strengthened requirements, we call upon HMG now (or as soon as possible post the May 2015 Election) to set aside **an annual national budget of circa £100m to support CEIAG in all secondary and special schools.**
9. To be most effective, the £100m should be delegated in appropriate proportions (e.g. determined by numbers on roll) to each school⁵ as a "**fund to be accounted for**" (akin to the dedicated Pupil Premium).
10. Schools should have the freedom to determine what is best for their students, and should be required to prepare their own plans on how to use these new funds – HMG should recommend

² <http://www.careersengland.org.uk/quality.php?page=introduction>

³ <http://www.thecdi.net/home>

⁴ <http://matrixstandard.com/>

⁵ There are currently some 4244 schools/educational establishments with students between 13-19 years of age on their rolls. In simple terms if **we say there are 4000 schools** to which the £100m should be delegated according to numbers on roll, then even if it were to be flat profiled that would equate to £25,000 per school per annum.

schools to include such plans in their annual School Development Plans (SDP). This would ensure every senior leadership team and Governing Body takes a direct interest in the school's CEIAG provision. It would also enable Ofsted inspectors readily to identify from every SDP how schools are utilising these funds to support the implementation of their statutory duty.

11. Schools should also be required to post details on their school website of their CEIAG provision and plans – as well as the destinations⁶ of their students - thereby increasing transparent accountability to parents, local employers and local communities.
12. We recommend all schools should be required (or at the least encouraged/recommended) to account for how they utilise these new funds – e.g. schools might choose to secure some appropriate additional external professional careers guidance, and/or to invest in development work to secure and/or maintain accreditation through a CEIAG quality award (nationally validated by QiCS), and to embed links with employers effectively into their CEIAG provision.
13. **The new fund of £100m would thereby significantly enhance schools' ability to maximise the benefits of the small but significant NCS brokerage of employer/school links⁷ - with schools holding the purse strings for the new funds and determining what to buy in and from whom to meet their particular local needs.**
14. We believe that 12 months after the first £100m pot of delegated funds is allocated, a further thematic review should be undertaken by Ofsted to measure the impact. Should that Ofsted review fail to demonstrate the changes required to bring sufficient consistency of quality of provision, we believe that this would demand action by HMG and the statutory duty created by the Education Act 2011 should be the subject of an independent review; and, if needs be, legislative change should be prepared to ensure that the NCS is enabled (and funded) directly to provide more services - including face to face careers guidance for young people - at local level to redress the inconsistencies.
15. **It is important to remember that the current position is that adults (including parents of school-aged students) can access the NCS at local level, but not their children under 19.**

⁶ Schools should publish data on these three aspects: (i) intended destinations, (ii) September offer, (iii) the annual activity survey. We do, however, have concerns about the current use of destination measures. School destinations are taken at a snapshot in time and do not consider sustainment in the cohort's Post 16 option.

Simplistic destination measures do not assess how many young people from the school are leaving their chosen sixth form and FE courses early having made the wrong choice. We question does a school know? The introduction of raising the participation age (RPA) has meant that some young people are enrolling in learning options which may not be their first choice and this is causing them to struggle on their course and drop out.

One recent Ofsted report mentions the small number of leavers from Year 11 who left as NEET, crediting the IAG in the school for this, however it does not take into account or mention the higher numbers of the same year group who went into employment without training or those whose destination was not known at all. This begs these questions "Is the destination measure Ofsted is interested in NEET or Not Participating?" and "How does this fit with RPA?" We believe it is important to define what is "good" and put destination measures in context –hence Ofsted should also make comparisons with other schools in the area and consider the figure as a percentage not a number.

⁷ The NCS currently has a national budget of £75,400,000 p.a. of which £15,400,000 is dedicated for work within prisons and under the Youth Contract. Therefore it is 5% of £60,000,000 which NCS contractors may deploy on 'partnership' activity to support employer links with schools; this amounts to £3m, which if flat profiled equates only to £750 per school p.a.

16. If the changes we believe are required to make the failing current policy work do not bring the consistency of provision which young people deserve (and the economic and social health of the nation requires), then legislative change must be considered to redress this.

Part Two: Careers England's policy on Careers Information, Advice and Guidance for adults

17. **Future careers support for adults must support the growth of the country's economy.**
18. Looking to 2015 and beyond, we urge that top priority must see future Her Majesty's Government (HMG) establishing a **new Policy Framework** across government which ensures that there is cross-department collaboration (Department for Education, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills and Department for Work & Pensions) to make most effective use of all public funding on careers support for adults.
19. Careers England supports the need for a continuing **National Careers Service (NCS)**. We advocate a **new Policy Framework** (see below) which minimalises the possibility that this **national** service might have too little that is assured at every local/regional level. A post-code lottery for adults must be avoided. Local flexibility and the new involvement of Local Enterprise Partnerships is welcomed but there must be consistency of delivery at national and regional levels
20. The primary purpose of careers support must be **to build individuals' career development and career management skills**; not simply concentrating upon short-term "progression into a job". Individuals need careers support to enable them to gain these skills and confidence, to take control of their future learning, find fulfilling work and manage their career pathways.
21. The service will therefore secure outcomes which will have personal benefits for individuals, and economic benefits for their future employers and thus for the economy. We believe that a new cross-government **Policy Framework**, which will enable the NCS to thrive and thus bring these benefits, should ensure that **the NCS has these key characteristics**:
 - (i) **contractually bound** by a national core specification and delivery framework⁸ which is sufficiently flexible to enable NCS provision to be locally/individually tailored to meet particular individual and economic needs;
 - (ii) **national branding** supported by strong promotion and marketing;
 - (iii) **delivery at all levels by nationally quality assured providers**, which includes appropriate requirements for skilled and competent staff at all levels in delivery organisations from point of reception/access through to direct delivery of services (including appropriate face-to-face support), and in leadership and management;
 - (iv) **enabled by the new HMG Policy Framework to establish** in every part of the country **an effective interface with partners such as DWP/JCP for the benefit of all clients**;
 - (v) **enabled by the new HMG Policy Framework to establish** in every Local Enterprise Partnership area of the country, **effective working together between NCS and the LEP (and other sources of LMI)**, bringing benefits for individuals and employers (not least responding effectively to identified skills gaps);

⁸ Careers England will be undertaking more work in the coming months, setting out our thoughts on this: see also points 6 and 7 in the Policy text.

- (vi) **underpinned by appropriate national digital/web provision** for the wider public (enabling all-age digital access to the service) which is integrated within the NCS, signposting adults to a range of 'approved' resources provided by a range of suppliers for national and local audiences;
- (vii) **supported by nationally-provided resources** for NCS providers to access to enhance their delivery provision.

22. Future policy must address the ageing population. This now exerts a major influence on all aspects of social and economic life. Managing an extended working life is vital for individuals' success and for their employers. The recent Mid Life Career Review by NIACE⁹ recommended that an extended working life should take account of other demands on them and individuals' personal aspirations. The future Policy Framework for careers support for adults should ensure that career reviews for older workers (50+) are built into the service provision.

23. The new national specification and contracting arrangements will need to **address how the future NCS is funded**. Careers England advocates a future funding regime which balances contractual values - recognising both the value of interventions with clients with learning and skills development as well as employment outcomes. NCS providers need to be incentivised to invest in building the career development skills, confidence and resilience of clients as much as enabling them to secure progression into a positive learning and/or work outcome.

⁹ <http://www.niace.org.uk/news/niace-s-mid-life-career-review-part-of-new-government-strategy>

Part Three: Careers England's policy on employer engagement

24. John Cridland, CBI Director General said: *"We know careers advice is on life support in many areas, as schools struggle with the statutory duty... businesses needs to roll up their sleeves and get stuck in"*.
25. Ofsted found that *"Links with employers were the weakest aspect of careers guidance in sixty schools visited. About two thirds of the schools reported that they had cut down their work experience provision for students in years 10 and 11 because of a reduced budget and because of recommendations in the Wolf Report"*.
26. In 2013, the government published its Inspiration Agenda which placed greater emphasis on the aspirations, inspiration and motivation of young people, and linked these concepts to contributions from employers and employees. This encouraged schools to adopt activities such as:
- Inspiring speakers
 - Workplace visits
 - Work experience
 - Help with CV and mock interviews
 - Mentoring (especially for those at risk of becoming NEET)
27. The Inspiration Agenda has been further reinforces with the refocusing of five percent of the National Careers Service funding for this area and the recently announced Careers and Enterprise company being established to facilitate greater employer engagement in schools and colleges.

Careers England's position

28. We strongly support employer engagement in careers education and work related learning in schools and colleges and have emphasised the importance of improved co-ordination between employers, professional careers advisers and schools and colleges.
29. We believe employers can contribute to the career development of young people in four ways:
- Providing information, inspiration and advice about the world of work through talks and other interactions such as mentoring and exhibitions
 - Providing opportunities to experience and learn about work and gain careers related skills through placement, visits and online resources
 - Contributing to careers education activities such as CV preparation and interview practice
 - Providing young people with contracts within the world of work (social capital)
30. The benefits to employers from engaging in these activities are very significant. They include:
- Direct benefits such as recruitment opportunities
 - Indirect benefits such as reputational advantage and fulfilling corporate social responsibility objectives
 - Workforce development benefits derived from employees building new skills and knowledge
31. However there are constraints on the contribution employers can make, for example:
- This is not their core business and they have time and resource constraints

- They are often limited to a detached knowledge of their own vocational area only
32. In summary, employer engagement on its own is not the complete solution to meeting young people's career needs. Career professionals working in partnership with employers is the most efficient model.
33. Career professionals (whether employed directly by the school or an external agency) are careers advisers qualified to at least Level 6 or a teacher who holds responsibility for the delivery of careers education and/or work related curriculum activities. They contribute by:
- Providing brokerage to ensure the contributions of employers are maximised and efficiently used
 - Managing careers education and guidance programmes within schools which involves employers
 - Providing professional careers guidance which is impartial and addresses young people's distinctive interests, abilities, aptitude and aspirations
 - Providing a comprehensive view of the local labour market

Conclusion

34. Employer and career professionals both have distinctive and complementary contributions to make to the career planning of young people. Working together within a planned programme of careers education and guidance enables them to provide more effective support to young people than they would on their own.

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For more information please visit www.careersengland.org.uk.