

Consultation

Launch Date 9 May 2012  
Respond by 1 August 2012  
Ref: Department for Education

## **Consultation on careers guidance for schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions**

From this September, the Education Act 2011 will place schools under a duty to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for pupils in years 9-11. The purpose of this consultation is to gather views on whether the new duty should be extended down to pupils in year 8 and upwards to young people up to the age of 18 studying in schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions. Subject to this consultation and to the parliamentary process, we are aiming to amend the age range by regulations from September 2013.



# Consultation on careers guidance for schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions

## A Consultation

**To** All those interested in Careers Guidance

**Issued** 9 May 2012

**Enquiries To** If you have a query relating to the policy content or consultation process you can contact the DfE National Helpline on: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's '[Contact us](#)' page or by emailing: [CareersGuidance.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CareersGuidance.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk)

## 1 Background and Context

- 1.1 Access to information and guidance about the options that are open to them and the progression routes to which those options lead, is an important factor in ensuring young people are able to make the most of the opportunities that are available post-16. This goes hand-in-hand with a focus on raising aspirations, broadening horizons and increasing social mobility, to the benefit both of individual young people, and of the economy and society in general.
- 1.2 Section 29 of the Education Act 2011 inserts a new section 42A into the Education Act 1997 to require, from September 2012, that maintained schools and pupil referral units in England secure independent careers guidance for pupils in the school year in which they reach the age of 14 until they have ceased to be of compulsory school age. The guidance must be presented in an impartial manner, provided in the best interests of the student and offer information on all 16-18 education or training options, including Apprenticeships.
- 1.3 Recently published statutory guidance, available on the DfE website at <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/q00205755/statutory-guidance-for-schools-careers-guidance-for-young-people> set a clear expectation that schools should secure face-to-face careers guidance where it is the most suitable support, particularly for the disadvantaged. Beyond this, schools will be free to make arrangements for careers guidance that fit the needs and circumstances of their pupils, and will be expected to work, as appropriate, in partnership with external and expert providers.
- 1.4 The existing delegated power in section 46 of the Education Act 1997 has been amended through the Education Act 2011 to allow the Secretary of State for Education to make provision by regulations for amending the scope of the operation of the new section 42A duty.

- 1.5 The delegated power in section 46 allows section 42A to be extended to cover:
- Pupils who have attained the age of 13 (i.e. from Year 8 upwards) attending the types of schools already covered by the section 42A duty;
  - Over-16s attending the types of schools already covered by the section 42A duty; and
  - Over-16s attending institutions within the further education sector.
- 1.6 The Government is committed to raising the participation age to 17 by 2013 and to 18 by 2015. The decisions that young people make during the 16-18 phase of their education are just as important to them in realising their future potential. Our intention therefore is to ensure that all young people up to the age of 18 attending schools and institutions in the further education sector have access to high quality careers guidance, underpinned by the principles of independence and impartiality.
- 1.7 Extending access to independent careers guidance to 18-year-olds would require the duty to be introduced in sixth form colleges and further education colleges for the first time. We know that many colleges and further education institutions currently offer an excellent support service to their young people, including careers advice and guidance. This consultation provides an opportunity to assess whether a new requirement to secure access to independent careers guidance could successfully be introduced without creating any unnecessary burdens for post-16 institutions.
- 1.8 We want all young people in post-16 education and training to benefit from access to independent and impartial careers guidance on the range of options available to them. FE colleges are currently subject to a duty under section 45 of the Education Act 1997 to provide guidance materials and a wide range of up to date reference materials to their students. We would consider the future application of section 45 to 16-18 year olds in colleges in the event of extending the new duty to colleges. Outside the scope of this consultation, we will also look at options for extending the new requirements to 16-18 year olds in other educational settings, including apprentices and those in work-based education and training.
- 1.9 We are also seeking views on securing access to independent careers guidance for pupils in year 8. The expansion of the range of providers available to young people, including the introduction of University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools, can mean that early guidance on the opportunities available locally will be important. Introducing independent careers guidance from year 8 might also benefit those attending middle schools, who would in some instances be entering their first year of secondary school in year 9 and also be making subject and option choices in the same year. The consultation will help us to assess whether there is a strong enough case for extending the legislative requirement to those in year 8 as the best way to secure appropriate support or whether this is best left to the discretion of schools, depending on the needs and circumstances of their pupils.

- 1.10 The new National Careers Service is an authoritative source of professional careers advice and information on careers and employment opportunities, further education, Apprenticeships and other types of training, and higher education. It is available through a website and national online and telephone services for young people and adults.
- 1.11 The National Careers Service also provides a face-to-face careers guidance service to adults in a wide variety of places in communities. Schools may choose to purchase face-to-face services from organisations delivering the National Careers Service or other expert providers.
- 1.12 The **matrix** Standard is the Government's quality standard for information, advice and guidance. It will quality assure the National Careers Service (face-to-face, telephone helpline and the website). All organisations who deliver the National Careers Service will be expected to be accredited to the revised **matrix** Standard by April 2013.
- 1.13 Further information about the Government's policy on careers guidance can be found on the DfE website at:  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/16to19/careersguidance/a0064052/the-role-of-schools-and-local-authorities-in-careers-guidance> and on the BIS website at:  
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/n/12-677-national-careers-service-right-advice-right-time.pdf>

## 2 How To Respond

- 2.1 You can respond to the consultation by completing the response form and emailing it to: [CareersGuidance.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CareersGuidance.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk) or sending it by post, by 1 August 2012, to:

Department for Education  
Consultation Unit, Area 1C,  
Castle View House,  
East Lane,  
Runcorn,  
Cheshire,  
WA7 2GJ

## 3 Additional Copies

- 3.1 Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from the Department for Education e-consultation website at:  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>

#### 4 Plans for making results public

- 4.1 The results of the consultation will be published in Autumn 2012 on the Department for Education e-consultation website and on the BIS website page Further Education and Skills <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/further-education-skills>