

Careers Profession Task Force

# Towards a strong careers profession

An independent report to the  
Department for Education

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## Foreword

Excellent careers advice is too important to leave to chance, because it is essential to personal and economic wellbeing. Now, more than ever, making the right decisions about learning or work really matters. Economic growth demands even higher-level skills and no-one is guaranteed a career for life. Decisions – whether they are about GCSEs and A levels, apprenticeships, university courses, or joining the professions – must be made on the basis of expert information and advice. Getting it wrong now can be costly – in thwarted personal ambitions and unmet skill needs.

High-quality careers advice is essential to a cohesive and upwardly-mobile society. In a recent speech, the Deputy Prime Minister identified some of the key barriers to social mobility, including differences in pre-school years, educational inequalities, levels of parental involvement, the gap between further and higher education and the difficulty for children from disadvantaged backgrounds entering the professions. I would add to that list: ill-informed and partial careers advice.

The Task Force has no doubt that professionalism underpins quality and our recommendations are designed to uphold common professional standards and ethics that will raise the status and integrity of career guidance in this country. And we are convinced that this new era of enhanced professional practice in career guidance will endure, regardless of any changes made to the way careers services are structured. This will, I believe, be regarded as a key turning point in the history of career guidance.

It is time for careers professionals to work together to provide a strong and unified voice, to show professional leadership and to take responsibility for transforming careers advice for young people, and their parents, who rightly expect excellence in the services they receive.

I was delighted to be asked to chair the Task Force on the Careers Profession. This is a subject close to my heart, having devoted my own career to supporting young people and adults to make the most of their talents. I saw first-hand as Principal at Lewisham College, where a professional culture pervaded everything we did, the critical role of career guidance in helping all members of the local community to succeed.

We owe it to all young people to give them the best possible support in making decisions about their future learning and work.

We believe that our recommendations will achieve that aim. In taking evidence we have been impressed by the determination of all those who work with young people to ensure that they receive career guidance of the highest quality. I would like to thank those who responded to our call for evidence as well as the members of the Task Force who devoted their energies, experiences and insights to this task.

**Dame Ruth Silver**

**Chair,**

## Our approach

The Task Force on the future of the Careers Profession was given a clear remit: to set out our vision for a transformed careers workforce in England which can offer young people the excellent careers service they deserve and expect. We were asked to recommend improvements to the recruitment, retention and development of careers professionals to achieve this aim. The formal Terms of Reference are at Annex 1.

Our inquiries focused on the actions needed to assure a high standard of professional practice. We have considered how to encourage a diverse workforce – one that is not only more representative in terms of gender, disabilities and ethnic background, but also with a variety of prior education and work experiences. We have also looked at the specific issue of specialisms within the profession, including how the careers profession could help to increase the number of people seeking to progress into careers in science, technology, engineering or maths (STEM).

Members of the Careers Profession Task Force were appointed to bring a range of relevant experience and interests. The members and their organisations are listed at Annex 2.

The Task Force met regularly and consulted extensively over a seven-month period. We listened to views presented by a range of people with relevant perspectives and we received written submissions through an open call for evidence (Annex 3). Members of the Task Force were also commissioned to carry out their own research and to submit papers. All the papers received by the Task Force are available at [www.cegnet.co.uk](http://www.cegnet.co.uk).

The Task Force's focus has been on the careers profession working with young people in England. However, many of the findings apply, or will be of interest, to all parts of the careers profession, working in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, with young people and adults, throughout the United Kingdom.

The Task Force is reporting to a newly-elected Government that is still developing its policies in relation to careers services – an area subjected to significant policy reform over recent years. By focusing on the principles of professionalism, we have sought to ensure our recommendations remain relevant to the careers profession regardless of any new policies that may be introduced. We are confident that our findings can help to inform the new Government's policies in relation to career guidance.

The Task Force is grateful to all those people and organisations who contributed to our inquiries: their evidence and perspectives were a fundamental part of our argument and analysis, and are reflected in the findings throughout this report.

## Our recommendations in summary

### Chapter 1: The careers profession in context

*Careers Advisers and Careers Educators provide careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) programmes to young people in schools and colleges. They work in partnership, bringing together Careers Advisers' specialist expertise with Careers Educators' knowledge of the school context. Using this 'partnership model', they can provide a CEIAG programme that is impartial, contemporary and focused on the abilities and interests of each individual student.*

**Recommendation 1:** The Task Force is persuaded of the importance of the partnership model, and recommends that Government should seek to maintain and strengthen this model as it develops its future vision for careers education and guidance.

### Chapter 2: A stronger, more unified profession

*Careers Advisers and Careers Educators are part of a wider community of practice which covers those who provide careers services to young people and adults, in a wide range of contexts and settings. This community of practice is only weakly professionalised. It does not have the essential characteristics of a strong and autonomous profession: the capability to speak with one voice, and a common set of professional standards and a code of ethics.*

**Recommendation 2:** The Task Force welcomes the action recently taken by the main careers professional associations to establish an overarching group for the membership bodies, the Careers Profession Alliance, as a single authoritative voice, and recommends that Government should demonstrate its active support and encouragement for this process.

**Recommendation 3:** The Task Force recommends that the Careers Profession Alliance should develop common professional standards and a common code of ethics for careers professionals, and that all organisations represented in the Alliance should expect their members to adhere to these standards.

*In order to assure a high quality careers service for young people and adults, the common professional standards should include a minimum entry-level qualification for careers professionals and a commitment to continuing professional development (CPD).*

**Recommendation 4:** The Task Force recommends that members of the careers profession should be expected to achieve a minimum level 6 (QCF) qualification before starting to practise, that the Careers Profession Alliance, working principally with Careers England (and involving the broader base of employers of careers professionals), should support such transition arrangements as are necessary for those individuals currently practising below this level, and that consideration should be given to raising the minimum level to level 7 within five years.

**Recommendation 5:** In support of a more diverse workforce, the Task Force recognises the importance of the work-based route into the profession (leading to a level 6 qualification) and recommends the development of a single career progression framework which is capable of incorporating the concepts of 'Careers First' and 'Careers Last'.

**Recommendation 6:** The Task Force recommends that the organisations forming the Careers Profession Alliance should expect their members (whether individual members of the

careers profession or employers of careers professionals) to demonstrate a commitment to CPD.

*In addition to updating core knowledge and skills, continuing professional development also helps careers professionals to keep pace with the dynamic contexts in which they work, and to develop knowledge and skills in new areas of economic and political priority.*

**Recommendation 7:** The Task Force recommends that initial training and CPD should include a focus on labour market information (LMI), information and communications technology (ICT), and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), all of which are crucial to all members of the careers profession in delivering high-quality career guidance; and that, through CPD, there should be opportunities for further development of ‘specialisms’, leading towards the concept of an Advanced Careers Practitioner.

**Recommendation 8:** The Task Force recommends that the organisations in the Careers Profession Alliance should consider requiring their members to self-declare the nature and amount of CPD they have undertaken each year, with a random sample being required to provide evidence to assure quality.

### Chapter 3: The careers profession at work with young people

*Careers Advisers and Careers Educators are the foremost providers of CEIAG to young people. As with all careers professionals, Careers Advisers and Careers Educators should be trusted to recognise the importance of careers professionalism to their own skills and competencies.*

**Recommendation 9:** The Task Force recommends that both Careers Advisers and Careers Educators, where they consider themselves to be careers professionals, must uphold the professional standards and meet other expectations of the careers profession.

*Schools and colleges play a crucial role in supporting young people’s CEIAG. There are a range of measures available to schools and colleges to help them assure students and their parents of high-quality CEIAG.*

**Recommendation 10:** The Task Force recommends that an overarching national kite mark should be established to validate the different CEIAG quality awards for schools, colleges and work-based learning providers.

**Recommendation 11:** The Task Force recommends that any organisation that is making arrangements for the provision of career guidance to young people should ensure that the provider meets a relevant, nationally approved quality standard, and that Government should support the establishment of such a standard.

*Examples of good CEIAG do exist, and schools, colleges and work-based learning providers need help to spread this good practice throughout the system.*

**Recommendation 12:** The Task Force recommends that the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services, the Training and Development Agency for Schools and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, working with Ofsted, the Careers Profession Alliance and Careers England (and involving the broader base of employers of careers professionals), should help schools, colleges and work-based learning providers to learn from and share examples of good practice.

**Recommendation 13:** The Task Force recommends that Ofsted should carry out a thematic review of CEIAG for young people, in a variety of contexts, to help identify excellent

CEIAG provision and to establish a baseline for future development; and should carry out a further such review within three years to evaluate the progress that has been made.

## **Chapter 4: Taking responsibility**

*Our recommendations place much of the responsibility for change with the careers profession itself, but, in order to be fully effective, the recommendations need to be supported by all parts of the careers community, including schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and employers. Government can help to facilitate the process.*

**Recommendation 14:** The Task Force recommends that Government should assure itself that the careers profession is rising to the challenge of implementing the Task Force's recommendations by commissioning reports on progress in March 2011 and March 2012.

## Chapter 1: The careers profession in context

The brief of this Task Force has been to consider those members of the careers profession who provide careers education, information, advice and guidance to young people. However, many of the individuals who work with young people are part of a wider careers profession – the broad community of practice that provides careers services to people of all ages. The partnership between those who work within schools and colleges to deliver programmes of CEIAG (Careers Educators) and those who are external to the school or college (Careers Advisers) is at the heart of effective careers guidance for young people.

*“We are clearly, as a nation, still wasting talent on a scale which is scandalous. It is a moral failure, an affront against social justice which we have to put right.”* (Michael Gove, speech at National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services Annual Conference, June 2010)

### Choice is a feature of the world we live in

- 1.1** Choice is an important part of the education system. It gives all students, from all backgrounds, the freedom and opportunity to pursue subjects and interests which best suit their talents and aspirations. It is critical that young people and their parents are well-informed about the potential of these decisions, and the positive ways they can influence their future working lives. For this to happen, young people need good careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). At its best, CEIAG empowers young people – of all abilities, interests and ambitions – with the knowledge and understanding they need to progress on to further and higher education and into sustainable employment.
- 1.2** In the best schools and colleges, information, advice and guidance about learning and work is provided to students as part of a careers education and guidance programme. Such programmes help students to acquire the knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to take advantage of the freedoms and opportunities education brings, and that shape their capacity to make a positive contribution to society.

### Young people are facing an increasingly competitive employment market

- 1.3** The effects of the recession have reinforced the pressures on young people. Recent figures show that just over 10% of people aged 16-18, and just over 15% of 16-24 year olds, are not in education, employment or training<sup>1</sup>. Competition for jobs, and for training places, is fierce. The number of graduate vacancies fell by nearly 7% for the recruitment year 2009/10, and 69 graduates on average applied for each graduate vacancy<sup>2</sup>. Employers and training providers

<sup>1</sup> Department for Education (2010). *NEET Statistics – Quarterly Brief Quarter 2*  
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000950/index.shtml>

<sup>2</sup> Association of Graduate Recruiters (2010). *Summer Survey 2010*  
<http://www.agr.org.uk/content/Class-of-2010-Faces-Uphill-Struggle-for-Jobs>

are also reporting significant increases in applications from school-leavers. This year BT said it received 100 applications for each of its 221 apprenticeship places, and Network Rail reported receiving 4,000 applications for just over 200 apprenticeships. The training provider City & Guilds announced that enquiries about its vocational qualifications are up 20% on last summer<sup>3</sup>.

**1.4** The UK economy faces significant skills shortages at technician and associate professional level in important growth sectors. In particular, there is a shortage of people both with and seeking to acquire high-level skills in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM): a CBI/Edexcel study estimates that by 2014 the UK will need to fill around 730,000 extra jobs in high-growth STEM sectors<sup>4</sup>. However, relatively fewer people are studying STEM at university and only around half of STEM graduates work in science-based jobs three or four years after qualifying<sup>5</sup>.<sup>6</sup> Employers are demanding higher level skills in all sectors; by 2020 there will be 3 million fewer low-skilled jobs in Britain than there are today<sup>7</sup>.

**1.5** The Government has responded to employers' demands. Its *Strategy for Sustainable Growth* announced extra funding for technician-level apprenticeship training and a new growth and innovation fund to help invest in training for high-growth areas<sup>8</sup>. Society has a responsibility, to parents and their children, to ensure that young people are aware of these opportunities, aspire to them, and are equipped with the knowledge and skills to progress into these high-skilled jobs of, and for, the future.

## High quality careers guidance can help young people make good choices

**1.6** Not only is there a moral responsibility to help young people respond to these challenges, but also, as growth returns to the economy, there is a social and economic imperative to enable young people to take advantage of the employment opportunities which are likely to emerge. High quality CEIAG can help young people to make good choices, both for them and for the wider economy, matching skills supply more closely with demand.

**1.7** Consistently good CEIAG can also make opportunity more equal, helping to create a fairer, more just society. Recent studies show poorer children often have lower levels of aspiration and less access to social networks for advice about higher education and work than their richer peers<sup>9</sup>. Aspiration deficits 'play an important part in explaining why poor children typically do worse at school'<sup>10</sup>. A survey of young people from workless families found that 70% have

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<sup>3</sup> The Guardian (2010). 'BT receives 24,000 applications for 220 apprenticeships', <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2010/aug/16/bt-apprenticeships-record-applications>

<sup>4</sup> Centre for Science Education (2009). *STEM Choices: A Resource Pack for Careers Education and Information, Advice and Guidance Practitioners* <http://www.cegnet.co.uk/files/CEGNET0001/STEM-final.pdf> (p.1.1)

<sup>5</sup> Evidence presented to the Task Force by Diana Garnham, Chief Executive of the Science Council, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Centre for Science Education (2009). *STEM Supply and Demand Research* [http://www.futuremorph.org/\\_db/\\_documents/STEM-section10.pdf](http://www.futuremorph.org/_db/_documents/STEM-section10.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> DCSF (2009). *Quality, Choice and Aspiration: A Strategy for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance* <http://publications.education.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00977-2009> (p.9)

<sup>8</sup> BIS (2010). *A Strategy for Sustainable Growth* [http://www.interactive.bis.gov.uk/.../growth/.../8782-BIS-Sustainable-Growth\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.interactive.bis.gov.uk/.../growth/.../8782-BIS-Sustainable-Growth_WEB.pdf) (p.10)

<sup>9</sup> Goodman, A. and Gregg, P. (2010) *The Importance of Attitudes and Behaviour for Poorer Children's Educational Attainment*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/educational-attainment-poor-children>; and Ermisch, J. and Del Bono, E. (2010) *Education Mobility in England - The link between the education levels of parents and the educational outcomes of teenagers*, The Sutton Trust <http://www.suttontrust.com/research/education-mobility-in-england/>

<sup>10</sup> Goodman, A. and Gregg, P. (2010) *The Importance of Attitudes and Behaviour for Poorer Children's Educational Attainment*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation (p.1)

struggled to find work, and 25% feel their parents do not have the knowledge to help them find employment. 49% of young people living in an area of high unemployment say they do not have role models whose careers they look up to and respect<sup>11</sup>. Good and impartial CEIAG can help to correct these imbalances, raising expectations at an early age and helping all young people – regardless of background – to progress, prosper and make the most of their talents<sup>12</sup>

## Career guidance has been subject to many changes in the last two decades

- 1.8** Recent studies have highlighted how careers professionals working with young people have not always been given the freedoms and resources they need in order to carry out their jobs effectively. In March 2010, Ofsted reported that ‘the increasing range of options for 14-19 year olds had extended the caseload of Personal Advisers in the Connexions service. They were also facing the pressures of keeping up to date with a wide range of developments so that they could provide well-informed and impartial advice’<sup>14</sup>. A National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)/National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) survey revealed that many careers professionals working in schools are unable to devote sufficient time to their careers-related work – 59% of Careers Coordinators reported spending four hours or less managing CEIAG in their school, and most commonly two (17%) or three hours (15%)<sup>15</sup>.
- 1.9** Many of the studies highlight inconsistencies in the quality of young people’s careers services, noting marked variations in the level and type of qualification held by Careers Advisers. A survey of all 150 local authorities by NICEC/CfBT Education Trust in 2008 revealed: ‘significant variations in the definitions and descriptions of roles, plus considerable uncertainty about the appropriateness and currency of qualifications in the fields of career guidance and youth support’<sup>16</sup>.
- 1.10** The Ofsted report from March 2010 concluded that: ‘In the secondary schools visited, careers education was sometimes taught by those who did not have sufficient and up to date knowledge, and, in some cases, the provision was perfunctory. The information, advice and guidance given were not always sufficiently impartial about the options available to young people at the age of 16, for example where secondary schools had their own sixth forms’<sup>17</sup>.
- 1.11** These reports seem to match the views held by some young people. A survey by the education foundation Edge found that 51% of young people said CEIAG is not working for them. The survey notes that ‘careers advice, work experience, and employment skills make up 60% of what young people believe education can do better to prepare them for their chosen career’<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The Prince’s Trust (2010). *Destined for the Dole: Breaking the Cycle of Worklessness in the UK*, , [http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about\\_the\\_trust/what\\_we\\_do/research/destined\\_for\\_the\\_dole1.aspx](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about_the_trust/what_we_do/research/destined_for_the_dole1.aspx)

<sup>12</sup> Gutman, L. M. and Akerman, R. (2008). *Determinants of Aspirations*, Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education

<sup>13</sup> Morris, M. and Rutt, S. (2006). *Evaluation of Aimhigher: Excellence Challenge Longitudinal Pupil Analysis Report*, DfES.

<sup>14</sup> Ofsted (2010). *Moving through the System: information, advice and guidance* <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Moving-through-the-system-information-advice-and-guidance> (p.9).

<sup>15</sup> McCrone, T., Marshall, H., White, K., Reed, F., Morris, M., Andrews, D. and Barnes, A. (2009). *Careers Coordinators in Schools* (DCSF Research Report 171). London: DCSF, (p.15)

<sup>16</sup> McGowan, A., Watts, A.G. and Andrews, D. (2009). *Local Variations: A follow-up study of new arrangements for Connexions/Careers/IAG Services for Young People in England* <http://www.iccdpp.org/Portals/1/Assessing%20Policy%20Effectiveness09.pdf> p.28)

<sup>17</sup> Ofsted (2010) *Moving through the System: information advice and guidance* (p.5).

<sup>18</sup> Edge (2010). *Edge Learners’ Survey 2010*, (p.15)

- 1.12** Further evidence submitted to the Task Force echoed and reinforced these observations, but also noted that the inconsistencies in quality are at least partly attributable to some of the recent reforms to which careers services in England have been subjected (see Annex 4). In particular, in recent times a central Government focus upon reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) has meant that many Careers Advisers have not been able to devote sufficient time to their career guidance responsibilities.
- 1.13** For young people to have an excellent CEIAG service, it needs to be provided by a highly-esteemed group of specialist careers professionals. But, as we explore below, the core principles of professionalism do not exist formally across the careers profession. Inconsistent levels of professionalism, along with the continual changes to the ownership and purposes of careers services and therefore to the role and responsibilities of Careers Advisers, mean that not all Advisers working with young people have the knowledge and status of expert careers professionals. We are certain that the lack of professionalism within the careers profession is a key reason why young people's careers services are not always as good as they should be.

## A broad community of practice working with people of all ages

- 1.14** Careers professionals working with young people are part of a wider community of practice, which includes those working in higher education and with adults in the public and private sectors, in a wide range of contexts and settings. These groups are represented by a number of different professional associations. This is why it can be difficult to identify a 'careers profession', which often means different things to different people. Indeed, the Task Force is not convinced that this community of practice is yet fully a profession. If it is, it is only weakly professionalised.

## Developing the community of practice into a profession

- 1.15** The Task Force recognises that excellent practice does exist in the current system, but has seen evidence that standards of practice are not as consistent as they should be, and regards this as symptomatic of a profession that is not yet strong. Careers services will only ever be as good as the calibre of the professionals providing those services and of the organisations that employ them.
- 1.16** Recent international studies have highlighted the importance of specialist careers professionals to a high-quality service<sup>19</sup>, and note that 'the career guidance sector in many countries is changing as career guidance becomes a separate practice and a distinct occupation, pushing the sector towards professionalism'<sup>20</sup>.
- 1.17** The Task Force agrees that professionalism is at the heart of a quality service. Professions – though they are different in purpose and in nature – have common characteristics, to which the careers profession should aspire.

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<sup>19</sup> OECD (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap* <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/45/34050171.pdf>; and Cedefop (2009). *Professionalising Career Guidance: Practitioner competencies and qualification routes in Europe* [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information.../5193\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information.../5193_en.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Reid, H. (2007). *Study on the Accreditation Schemes of OECD Countries* (p.7)

## Characteristics of a profession

A profession is one whose members:

- uphold professional standards and a code of ethics;
- are committed to CPD and professional-level qualifications;
- encourage professional practice;
- seek to widen access to the profession while driving up standards;
- contribute to research and the profession's body of knowledge;
- are endorsed by employers and users of the service as providers of a consistent and excellent service;
- challenge and innovate; and
- encourage intellectual curiosity.

**1.18** The Task Force considers it is a mark of a strong profession that it can set and build these characteristics for itself, without having them imposed by government. This should support the creation of an identifiable and highly esteemed cadre of careers professionals, who will themselves help to establish the principles of professionalism and disseminate their importance throughout the wider workforce.

### The careers profession working with young people

**1.19** In line with the Task Force's Terms of Reference, this report focuses mainly on the members of the careers profession – the careers professionals – working with young people, who are drawn broadly from two main groups: Careers Advisers and Careers Educators.

#### Careers Advisers and Careers Educators

**Careers Advisers** are typically employed by an external, specialist provider of careers services, and work with Careers Educators to provide CEIAG to students in schools and colleges. Currently, the majority of Careers Advisers working with young people are employed by providers of Connexions services, where they are commonly referred to as Personal Advisers (though not all Personal Advisers are trained Careers Advisers).

**Careers Educators** are members of a school or college staff with a responsibility for coordinating, managing or providing CEIAG programmes for students.

**1.20** The Task Force has concluded that, while almost all Careers Advisers are likely to consider themselves to be careers professionals, not all Careers Educators will do so. Many members of a school staff – from senior leaders to classroom teachers, and from tutors to learning mentors – will have a role in informing young people of their career options and in supporting them to make appropriate choices. Most will be members of other professions, primarily the teaching profession, and will not consider themselves to be careers professionals. Others – particularly Careers Coordinators and some Careers Leaders – are more likely to do so.

**1.21** The Task Force considers that a careers professional is someone who adheres to the principles and standards set by the careers profession. In coming to a view about whether they regard

themselves as belonging to the careers profession, we would expect an individual to consider this carefully and understand the obligations and standards that would apply. Membership of a professional body may be required by organisations providing career guidance services, and other employers – such as schools – may wish to encourage and support key members of staff to hold or to gain professional status.

### **The role of a careers professional working with young people**

Careers professionals provide young people with impartial CEIAG that challenges preconceptions and stereotypes, is free from institutional bias, values both academic and vocational routes and is informed by the labour market. This helps young people to:

- choose the subjects and qualification routes that are right for them and meet their aspirations for further and higher education, work-based learning and work; and
- make decisions that enable them to achieve in education to the highest possible level.

A careers professional contributes to a young person's preparation for, and understanding of, the world of work by helping him or her to:

- understand the opportunities within a dynamic labour market;
- access local, national and international labour market information;
- understand the requirements and demands of particular occupations;
- understand the attributes and values required for working life; and
- gain first-hand experience of career and educational opportunities.

A careers professional supports young people to progress and prosper by helping them to:

- plan, manage and develop their careers;
- develop a strong sense of personal responsibility and the resilience to overcome barriers to achieve their goals;
- broaden their horizons, raise aspirations and appreciate their potential to progress;
- understand the benefits of further and higher education; and
- gain access to wider networks, which increase their understanding of career routes and the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

**1.22** Not all the aspects of the role of a careers professional are necessarily undertaken solely by careers professionals. Parents, teachers and support staff in schools will have an important role in raising young people's aspirations and supporting them as they make choices for education

and work. But a strong partnership between a Careers Adviser and Careers Educators is at the heart of high-quality CEIAG for young people.

**1.23** This is described as the 'partnership model', wherein Careers Advisers and Careers Educators work together to provide CEIAG programmes to students, bringing together specialist careers expertise with knowledge of the school context. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development recognises the partnership model as the best way to provide CEIAG to young people<sup>21</sup>, and this model has underpinned the provision of career guidance in England for many years. Together, Careers Advisers and Careers Educators can provide a CEIAG programme that is impartial, contemporary and focused on the abilities and interests of each individual student.

**Recommendation 1: The Task Force is persuaded of the importance of the partnership model, and recommends that Government should seek to maintain and strengthen this model as it develops its future vision for careers education and guidance.**

### Successful Partnership Models

The George Spencer Academy in Nottinghamshire was granted academy status in September 2010 and was judged to be "outstanding" by Ofsted in 2010.

Each year, the Connexions Personal Adviser works with the Deputy Headteacher to draw up a School Partnership which outlines the work that the Connexions Personal Advisor will undertake. The link with the senior management team is critical as it helps to position IAG as an important priority for the school and establishes links with the school's Careers Education programme.

Through this link the Connexions Advisor can access the school's careers budget to purchase materials and liaise closely with Heads of Year to ensure the agreed programme of activity is delivered effectively.

The annual partnership agreement outlines the programme of work for the year including what year groups will receive group work and how this will sit within the school's CEG programme.

Connexions attends many different evenings events at school which attract good parental attendance including year 9 progress evenings, year 9 market place (GCSE options), year 10 progress, year 11 progress, year 11 post-16 options, 6th form fresher's' fair etc. In addition, Connexions are always invited to years 9-11 multi-agency meetings in school where those needing additional support are discussed.

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<sup>21</sup> OECD (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap* <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/45/34050171.pdf>

The Cheltenham Ladies' College has a strong relationship with ISCO Careers Service which is part of the Inspiring Futures Foundation. This complements and enhances the support that students receive from the College's Professional Guidance Department, which was praised by ISI inspectors.

The ISCO programme starts in Year 10 when students attend an initial career planning briefing, which challenges them to start thinking about their future plans and introduces them to the Futurewise careers and higher education guidance scheme. At the start of Year 11, students complete a career interests questionnaire and a psychometric assessment, which generates a comprehensive profile and career suggestions. Students access their profile and career suggestions via a personalised webspace and a hard copy report is provided for parents, who also have access online.

Following a group session about how to interpret their profile and log onto their Futurewise webspaces, students meet one of the Foundation's careers advisers for an individual, impartial discussion on post 16, post 18 and post 21 plans and decisions. An action plan is agreed and many students recognise the value of exploring careers and developing employability skills by undertaking work experience placements and attending Futurewise career experience events which are supported by professional associations, employers and higher education.

## Chapter 2: A stronger, more unified profession

A strong careers profession will be well placed to meet the demands of the 21st century. That profession needs to uphold common professional standards and ethics, be highly qualified, and demonstrate a commitment to CPD. Whilst this report primarily focuses on the careers profession working with young people, the recommendations in this Chapter apply equally to all members of the careers profession, whether they provide careers services to young people, higher education students or adults, and whether they work in the public, private or voluntary and community sectors.

### Working together, with a single voice

- 2.1** Within the UK, there are five main professional associations for the careers profession<sup>22</sup>. Between them they represent the interests of individuals providing careers services in a range of settings and to customers of all ages, not just young people. Whilst most members of the UK associations are part of the careers profession, the different contexts in which they work have led them to have separate associations to represent their distinctive purposes.

#### Professional associations

##### **Institute of Career Guidance (ICG)**

Represents career guidance practitioners/managers/leaders, and Careers Advisers working in the public, private and voluntary sectors across the UK. Its annual average membership is over 4,500.

##### **Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)**

Has a membership of around 2,130 careers service managers, Careers Advisers and other careers service staff based in higher education institutions across the UK.

##### **Association for Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG)**

Represents Careers Educators - mainly Careers Coordinators and Careers Leaders - and has a membership of around 1,330.

##### **National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults (NAEGA)**

Has around 700 members who provide adult career guidance at different levels and in different settings.

##### **Association of Career Professionals International (ACPI)**

The United Kingdom arm of this international body represents individuals working in careers, or career-related roles, in the private sector. The total membership is 450, of whom 38 are active UK members.

<sup>22</sup> The primary international association in the field of career guidance is the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG). Its main members are national associations, which represent over 21,000 career professionals from 53 countries in all continents.

**2.2** The Task Force considers the best and most effective professions to be capable of speaking with one voice. We strongly endorse the recent action taken by ICG, AGCAS, ACEG, NAEGA and ACPI, with the support of Lifelong Learning UK, to establish a Careers Profession Alliance: a single, authoritative voice which speaks and acts on behalf of the whole careers profession.

**Recommendation 2: The Task Force welcomes the action recently taken by the main careers professional associations to establish an overarching group for the membership bodies, the Careers Profession Alliance, as a single authoritative voice, and recommends that Government should demonstrate its active support and encouragement for this process.**

**2.3** In addition to the five main associations, other professional associations, such as the British Psychological Society and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, will have members who may regard themselves as part of the careers profession. It is important that the Careers Profession Alliance seeks to engage with all individuals who are part of, or at times work within, the careers profession, including those who may not be covered by the five main professional associations.

**2.4** Lessons from other countries and other professions show that a unified voice is the route to bringing credibility, status and autonomy to the careers profession<sup>23</sup>. As with all professions, the specific remit and governance of the Careers Profession Alliance should be decided by the profession itself, but we consider that the Alliance should take responsibility for:

- creating common professional standards and a code of ethics;
- disseminating the value of the professional standards across the profession and throughout the wider careers community;
- partnering with the relevant bodies to create a single career progression framework for the careers profession;
- maintaining relationships with other cognate professions and professional bodies;
- highlighting and promoting excellent professional practice; and
- raising public awareness of the role of careers professionals.

**2.5** The success and effectiveness of the Careers Profession Alliance, as it seeks to create a more professionalised careers service, will depend upon the support it receives. If the Alliance is to be the engine of change, it must be fully supported by all parts of the careers community including schools, colleges, work-based learning providers, employers and local authorities. Government will also have a role to play in helping to create the conditions and expectations which will enable the careers profession to develop.

## **A profession that shares common professional standards**

**2.6** It is important to assure both young people and adults that the professionals responsible for providing careers services meet a universally recognised level of professional practice. A strong and effective profession must have, at its centre, a common set of professional standards and a code of ethics. The Task Force was impressed and encouraged by the strong support within the careers profession for creating such standards. We strongly advise that these be drawn up by the Careers Profession Alliance and applied to all members of the profession, whether working with young people or adults.

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<sup>23</sup> With a small amount of funding and encouragement from the Australian Government, the Australian career guidance sector established a single body for career development practitioners – the Careers Industry Council of Australia (CICA). CICA has since developed common professional standards and a code of ethics for the careers profession in Australia.

**Recommendation 3: The Task Force recommends that the Careers Profession Alliance should develop common professional standards and a common code of ethics for careers professionals, and that all organisations represented in the Alliance should expect their members to adhere to these standards.**

**2.7** While the specifics of the professional standards, explored in further detail elsewhere in the report, were the subject of rigorous debate between Task Force members, there was a clear consensus on the broad requirements which should be included in the professional standards:

- adherence to a code of ethics;
- minimum entry qualification levels;
- minimum amounts of continuing professional development; and
- membership of an association represented by the Careers Profession Alliance.

**2.8** The Task Force is convinced that creating professional standards will mark the beginning of a new professionalism within the careers workforce – releasing the potential within the profession and establishing a new, highly-esteemed cadre of careers professionals. These professionals will hold status not only within the profession, but also amongst other professionals and, critically, with those using careers services and the wider public.

**2.9** For the professional standards truly to be effective, they need to be recognised and supported by the wider careers community. It is important that employers of careers professionals support their employees in meeting and upholding the standards, and we note below the vital role played by employers in supporting continuing professional development.

**2.10** The Task Force is confident that good employers will incorporate the professional standards into performance appraisals, but we recognise too that good professionals are responsible for their own development. Careers professionals should be trusted to reflect on how their performance benefits the client, whilst seeking to share professional practice and research through peer-to-peer support.

**2.11** In order for careers professionals to become a respected and high-status role, the Task Force agrees that there should be consequences for failing to uphold the professional standards. We concluded that, in time, the Careers Profession Alliance should establish a Register of Practice for careers professionals, with failure to uphold the professional standards leading to disciplinary action and dismissal from the Register.

## **High expectations for those entering the profession are important**

**2.12** The Task Force received substantial evidence in support of a minimum entry level qualification as part of the common professional standards. In-depth discussions took place between members of the Task Force about what the minimum level should be, with strong evidence put forward in favour of a minimum level 7 (QCF) qualification. However, a majority of evidence submitted to the Task Force called for a level 6 (QCF) minimum. Critically, a level 6 qualification can be attained both through the higher education Qualification in Careers Guidance and Lifelong Learning UK's work-based Diploma in Career Guidance and Development. The Children's Workforce Development Council is currently developing a transition award in career guidance to ensure that members of the careers profession with a Diploma in Learning Development and Support Services can practise at level 6.

**2.13** Proponents of a minimum level 7 qualification argued that the complexity of working in careers services requires skills that currently can only be developed at a postgraduate level. International research also highlights the growing number of countries which are moving towards postgraduate level training for careers professionals<sup>24</sup>. At this stage of the profession's development, the Task Force considers that a level 6 entry level qualification will improve current skill levels. But we recognise that a level 7 qualification should be part of a formal career progression framework for careers professionals and might, in time, become the minimum level for entry.

**2.14** Introducing a minimum level of entry qualification will help to raise the status of careers professionals and enable the profession to provide a better, more consistent service to young people and adults. But to ensure the professional standards remain an attainable aspiration for all those practising below level 6, the Task Force agreed there should be clear progression routes through to level 6 training and beyond.

**Recommendation 4: The Task Force recommends that members of the careers profession should be expected to achieve a minimum level 6 (QCF) qualification before starting to practise, that the Careers Profession Alliance, working principally with Careers England (and involving the broader base of employers of careers professionals), should support such transition arrangements as are necessary for those individuals currently practising below this level, and that consideration should be given to raising the minimum level to level 7 within five years.**

**2.15** Different career progression frameworks currently exist for different sectors of the careers profession. Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) recently developed a progression framework for individuals providing careers services to adults. The Children Workforce Development Council's (CWDC) Integrated Qualifications Framework, and the Training and Development Agency for Schools' (TDA) workforce development framework, covers members of the careers profession who work with young people. The Task Force found that the language and terminology used to describe the work and qualifications of the careers profession differed from one framework to the next. The degree of generic and specialist training available at different levels varied, and the diagrams used to illustrate the different frameworks were not compatible. Evidence submitted to the Task Force re-affirmed these findings, indicating that different frameworks reinforce divisions in the workforce and hinder progression both into and within the profession. Different frameworks also make it hard for people seeking to join the careers profession to find out what skills and competencies are required, and how these requirements relate to their own qualifications.

**2.16** By building on the current frameworks, the CWDC, LLUK and the TDA – in partnership with the Careers Profession Alliance – can create a 'climbing frame' for the profession. This would significantly help all members of the careers profession to: progress their careers and meet the professional standards; update their competencies through continuing professional development; and move across into other sectors of the profession. It will also enable new entrants to map their skills and qualifications more effectively against those required by different roles within the careers profession. The Task Force considers that this framework would be of most use to the profession if, in time, it is developed into an online, interactive tool.

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<sup>24</sup> Cedefop (2009). *Professionalising Career Guidance: Practitioner competencies and qualification routes in Europe* [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information.../5193\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/etv/Upload/Information.../5193_en.pdf) (p.88)

## A diverse and representative profession

- 2.17** The Task Force is convinced that diversity must be a key characteristic of the careers profession. A diverse workforce – in terms of gender, ethnic background, disability and also prior education experiences and occupations – will bring a more representative and realistic understanding of careers to the profession. Recent efforts to widen the diversity of the workforce have not delivered sufficient progress.
- 2.18** We therefore propose that action should be taken on three, closely related and mutually-reinforcing fronts. First, the inclusion of a supported and respected work-based route, in addition to a higher education route, to encourage people into the profession who have experience of the world of work and who enjoy training through practical as well as academic routes. Second, the development of a single career progression framework with flexible entry points and multiple routes into and through the profession. This will help to attract and support the progression of people from a variety of backgrounds and with a range of experiences and interests. Third, recognising the contribution of those who work as ‘para-professionals’, or similar, in providing high standards, and supporting them, where they wish, to acquire full professional status.
- 2.19** In order to assure those using careers services of a diverse and representative careers profession, we recommend that Government supports Careers England in taking the lead to involve the broader base of employers of careers professionals in creating both ‘Careers First’ and ‘Careers Last’ recruitment programmes.<sup>25</sup> The aim of a ‘Careers First’ programme should be to raise the profession’s profile amongst young people, and to give graduates the opportunity to acquire generic, transferable, professional level skills that will provide a strong base for varied career development both inside and beyond the career guidance field (including broader management roles).
- 2.20** A ‘Careers Last’ programme would not only diversify the workforce but also encourage people with valuable experience, who may be looking to change jobs later in life, into the careers profession. This could include individuals from other highly-professionalised occupations, but also people without professional qualifications who may have experience of the labour market, or of being parents or employers. The wisdom these people can bring to the careers profession would complement those who have entered through more traditional routes. In particular, these people may be well-placed to offer advice in the context of their knowledge of, and links to, their local community.

**Recommendation 5:** In support of a more diverse workforce, the Task Force recognises the importance of the work-based route into the profession (leading to a level 6 qualification) and recommends the development of a single career progression framework which is capable of incorporating the concepts of ‘Careers First’ and ‘Careers Last’.

## Careers professionals need constantly to update their knowledge and skills

- 2.21** The best professionals place great importance on updating their initial training and expertise. Continuing professional development (CPD) is the lifeblood of professional practice. It enables

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<sup>25</sup> Careers England is the trade association for employer organisations in careers education and guidance in England.

professionals to deepen their knowledge, acquire new and specialist skills, and progress their careers through to leadership and senior management roles.

**2.22** The Task Force agrees that CPD is of fundamental importance to the careers profession. Labour markets and education/training arrangements evolve rapidly, changing people's expectations of careers services and the evidence base for professional practice. In addition, good careers professionals need to develop their broader knowledge and skills to ensure their services remain current and of a consistently high standard. As well as improving the essential expertise of careers professionals, CPD also helps to maximise staff potential by linking theory to practice, improves morale and motivation in the workforce, helps staff to reflect on gaps in their own knowledge and experience, and provides opportunities for sharing effective practice.

**2.23** There is no universal CPD programme for careers professionals, and the Task Force believes that CPD is not sufficiently supported by all employers. Career-long development is critical if the careers profession is to attract and retain an expert and diverse workforce. We are convinced there needs to be a big shift in the attitude of the profession, and of those who employ careers professionals, towards CPD, before the profession can deliver a consistent, relevant and highly professionalised range of careers services.

**Recommendation 6: The Task Force recommends that the organisations forming the Careers Profession Alliance should expect their members (whether individual members of the careers profession or employers of careers professionals) to demonstrate a commitment to continuing professional development.**

**2.24** Careers professionals have a responsibility to young people and adults to ensure they are meeting the highest professional standards, to which regular CPD makes an essential contribution. Employers also have a responsibility to ensure members of their staff are providing young people and adults with the best possible service. The Task Force recommends that the profession, through the Careers Profession Alliance, is entrusted with determining the minimum *amount* of CPD careers professionals should be expected to undertake. Each professional should then be trusted to choose the *type* of CPD which most effectively ensures their professional development needs are met (although we recommend that CPD should be included in all formal performance appraisals).

**2.25** The Task Force concluded that CPD programmes need to be incorporated into the new career progression framework (see recommendation 5) to allow all members of the profession to update their knowledge of careers, improve their skills and progress to higher levels.

**2.26** Employers of careers practitioners have a role to play in commissioning and part-funding CPD, given the commercial and reputational advantage they gain from developing their workforce. However, the Task Force recognises the financial constraints upon employers and, as with other professions, it is important that individuals also contribute to the costs of their own CPD in recognition of the improvements it brings to their own careers and earning potential. All CPD should be quality assured and assessed for value for money and impact. Tools such as peer-to-peer support, communities of practice, mentoring, coaching and the use of online programmes should be considered as cost-effective ways of providing CPD.

## All careers professionals need to develop core knowledge and skills

**2.27** As we have noted already, careers professionals need to adapt and update their knowledge and skills to keep pace with the dynamic contexts in which they work. The Task Force received evidence showing that careers professionals need to focus on certain core areas in order to provide an effective service to young people and adults.

### Career and labour market information (CLMI)

**2.28** The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Education and Skills Survey 2010 reports that 20% of employers want improved careers advice for young people<sup>26</sup> and 43% feel young people have limited knowledge about their potential job<sup>27</sup>. The Task Force concluded that careers professionals need to build closer links with the labour market and undertake CPD which increases their knowledge of labour market opportunities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

**2.29** The knowledge and application of CLMI is a core part of a careers professional's competencies and central to ensuring young people and adults are provided with a high-quality service. This includes information on courses and occupations, on the relationships between the two, and on changes in supply and demand within both the learning market and the labour market.

**2.30** There is no shortage of labour market information (LMI) available: for example, the National Guidance Research Forum's website, developed by the Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick, displays LMI for all industries in the UK; and the UK Commission on Employment and Skills and Sector Skills Councils have a wealth of data. The Task Force has not been convinced that all parts of the careers profession, and in particular Careers Advisers working with young people, are sufficiently supported in accessing and applying up-to-date LMI. We advise that maintaining the skills and knowledge of LMI are made a part of the minimum requirement for CPD.

#### Using Labour Market Information

The Greater Merseyside Connexions I-Choose Labour Market Information Pack provides practitioners with information that can be used to help young people understand the local labour market and identify which opportunities match their aspirations.

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<sup>26</sup> CBI (2010). Ready to Grow: Business Priorities for Education and Skills  
<http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/content.nsf/802737AED3E3420580256706005390AE/C4393B860D00478E802576C6003B0679>  
(p.11)

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.23

Knowledge of the local labour market may suggest to some young people:

- alternative career options or paths that they had not considered; and
- that they may have to look beyond the local labour market to find opportunities that match their aspirations

The resources in this pack not only show what the Local Labour Market looks like, but also how it has changed and why it continues to change.

The pack contains:

- complete lesson plans with 3 Labour Market DVDs filmed by young people for young people which look at 11 different sectors and the opportunities within them; including interviews with key business people from across the region to provide a realistic picture of the labour market.;
- information that can be used to create lesson plans to illustrate the composition and structure of the local labour market; and
- a Pen Drive which includes a variety of tailor made PowerPoint presentations, to support the delivery of CE/IAG. These include, An Introduction to Labour Market Information, Making Option Choices, and Preparation for Working Life (CV Writing Skills and Interview Techniques).

The LMI Pack has received excellent feedback locally, regionally and nationally and has had to be reprinted due to demand.

## Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

**2.31** The Task Force was impressed by evidence it received showing the growing importance of ICT in the provision of careers services. Not only is it a useful resource for careers professionals (not least for accessing LMI), but it is also a highly effective medium for communicating with people using careers services. Young people in particular are extremely proficient users of internet-based technologies. Recent research notes that Careers Advisers ‘...will need, increasingly, to demonstrate a level of proficiency in internet-based technologies at least equal to those of the young people accessing their expertise’<sup>28</sup>.

**2.32** Internet-based technologies and communication devices evolve rapidly. Initial training in such competencies is important, but CPD must also be fully utilised if careers professionals are to keep pace with change. The Task Force endorses the same research study’s recommendation that ‘ICT user skills and competencies should be integrated as central in both initial work-based and off-the-job training for guidance at the national level’<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> Bimrose, J., Barnes, S-A., Attwell, G. (2010). An investigation into the skills needed by Connexions Personal Advisers to develop internet-based guidance. CfBT: Warwick Institute for Employment Research: Reading/Coventry.  
[http://www.cfbt.com/evidenceforeducation/our\\_research/evidence\\_for\\_youth/advice\\_and\\_guidance/connexions\\_personal\\_advisors.aspx](http://www.cfbt.com/evidenceforeducation/our_research/evidence_for_youth/advice_and_guidance/connexions_personal_advisors.aspx)

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p13

**2.33** Young people, their parents, teachers and those who advise them, benefit from having access to high quality, comprehensive online resources to inform and support their decision making. The Task Force welcomes the Government's intention to develop such a resource.

## Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)

**2.34** As Chapter 1 notes, not enough young people are attracted to STEM subjects despite their importance to a wide range of high-skilled occupations. Students' interest in STEM subjects is low throughout the education system, from take-up in secondary school through to further and higher education. Students need to be aware that STEM subject choices (especially sciences and mathematics which are often perceived by some to be more difficult) open the way to rewarding STEM careers.

**2.35** We want schools and colleges to take steps to address these attitudes and to be supported to give informed advice on STEM subject choices. Helping students to understand that some qualifications, particularly in STEM, have greater value than others in the labour market does not undermine impartiality or professional standards. Advice should always be given with the student's best interests at heart, and based on a full understanding of the implications of subject choices, both for the individual and for the wider labour market.

**2.36** The Task Force is clear that all careers professionals require a greater understanding of the opportunities and breadth in STEM careers. We would like to see knowledge of STEM careers integrated within initial training for careers professionals, but the urgent need for such knowledge also requires particular action to be taken in the short term through CPD.

**2.37** Beyond this core initial training and CPD, knowledge of an area such as STEM would be acquired by careers professionals as a 'specialism'. Those professionals who take up the specialist training could promote its benefits across their employing organisation and in the contexts in which they work, and help to provide universal CPD in STEM to their professional peers.

## Other specialisms

**2.38** The Task Force's recommendation for a 'universal and specialist' approach to CPD in STEM can also be applied to other areas of expertise. Many employers of careers professionals already recognise the importance of expertise in, for example, Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties and Disabilities post-16. Such an approach could also easily be applied to other areas such as apprenticeships, progression to higher education, or equality and diversity.

**Recommendation 7:** The Task Force recommends that initial training and CPD should include a focus on LMI, ICT, and STEM, all of which are crucial to all members of the careers profession in delivering high-quality career guidance; and that, through CPD, there should be opportunities for further development of 'specialisms', leading towards the concept of an Advanced Careers Practitioner.

## Support for CPD from professional bodies and employers of careers professionals is key

**2.39** In addition to updating competencies in these fast-moving contexts, well-managed CPD programmes are also the most effective way for careers professionals to adapt and respond to changes in Government policy.

**2.40** The Task Force believes that members of the Careers Profession Alliance and employers of careers professionals should consider adopting the Institute for Learning's approach to managing CPD. The Institute for Learning is the professional body for practitioners in the further education sector. It requires its members, as part of their professional status, to self-declare the nature and amount of CPD they have undertaken each year. A random sample of individuals is then asked to provide evidence of their declared CPD, in order to assure quality. This method is relatively cost-effective and allows individuals to be held to account whilst at the same time engendering a sense of self-responsibility – an essential characteristic of autonomous professional practice.

**Recommendation 8:** The Task Force recommends that the organisations in the Careers Profession Alliance should consider requiring their members to self-declare the nature and amount of CPD they have undertaken each year, with a random sample being required to provide evidence to assure quality.

## Chapter 3: The careers profession working with young people

We re-emphasise that our recommendations in Chapter 2 are made in the context of the whole careers profession, working with both young people and adults. In this Chapter, in line with the Task Force's primary focus on young people, we explore some of the important issues specific to the work of those people responsible for the provision of young people's CEIAG: Careers Advisers and Careers Educators.

*"It is professionals, not bureaucratic strategies and initiatives, which drive school improvement"*  
(Michael Gove, speech at National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services Annual Conference, June 2010)

### Most young people will be provided with career guidance through their school or college

- 3.1** As we note in Chapter 1, most schools and colleges (including the best) provide CEIAG programmes to students using a partnership between Careers Advisers and Careers Educators.

#### Careers Advisers

- 3.2** Careers Advisers are the principal providers of specialist, expert and current careers advice and guidance to students. Most Careers Advisers are employed by Connexions Services and are often known as Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs)<sup>30</sup>. The CWDC estimates there are around 7,500 PAs working in England, though not all are trained Careers Advisers<sup>31</sup>. Their independence from schools, colleges and work-based learning providers helps to ensure that young people are given impartial advice and guidance about their education and work choices.

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<sup>30</sup> Local authorities are currently responsible for delivering Connexions Services.

<sup>31</sup> CWDC (2007/8). *Occupational Summary Sheet, Connexions Personal Advisers*  
[http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/1762/Connexions\\_PA.pdf](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/1762/Connexions_PA.pdf)

### **Careers Advisers' duties typically include**

- interviewing clients on a one to one basis or in small groups
- carrying out a needs assessment;
- providing information, advice and guidance about careers, education, employment and training;
- helping students to apply for further and higher education, as well as work-based training and other employment opportunities;
- assisting young people to draw up action plans for employment, education and training and supporting them to achieve these goals;
- running small group sessions or larger presentations on all aspects of careers work;
- keeping up to date with labour market information, legislation, and professional and academic developments by visiting employers, training providers and training events run by educational and professional bodies;
- using ICT to track labour market information, and for administrative tasks such as recording interactions with and tracking clients;
- using computer-aided guidance packages, skills assessment tools, psychometric tests and personal inventories;
- supporting the transition of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, and brokerage of specialist education and training opportunities for young people with LDD;
- planning and organising careers fairs and conventions;
- managing a caseload of clients; and
- assisting Careers Educators with the brokerage of work experience opportunities for students.

## **Careers Educators**

**3.3** Careers Educators are the members of the school and college staff who lead, manage, provide and/or support CEIAG programmes for students. Careers Educators build CEIAG into students' daily experiences and lay the foundations for the bespoke career guidance support provided by Careers Advisers.

### **Careers Educators help students to develop the attributes they need in order to make informed decisions about education and work. These attributes include:**

- an ability to review their own strengths, interests and aptitudes and identify areas for development;
- an understanding of the world of work through first-hand experiences of work and contact with employers;
- knowledge about sources of help and support in making career decisions;
- an ability to research the available options in education and work;
- an understanding of the influences on their career decisions;
- decision-making skills;
- an ability to prepare for and manage change and transitions in their lives; and
- an ability to present themselves in writing and interviews.

**3.4** There is no single organisational model for Careers Educators: titles and responsibilities vary from one school and college to the next. But the schools and colleges providing the most effective CEIAG programmes ensure that Careers Educator roles are a part of both their middle and senior leadership teams (shown below). Some schools may ask the same individual to perform more than one of these roles; they may also link some of them to wider roles (e.g. Coordinator of Work-Related Learning).

**Based on evidence submitted to the Task Force, we found that an effective model for Careers Educators includes:**

**A Governor with specific responsibility for CEIAG:** This helps to ensure that the school/college complies with its statutory obligations with regard to CEIAG. The Governor will often have an interest in the local business community and may facilitate links with local employers and community development.

**Careers Leader:** A member of the senior leadership team who provides vision and strategic leadership for the school's/college's CEIAG provision. Key responsibilities include ensuring that sufficient resources are secured for the provision of effective CEIAG, and supporting the CPD needs of staff working in CEIAG.

**Careers Coordinator:** A middle leader responsible for the strategic direction and the day-to-day leading and managing of CEIAG in the school/college. His/her role includes acting as the subject leader for careers education and the manager of the careers information, advice and guidance provided by school/college staff. The Careers Coordinator is also the principal school/college contact for the Careers Adviser. It is important to note that Careers Coordinators may come from a range of different professional backgrounds: often they are teachers, but they may include librarians, human resource managers and administrators.

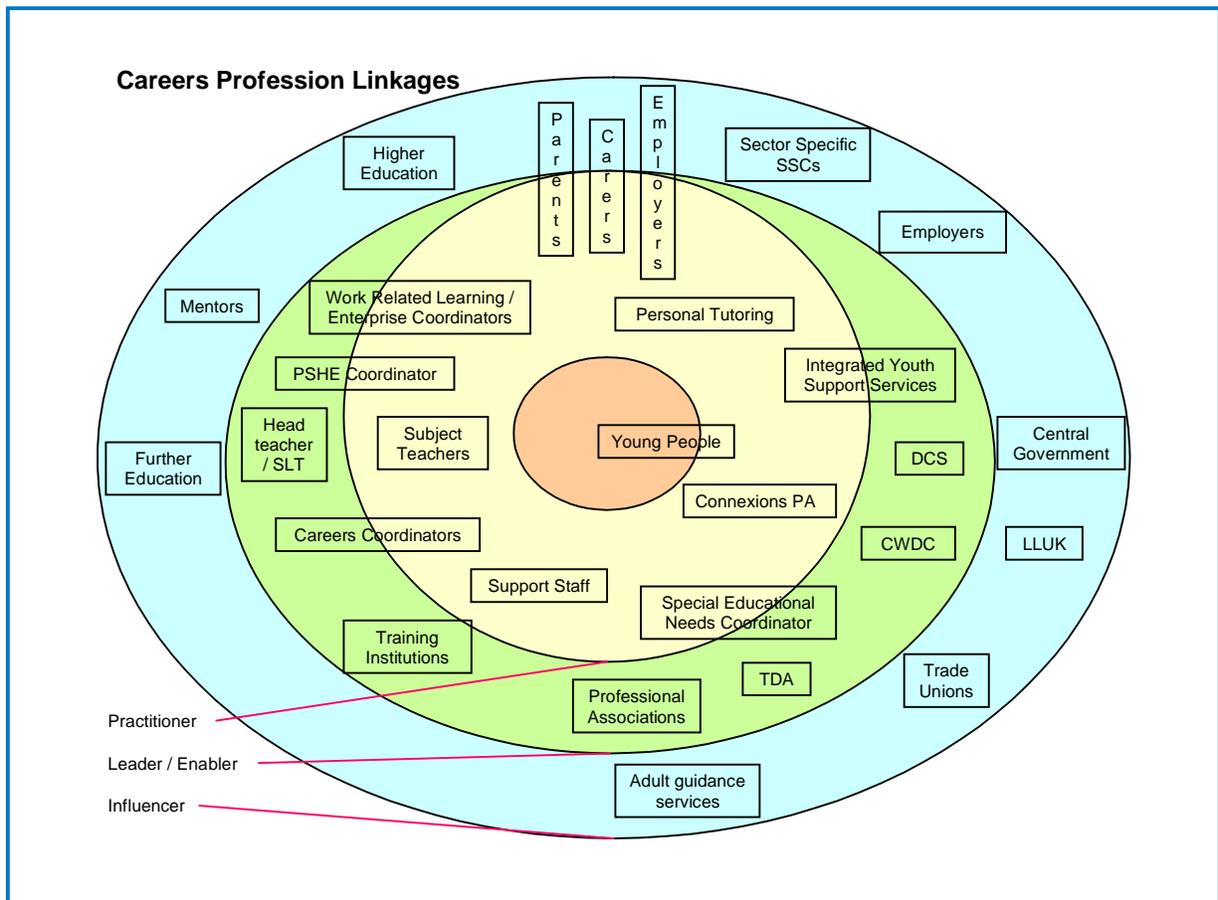
**Careers Administrators:** An administrator who maintains the school's/college's careers resource centre. Duties are likely also to include the organisation of students' career guidance interviews and administering work experience programmes with employers.

**Teachers:** Teachers may be involved in careers programmes in three main roles:

- As subject teachers, teaching students about careers relating to their own subjects, and helping students to understand how the skills and attributes developed through study of the subject prepare them more generally for adult life. Students need to know how each subject relates to opportunities in further and higher education and work.
- As tutors, with a detailed understanding of the CEIAG needs of the individual students in their tutor-group.
- As teachers of careers education lessons as set out by the Careers Coordinator in the schemes of work. Such lessons are often included in Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programmes, taught by teams of teachers.

**Careers support staff:** Includes learning support assistants, learning mentors, Aimhigher and other progression staff. They have a role in providing careers support to individual and small groups of students. They may also provide support to students during work experience and other work-related educational activities.

## Careers Advisers and Careers Educators linking with others



**3.5** The Task Force believes that referral protocols are central to supporting the work careers professionals do with young people. Careers Advisers and Careers Educators will often come into contact with vulnerable young people. To ensure these young people get the appropriate help, it is important that Careers Advisers have strong links with other professionals, such as those working in social welfare, and foster these links as a core part of their professional responsibilities.

**3.6** Careers Advisers also need to be closely associated with other members of the careers profession. Adults are currently served by a separate public careers service (Next Step), and each higher education institution (HEI) has its own autonomous careers service for students. In order to assure coherent and continuous progression to further careers support at such critical transitions in people's lives, Careers Advisers need to maintain strong links with their professional peers working in adult careers services, HEIs and agencies such as Jobcentre Plus.

## Working Together

Connexions in Littlehampton has good links with the Youth Agencies in the area via a quarterly Youth Agencies' group meeting, and other jointly run youth activities.

They are co-located with Youth Workers, and an Alcohol Liaison Worker and an Intensive Support Connexions PA both 'hotdesk' there. A Children & Young People's Planning Forum (CAF) meeting is held in the Youth Club once a month with Social Care colleagues. A School Nurse attends an After School Drop In at the Youth Centre each week alongside either the Youth Worker or Connexions PA. Similar activities take place monthly and weekly at the other Secondary School a five minute drive away.

NEET Engagement projects led by Youth Service and Connexions staff use the Youth Club as their base throughout the programme and agencies such as Training Providers and Inset, the local Volunteer organisation for young people, are invited to meet the young people. Co-location provides opportunities for formal and informal links between services, for the benefit of young people.

## Engaging with employers

- 3.7** Careers Educators with their school and college colleagues are responsible for engaging with employers and providing students with work experience. Schools are responsible for providing work-related learning for their students as part of the Basic School Curriculum, and will either work with employers directly or use Education Business Partnership organisations to manage employer links on their behalf. We welcome the work of the Education and Employers Task Force, which recognises that young people highly value interaction with employers, and endorse its recommendations to strengthen links between employers and schools<sup>32</sup>.
- 3.8** The CBI's/EDI's *Education and Skills Survey 2010* notes the important role work placements can play in encouraging students to progress into STEM-related careers: 'Work placements give students an insight into STEM careers and often raise awareness of how these subjects are used in the workplace, combating negative perceptions. Seventy-one percent of businesses believe they can help encourage STEM study by providing high-quality work placements'<sup>33</sup>.
- 3.9** Employer engagement is central to the work of all careers professionals. The links Careers Advisers have with employers and other opportunity providers, such as the National Apprenticeship Service, are a key part of assuring excellent CEIAG, and some Careers Advisers will act as a conduit between schools and colleges and employers. We agree with the

<sup>32</sup> Education and Employer's Task Force (2010). *Helping young people succeed: How employers can support careers education*

<sup>33</sup> CBI (2010). Ready to Grow: Business Priorities for Education and Skills  
<http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/content.nsf/802737AED3E3420580256706005390AE/C4393B860D00478E802576C6003B0679>  
p.37

Education and Employers Task Force that there is potential in the system for Careers Advisers to play an even greater role in brokering relations between schools and employers<sup>34</sup>.

- 3.10** Parents are frequently a useful source to employer links. Since parents can also have a strong influence on their own children's career choices, it is important that they be actively involved in careers programmes.

## Careers Coordinators play an important role

- 3.11** The Task Force found that Careers Coordinators are key members of the Careers Educator workforce and central to the provision of young people's CEIAG. The majority will consider themselves to be part of the careers profession. Evidence to the Task Force showed that the best schools and colleges have a Careers Coordinator in post, with a clearly defined role that is recognised in the Teaching and Learning Responsibility structure (colleges may appoint a head of student/learning services to play this role).
- 3.12** Historically, a large majority of Careers Coordinators were either former subject teachers or teachers who undertook their CEIAG duties as an adjunct to teaching. Since workforce remodelling was introduced in schools in 2003, a growing number of schools have recruited Careers Coordinators from non-teaching backgrounds<sup>35</sup>. Whilst this has diversified the workforce, it has also meant that, with loose requirements for initial training and CPD, the skills and competencies of Careers Coordinators varies significantly. A recent survey of Careers Coordinators by NICEC/NFER revealed that less than a third held a qualification relating to CEIAG<sup>36</sup>.
- 3.13** There is no specific qualification for Careers Coordinators, and the NFER/NICEC survey found that Careers Coordinators supported the principle of a discrete qualification. This would not only help to create a more uniformly skilled workforce, but also raise the status of the Careers Coordinator, identifying it as a specialist role requiring a specific set of skills and competencies.
- 3.14** The Task Force supports plans to develop a new qualification for Careers Coordinators. We concluded that any new qualification should be integrated into the single career progression framework for the careers profession (see recommendation 5) and be made available up to a level 6 (QCF), aligning it with the minimum entry level qualification for the common professional standards. We also endorse the NFER/NICEC report's recommendation that a new Careers Coordinator qualification should recognise prior experience to help assure quality and diversity in the workforce. Beyond this, Careers Coordinators should be trusted to recognise the significance of their own contributions and the importance of careers professionalism to their skills and competencies.

**Recommendation 9: The Task Force recommends that both Careers Advisers and Careers Educators, where they consider themselves to be careers professionals, must uphold the professional standards and meet other expectations of the careers profession.**

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<sup>34</sup> Education and Employer's Task Force (2010). *Helping young people succeed: How employers can support careers education* (p.4, p15)

<sup>35</sup> Andrews, D. (2005). *Careers Coordinators and Workforce Remodelling: An examination of the benefits and challenges when schools appoint non-teachers to the role of careers co-ordinator*. [www.iagworkforce.co.uk/.../david\\_andrews\\_workforce\\_remodelling.pdf](http://www.iagworkforce.co.uk/.../david_andrews_workforce_remodelling.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> McCrone, T., Marshall, H., White, K., Reed, F., Morris, M., Andrews, D. and Barnes, A. (2009). *Careers Coordinators in Schools* (DCSF Research Report 171). London: DCSF (p.11)

## Assuring parents, their children and others of a high quality service will increase confidence in career guidance

- 3.15** The creation of common professional standards will bring greater transparency to the careers profession, helping to assure students, their parents, schools and colleges that Careers Advisers and Careers Educators are among the best in their field. However, for the professional standards to gain currency throughout the careers profession and the wider careers community, it is critical that they are recognised and supported by schools and colleges.
- 3.16** In addition to supporting the common professional standards, schools and colleges can further assure parents and their children of high quality CEIAG by attaining and maintaining a Quality Award in CEIAG.
- 3.17** Nationwide, there are currently eighteen different quality awards offered to schools and colleges (and, in some areas, work-based learning providers). The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) submitted an unpublished survey to the Task Force showing that, within 63% of the local authorities surveyed, 50% of schools and 49% of colleges either hold a quality award or are working towards one<sup>37</sup>. The main purpose of CEIAG quality awards is to help schools and colleges:
- recognise and share examples of good CEIAG provision;
  - raise the profile of CEIAG at a strategic and operational level;
  - promote continuous improvement and developments in CEIAG; and
  - audit their own CEIAG services.
- 3.18** Private careers companies and some local authorities (LAs), or groups of authorities within a region, have developed their own awards. This approach gives greater flexibility and allows awards to be designed which reflect local priorities. But findings from the LSIS survey show this approach has created inconsistencies, with some awards demanding higher standards of schools and colleges than others. The survey found substantial variations between different awards in terms of content and method of assessment and concluded that: 'some areas have very robust and rigorous quality award provision, whereas other areas have less robust provision or none at all. This is something that clearly needs addressing'<sup>38</sup>.
- 3.19** In LSIS's survey, a majority of LAs indicated that a national kite mark for CEIAG quality awards would be preferable to introducing a single, national quality award<sup>39</sup>. A kite mark would allow LAs to retain local, bespoke quality awards, whilst also assuring schools and colleges – as well as students and parents – that each award meets a nationally recognised level of excellence.

**Recommendation 10: The Task Force recommends that an overarching national kite mark should be established to validate the different CEIAG quality awards for schools, colleges and work-based learning providers.**

- 3.20** In addition to the quality awards for schools and colleges, there are a number of organisational quality standards which apply to the employers of Careers Advisers. Schools and colleges can further assure their students of excellent CEIAG by only engaging with Careers Advisers whose employers meet a nationally recognised quality standard.

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<sup>37</sup> Ambrose, J. (2010). *Quality Awards for CEIAG in England*, LSIS

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

**Recommendation 11:** The Task Force recommends that any organisation that is making arrangements for the provision of career guidance to young people should ensure that the provider meets a relevant, nationally approved quality standard, and that Government should support the establishment of such a standard.

**3.21** The Task Force concluded that support for the common professional standards (see recommendation 3) should be made a condition of the kite mark for CEIAG quality awards and the nationally approved quality standard.

## Promoting and sharing good practice

### Getting Organised

Whitgift School, which is an independent boys' school, has held Investor in Careers status since 2000 and successfully sought re-accreditation (for the third time) in July 2010 to gain this award for a further three years.

The CEIAG programme is run by the Head of Careers who is supported by the Deputy Head of Careers, a full-time Careers Administrator and a Work Experience Assistant. The Head of Careers reports directly to the Senior Leadership Team on all matters relating to CEIAG. She is also responsible for the management of the department's budget. In order to fulfil this role, the Head of Careers is given 1/3 remission from professional duties as a classroom teacher.

The central aim of the CEIAG programme is to encourage research and debate, and to provide the resources to enable each student to explore and develop his career aspirations and to fulfil his potential. The programme is designed to make sure that the school reaches every student, raises their awareness of the career options available, and encourages them to broaden their aspirations in the light of developing self-awareness. The school aims to inform students about their careers options in a form which they find readily accessible and enjoyable to use.

Throughout the school all students follow a PSHE and Critical Reflection programme of study which encompasses many elements of the careers programme. Careers lessons are not specifically timetabled but instead students receive targeted briefings at appropriate times. Form tutors are always present at these briefings so that they are able to follow up the work during the tutorial programme.

In addition, the School's Careers Advisory Panel, which consists of a committee of parents, meets termly to review careers activities and assist with the planning of future events.

## Careers in the Classroom

Greensward is a successful Academy in Hockley, Essex, which specialises in science and applied learning. CEIAG is delivered through all subjects and is the focus of an enrichment programme of dedicated days for each year group which involves as many tutors as possible in the delivery. Each department has a careers board with a link teacher who the careers coordinator uses as a contact for two-way provision of information on CEIAG. Schemes of work identify where the CEIAG activities are happening, along with specific objectives and outcomes for students.

## Engaging Employers

Hampton Academy in Richmond upon Thames cooperates with the borough's Education Business Partnership and other youth and community organisations in a planned and effective way to secure employer participation in both work experience and other targeted events. The college works closely with their EBP to embed WRL across the curriculum. Effective examples include:

- Involvement in the Business Language Champions initiative with one of the main international banking groups, which has helped to considerably improve the take up of GCSE language options and provided innovative ways of teaching and offering learners a chance to visit prestigious offices in Canary Wharf . Other positive outcomes included demonstrating the importance and benefits of speaking foreign languages in the context of career decisions, insight into the operation of a large international company, knowledge of job opportunities and career pathways, opportunities to practise language skills in a work context and acquiring new vocabulary .
- Involvement in 'Insight into Art' in cooperation with a major local employer of national prominence that has enabled students to gain awareness of career opportunities linked to Art.
- Partnership working with a large London bakery and sandwich shop that now supports Food Technology through showing a video of their bread-making, talking through a presentation and running a question and answer session.
- Using the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Ambassadors programme to bring in speakers such as from the National Physical Laboratory to enliven the curriculum through a talk about Physics and radioactivity and provide information about careers using physics. They have also used a number of STEM ambassadors and other employers from the STEM areas to take part in a Science and Maths speed-networking careers event as another means of stimulating delivery style.

**Recommendation 12:** The Task Force recommends that the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services, the Training and Development Agency for Schools and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, working with Ofsted, the Careers Profession Alliance and Careers England (and involving the broader base of employers of careers professionals), should help schools, colleges and work-based learning providers to learn from and share examples of good practice.

**3.22** In addition to schools and colleges being accountable through the voluntary quality awards, CEIAG is currently included in Ofsted’s inspection process as part of the new inspection framework. However, Ofsted inspections are likely to be simplified in the near future, making fewer judgments on schools and colleges and focusing on the core assessments of teaching and learning. Schools rated as ‘outstanding’ will be freed from inspection altogether.

**3.23** In view of this, the Task Force took evidence on how students and their parents can be enabled to identify which schools and colleges work actively to provide excellent CEIAG. Not only is it important that students and parents have accountability, but also that they are empowered with the knowledge of what good practice looks like.

**3.24** Some aspects of good CEIAG are difficult to assess objectively through inspection. For example, it may be difficult to evaluate whether or not a school or college is providing CEIAG that is impartial. Ofsted’s thematic reports explore the provision of specific subjects in a small sample of schools, identifying examples of good provision and areas of weakness. The Task Force concludes that a new thematic report at this time in a new Government would be of immense benefit to CEIAG, helping to highlight and promote excellent CEIAG provision, good professional practice and examples of how best to assure impartiality. Professionals working in institutions providing the best CEIAG programmes could then offer peer-to-peer support, to spread innovative, dynamic and excellent CEIAG throughout the system.

**Recommendation 13:** The Task Force recommends that Ofsted should carry out a thematic review of CEIAG for young people, in a variety of contexts, to help identify excellent CEIAG provision and to establish a baseline for future development; and should carry out a further such review within three years to evaluate the progress that has been made.

## Chapter 4: Taking responsibility

- 4.1** Our recommendations are designed to establish and enhance the principles of professionalism in the careers sector.
- 4.2** Greater professionalism throughout the workforce will help to create a strong careers profession and a consistently good careers service for both young people and adults. It will also address the paradox that exists at the heart of careers services: that those individuals whose job it is to provide careers services – to motivate, broaden horizons, raise aspirations, advise on training need and challenge people to progress – do not always enjoy or employ, in their own careers, the values they seek to instil in others. The medium should be congruent with the message. It is critical that the careers profession itself is the very essence of a good career: highly professionalised, well qualified, with a diverse workforce and offering progression through the profession and to other occupations.
- 4.3** As has been emphasised throughout the report, our recommendations place much of the responsibility for improvement with the profession. In line with all strong, autonomous professions, the careers profession must be given the freedom to set its own standards for professionalism, release the potential in the workforce and establish a new cadre of careers professionals for new times. By continually developing their own professional practice, these colleagues will help to drive up standards across the profession, providing the public with the reassurance of professional excellence which is easily identifiable and consistently available.
- 4.4** Throughout our inquiry the Task Force has been strongly encouraged by the ambition and appetite for change from within the sector itself. All parties were clear in their assessment that, regardless of the process by which careers services are delivered, higher standards of provision are needed across the careers profession.
- 4.5** The Task Force is confident that our recommendations will deliver these improvements, assuring all young people, their parents, graduates and adults of high quality careers services.
- 4.6** In order to be fully effective, the recommendations will require support from all parts of the careers community. The profession itself, through the Careers Profession Alliance, needs quickly to develop an authoritative and respected single voice which represents the views of the whole profession. From this foundation, common professional standards can be established, and the values and benefits of professionalism disseminated throughout the profession and to the wider careers community. It is essential that employers of careers professionals support the profession as it seeks to achieve these aims.
- 4.7** Schools, colleges, work-based learning providers, employers, trade unions, local authorities, and other professionals who work in partnership with the careers profession have a critical role to play. The careers profession should exercise leadership: without the recognition and support of these partners, the new principles and standards of careers professionalism will not gain credibility and take hold both inside and outside the profession.
- 4.8** Finally, the Task Force does not believe that central Government needs to have a direct role in implementing these recommendations. However, Government can help to facilitate the process by welcoming the profession's growing autonomy, supporting the expectations of the profession, advocating the new standards of professionalism, and enabling swift progress to be made.

**Recommendation 14:** The Task Force recommends that Government should assure itself that the careers profession is rising to the challenge of implementing the Task Force's recommendations by commissioning a report on progress in March 2011 and March 2012.

# Annex 1: Careers Profession Task Force's Terms of Reference

## Background

The creation of a Task Force on the Careers Profession is a commitment from 'Quality, Choice and Aspiration: a strategy for young people's information advice and guidance', published in October 2009, which set out a vision and series of commitments to improve the quality of CEIAG so that it supports the raising of aspirations and achievement by young people in a rapidly changing economy and society.

## Task Statement

The Task Force on the Careers Profession will provide the vision for high-quality delivery of CEIAG and make recommendations on the actions needed to ensure careers professionals in England have the knowledge and skills required to enable young people to:

- make informed decisions about learning and work pathways; and
- have the ability to manage and plan their own careers and personal development.

## Objectives

Specifically, the Task Force, during the course of its work, should advise the Government on how best to:

- attract entrants to the profession who are well-qualified, from a variety of backgrounds and who reflect the make-up of the working population;
- retain and motivate existing effective careers professionals;
- ensure that professional practice is of a high standard, with strong leadership, management and quality assurance;
- ensure that careers professionals receive the CPD, support and guidance that they need to enable their own development; and
- strengthen the integrated working of careers professionals with other members of the youth and adult workforce.

Additionally, the Task Force should answer the following questions:

- Taking into account the work already underway to review the qualifications for careers specialists, do all careers professionals currently hold a specialist qualification? And if not, should they?
- Should professional careers advisers be provided with specialist STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) CPD?

In developing its advice the Task Force should ensure that it has taken account of:

- value for money considerations; and
- demand from young people and others with an interest such as employers and parents.

## Scope

An early task for the Task Force will be to agree the precise definition of 'careers professionals'. The Task Force will want to set its discussions in the wider context of:

- the workforce in schools, colleges, local authorities, third sector and work-based learning providers and the quality of IAG delivered by those not included in the definition of 'careers professionals';
- an all-age strategy, including considering the links with the adult guidance workforce; and
- the positions in the other countries of the UK.

The Task Force's report will be informed by its members' pre-existing knowledge and experience, the CEIAG evidence-base, access to experts in the field and the ability to consult both careers professionals and service users.

## Governance

For the first two months meetings will be held bi-weekly and then will become monthly. Separate seminars on specific themes may be held as appropriate in-between full Task Force meetings. The Task Force may establish sub-groups to consider individual strands of work in more detail and to report to the Task Force.

The secretariat for the Task Force will be provided by DfE.

## Review

The Task Force is due to deliver its final recommendations during summer 2010. Following its report, the Task Force will be disbanded.

## **Annex 2: Membership of the Task Force on the Careers Profession**

Chair – Dame Ruth Silver DBE FCGI, Chair, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service

Vice Chair – Professor Rachel Mulvey, Associate Dean, School of Psychology, University of East London

Sue Barr, President, Association of Careers Education and Guidance

Richard Barrett, Director, Deloitte and lead adviser to Education Employer Taskforce review of the role of employers in IAG

Denise Bertuchi, Assistant National Officer, Education and Children’s Services UNISON

Professor Jenny Bimrose, Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick

Paul Chubb, Non-Executive Director and Professional Adviser to the Board of, Careers England

Kieran Gordon – Chief Executive, Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership

Dr Deirdre Hughes, President, Institute for Careers Guidance

Julie Hughes [Graham Holley], Chief Executive, Training and Development Agency for Schools

Ayub Khan, Director Connexions South London Sub-Regional Unit

Patricia Pugh, Career Guidance Constituency Manager, Lifelong Learning UK

John Morgan, President, Association of School and College Leaders

Julia Tortise [Jane Haywood], Chief Executive, Children’s Workforce Development Council

Andrew Simmons, ADCS

Ruth Spellman OBE, Chief Executive, Chartered Management Institute

Professor Tony Watts OBE, Senior Fellow and Life President of the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling

James Epps, Task Force on the Careers Profession Writer

## Annex 3: Call for Evidence

### Key messages

#### 1. Recruitment

- Attract a diverse range of entrants to the profession by creating better opportunities and raising the profile of the profession.
- Improve careers professionals' status and recognition by clear career structure based on achievements and qualifications.
- Greater simplification and flexibility required around professional entry and progression routes.
- Post qualification on the job training is required and could be implemented through a probationary year and/or 1:1 guidance.

#### 2. Workforce Development

- Careers professionals need a range of skills to support their knowledge, communications and development.
- Careers professionals should be expected to undertake a minimum level of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) each year.
- CPD should be funded through a national system with a central budget to maintain common professional standards.

#### 3. Standards / Inspection

- Professional practice can be assessed both internally and externally to raise the importance of high quality IAG.
- Professional standards can act as a benchmark across professions to compare performance.
- The best way to ensure consistently high practice across the profession is through; high quality initial training, CPD, effective assessment, inspection, sharing of best practice and through performance management mechanisms using appropriate indicators.
- Many of the expectations of careers professionals are too broad and unrealistic leaving PAs stretched.

#### 4. Linkages

- The partnership model for delivering expert careers advice and guidance is only successful in areas where sufficient commitment from supporting groups exist.
- Careers professionals need to work with a range of partners.
- Careers professionals should link their work with the wider workforce through networking and building partnerships.
- Youth guidance services can link with adult services by sharing a range of resources including visits to employers and data on clients.
- Provide more accurate information to wider networks about what careers professionals actually do and the quality of the service they offer.

## Respondents

5. We received 26 responses from the following organisations / individuals:

- Sue Barr – ACEG Consultative Council Reflections
- Duncan Bolam – Career Dovetail
- Andrew Burton – Head of Learner Services at City of Bristol College
- Kate Campion – National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services Operational Director
- Alison Chubb – Careers Guidance Practitioner
- Connexions – responses from a range of advisers across England.
- 14-19 Learners Panel – a group of young people drawn together by DCSF
- Jane Haywood – Children's Workforce Development Council
- Edge Learner Forum – 14-23 year olds from the South East and South West of England
- Katharine Horler – Chef Executive of Connexions Thames Valley
- Julie Hughes – Head of 14-19 Workforce Development at Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA)
- Carol James – National Champion for Advice and Guidance at Specialist Schools and Academies Trust
- Hannah James – Information and Research Worker at Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
- Angus Laing – North Nottinghamshire College
- Gail O'Malley – Connexions manager Worcestershire
- Mike Manson – Redbridge Solutions on behalf of Careers Information Managers in the South East and the Careers Writers Association
- Gill Mills – Barking & Dagenham College
- Professor Kate Myers – 14-19 Equality Advisor
- Claire Nix – VT Group Plc
- Vince Pizzoni – Head of Professional Guidance at the Cheltenham Ladies College
- Ann Poulter – 14-19 Policy Administrator at Association of Colleges
- Andrew Pugh – Education Improvement Advisor: CEIAG, Worcestershire County Council
- Linda Sinclair – Principal at Hills Road Sixth Form College
- Annette Wade – Marketing Manager at CASCAiD Ltd
- Tim Warren – Head of Customer Support and Development

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## Annex 5: Recent history of young people's CEIAG

In accordance with the Employment and Training Act 1973, the Careers Service was placed under the control of local education authorities (LEAs) in 1974. LEAs were statutorily required to provide careers guidance to all young people, but adult careers guidance, also delivered by LEAs, was not mandatory, and funding was at the discretion of LEAs.

This model remained in place until the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act was passed in 1993. The Act removed the Careers Service from LEA control and placed a duty on the Secretary of State to determine how career guidance services should be provided. In line with the structural public service reforms of the time, the Secretary of State put young people's career guidance services out to tender, and contracts were won by both private providers and LEAs.

The next reforms came in 1994, when two government strategy papers, *Competitiveness: Helping Business to Win* and *Better Choices*, set out a wider role for the Careers Service within careers education, and announced an entitlement to career guidance for all young people aged 11-18 years old. The Careers Service was to work in partnership with education institutions and LEAs, and Careers Advisers were given clear access to work in schools. This was enshrined in the Education Act 1997.

### Connexions

A significant moment in the recent history of CEIAG came in 1999 when the Labour government's Social Exclusion Unit published: *Bridging the Gap - new opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training*.

This report announced a new strategy aimed at improving social inclusion and reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The strategy was to house all services for socially excluded young people under one agency, Connexions, coordinated at a sub-regional level through Connexions Partnerships.

These plans were implemented in 2001 and the Careers Service was completely subsumed within the new Connexions structure. Subsequently, in line with the social inclusion agenda, the emphasis for careers services shifted away from universal schools provision towards NEETs.

### 'Youth Matters'

Further reforms to the delivery of young people's careers services were outlined in the *Youth Matters* Green Paper, 2005, and the implementation plan *Youth Matters Next Steps*, 2006. These papers announced that responsibility for the delivery of career guidance and related services would be transferred from Connexions Partnerships to local authorities (LAs). CEIAG would be commissioned by LAs through Children's Trusts, as part of an Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS). These arrangements came into effect in April 2008.

In line with the principles of the IYSS, career guidance was subsumed within the delivery of broader Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) provision, which included advice on lifestyle issues such as health, leisure and relationships. LAs were required to continue using the Connexions brand to provide IAG.

Under the current arrangements, Connexions Personal Advisors (PAs) deliver a universal CEIAG offer to all young people in partnership with schools and colleges. In addition, in line

with the IYSS focus on reducing the number of NEETs, PAs also offer 'targeted support' to help engage socially disaffected young people. Not all PAs are trained Careers Advisers.

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Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at:

Telephone: 0870 000 2288  
Typetalk: 18001 0870 000 2288  
Fax: 01928 794248  
Post: Department for Education  
Castle View House  
East Lane  
Runcorn  
Cheshire  
WA7 2GJ

Phone lines are open 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.