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UNIT AND RECEIVED BY THE COMMITTEE
AT 0900 on 3RD MARCH AT THE SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE as “E34”

Committee Stage Education Bill

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**EVIDENCE TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMITTEE
Clauses 26 & 27**

CAREERS ADVICE & GUIDANCE: THE EDUCATION BILL and the ALL-AGE CAREERS SERVICE

1. As the Trade Association for employers in the careers advice and guidance industry in England, we write to ask the Committee to consider the following which we believe will influence the new scenario for the better – for the benefit of all of England’s young people and for all of the other potential users of the new all-age careers service (aaCS).
2. The new era needs to build upon solid foundations from today. Those foundations are being rapidly eroded. Hence Ministers need most urgently to remind Local Authorities that their current statutory duty to provide universal careers advice and guidance for young people remains in place today, and does so until such time as the new legislation is not only enacted but implemented. Failure to do this would amount to condoning LAs cutting statutory services and failing in their duties.
3. We also believe that Schools are woefully unaware of what is happening now, why and what is planned. Hence Ministers also need before Easter to write to all state-funded Secondary Heads and Chairs of Governors about current arrangements, transition plans and what the newly proposed arrangements will look like. This should explain the proposed timetable for change and (once careers education becomes no longer statutory) stress that all Schools will remain expected to prepare young people for transitions at 16+ and through the 16-19 phase, with particular attention to their employability skills and career management life-skills.
4. The Bill is silent on the aaCS, we understand because Ministers believe they have sufficient powers already to establish it. Whilst we have openly supported the proposal for an all-age service, we have growing concerns about the lack of details available for both the transition stage, and what the service will look like. Hence we urge Ministers urgently to involve their aaCS Advisory Group in meaningful, open and transparent discussions on: the transition to the aaCS; the design and commissioning of the aaCS; budgets; quality assurance (including mandatory quality standards for organisations procured to provide the aaCS); and on



professional standards of competence for the specialist careers advisers they rightly seek to form the core workforce of the aaCS. Consultations of substance have not begun on these issues with the Advisory Group and it is misleading to suggest otherwise in Written Answers to PQs.

5. We believe that Ministers need to be persuaded to make changes to strengthen the Education Bill (current Clauses 26 & 27) either by amendments to the Bill, or at a minimum through Parliamentary Assurances during the passage of the Bill. Top priorities are:
 - a. The new duty on Schools to secure independent careers guidance must include the whole 14-19 cohort (transitions after 16, as much as pre-16, are increasingly complex), and must cover all options/routes/providers of learning and work.
 - b. All Schools (and parents, young people and their future employers) need to be assured that every 'approved' provider of the newly secured careers guidance will meet the same robust national quality standards required of the aaCS providers, and that all specialist careers advisers delivering such services to any School in England meet the professional standards of competence required of the aaCS workforce.
 - c. All providers of this newly secured careers guidance must be required to contribute to a single the universal client record management system (preferably derived from CCIS) which LAs and the new aaCS will together (as yet undefined how) need to maintain across the age range.

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