

UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum

8th June 2010

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The meeting opened with update comments from stakeholders attending the meeting. These are noted in Annex 1.
- 1.2. The discussion about the establishment of the UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum (hereafter called the forum) started with a reflection on the rationale for the forum. Prof Tony Watts highlighted how the forum could act as a co-ordinating network of careers sector stakeholders in relation to the work programme being delivered by the ELGPN at European level and as a co-ordinating network for interacting with career IAG policy across the four nation governments.
 - The ELGPN is currently completing the first phase of its work programme. This covers 4 overarching themes – career management skills; access to lifelong guidance services; quality assurance and impact measurement; and co-ordination and co-operation within member states. For further information, see the note disseminated to the forum on the ELGPN.
 - The ELGPN provides a clear rationale for the new UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum – most member countries have a broad representation from the Careers Sector in their country delegations that extends beyond government representation to ensure that all key stakeholders are engaged.
 - Phase 2 of the ELGPN programme will include linking careers IAG programmes to other EU policies, including schools, welfare, and employment.
 - All countries have a focus on co-ordination and co-operation, relevant government ministries are engaged and the social partners are crucial to making joined up policy at member state level.
- 1.3. The role of the forum in linking UK and European policy and practice is also outlined in Annex 2. This highlights the co-ordinating and leadership role of the forum in relation to the ELGPN and the “Liverpool Group” of UK government officials. This group has recently been more formally established as the UK Government Careers Policy Forum.
- 1.4. Forum members noted the following points:
 - The forum had the potential to be the collective voice for the careers sector, aside from the voice of the careers profession which needed its own voice – hence the establishment of the Careers Colloquium.
 - The forum should not be a repeat of the Guidance Council to the extent that it should not compete with its members – there was an opportunity to establish the forum as a network of strategic leaders and social partners to work on behalf of the Careers Sector, to be the collective voice.
 - With a new government in England there was the opportunity to collaborate on the development of an all-age career IAG service, and use the forum to ensure that the new government developed a systematic approach, and to learn from the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
 - As for interacting with the “Liverpool Group”, it was important for the forum to be recognised as a constructive voice and not as a ‘lobby group’.

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2. Key objectives for the forum

- 2.1. There was much discussion at the meeting about the objectives for the forum and its strategic positioning on the career IAG policy landscape.
- 2.2. The forum offers the opportunity to provide a strategic link from the Careers Sector to the four nation governments, to ensure alignment across the four home countries and to link to the European agenda via the ELGPN.
- 2.3. Links with strategic partners such as the TUC, the CBI, CIHE and UKCES are considered important. Engagement with business, the unions and UK-wide partners is an important requirement for ensuring better alignment of key policy messages, developing a collective voice and making sure policy programmes and delivery are joined up, better integrated and foster greater collaboration and co-ordination across the careers sector at a UK-wide level.

3. Strategic concerns:

- 3.1. The group raised a few concerns about the forum and its key objectives:
 - The forum should be clear about its composition and membership – who will drive it and how will it be formally established.
 - The forum needs to acknowledge and synchronise its activities with the many parallel conversations which are currently underway in the sector – this includes the “Liverpool Group”, the LLUK Constituency Panel, the Careers Colloquium and the review of the careers profession being undertaken by Dame Ruth Silver, amongst others.
 - The forum should not seek to be the single point of contact with the careers sector for government in the four home nations, but a single point of contact where this is appropriate.
 - The forum needs to identify its ‘voice’ – as a collective voice for the sector it must have a clear identity and objectives which differentiate itself from the many other initiatives in the sector.
- 3.2. In response, it was noted:
 - The forum could act a collective voice and serve as a liaison link between the Careers Sector and the UK’s representatives on the ELGPN.
 - The forum could provide a link on UK policy matters to the “Liverpool Group”.
 - The forum could be proactive as a UK-wide strategic leadership network to engage actively on policy matters affecting the Careers Sector.
 - The crucial USP of the forum is that it is a genuine UK-wide network, it covers the spectrum of stakeholders with an interest in the careers sector and most importantly, it includes the social partners – employers and unions and key organisations like the UKCES.
 - As a collective endeavour, it is about more than a single message to government, it is about a UK-wide collective voice for the Careers Sector.
 - Clarity is needed on the composition of the group and the social partners, and a broader network of stakeholders who have an interest but are not directly involved in career IAG. The Terms of Reference should outline the membership criteria.

4. An overarching vision

- 4.1. As an overarching objective the forum could aspire to voice the needs of every citizen for careers information, advice and guidance. As a strategic leadership network it could actively collaborate with social partners and key national stakeholders to ensure that the voice of the Careers Sector extends beyond the careers profession itself and also incorporates perspectives that cover the spectrum of views.
- 4.2. As a ‘big idea’, it could encompass the vision of “lifelong careers guidance for everyone”. To achieve this, the forum provides a network for a conversation with UK-wide stakeholders, to align EU and UK policies and programmes and engage the social partners.





Suggested changes to the Terms of Reference

- 4.3. Aside from the four suggested topics of focus for the forum, the group also suggested:
- that career management skills also incorporate aspects on career learning;
 - that the focus on lifelong guidance services also covers aspects related to employability, social mobility and social justice.
 - that the forum act as a point of contact with external groups such as the ELGPN and the “Liverpool Group”.

5. Immediate priorities

5.1. With the new government in England it was suggested that the forum act now to influence the development of an all-age careers service in England. Using the experiences of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland the forum could issue a set of guiding principles that could inform the development of an all-age service in England.

Next steps:

5.2. The meeting concluded by identifying a series of actions to complete the establishment of the UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum.

Action	Resp
Establish the forum with a formal constitution and Terms of Reference	KH, TW, MD, VB
The CIHE to continue to act as convenor for the forum.	KH*
Establish a steering group extended beyond the core group of Margaret Dane, Vivienne Brown, Tony Watts and Keith Herrmann	KH, TW
Identify and confirm a chair for the forum – Sir Martin Harris and Harvey McGrath identified as possible candidates	KH, TW
Establish clear guidance on membership of the forum – core members, observers and co-opted members	KH, all
Identify a possible work programme for the forum	KH, all

* Keith Herrmann informed the meeting that he would be leaving CIHE due to organisational restructuring. He indicated that he would allocate the next 6-8 weeks of his personal time to ensure that the forum was formally established and put in place an appropriate transition strategy to ensure that the UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum was established on firm grounds. The CIHE’s Chief Executive, David Docherty, is committed to supporting the forum and will assign a CIHE associate to represent the CIHE on the forum.

The next meeting of the forum is scheduled for early October where the forum would be formally established and signed off by stakeholders and members.





UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum Stakeholder List

FirstName	LastName	Title	Organisation
Alan	Vincent	General Secretary	ACEG
Margaret	Dane	Chief Executive	AGCAS
Carl	Gilleard	Chief Executive	AGR
Paul	Chubb	Board member	Careers England
James	Fothergill	Head of Education and Skills	CBI
Judith	Norrington	Director of Policy	City & Guilds
Heidi	Agbenyo	Senior Manager - Stakeholder Communications	City & Guilds
Tristram	Hooley	Head	iCeGS
Deirdre	Hughes	President	ICG
Pat	Pugh	Career Guidance Constituency Manager	LLUK
Ann	Ruthven	Chair	NAEGA
Alan	Tuckett	Director	NIACE
Alastair	Thomson	Principal Policy Officer	NIACE
Tony	Watts		NICEC
Vivienne	Brown	Head of Education and Qualifications	Skills Development Scotland
Diana	Garnham	Chief Executive	Science Council
Ian	Borkett	Standards & Quality Manager	TUC and unionlearn
Richard	Blakeley	Policy Officer: Learning & Skills	TUC and unionlearn
Moira	McKerracher	Assistant Director - Strategy & Performance	UKCES
Keith	Herrmann	Deputy Chief Executive	CIHE
Peter	Forbes	Associate	CIHE
Fiona	Waye	Policy Adviser	UUK
Allister	McGowan	Chairman	NICEC and Careers England
Virginia	Isaac	Director of Business Development	UCAS
John	Lucas	Policy Advisor	British Chambers
Steve	Hoy	Chief Executive, Connexions Cheshire & Warrington	Representing the National Connexions Network





Annex 1: Stakeholder Updates

UKCES – Moira McKerracher

- The UKCES has commissioned 2 research projects on career IAG issues arising from their recent strategy report “Skills, Jobs, Growth”, covering:
 - by iCEGS, a review of using new technologies for career IAG support;
 - by IER Warwick, an assessment of the provision of high quality LMI data and careers information.
- The SSCs have also been commissioned to develop high quality LMI data for careers IAG and the UKCES is looking to take forward the development of new web 3.0 technology platforms to deliver career IAG support. The UKCES is looking for critical insight and expert advice on these projects and so welcomes comments from members of the forum on these developments.

ACEG – Alan Vincent

- The primary focus of the ACEG is on careers IAG in schools and colleges. A recent survey of its member has highlighted the importance of addressing the CPD needs of their members in order to deliver a high quality service.
- The ACEG has produced some research on the benefits of careers education; this will be issued shortly
- The ACEG is a member of the Career Colloquium and supports a common statement of principles about career IAG delivery and a statement of key messages to the new government.

LLUK – Pat Pugh

- The LLUK Constituency Panel is responsible for reviewing professional standards in what is a very complex domain where uniform occupational standards are important to the delivery of quality careers IAG. The UK-wide mapping process has provided a comprehensive assessment of the diverse range of provision.
- The Constituency Panel is working on a workforce development strategy (in England) but holds a UK-wide remit as well and is developing a careers profession framework.
- The Constituency Panel is advising on the revision of the National Occupational Standards for career IAG and actively participating in the government’s task force on the careers profession being chaired Dame Ruth Silver.

TUC/unionlearn – Richard Blakeley

- The TUC is working to support a national learners strategy which incorporates support for careers information, advice and guidance for people at work.
- The TUC/unionlearn has also been actively involved in the development of the Adult Careers Service (in England) and participated on the Millburn Group on Access to the Professions to explore the issues of social mobility and access to the professions.

NICEC/Careers England – Allister McGowan

- As a trade association Careers England covers the full range of activity in the careers IAG provision. It has been actively involved in submitting a range of reports to government on the future of the Connexions service, the Adult Careers Service and the possibility of an all-age service in England as already in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Connexions – Steve Hoy

- The Connexions network of delivery agencies are contracted to deliver career IAG in the 14-19 sector.
- The network is researching the costs of financing IAG support in light of the pending budget cuts – there is a significant risk of key IAG services being curtailed as a result of cuts to local authority budgets.





ICG – Deirdre Hughes

- The ICG is part of the Careers Colloquium, and is currently planning to host Scottish MPs at an event on 13th September.
- The ICG has launched its CREATE campaign, a new national campaign to raise awareness of career IAG provision.
- In another capacity Deirdre is working with IER Warwick to develop LMI infosheets for the new adult Careers Service in England, undertaking a review of career IAG provision in Wales, and is working in partnership with Careers England on career IAG and social mobility.

AGCAS – Margaret Dane

- AGCAS is working to help HE careers services reposition themselves and the delivery of career IAG in universities from them being perceived as a separate “after-sales” services in universities towards them becoming an integrated component of the student learning experience.
- AGCAS is working on a range of PMI 2 projects aimed at:
 - providing support services to international students;
 - providing better LMI data to international students about their home countries and sector employment trends;
 - working with employers in the UK on recruiting international students.

NAEGA – Ann Ruthven

- As a UK-wide body, NAEGA focuses on adult education and workforce development, and hence has an emphasis on career IAG support for adults.
- NAEGA works extensively with FE colleges, adult training, and skills development in the third sector.
- NAEGA is testing a careers blueprint project about careers IAG in schools and access to university education; this all-age approach is supported also by the DfE and BIS will be launched soon.
- NAEGA is undertaking extensive research about career IAG support within the college sector – reports can be found on the LSIS website.

CIHE – Peter Forbes

- The CIHE has recently completed a report on postgraduate education and employer perspectives on the value of postgraduate education – this report was commissioned for the BIS Review of Postgraduate Education.
- CIHE is working with i-grad on an international survey of graduate employability programmes at a number of universities around the world. This project for BIS will inform policies to support graduate employability to meet business needs and better respond to graduate unemployment.

iCeGS – Tristram Hooley

- As a research centre at the University of Derby the iCeGS is researching a range of themes related to career IAG, including: technology and career IAG provision, postgraduates and careers, the quality and diversity aspects of career IAG. The iCeGS works across the education spectrum – looking at these issues in schools, FE colleges and universities.

UUK – Fiona Waye

- UUK is exploring ways of widening access to higher education, and looking particularly at pre-HE transitions and how universities can use their career services and outreach programmes to better support schools.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) – Vivienne Brown

- SDS is the skills body for Scotland and delivers both career guidance services and National Training Programmes. SDS is charged with simplifying and optimising the skills landscape in Scotland and in working with all stakeholders and partners involved in learning, work, economic development and social inclusion to that end. It also has a key policy, strategy and research function, working with Scottish Government and partners. As an example, recent developments include the introduction of Career Management Skills using a Blueprint for Scotland.





Annex 2: Possible Options for Collaboration

As discussed at the previous forum meeting in January there is a need to consider how a possible UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum could connect with government officials in the four nation governments and with the policy dialogue at a European level via the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN).

Outlined below briefly is a possible model for promoting such collaboration. We suggest that the forum becomes a channel through which the UK Careers Sector interacts with the four nation governments and with policy at a European level. This would require:

- using the forum to communicate with the four nation governments via the UK Government Careers Policy Forum about developments in the sector;
- using the forum as an intermediary for the 3 UK representatives on the ELGPN, to collect, collate and disseminate views on the ELGPN from forum members;
- using the forum to communicate information about EU policy on career IAG to the UK careers sector.

The diagram below sketches a possible set of relationships between the forum and the ELGPN as well as with government civil servants via the UK Government Careers Policy Forum.

These options for collaboration by the forum were discussed at the forum meeting on 8th June 2010 and approved.

