



**PRESS NOTICE: 20<sup>th</sup> MAY 2012**

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## CAREERS GUIDANCE

Careers England is today publishing a detailed Policy Commentary on the Coalition Government's policies for Careers Guidance in England.

Commenting on the conclusions of the review by Professor Tony Watts, Paul Chubb (Executive Director for CE) said:

*" This Commentary is a forensic assessment of the way in which the bold vision for a world-class all-age Careers Service has foundered as the tensions between contradictory policies have undermined the essential building block of a universal careers service for young people.*

*There remains tremendous good will in the sector for that vision; and the readiness of many schools and colleges to commit to work towards Quality Awards for their careers provision which meet the new over-arching national validation – the Quality in Careers Standard – is the most heartening.*

*Diligent monitoring will be required of the implementation of the new duty from September for schools to secure 'independent careers guidance' – it will not be sufficient simply to refer students to an external helpline or website. We share the widespread concern that the weak Statutory Guidance to schools from the Department for Education has not been helpful. We welcome the Ofsted Thematic survey on how schools implement their duty, which will take place in the spring of 2013; it will be a crucial test of the wisdom of this policy, for which there is no supportive international evidence – in fact, quite the contrary.*

*High hopes exist for the National Careers Service, and we wish everyone involved in its planning and delivery the greatest success. The economic and social benefits of effective careers guidance are real, and in these times of economic uncertainty and high levels of unemployment amongst under 25s, the country deserves the highest quality careers services we can afford."*

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In his Policy Commentary, Professor Watts concludes:

"The current Government at an early stage affirmed its intention to strengthen career guidance services in England. Its main rationales were two-fold: promoting social mobility; and moving towards a user-led skills system. In pursuit of this intention, the Government made three commitments, all of which were widely welcomed: to establish an all-age National Careers Service (NCS); to revitalise the professional status of career guidance; and, in respect of support for young people, to safeguard the partnership model between schools and external career guidance providers.

The main sources of significant tensions have lain between these policies and the Government's policies relating to school autonomy. Schools will from September 2012 have a statutory duty to secure careers guidance services from an independent provider (a

contractor-supplier relationship); but it is left to schools themselves to define the form such services should take. This undermines the partnership model; raises issues about how quality is to be assured; and effectively renders the statutory duty meaningless.

Veiled by these changes and related confusions, the existing funding for face-to-face career guidance services for young people has been allowed to vanish without trace, without any public announcement to this effect. Most existing Connexions career guidance services for young people have been eroded or dismantled by Local Authority cuts. Schools now have to pay for services they previously received free of charge. Early signs are that a variety of different internal and external models are being developed by different schools, but that in many schools (possibly most if not all) the extent of provision is likely to be significantly reduced.

Meanwhile, the NCS has been launched, and valuable work has been carried out on developing a potentially world-class quality-assurance framework for career guidance in England. But the original Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) vision for the NCS has been significantly eroded by lack of serious engagement from the Department for Education (DfE), with likely adverse impact on the services for adults too.”

**ENDS**

[www.careersengland.org.uk](http://www.careersengland.org.uk)

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#### NOTES TO EDITORS

- 1. Careers England is the national trade association for organisations providing careers information, advice and guidance products and services.**
- 2. *Careers England Policy Commentary 15B* is the seventeenth in an occasional series of briefing notes on key policy documents related to the future of career guidance services in England. The note has been prepared for Careers England by Professor Tony Watts. It builds upon Policy Commentaries 15 and 15A, issued in 2011, and Policy Commentary 16, issued in 2012, on the Coalition Government’s emerging policies on career guidance.**
- 3. The new duty requiring all of England's secondary schools, including Academies (through their funding agreements), to secure independent careers advice and guidance for their pupils and students takes effect from September 2012.**
- 4. The Statutory Guidance to schools to assist Governing Bodies and Head Teachers to make decisions about how to implement the duty to meet their students' needs was published at the end of March by the DfE**
- 5. The Quality in Careers Consortium was established to oversee the national validation of England’s locally developed Quality Awards for CEIAG programmes and provision in schools, colleges and work-based learning. The national validation is known as the Quality in Careers Standard.**
- 6. The Quality in Careers Standard Consortium Board comprises:**

- Dame Ruth Silver as Chair
  - Association for Careers Education & Guidance (ACEG) nominee = Vince Barrett, President
  - Association of Colleges (AoC) nominee = Joy Mercer, Director of Policy (Education)
  - Association of Employment & Learning Providers (AELP) nominee = Graham Hoyle, Chief Executive
  - Association of School & College Leaders (ASCL) nominee = Duncan Baldwin, Deputy Policy Director
  - CEIAG Expert Invitee = David Andrews (CEIAG Consultant).
  - Careers England nominee = Claire Nix, Member of the CE Board/Chair of the CE Quality Task Group
  - Careers Profession Alliance (CPA) nominee = Sue Barr, Member of the CPA executive
  - Institute of Career Guidance (ICG nominee) = David Milton, ICG Vice President
  - National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) nominee = Lesley Gannon, Head of Campaigns
  - Project Leader = Paul Chubb (Careers England)
7. Careers England provides support for the Consortium including hosting a dedicated section for the QiCS on its website [www.careersengland.org.uk](http://www.careersengland.org.uk)
  8. The 14 Quality Awards which have committed to work towards national validation are shown on the CEIAG Quality Awards page on the Careers England website.

FURTHER DETAILS from Paul Chubb 07976 575536  
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