

Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in schools in England

This briefing paper covers the current and future position of CEIAG in schools in England. It includes a summary of the government's expectations on schools, good practice in delivery of CEIAG, future arrangements, based on the 2011 Education Bill and the principles that should underpin these. It has been written by the Association for Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG) and the Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG), in collaboration with Careers England and the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL).

CEIAG in schools – the current position

Since 1997, schools have had a statutory responsibility to provide programmes of careers education for pupils from year 9 to year 11 and this was extended in 2004 to include years 7 and 8¹. Careers education contributes to preparing young people for adult life by providing them with the knowledge and skills to enable them to plan and manage their journey through learning, training and into work. There is no statutory programme of study for careers education and so schools are free to decide on what to include but a good careers programme has the following elements:

- a planned programme of careers education, tailored to the needs of individual pupils
- experiences of the world of work
- impartial, independent careers guidance
- the provision of information about opportunities and progression routes in learning and work.

Careers education and careers guidance are complementary. A formal joint working arrangement between the school or college and an external guidance provider such as the Connexions Service makes a significant contribution to an individual's social mobility and economic prosperity. A well-planned careers education programme will ensure that young people have the knowledge and skills to use and apply impartial careers guidance effectively. It will also ensure that careers guidance is seen as an integral part of an ongoing process of career development rather than a one off event. In order to make career learning meaningful to young people, most schools contextualise it by providing work-related activities and exploratory

activities in relation to F/HE. These include work experience (around 90 per cent of pupils undertake this during compulsory schooling), enterprise activities, curriculum-linked workplace visits and talks, sector-specific information or business simulation challenges from employers, mentoring, mock interviews, job-specific tasks, work tasters, simulations and work shadowing.

CEIAG delivery

In many schools the model of delivery of careers education is through a combination of:

- discrete time for careers education which may be part of tutorials or a wider personal development programme
- through subjects (enabling students to understand progression routes and career opportunities from subjects as well as opportunities to understand and develop subject-related employability skills)
- through 'enrichment' activities such as work experience, enterprise activities, careers fairs, workplace visits and talks.

Colleges tend to deliver CEIAG through enrichment and tutorial programmes as well as through subjects and courses.

Careers professionals

An important factor in ensuring quality of provision is that it should be delivered in a way that makes the most of the knowledge and expertise of everyone involved. The best way to achieve this is through the partnership model of delivery in which schools draw on their knowledge of pupils' CEIAG needs and work closely with external careers advisers with expertise in careers guidance and who have up to date labour market information (LMI) and knowledge of the world of work. The Career Profession Task Force report, *Towards a Strong Careers Profession*² suggested a model of good practice in leadership, management and delivery of CEIAG in schools based on a range of staff roles including:

¹ OPSI (1997) *Education Act 1997*
OPSI (2003) *The Education (Extension of Careers Education) (England) Regulations 2003*

² Careers Profession Task Force (2010). *Towards a Strong Careers Profession: An Independent Report to the Department for Education.*

A governor with specific responsibility for CEIAG:

a designated member of the governing body who will help to ensure that the school/college complies with its statutory obligations with regard to CEIAG but who will also be able to offer an important lay perspective on how well the school's CEIAG provision prepares pupils for the world beyond school.

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 the designated governor and 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 day to day contact for the careers adviser. Careers coordinators may come from a range of professional backgrounds: often they are teachers, but they may include librarians, human resource managers, careers advisers and administrators. If the careers coordinator is from a non-teaching background, they will usually require extra support from the careers leader in order to effectively undertake their role as the subject leader for careers education.

Careers administrators: who maintains the school's/college's careers resource centre. Duties are likely also to include the organisation of students' career guidance interviews, setting up and maintaining employer links and assisting in the placement procedures for work experience.

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

- as teachers of careers education lessons planned by the careers coordinator in the schemes of work.
- as subject teachers, teaching students about careers relating to their own subjects as well as helping them to understand how the skills and attributes developed through study of the subject prepare them more generally for adult life and work.
- as tutors, with a detailed understanding of the CEIAG needs of the individual students in their tutor-group.

Careers support staff: including learning support assistants, learning mentors and progression staff who will complement the work of teachers detailed above.

Careers advisers: professionally trained and qualified practitioners in careers guidance who are usually employed by an external careers guidance provider, although a minority of schools employ their own, usually on a part time basis. Careers advisers are experts in specialist careers advice and guidance and they have a better understanding of the labour market, including up to date knowledge of legislation and the breadth of vocational and academic developments. They use this expertise in one to one interviews with students, groupwork and larger presentations.

New arrangements for CEIAG

The Government's future expectations of schools' responsibilities for careers education and guidance have been set out in the Education Bill³ which introduces the following changes:

A new statutory duty on schools in England to secure independent careers guidance for all pupils in years 9 to 11 which applies to all maintained schools, including special schools and PRUs. Once it becomes an act it will apply to academies through their funding agreements. This careers guidance should:

- not be provided by a teacher or any other person employed at the school. However, the explanatory notes make it clear that this would not prohibit teachers from offering some careers advice, as long as it is supplemented with that from an independent source. In response to a query on this issue, the following clarification was received from the civil servant responsible for this area of work: 'The Bill requires schools to secure access to independent careers guidance. Schools may not ask a teacher, supply teacher, or other individual employed by the school to be the sole source of careers guidance for any pupil. But they may still employ their own careers adviser or involve a careers coordinator or other member of the school staff in providing careers guidance, as long as pupils have access to an external source of guidance too. That might include (but would not be limited to) access to online resources, support via a helpline, or face-to-face guidance from a specialist provider.'⁴
- be presented in an impartial manner and promote the best interests of the pupil to whom it is given
- include information on options available in 16 to 18 education or training, including apprenticeships.

The Bill also removes the duty on schools in England to provide careers education for Y7-Y11. However:

- the duty on schools to provide careers education still applies to Wales

³ The Education Bill 2011 was introduced to Parliament in January 2011 and is projected to be implemented from April 2012.

⁴ Email Anna Paige, Deputy Director, DfE Quality, Choice and Guidance Division to Professor Tony Watts, 22 March 2011

- the secretary of state still expects careers education to be delivered in English schools.

Other changes include:

- The removal of the requirement for schools to provide careers advisers with access to, and information on, students for the purpose of giving guidance, although the government expects that this will be part of the agreement that schools will make with independent guidance providers.
- The removal of the separate duty on schools to provide careers information but this duty will be continued for further education institutions. It is expected that this information will be part of the independent, impartial guidance that students will have.
- Government will collect and publish data about the activities that pupils go on to do when they leave a school or college. They will do this by 'matching' information from the National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS) about where pupils go on to study or work with information that the secretary of state holds on individuals' education outcomes on the national pupil database.

Rationale for the changes to CEIAG in the Bill

Ministers have stated that at the heart of the government's policies in this area is the belief that CEIAG has an important role in promoting social mobility. John Hayes (Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning) has said:

*'... part of my aim is to ensure that careers advice is a driver of improved social mobility, so that we provide people who do not receive best advice from other sources, such as familial or social networks, with the kind of advice that allows them to turn their ambitions into fulfilled reality.'*⁵

The government has said that the rationale for the introduction of the duty for schools to secure independent, impartial guidance is that it will strengthen the partnership model of delivery of CEIAG which will lead to improved CEIAG. However, there is a danger that by removing the duty to provide careers education, access to high quality, impartial guidance will be impaired. Careers education supports the decision making process and development of career management skills that cannot be achieved in a 'one-off' careers guidance interview. Ministers have said that the requirement to deliver careers education is being repealed to reduce 'unnecessary prescription and bureaucracy' on schools, but that they would expect schools to continue to deliver it as part of what they do in order to prepare their students for the next stage in their learning and careers.

Issues for schools and colleges

In the transition between the current situation and introduction of the new requirements on schools and colleges there will be a period of uncertainty during which support services that have been relied on in the past will no longer be there⁶. Local authorities have been required to cut services in order to deal with reduced budgets and this has included cuts to the connexions service which was funded through the Area Based Grant (ABG). Cuts to the connexions service have been made disproportionately across local authorities meaning that access to careers guidance is no longer as readily available for all young people and in some cases it has been removed altogether. Many local authorities are no longer able to have partnership agreements with schools and in many areas support for development and delivery of careers education has disappeared or been significantly eroded. One example of this is that the connexions direct, Jobs4u website which supports the Careers Library Classification Index (CRCL) is no longer being updated. School- and college-based staff cannot be expected to have specialist expertise which would replace all of the existing infrastructure.

It is not yet clear whether the government expects the National Careers Service to fulfil the same strategic role that connexions had. If not, this will mean a less consistent approach to the provision of guidance for all young people and removal of any element of entitlement. In the absence of support nationally or from local authorities, schools and colleges will have to commission careers guidance services themselves and this responsibility will need to be allocated to a senior leader, working with the careers coordinator. In carrying out this role, they will need to be assured that the guidance they secure will meet robust quality standards. As yet there is no proposed requirement for all providers of careers guidance to meet a national quality standard and this could lead to a situation where the quality of careers guidance is diminished and some young people will be disadvantaged. In order to avoid this, the senior leader responsible for commissioning careers guidance should be assured that providers have robust quality arrangements in place which include that they have a national quality standard and that individual practitioners observe the professional standards and code of ethics agreed by the Careers Profession Alliance.

Principles for CEIAG for all young people

In order to ensure that all young people get the high quality CEIAG that they need, there are a number of core principles that schools and colleges should have in place and these should include:

- identifying the outcomes that young people need and link these to the inputs and activities provided. These

⁵ John Hayes in Education Bill Committee, 29 March 2011.

⁶ The Careers England Policy Commentary 15 (April 2011): the *Coalition's Emerging Policies on Careers Guidance* sets out in detail the current situation and issues arising from this.

outcomes will be based on the three aims of careers education which are to promote self-development, opportunity awareness and career management skills. In recent years a number of different frameworks have been produced to help schools develop their programmes including DfES (2003), DCSF (2010) and QCA 2008.

- ensuring that provision is of high quality. There are a number of local quality awards available which schools and colleges can achieve to recognise that their CEIAG provision meets particular standards. The Careers Profession Task Force suggested that there should be a national overarching kite mark to validate these quality awards and this work is now being taken forward by Careers England. Also, when securing guidance, schools and colleges should ensure that the provider has achieved a quality standard, such as the matrix standard. In addition, the Careers Profession Alliance has written professional standards for individual careers professionals.
- having a strategic approach underpinned by strong leadership which will ensure that CEIAG is integrated into learning and contributes to the school's or college's support of young people's achievement, attainment and progression.
- having effective co-ordination which will ensure that CEIAG is planned coherently and thus maximises successful progression outcomes for young people.
- continuous monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of provision so that destination and progression outcomes can be assessed, based on evidence and, whenever necessary, further developments can be made to secure progression and continuity for all learners.
- assessing and meeting the professional development needs of all staff to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles in providing for the CEIAG needs of students.

Who can help?

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