



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Youth Employment

Series 2 – Education into Employment

Written evidence submitted by the Career Development Institute (CDI)

Introduction

The Career Development Institute is the UK-wide professional body for everyone working in careers education; careers information, advice and guidance; career coaching and career counselling. We have 5,000 members, many of whom are careers teachers and careers advisers working with young people.

The Institute is pleased to have the opportunity to submit evidence to this inquiry as we have serious concerns about the erosion of careers support services for young people over the past five years and the impact this is having not only on young people themselves but also the economy and society at large.

Executive summary

- Support for young people to make the transition from education to employment has been reduced at a time when it is needed more than ever.
- While many schools are providing good support, such support is not available to all young people in England, as careers education and work-related learning are no longer compulsory elements of the school curriculum and the universal career guidance service has been dismantled.
- The closure of many high street careers (Connexions) centres means that it is difficult for young people to access career advice once they have left school.
- We recommend that the Government should:
 - reinstate the statutory duties on schools to provide careers, employability and enterprise education as part of the curriculum and extend the duty to cover the age range 11 to 18;
 - implement a truly universal, all-age careers guidance service, available to young people and adults, at times and locations that are accessible to them.

Changing context

Changes to the benefits system and the raising of the age of participation in learning have combined to delay young people's entry into the labour market to age 18 at the earliest. This, combined with the emphasis that Government places on measuring the performance of schools by their examination results, has meant that much of the work in schools on helping young people's transitions on from school focuses on progression to further study, with less attention to preparation for working life. The CDI fully supports the need to encourage young people to continue in education and to invest in developing their skills, but we must not reduce the work done to help young people secure jobs and to succeed in employment.

Youth unemployment figures are falling but are still too high. Young people need help with: understanding the labour market opportunities that are available today and the future nature of work and likely impact of technology; deciding what to do in their working lives and finding and keeping paid employment. It is unfortunate, to say the least, that this need for support for transition

has coincided with the dismantling of the universal careers guidance service for young people and the transfer of responsibility for this vital support to schools with no additional funding and very little support.

If young people do not receive the support they need to manage their careers and progress successfully into work, they are denied the opportunity of a fulfilling adult working life, they are not contributing to the economy and they are at risk of getting into problems with personal and social costs.

What support do young people need?

To be helped to make the transition from education to employment, young people need to be provided with an education that helps them to understand the world of work and the labour market and to help them to develop the skills of finding work and succeeding in the workplace. The CDI refers to this essential part of the school curriculum as careers, employability and enterprise education. In addition young people should have access to information, advice and guidance, from professionally qualified career advisers, at times when they need it, both within school and when they have left school.

Current support

From 1997 to 2012 all secondary schools were required to include careers education in the curriculum for all pupils aged 11 to 16, and from 2004 to 2012 they were also required to include work-related learning and enterprise in the curriculum for all pupils aged 14 to 16. Both these statutory duties were removed in 2012.

From 1973 to 2012, all young people in England had access to a national careers guidance service, delivered locally. Funding and the requirement to provide such a service was removed by Government in 2012. Instead schools have been given responsibility for securing access to careers guidance for their pupils aged 13 to 18 that need it. The National Careers Service that was established in 2012 only has a remit to provide face-to-face guidance for adults.

The CDI continues to support schools in providing appropriate support to young people. We have:

- published a framework and supporting materials for careers, employability and enterprise education;
- established a register of professionally qualified career practitioners;
- provided advice on how to commission careers guidance services.

We know that many schools are providing good support, but we also know that such support is not available in every school. We are also acutely aware that very little support is available to young people once they have left school. Moving from the Connexions service to a school-based model has led to the closure of many high street careers (Connexions) centres and young people are often not comfortable visiting Jobcentre Plus offices.

The Careers and Enterprise Company and Jobcentre Plus school advisers are providing good support to schools, and the CDI is working in partnership with both organisations, but this is not enough. Some schools have dropped careers education and work-related learning; the Government's own research shows that only two-thirds of schools are meeting their statutory duty to secure access to independent careers guidance; studies indicate that the support for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people from local authorities varies considerably from one area to another, particularly as budgets are cut.

What needs to be done?

We recommend that the Government should reinstate the statutory duties on schools to provide careers, employability and enterprise education as part of the curriculum and extend the duty to cover the age range 11 to 18.

We further recommend that the Government should implement the vision it set out in 2010 for a truly universal, all-age careers guidance service, available to young people and adults, at times and locations that are accessible to them.

We were pleased to note that the Green Paper on *Building an Industrial Strategy* published in January 2017 includes a commitment to publish a new, comprehensive strategy for careers later in 2017. The CDI hopes that the strategy will include our recommendations and we would be pleased to help to implement the proposals into practice.

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