



The Career Development Institute's response to:

The House of Commons BIS and Education Committee's joint report on careers education, information, advice and guidance

The report

Members of the House of Commons Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Education Committees came together in December 2015 to form the Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy. The aim of the Sub-Committee is to bring greater co-ordination to the scrutiny of education and skills policy and its impact on the economy. Members chose careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) as the subject for its first inquiry. Evidence was received through over 130 written submissions, four oral evidence sessions and an informal discussion with around 30 young people. The report was published in July 2016.

Around the same time as the inquiry was launched, the Government announced plans to publish a careers strategy. This was originally due in Spring 2016 but it had not appeared by the time the Sub-Committee's report was published and it has still to be published.

Overall findings

The overall conclusion from the inquiry was that CEIAG in schools in England is patchy and often inadequate: that the system has failed too many young people for far too long, with the result that they are leaving education without the tools to help them consider their future choices.

The report stresses that the Government's careers strategy is urgently needed and must include immediate steps to ensure all young people have access to high quality CEIAG. The Sub-Committee goes on to make a series of recommendations about what those key steps should be.

The views of the Career Development Institute (CDI)

The CDI is the UK-wide professional body for everyone working in career education; career information, advice and guidance and career coaching and has a membership of 4,800 career professionals.

The inquiry is the latest in a long line of reports to emerge over recent years expressing concerns about the state of CEIAG in schools and we share the Sub-Committee's disappointment that careers support is still poor in so many schools. It is interesting to note that research published by the Careers & Enterprise Company in August 2016¹, provides further evidence of concerns about the state of CEIAG in schools and finds that young people are confronted with lots of information but have little way of making sense of it.

We have already issued an initial response to the report, in the form of a joint statement with our colleagues in Careers England, the Quality in Careers Consortium and Assessment Services Ltd (the assessment body for the matrix standard), in which we have stressed the importance of young people in schools having access to the highest quality careers education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG) and urged the Government to publish its strategy for improving careers support in schools as soon as possible.

¹ *Moments of Choice* (The Careers & Enterprise Company, 2016)

In this response the CDI considers each of the report's 12 recommendations and provides the Institute's views on the actions suggested. In each case the response is introduced by quoting the Sub-Committee's recommendation in full, in italics.

1. *We welcome the Government's intention to legislate to require schools to collaborate with training providers and look forward to seeing further details of how it will work in practice. We recommend that the Government set out robust mechanisms to ensure that the new law is well-published and properly enforced.*

The CDI supports the view that schools should be required to collaborate with all providers of education and training opportunities available to young people, i.e. university technical colleagues (UTCs) and studio schools, sixth form and further education (FE) colleges and universities, as well as apprenticeship and other work-based training providers. Schools will need help with knowing which providers to contact locally and we understand that the Careers & Enterprise Company is developing a toolkit to help schools with this.

It will be important that the legislation should be accompanied by clear advice to schools on what is required of them and that Ofsted is given an explicit remit to monitor practice in schools. The Department for Education should also ask all education and training providers to report annually on their contact with schools.

2. *We recommend that Ofsted introduce a specific judgement on careers information, advice and guidance for secondary schools, and set clear criteria for making these judgements. The Common Inspection Framework should be amended to make clear that a secondary school whose careers provision is judged as "requires improvement" or "inadequate" cannot be judged to be "outstanding" overall; likewise, a secondary school should be unable to receive an overall judgement of "good" if its careers provision is judged to be "inadequate".*

The CDI welcomed the strengthening of the position of CEIAG in the Common Inspection Framework that was introduced in September 2015. We remain concerned, however, that these aspects of the inspection framework are not applied rigorously and consistently in all school inspections. While we welcome the suggestions for further strengthening, and for ensuring better consistency between overall judgements and judgements on careers provision, these measures are likely to have little impact on improving CEIAG in schools unless they are applied with equal rigour by all inspection teams. The CDI has offered to support appropriate training to help Ofsted inspectors know what to look forward when examining CEIAG and, at a time when there have been changes within Ofsted, we will repeat our offer to the Regional Directors.

3. *We invite the Government, in its response, to set out a comprehensive plan for improving destination data, including the timescales for doing so. This plan should include steps to make the data available in a more timely way and to ensure that they cover a longer period of time, and give more details on how the data will draw on information held by other Government departments. The Government should also consider how best to present its destination data, to mitigate the risk that schools are judged primarily on the number of their students going onto higher education.*

The CDI welcomes the focus on more effective use of destination data to support schools' monitoring, review and evaluation of their careers provision and agrees with the recommendation to improve the data.

Summative data, presented in broad categories and based on destinations of leavers from two or three years ago is of only limited value. For destination data to be useful, it needs to relate to recent leavers, over a longer period of time after leaving school and enable schools to track the progress of individual pupils from intended destination to actual destination and subsequent retention. Only then would a school be able to answer the important question: "did we get the careers education and guidance right for that student?"

No category, or sub-category, of destination should be given higher status than any other: the key question for improving CEIAG is "did the pupils end up in the right place for them" and not "how many pupils ended up in a particular type of institution?"

We remain concerned that the quality of data provided by different local authorities varies considerably and recommend that steps are taken to ensure that all local authorities produce data of the quality of the best.

- 4. We recommend that the Government, in its careers strategy, take steps to simplify the delivery of its careers policy at the national level. It should put a single Minister and a single Department in charge of co-ordinating careers provision for all ages, and set out how it plans to rationalise the number of Government-funded organisations delivering careers programmes.*

The CDI has consistently supported calls for a national cross-departmental strategy for careers support and greater coherence of provision. We also regard the implementation of the National Careers Service in its current form as a missed opportunity to establish a genuinely, all-age careers guidance service in England, as originally-envisaged by the Coalition Government in November 2010.

Since the Sub-Committee's report was published the Government has reorganised some departmental responsibilities and we support the relocation of responsibilities for further education, higher education and apprenticeships into the DfE. We also welcome the appointment of a single Minister, Robert Halfon MP, responsible for co-ordinating careers provision for all ages. These changes should enable all the various initiatives to be brought together into a coherent, all-age strategy for careers and lay the foundations, potentially, for an all-age careers service.

- 5. We recommend that all Government funded careers initiatives, including the Jobcentre Plus support for schools scheme, be brought under the same umbrella of the Careers & Enterprise Company. We further recommend that the Government consult on transferring responsibility for the National Careers Service from the Skills Funding Agency to the Careers & Enterprise Company. We also encourage the Careers & Enterprise Company to set out how, in addition to its existing programmes, it plans to support the provision of independent and impartial careers guidance in schools.*

The CDI recognises the need for greater coherence and to bring all the various careers initiatives for schools under a single umbrella. We are not convinced, however, that the Careers & Enterprise Company is necessarily the most appropriate location. This is partly because of a lack of certainty about the long-term future of the Company. When the Careers & Enterprise Company was launched

we understood that the funding from central Government would be for the first two years. As we are now in the second year of that initial period it would be helpful to have a clear statement about the future of the Company before implementing the developments implied in this recommendation.

It is important also to recognise that the Careers & Enterprise Company is not subject to the same accountability measures and procedures as the National Careers Service for example. At present the work of the two organisations is very different, with the National Careers Service concentrating on providing career guidance to certain priority groups of adults and the Careers & Enterprise Company focusing on programmes of support to schools.

We would, however, support a rationalisation of the National Careers Service's 'Inspiration agenda' and the work of the Careers & Enterprise Company on linking employers with schools, and indeed also the work of the various organisations supported by the Careers & Enterprise Company's innovation fund. But we consider that transferring all the current National Careers Service contracts to an organisation that has no track record of managing public service contracts, and which has to date not shown that it understands and values the work of careers professionals, would put the adult career guidance service at risk.

Many of our members work on National Careers Service contracts and we would be pleased to contribute to consultations on the future of the Service and what a genuinely constituted all-age career service might look like.

We welcome the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the Careers & Enterprise Company should set out its plans to support the provision of independent and impartial careers guidance. For some time we have urged the Company to have a drive and focus on careers equal to that which it currently has on enterprise. We are encouraged by the Company's response to its *Moments of Choice* research, which indicates that it does indeed plan to work with key stakeholders, including the CDI, on improving careers education and careers guidance in schools. We would be pleased to work with the Company on developing its plans to support careers provision in schools.

6. *We support the merger of the Quality in Careers and matrix Standards and recommend that the Government support the establishment and promotion of a single quality brand covering schools, colleges, careers service providers and careers websites, with appropriate criteria for the different types of organisation to meet. As part of this work, it should also encourage the bringing together of the 12 different awards recognised by the Quality in Careers Standard into a single award.*

The CDI believes that the current approach to quality assuring careers work in schools is largely fit for purpose. The quality awards for CEIAG, nationally-validated by the Quality in Careers Standard, provide a means of assessing and accrediting programmes of CEIAG in schools and colleges; the matrix standard assesses and accredits services providing careers information, advice and guidance in schools and other settings; the CDI's Register of Career Development Professionals provides a means of careers advisers showing that they are qualified to at least level 6, abide by a code of ethics and maintain their competence by undertaking regular CPD (at least 25 hours annually); the CDI's Career Assured endorsement provides a means of quality assuring websites and other products.

Because they serve different purposes, we do not agree with the suggestion that the Quality in Careers and matrix Standards should be merged. Nevertheless, we appreciate that the distinction between the two is not always clearly understood and welcome the recent publication of a

statement to explain the distinction and relationship between them (see Annex 1). Furthermore, we support the view that organisations and services should be free to choose the standard that best fits their work.

We appreciate that the situation can appear to be complicated further by the fact that there are 12 different CEIAG quality awards and, as a constituent member of the Quality in Careers Consortium, with two seats on the Board, the CDI will work with the providers of the quality awards to explore ways of bringing greater coherence to the current provision.

7. *We recommend that the Government, once the new quality brand is in place, amend the statutory guidance to require all schools to work towards being accredited under this brand, and only to use careers services from organisations holding it.*

For the reasons cited above, we do not support the establishment of a new quality brand but the CDI whole-heartedly supports the principles behind this particular recommendation. We welcomed the strengthening of the statutory guidance in March 2015, to recommend that all schools should work towards achieving a quality award, nationally-validated by the Quality in Careers Standard.

We, therefore, welcome the recommendation that this should be upgraded to a requirement. If all schools were to be required to achieve a quality award, all young people would be assured of access to good quality CEIAG support. Further, we also support the recommendation that where schools use careers organisations to provide career guidance they should only use services accredited by the matrix standard.

8. *We recommend that the Government statutory guidance is amended to require those delivering advice and guidance in schools to hold, at a minimum, a relevant level 6 qualification.*

The CDI fully supports this recommendation, as a means of ensuring that all young people have access to career guidance from a professionally qualified careers adviser. We would wish to extend the recommendation to require the adviser also to be a member of the CDI's Register of Career Development Professionals, established in 2013 at the request of a previous conservative government as a means of regulating the sector.

9. *The Committee is disappointed that the consistently high quality analysis and advice provided by the UK Commission on Employment and Skills (UKCES) is to be lost. We welcome the Government's commitment to continue operating the LMI for All dataset. We trust that the Department for Business Innovation and Skills will build upon the good work of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. We recommend that the Government set out in its response how it will ensure that LMI data published in future will match the high standards achieved by UKCES. We recommend that in its careers strategy, the Government set out its plans for further improving the quality and usefulness of the data.*

Access to good quality, local and national LMI, for both career development professionals and young people themselves, is an essential foundation of good career guidance. We were concerned that the closure of UKCES would put the future of the very successful 'LMI for All' facility at risk. The CDI is pleased that the data set will continue and we support the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the Government should ensure that the service is both maintained and developed further: this must

include a strategy for ensuring the longer-term future for 'LMI for All', not just its short-term survival.

10. We recommend that the Government take steps to ensure that all Local Enterprise Partnerships have the capacity and are encouraged to provide up-to-date good quality labour market information to schools, colleges and career professionals within their local area. The Careers & Enterprise Company could be charged with supporting LEPs to improve their data provision. Money saved by the rationalisation of national careers organisations we proposed earlier in the Report could be used to boost the capacity of LEPs for this and other roles in support of careers provision.

The CDI supports this recommendation and hopes that all LEPs produce LMI of the quality that the best of them currently provide. We wish to add that the Careers & Enterprise Company and the LEPs should also work together with the National Careers Service as its website makes available a wealth of good quality LMI.

11. We welcome the involvement of Local Enterprise Partnerships in the Enterprise Adviser Scheme. We encourage all LEPs to play their full role in brokering links between employers and schools. We recommend that, for its part, the Careers & Enterprise Company ensure that the scheme leaves plenty of room for local flexibility and that it supports, rather than duplicates, any existing work being carried out by the LEP.

The CDI supports this recommendation. Direct contracts with the world of work and encounters with employers are a key component of good careers provision but must be complementary to other elements as set out in the Gatsby benchmarks.

One way of helping LEPs respond to local needs would be to devolve some of the Careers & Enterprise Company's funding for schemes such as the innovation fund to the LEPs so that they could procure the most appropriate services and co-ordinate them with the work of their Enterprise Co-ordinators.

12. We recommend that the Government work with employers and schools to produce a plan to ensure that all students at Key Stage 4 have the opportunity to take part in meaningful work experience. It should also ensure that there are mechanisms in place to ensure that work experience is being effectively delivered through Key Stage 5 study plans.

The CDI recognises that well-planned and meaningful experiences of work and exposure to the world of work in Key Stage 4 can make a significant contribution to helping young people make better informed career decisions and prepare for the transition to work, provided that they are both personalised to the aspirations and interests of the students and linked to developing their employability.

We would, therefore, suggest that a requirement in Key Stage 4 for some form of direct experience and exposure to the workplace should be introduced. This does not necessarily have to take the form of a traditional work experience placement and could encompass several of the wide range of employer engagement activities now being promoted by the Careers & Enterprise Company, as part of a progressive programme of careers, employability and enterprise education.

We continue to support the provision of work experience in all 16-18 study programmes.

Other recommendations

The CDI welcomes many of the Sub-Committee's recommendations. If these were to be incorporated into the Government's careers strategy, they could lead to a marked improvement in the provision of CEIAG for young people. However, we believe further action needs to be taken, beyond the recommendations set out in the Sub-Committee's report.

- Firstly, the Government should reinstate the statutory duty on schools to provide careers education in the curriculum from Year 7 to Year 11, and extend the requirement to age 18.
- Secondly, a national programme of support for CEIAG in schools should be established, building on the current national pilot using the Gatsby benchmarks and Teach First's careers and employability pilot, and led by CEIAG Development Co-ordinators based in the LEPs working alongside the Enterprise Co-ordinators.
- Thirdly, development funding for CEIAG should be made available to schools to help build their capacity to take on the additional responsibilities for CEIAG. To ensure that the money is directed appropriately, access to the funding should be conditional upon achieving, or being re-accredited for, a quality award for CEIAG.
- Fourthly, the Government should make it clear that it values the work of careers professionals and that the intention of the statutory duty it has placed on schools is to ensure that all young people continue to have access to high quality careers support from professionally qualified careers advisers as an integral part of a careers programme led by a designated careers leader.