LENGTH MATTERS!

EXPLORATORY RESEARCH INTO THE IMPACT SHORTENING GUIDANCE HAS ON PRACTICE

Principle Research Investigator
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RESEARCH INTO:

“THE IMPACT A TENDENCY TOWARDS SHORTER GUIDANCE APPOINTMENTS IS HAVING ON PRACTICE”
WHAT WILL WE COVER TODAY?

- Context
- Research Aims
- Methodology
- Findings
- Discussion
- Recommendations & Next Steps
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Charlie Ball and the team at HECSU
- For funding our Research and your unending enthusiasm for our project! Thank you so much!

Gill Frigerio (Course Director of MA Careers Coaching & Development @Warwick)
- Ongoing support, ‘critical friendship’ and source of inspiration! (Standing on Shoulders of Giants)

Anne Wilson (Head of Careers) and Sue Bennett (Director of SCS) at Warwick
- For allowing us to do it, and supporting us along the way! Thank you!

Our colleagues and students who participated
- Without you, this really couldn’t have happened! We shall ever be in your gratitude!
Complete the following survey:

http://bit.ly/2AFcBUG
CONTEXT

UK Landscape:
- Connexions, 2011, ‘Service closed down’
- DWP, 2011 Flexible New Deal removed in favour of the Tories ‘Work Programme’
- Ofsted Report, 2013, ‘Careers support in schools not good enough’
- Gatsby Charitable Foundation, 2014, Gatsby Report – urging Policymakers to do something about careers guidance in the UK
- DfE, 2015, Mandatory requirement for careers advice in schools withdrawn

Guidance Landscape:
- Trend towards shorter appointments, for more individuals
- Rising expectations, rise in need for services – stretched resources
- In HE, ‘Employability’ and ‘outcomes’ a clear focus, but where is this going...?
WIDER CONTEXT
RESEARCH AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- To gain rich research evidence which will give valuable insights into the impact shortening appointments is having on practice.
- Gaining insight into guidance practitioners’ perception of how effective their interactions are (within short appointments).
- Measured against how effective the interaction is perceived to be by the students both immediately afterwards, and by what they do as a result of the intervention.

Scope/ Limitations:

- We only looked at ‘Guidance’ appointments (specifically ‘central guidance’)
- ‘Career Guidance’ appointments focus on career decision-making and ‘guidance’ whereas ‘Job Search Advice’ appointments focus on ‘CVs, applications etc
- This is NOT a comparative study
**METHODOLOGY**

**WHAT WE DID – PHASE 1**

- Every ‘central guidance’ appointment invited to participate in a Quantitative Survey post-appointment (n=836)
- Completed by 15% of population in Autumn Term 2016 (n=124)
- Data was analysed using SPSS
- Statistical inferences were made by using non-parametric tests (a.k.a. by magic!)
METHODOLOGY

PHASE 2

10 Students

5 Senior Careers Consultants (SCCs)

3 Interviewers
METHODOLOGY

PHASE 2

Stage 1
- 30 minute guidance appointment booked
- Strictly timed to service requirements (30 minutes)

Stage 2
- Separate interviews with SCCs and Student

Stage 3
- Final interview
- With students to see what progress has been made
FINDINGS

PHASE 1 - QUANTITATIVE SURVEY
Why do they come to see us?
(students can select more than one, pop. size 124)

- Help with career decision-making: 80
- Application support: 29
- Information about specific careers: 28
- CV review: 18
- Interview support: 14
- Review of R2 Strengths Profile: 8
- Internships/Placements: 3
FINDINGS

APPOINTMENT LENGTH

[Bar graph showing counts of responses to the question about the length of appointments. The categories are 'About right', 'A Little Short Appt Length', and 'Too Short'. The total N = 124.]
BUT...

“I felt an hour length the right balance as an introduction to the service and provided a manageable amount of advice to absorb and reflect on afterwards”.

“40 minutes feels better than 30”

“Should be an hour”

“Up to 45 minutes to 1 hour would be great!”

10 more minutes was needed

“My appointment was a little shortened compared to usual because we both had a lecture next, so could not say whether the usual length would feel long enough or not”.

“I had a one hour appointment, which was perfect!”
Students reported high levels of satisfaction with their guidance appointments (n=109), in addition to reporting benefits such as: feeling more confident (n= 92), coming away with ideas for development (n=86) and coming away with a clear plan for development (n=100)

Unsurprisingly, in the session ‘Guidance’ was reported to contain a rich and diverse exposition of practitioner skill, with techniques ranging from: exploration of the past (n=116), providing learning opportunities (n=97), challenging thinking (n=86), discussing skills & strengths (n=95), and ‘being genuine’ (n=120)

Crucially, students who reported that the appointment was ‘too short’ (n=40) reported lower scores in general, (therefore reporting that they gain less from the appointment).
## DURING THE APPOINTMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Appt Length</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session_The Careers Consultant took a genuine interest in me</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>.580</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session_I talked about my past experience and interests</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>1.214</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>.768</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session_We discussed my skills +/- strengths</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>.971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session_We discussed what jobs would match my skills +/- strengths</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.966</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>1.035</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session_My thinking was challenged</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
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<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session_We discussed areas that I could develop (e.g. through work experience)</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.025</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>.983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BalanceListen&amp;Talk</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>.898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session_We discussed practical steps I could take to achieve my goals</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>.813</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>.790</td>
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## FOLLOWING THE APPOINTMENT

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<th>Appt Length</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I came away with a clear plan of action/ some next steps to take</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.861</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I came away thinking differently</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1.018</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I learnt something about my skills +/- strengths</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I feel more confident approaching my career decision-making</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.784</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.878</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I came away with ideas for personal development</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>.900</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>.916</td>
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<td>Following appointment_I am going to put what I learnt about myself into practice</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.815</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>.991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I feel like my career goals are more achievable</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.791</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.920</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I have improved my knowledge about what I could do after University</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following appointment_I thought the appointment was useful</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>.722</td>
</tr>
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## POST APPOINTMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S. Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>S. Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommend to a friend</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book another guidance appointment</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend another Careers Event e.g. Careers Fair</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result of appointment_Recommend the service to a friend</th>
<th>Appt Length</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result of appointment_Recommend the service to a friend</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.783</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>.736</td>
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<tr>
<td>Result of appointment_Book another guidance appointment</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.010</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>.883</td>
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<tr>
<td>Result of appointment_Attend other Student Careers &amp; Skills events e.g. careers fairs</td>
<td>&gt;= 4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>.864</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>.773</td>
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PHASE 2
QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS
FINDINGS

STUDENTS

- Students don’t seem to mind how long appointments are, but all of them thought they would have benefitted from more time (n=10).
- Once they engage (no matter how), they want to come back, because they think our service is great (n=10).
- Students don’t really know what we do: minimal, false or no expectations of what ‘guidance’ is at outset (n=10).
- All students strongly value what we do (i.e. guidance) (n=10).
- All students reported that we do has impact on them in some tangible (and intangible) way (n=10).
FINDINGS
GUIDANCE PRACTITIONERS

- Practitioners do what they can within the time constraints they need to adhere to, and are able to perform highly effective and action-oriented guidance within given time constraints. This serves to address the ‘presenting issue’.

- Rapport building and contracting take time. As the ‘real issue’ tends to emerge after rapport building has been done/ the ‘presenting issue’ seems to have been addressed, the expert’s opinion of what ‘Needs’ to be challenged (discussed etc.) comes later if time allows.

- There is a drive to an ‘outcome’ – what does this say about our confidence in what we do?

- Practitioners have a tendency to want to ‘give’ something (information, links, jobs to apply for, even re-assurance, confidence, unconditional positive regard) and this seems to link to their perceived ‘effectiveness’.
DISCUSSION
IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUR PRACTICE

- In pairs/groups you have **five minutes** to discuss **what the implications are** for you
- Discuss, Write or (preferably!) DRAW your answers on A4 page given
- Once you have finished take a photo of them on a phone/tablet
- Upload your photo
CONCLUSIONS

- Appointment length (or students’ perception of it) seems to impact their satisfaction, and importantly, what they report to gain from the appointments.

- Guidance remains a rich, and theoretically informed intervention regardless of appointment length, however time puts appears to put pressure on the Guidance Practitioner's position as expert to diagnose more systemic/ deeper issues.

- Students (and possible everyone else, that isn’t a guidance practitioner!) have ‘personal career theories’ about ‘career’ but also what we do in ‘careers services’ and this needs to be seriously looked into, starting with ourselves (who else better to profile what we do?)
The future of guidance?
CALL TO ACTION/ NEXT STEPS

• Write on a postcard at least one **ACTION** that you will commit to personally take forwards following today.

• Please be ‘SMART’ about it 😊!

• Place your postcard in the envelope provided when you have finished, and seal it.

• Write your name & address on the envelope, and hand them in.

• I will post them to you in four weeks, as a reminder of what you have committed to do as a result of today.
THANK YOU
ANY QUESTIONS?