



# Careers Leaders in Schools

**A CDI Briefing**

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# Briefing

**Recent changes in policy for careers education and guidance for young people in England have placed greater responsibility on schools<sup>1</sup>. At the same time, there has been a growth in the number of organisations offering support to schools. For the various elements of careers support provided by the school and the contributions of the different external partners to be brought together into a coherent programme of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) for young people, there needs to be clear leadership from within the school.**

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for everyone working in careers education; careers information, advice and guidance; career coaching and career counselling. This briefing specifies the role of the careers leader and its relationship to the other key careers professional role, the careers adviser. It also provides advice on the features of effective leadership and management of CEIAG in schools and on access to relevant training and continuing professional development (CPD). While the focus for this briefing is the context in England, the general principles and advice are also relevant to all schools in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

## The role of careers professionals in a school-based model

Prior to 2012 responsibility for careers support for young people throughout the UK was shared between the schools, which provided careers information, careers and work-related education and initial advice, and an external careers guidance service, funded by government, which provided careers guidance to pupils and related support to schools. For this partnership model to work effectively, schools had in place a member of staff with responsibility for careers who worked closely with the careers adviser from the external service. This model essentially continues in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In England, responsibility has been placed firmly with individual schools. The national careers guidance service, locally delivered, has been replaced with a statutory duty on schools to secure access to independent careers guidance for their pupils. In addition to making available careers information and providing a programme of careers education, schools are now required to make arrangements for pupils to have access to advice and guidance. This commissioning adds to the role of the member of staff with responsibility for CEIAG.

The Gatsby benchmarks<sup>2</sup> set out a framework of good practice:

1. A stable and embedded programme of careers education and guidance
2. Good quality information about future study options, jobs and the labour market

3. Opportunities for advice and support tailored to young people's needs
4. Subject teaching linked to careers
5. Several opportunities to learn from employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Opportunities to hear from representatives of FE, HE and apprenticeship providers
8. Personal guidance from a professionally qualified careers adviser, at the right time.

A programme that follows these benchmarks requires contributions from several different members of staff within the school (e.g. careers teachers, subject teachers, tutors, SENCO), and contributions from a range of external partners (e.g. representatives of FE colleges and universities, employers, apprenticeship providers, careers advisers), all co-ordinated into a coherent, progressive and integrated programme of careers support from Key Stage 3 through to the sixth form. This, in turn, necessitates clear leadership and management.

Implementing the Gatsby Framework may require a fundamental rethink on how careers education and guidance is delivered in your school. The CDI believes that two complementary professional roles are required: the careers leader, to take responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management of CEIAG within the school and linking with external partners including the providers of careers guidance **and** the careers adviser, to take responsibility for providing independent and impartial careers guidance to pupils.

## Careers leadership in schools

The tasks involved in the leadership and management of CEIAG in schools can be specified under the four broad headings of: *co-ordination* (linking all the contributions from within the school); *networking* (linking all contributions from external partners); *management* (ensuring the delivery of careers education and initial information and advice and the efficient administration of CEIAG); *leadership* (providing strategic leadership and assuring quality). These are itemised in Figure 1

Schools can use this list of tasks to review their arrangements for the leadership and management of CEIAG. The most common approach is to combine the 17 tasks into a single role specification for a middle leader and to give that post the title of careers leader (formerly head of careers or careers co-ordinator). In such cases the list can also be used to review the job description for the careers leader, as a basis for performance reviews and as a means of identifying training and CPD needs.

Some schools choose to allocate the tasks to more than one member of staff, which then necessitates a means of enabling those colleagues to work together. In these instances the list can be used to ensure that there are no gaps in the arrangements or any duplication of roles.

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for everyone working in careers education; careers information, advice and guidance; career coaching and career counselling.

1. The Education Act 2011

2. The Gatsby Charitable Foundation (2014). Good Career Guidance. London: Gatsby

## Figure 1. The careers leadership tasks

Ref. Andrews, D. and Hooley, T. (2017) "...and now it's over to you": recognising and supporting the role of careers leaders in schools in England. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*

<b>Co-ordination</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Managing the provision of careers information</li><li>2. Liaising with the PSHE leader and other subject leaders to plan careers education in the curriculum</li><li>3. Liaising with tutorial managers, mentors, SENCO and head of sixth form to identify pupils needing guidance</li><li>4. Referring pupils to careers advisers</li></ol>
<b>Networking</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Establishing, maintaining and developing links with FE colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers.</li><li>6. Establishing, maintaining and developing links with employers</li><li>7. Negotiating an annual service level agreement with the local authority for support for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils</li><li>8. Commissioning career guidance services</li></ol>
<b>Project management</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. Planning schemes of work for careers education</li><li>10. Briefing and supporting teachers of careers education and tutors providing initial information and advice</li><li>11. Monitoring teaching and learning in careers education</li><li>12. Monitoring access to, and take up, of career guidance</li></ol>
<b>Line management</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>13. Managing the work of the careers administrator</li></ol>
<b>Leadership</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>14. Advising senior leadership on policy, strategy and resources for CEIAG</li><li>15. Reporting to senior leaders and governors</li><li>16. Reviewing and evaluating the programme of CEIAG</li><li>17. Preparing and implementing a development plan for CEIAG</li></ol>

## The appointment of careers leaders

In the past it was almost always the case that the role of careers leader was filled by a teacher, who was given the post as an extra responsibility and allocated some additional non-teaching time to fulfil the tasks. This is still the model adopted by many schools but it is estimated that in up to a third of schools the role is filled by someone who is not a teacher and who comes from a different professional background, including qualified careers advisers recruited to the position.

It matters less whether the tasks are undertaken by one member of staff or several, or whether the post is filled by a member of the teaching or non-teaching staff, and more that all the tasks are clearly assigned and that the personnel allocated the role(s) are enabled and supported to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

The role is a middle leadership position and needs to be located appropriately in the organisational structure of the school in order to be able to fulfil the tasks effectively. It should be recognised with an appropriate responsibility allowance and allocated time to undertake the tasks.

Careers leaders do not constitute a new profession but the role is a professional role. Teachers who move into the role of careers leader already have a professional identity as a teacher, but have taken on an additional professional identity within the careers profession. The same would be true of other professionals who take on the role, such as human resource managers, librarians and others.

Schools should recognise that where they appoint teaching assistants, learning mentors or administrative staff to the role of careers leader, they have moved the individuals from the support staff into a professional role. Similarly, careers advisers who move into the role of careers leader can be viewed as taking on an additional professional role within their existing profession.

## Combining the roles of careers leader and careers adviser

Throughout this briefing a distinction has been made between the two professional roles of careers leader and careers adviser. These are separate, but related, roles. However, it is possible for one individual to take on both roles. This is happening in some schools in England, either through careers advisers being appointed to schools, or their services being bought in under contract, and then having their brief extended to include careers leadership, or through careers leaders in schools undertaking a qualification in careers guidance. The result, in both scenarios, is a careers professional with the dual roles of careers leader and careers adviser - a combined role similar to that of a guidance counsellor in post-primary schools in the Republic of Ireland.

Implementing the Gatsby Framework may require a fundamental rethink on how careers education and guidance is delivered in your school.

**Figure 2. Careers leadership in schools: respective roles**

Governing body	Link Governor	Advocate for careers Support and challenge
Senior leadership	Assistant or Deputy Head	Strategic overview Line manager for Careers Leader
Middle leaders	Careers Leader	Day-to-day leadership and management
Support staff	Careers Administrator	More routine organisation and administration

### Effective leadership of careers in schools

The tasks of careers leadership listed in Figure 1 demonstrate that this is a middle leadership role, working in partnership with several members of staff, including other middle leaders, in school and with a range of individuals and organisations in the wider community beyond the school. This is why the role is comparable to that of a SENCO. Positioning the role as a middle leader is the first step in ensuring effective arrangements for the leadership of careers in the school. It is also a signal to senior leaders that to be effective in this role, the careers leader will require a level and breadth of CPD which is commensurate with this role.

The careers leader should have the active support of a designated member of the senior leadership team (often an assistant head of deputy head) as their line manager. To be enabled to have the time to effectively lead and manage; the careers leader should also be able to delegate the more routine organisational and administrative tasks to a member of the support staff designated as the careers administrator.

There is further value in having a link governor for careers, who can act as an advocate on the governing body and offer support and challenge to the careers leader and the senior leader with overall responsibility for careers. These respective roles are set out in Figure 2.

Careers leaders in schools are at the centre of a web of activities, working with a range of other people, as illustrated in Figure 3 below.

### CPD for careers leaders

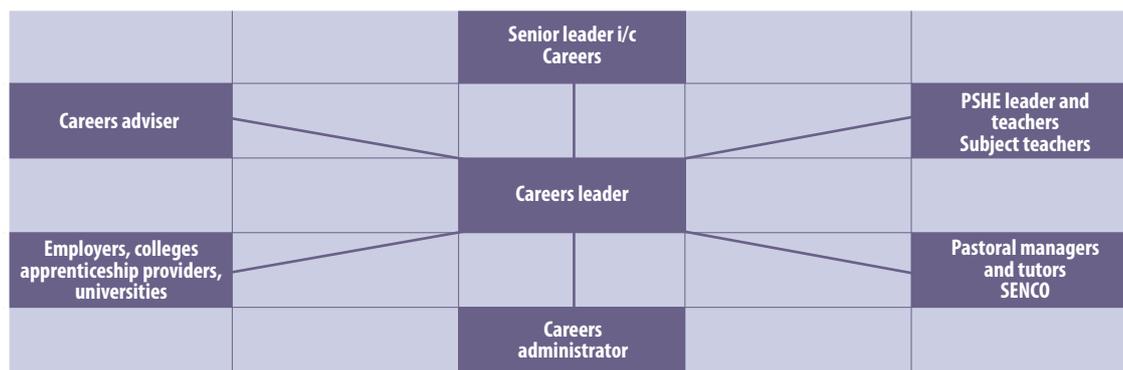
No one trains initially to be a careers leader. Everyone who comes into the role does so from a different previous role, be they teachers, careers advisers or from another job. It follows that if they are to take on this new professional role they should have access to appropriate CPD to equip them with the knowledge, understanding and skills to fulfil the tasks involved. The particular training needs will depend on the careers leaders' prior experience and will be different depending on their previous roles. The tasks listed in Figure 1 provide a good starting point for identifying CPD needs.

The CPD opportunities available for careers leaders in England range from short unaccredited courses run by the CDI, private organisations, careers companies and local authorities, through to free-standing HE awards such as the Advanced Certificate in CEG at Canterbury Christ Church University and 'careers leadership' options within postgraduate courses at University of Derby and Nottingham Trent University.

The main provision promoted by the CDI is the Certificate in Careers Leadership, based on three of the optional units of the Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development. Further details can be found at: [www.theecd.net/Certificate-in-Careers-Leadership](http://www.theecd.net/Certificate-in-Careers-Leadership).

The CDI is keen to promote the professional role of careers leader in schools, and for careers leaders to have access to CPD for the role, with the option of gaining a qualification. We are working in partnership with The Careers & Enterprise Company, the Gatsby Foundation and Teach First, and will update this briefing if further CPD opportunities emerge from current pilots and developments.

**Figure 3. The inter-relationship of careers roles in schools**



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We are working in partnership with The Careers & Enterprise Company, the Gatsby Foundation and Teach First.



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