



CDI Briefing: Careers guidance and access for education and training providers: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on providing careers guidance (July 2021)

What does this mean for the Careers Adviser?

Introduction:

[‘Careers guidance and access for education and training providers’](#) (July 2021) brings together statutory guidance for schools, further education colleges and 6th form colleges on careers guidance into a single document. It sets out the duties placed on them to provide careers guidance and stresses requirements for providers of technical education to access students (the ‘Baker clause’), also how careers guidance features in the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework. There has been no change to careers legislation.

The guidance is not directed at professionally qualified Careers Advisers, except where they are a member of the school or college staff. However, it will impact on their role within schools with students from year 8 to year 13, further education colleges and 6th form colleges with students up to and including the age of 18, or up to the age of 25 with a current education, health and care plan. The duties and expectations placed on schools and colleges are aligned against the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, with useful references and links to resources developed by the Careers and Enterprise Company.

Relevance to Careers Advisers

The guidance:

- states that *‘there will be an increasing need for schools and colleges to work in partnership with (...) **careers advisers** (...) to support students to prepare for the workplace and to make informed choices about the next step in their education or training’* (p.5);
- continues to expect schools and colleges to use the Gatsby Benchmarks to develop *‘a careers programme that increases opportunities for students to access everything from experiences of the workplace **and personal guidance with a careers adviser**, to engagement with employers, colleges, training providers and universities’* (p.9); with *‘an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it’* (p.15);
- *‘urges senior leaders (...) to invest in personal guidance **provided by a qualified careers adviser** (p.7) which ‘can be delivered by school or college staff – if trained’* (p.3);
- recognises that as distinct from Career Leaders, Careers Advisers provide personal guidance to students and offer specific expertise on the labour market, educational pathways and progression routes and career decision-making: *‘Careers advisers are expert at interpreting LMI and using this with students to enable them to make effective career decisions’* (p.19.); and
- advises that [SEND] *‘Schools should ensure (...) reviews are informed by good careers guidance, including impartial personal guidance by a qualified careers adviser’* (p.24).

Careers Advisers are well placed to support schools, FE and 6th form colleges to provide the full range of activity delivered under the eight Gatsby Benchmarks – defined as ‘careers guidance’ – and to engage and inform students about available education, training and employment options.

Plus, they have a particular role to play with regard to the Gatsby Benchmark 8: Personal Guidance – ‘*the school or college should ensure that access to an adviser trained to [at least] level 6 is available when needed*’ (footnote, p.38). Personal guidance is the opportunity for students to make sense of all the various career activities they have experienced and to reflect on what this means for them ‘*with the assistance of a qualified careers adviser*’ (p.38).

The guidance stresses that Careers Advisers working with students with SEND should draw on the outcome and aspirations in the education, health and care plan. Similarly, when working with looked after children or care leavers, the personal education plan (PEP) or pathway plan should be used to help focus the discussion (p.38).

Importantly, the CDI is cited as recommending that at least 45 minutes are allowed for every personal guidance interview’ (p.39). This recommendation is based on research¹. The CDI also welcomes the recommendation that schools and colleges recruit qualified Careers Advisers from the [UK Register of Career Development Professionals](#) managed by the CDI. Meeting the eligibility criteria for the Register is endorsement of professional competence.

It is acknowledged throughout the guidance that Careers Advisers have an integral part to play in the provision of careers education and guidance in schools, further education colleges and sixth form colleges. For example:

‘Schools and colleges should keep comprehensive and accurate careers education records. This helps (...) careers advisers to maintain consistent advice and keep track of agreed actions and next steps (p.20).

‘[Like Career Leaders] Careers advisers should also (...) engage with the relevant Virtual School Head or personal adviser (p.22).

Notwithstanding this, investment by the Department of Education does not extend beyond the roll-out of Career Hubs, Careers Leader training, the Enterprise Adviser Network and digital support (p.8). Similarly, access for young people over the age of 13 to information, advice and guidance provided by the National Careers Service remains limited to a website, telephone helpline and webchat service (p.11). There is, however, a commitment ‘*to build career awareness into every stage of professional development for teachers*’ (p.34). Similarly, the guidance expects that schools and colleges appoint a Careers Leader who has the skills, commitment and backing from their senior leadership team, including protected time that enables the Careers Leader to carry out the role effectively (p.10).

The guidance requires schools and colleges to act impartially and not show bias towards any route – academic or technical. It states that ‘*Schools and academies must have regard for when carrying out their duty to ensure that there is an opportunity for a range of providers to access pupils to inform them about technical education and apprenticeships*’ (p.3).

In contrast ‘*FE and 6th form colleges must have regard to the statutory guidance **when carrying out their duty or funding requirements to provide pupils with independent careers guidance***’ (p.3) – professionally qualified Careers Advisers are well placed to support them in meeting this requirement. It should be noted that ‘independent’ is also defined as sources of information external to the school or college such as websites and telephone helplines, although schools and colleges may recommend good quality websites and apps ‘*in consultation with a careers adviser*’ (p.34). Equally, schools and colleges can ‘*invite*

¹ Everitt, J., Neary, S., Delagardo, M.A. and Clark, L. (2019) Personal Guidance What works? The Careers Enterprise Company. Available from <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/research/personal-guidance-what-works>

careers advisers (...) to co-design or deliver part of the curriculum, use LMI to showcase growth sectors in the local area or deliver careers fairs' (p.35).

Measuring performance

The guidance strongly recommends that all schools and colleges work towards the **Quality in Careers Standard**, <https://www.qualityincareers.org.uk/> (p.12) although destinations remain an important measure of success (p12). Colleges in receipt of funding from the ESFA adult education budget must hold the matrix Standard, <https://matrixstandard.com/>

The guidance strengthens the role of Ofsted in assessing careers provision (p.12). It is legally required to comment in an inspection report on the careers guidance provided at colleges for 16-to-18-year-olds and students up to 25 with an education, health and care plan. In schools, it will assess the quality of careers information, education, advice and guidance provision and how well it benefits pupils in choosing and deciding on their next steps. The assessment includes looking at provider access arrangements but does not extend to access to students or information-sharing arrangements for Careers Advisers.

Summary

It is evident that under the statutory guidelines professionally qualified Careers Advisers have a key role to play in the provision of personal career guidance. Moreover, they are well placed to contribute to the design and implementation of an effective strategic careers plan and of a progressive careers programme, developed in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks.

For further information, please contact:

Claire Johnson

Head of Professional Development and Standards

Claire.johnson@thecdi.net