



Careers Guidance in Schools and Colleges:

A Guide to Best Practice and Commissioning Careers Guidance Services

July 2014





Foreword

President, Career Development Institute

July 2014

In the run up to the publication of this guide, there has been an unusually high proportion of reports emphasising the critical importance of building strong vocationally focused opportunities for young people. The National Careers Council for England call it a “culture change”; the Department for Education set out an “Inspiration Vision” and UKCES describe “a precarious future” for young people, arguing that genuine experience of the workplace is vital for young people. The economic argument for a competitive nation is loud and clear.

I believe that this is an agenda that employers already buy into. The CBI reports that links with schools are a real priority for most employers, with 85% of its members surveyed reporting ties with local education providers. There is great employer led work taking place, with successes such as the Education and Employers Taskforce led “Inspiring the Future Campaign”, STEMNET, Young Enterprise and Barclays’ “LifeSkills”. The now annual Skills Show and national and local events demonstrate the commitment from schools and colleges as well as employers to creating a meaningful interface between young people and work. Local Education Business Partnerships, such as my own in Lancashire, still operate to deliver excellent brokerage services that are enthusiastically entered into by schools and employers; in Lancashire for example, The Via Partnership organised 5,000 work experience placements in just one academic year. There exists a strong commitment to employer links.

Nevertheless, even though the number of NEET young people is falling, 16-24 year olds are four times more likely to be unemployed than their adult counterparts. As well as the skills debate, there is a social cost too. In February this year, the Prince’s Trust found that long-term unemployed young people were more than twice as likely as their peers to have been prescribed anti-depressants and may feel that they have nothing to live for.

There is no such thing as the “golden bullet” to solve youth unemployment, but there are “magic ingredients”. Experience of work; exposure to employers; understanding the labour market are high on the shopping list and there are two more to season the dish:

- A planned and effective careers education programme, to translate inspiration from the work place into motivation to achieve in the classroom;



- Independent, impartial careers advice and guidance, to meet and challenge the individual needs of our students.

This guide offers a practical step by step approach to interpreting, meeting and exceeding the requirement of the Statutory Guidance for schools. It also includes two pages on the work of the Career Development Institute, which has a key role to play in influencing careers and skills policy and a clear purpose to improve and assure the quality and availability of career development opportunities for all throughout the UK.

In addition to being sent to the Head of Careers in all secondary schools and academies in England, the key messages will be further explored through four regional conferences to take place in London, York, Bridgwater and Birmingham this September and October. Taken together the guide and the conferences are designed to help schools deliver the best possible programme for young people.

We hope this information will be useful to careers coordinators, professionals and managers alike.

Karen O'Donoghue

President of the Career Development Institute and Chief Executive of The Via Partnership

This guide offers a practical step by step approach to interpreting, meeting and exceeding the requirement of the Statutory Guidance for schools.

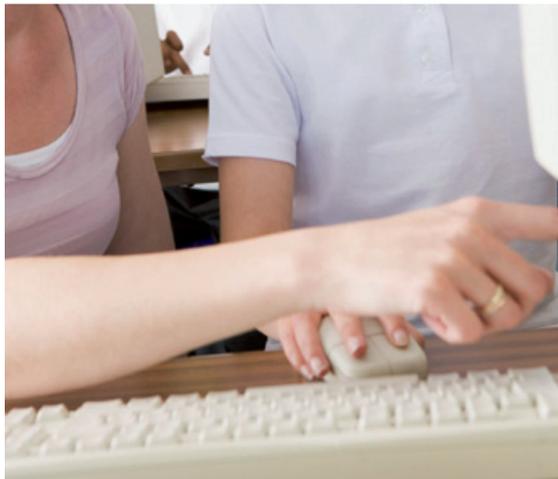
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Acknowledgement

The non-CDI specific pages of the guide have been written for the Career Development Institute by David Andrews, an honorary life member of the CDI. We wish to acknowledge that some of the content has been drawn from an earlier guide written for East Sussex County Council in 2012 and we are grateful for their permission to adapt some of the material for this publication.

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The Education Act 2011 has transferred responsibility for careers guidance from local authorities to schools and colleges.

Introduction to the Guide

In 2012 school based provision for the delivery of careers support for young people underwent one of the most profound changes in four decades. From 1973, for almost forty years, schools and colleges worked in partnership with the local careers guidance service to provide careers education, information, advice and guidance to young people. Over that period the external provider of careers advice and guidance went through four changes, from local education authority (LEA) careers services, through privatised careers companies and, later, Connexions, to local authority managed, or commissioned, IAG services. Nevertheless, throughout the service was universally available across England and free of charge to schools and colleges. It was a national service, locally delivered and funded by government.

The Education Act 2011 has transferred responsibility for careers guidance from local authorities to schools and colleges. Since September 2012 schools have been required to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for their students, and in September 2013 this

requirement was extended to colleges. At the same time, the Government has removed the statutory duties on schools to provide careers education in the curriculum and work-related learning at key stage 4.

This guide has been published to assist schools and colleges with meeting the new duty and putting in place arrangements that will best support students' choices and transitions as they progress through learning and into work. As a consequence of local authorities no longer being required, or funded, to provide a universal careers service, schools and colleges have provided support to students and the guidance in this booklet should assist the review of those arrangements and help to achieve the highest quality careers education, information, advice and guidance services for pupils and students.

The Statutory Duty

Schools

Maintained schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) have a statutory duty to ensure that all registered pupils, from year 8 to year 13, are provided with independent and impartial careers guidance.

'Independent' is defined as being from a source external to the school and 'impartial' as showing no bias towards a particular education, training or work option. Governing bodies must also ensure that the guidance provided includes information on the full range of education and training options, including apprenticeships and other vocational pathways, and promotes the best interests of the pupils to whom it is given.

This requirement also applies to academies and free schools, through their funding agreements with the Department for Education, but not to independent schools in the private sector.

FE and Sixth Form Colleges

Colleges similarly are required to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for all students up to and including the age of 18, and 19-25 year-olds with a Learning Difficulty Assessment.

Local authorities

Local authorities continue to have responsibility for providing support for vulnerable and disadvantaged students: this includes students with special educational needs (SEN) and learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), and those who are not engaged in employment, education or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET. This type of IAG support is sometimes referred to as the targeted element of the former Connexions service. For students with SEN/LDD, the service includes the provision of a Learning Difficulty Assessment and extends to age 25.

National Careers Service

The National Careers Service provides careers information and advice for young people through its website, <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>, and its telephone helpline, 0800 100 900. Its remit to provide face-to-face careers guidance is, however, currently limited to adults only.

As part of the new contracting arrangements for the National Careers Service, from October 2014, contractors will have a new role in promoting and brokering school and college links with employers. However, it would be fair to say that the percentage of their budget identified for this activity is relatively small.

Case Study

National Careers Service provider

CfBT is the National Careers Service contractor in the North East of England. Their research indicates that employers in the North East report serious difficulty in recruiting employees with the required skills and realistic expectations of the workplace. Schools report a lack of coordination in their engagement with employers.

CfBT knows that effective careers advice raises ambitions and inspires career development and progression and their Supporting Inspiration plan is designed to tackle these issues. They will be hosting launch events for schools, colleges and employers to promote the role of the National Careers Service and to secure engagement in their strategy, which includes:

- multiplying workplace experience opportunities
- offering a direct point of contact at management level for schools
- brokering relationships between employers, schools, colleges and parents; giving students insights into different careers; providing access to active experience of work, and raising their career aspirations
- developing and providing best practice guides for employers on working with schools
- bringing together careers practitioners and Sector Skills Councils, colleges and other training organisations
- sharing their high quality Labour Market Intelligence
- providing a range of inspiring resources for use by teachers and key partners

In the North East, CfBT's careers advisers are members of the CDI.

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Best Practice

The Department for Education (DfE) issued updated statutory guidance and non-statutory departmental advice on careers guidance and inspiration in schools in April 2014. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the DfE also issued guidance for FE and sixth form colleges in June 2013.

These three documents clarify the Government's expectations of governing bodies, senior leaders and other staff, in terms of both what schools and colleges must do and what they should do.

The guidance from BIS and the DfE is permissive in that it allows schools and colleges to decide how best to meet the new duty, and it takes a fairly open approach to defining external sources of careers guidance to include, in addition to careers advisers, employers, mentors, websites and telephone helplines.

There is a strong emphasis on *inspiration*, as well as IAG, and a particular focus on enabling students to learn from *direct access to employers*.

There is, however, a clear message that the school's or college's provision of advice and guidance should comprise a coherent programme of activities that inform, inspire and motivate young people, preparing them for work and helping them to understand where different education and training choices could take them in the future.

There has never been a time when careers guidance has been so important for young people as it is now. The landscape of education, training and employment opportunities that students need to navigate is more complex and more challenging than that faced by previous generations. While the economy is beginning to recover from the recent recession, levels of youth unemployment and under-employment are still high. The raising of the age for participating in learning means that young people face a wider range of choices of courses and places to study. Qualifications such as GCSE and A level are changing, and opportunities in higher education extend now beyond the UK to other parts of Europe and further afield. Students need help to make choices and manage transitions: they need good quality careers education, information, advice and guidance.

Specifically, students need access to:

- comprehensive and up to date information on the full range of options in education, training and work, accompanied by information on the progression opportunities that follow from each of those options;
- timely and impartial advice and guidance;
- programmes of careers education that equip them to make effective use of the information, advice and guidance provided and to develop their career management and employability skills.

There is a strong emphasis on *inspiration*, as well as IAG, and a particular focus on enabling students to learn from *direct access to employers*.





The CDI believes that schools and colleges should have in place a co-ordinated programme of careers support that includes the following elements;

Careers information

Information on the full range of options available in education, training and work, and the progression opportunities that follow those options. Careers information can be provided through a range of media including: books, leaflets and posters; software, websites; social media eg Twitter and telephone helplines; information talks from colleges, universities, apprenticeship providers and employers; visits to colleges, universities, training providers and businesses.

Careers advice and guidance

Advice helps students to interpret information and apply it to their own situation; guidance is the in-depth support provided by qualified practitioners to help students explore their options and make informed choices that are best for them.

Advice and guidance are closely linked to related activities such as tutoring, progress reviews, academic monitoring and mentoring. Through these activities school and college staff begin to help students look at future options and identify when students need to be referred to advisers for more in-depth guidance. Advisers offering careers guidance should be professionally qualified in guidance theory and practice and the CDI believes they should hold a relevant qualification at QCF Level 6 or above. They should also be able to act impartially (see page 15) and this is best achieved by being external to

the school or college. A later section of this guide provides detailed guidance on commissioning careers guidance services.

Careers education

Planned and progressive programmes of activities in the curriculum which help students to develop the knowledge and skills to understand themselves, research the opportunities available, make decisions and move successfully on to the next stage. The CDI has published a framework for careers and work-related education 7-19, and a practical guide to using the framework, available from http://www.theccdinet/write/CWRE_User_Guide.pdf

Effective engagement with employers

Opportunities to be inspired, informed and advised by employers through talks and work place visits. Employers can also enhance programmes of careers education through contributing to classroom-based lessons, running CV workshops, conducting mock interviews and supporting enterprise activities, plus offering work experience and work shadowing placements. Such activities should be integrated into the programme of careers support and complemented by access to impartial careers guidance.

The raising of the age for participating in learning means that young people face a wider range of choices of courses and places to study.



In England there are 12 quality awards for CEIAG. Each one provides a framework for school or college self-review and evaluation.

Assuring quality

The CDI supports the three aspects of quality assurance for careers support in schools and colleges.

1. Professional qualifications for careers advisers

As the UK-wide professional association for all career development professionals, the CDI believes that all advisers employed or contracted to provide careers guidance to young people should hold an appropriate professional qualification in career development and be registered on the UK Register of Career Development Professionals, the public register that can be searched through the Home Page of the CDI's website – www.thecdi.net

The pages that follow provide further information on professional qualifications, the UK Register of Career Development Professionals held by the CDI and the other services available from the Institute.

2. Reviewing and evaluating the CEIAG programme in the school or college

In England there are 12 quality awards for CEIAG. Each one provides a framework for school or college self-review and evaluation. Seven of the awards currently meet the national validation criteria set by the *Quality in Careers Standard* and the other five are working towards achieving the QiCS.

There are already over 1,100 schools, colleges and work-based training providers that hold, or are working towards, a CEIAG award. The CDI recommends that all schools and colleges should work towards a QiCS-validated quality award.

<http://www.careersengland.org.uk/quality.php?page=ceiag-quality-awards>

3. Quality assured providers of careers guidance

The quality standard for the guidance sector is *matrix*. Not only does the CDI recommend that schools and colleges should secure careers guidance services from an external provider, but also it recommends that only organisations with matrix accreditation should be used. This is in line with the requirements placed by BIS on providers of careers guidance to adults through the National Careers Service.

<http://matrixstandard.com>

Case Study

How one school in Summerhill, Dudley uses a CEIAG award framework to support a decade of excellent practice

The occasion of Summerhill School's third successive Gold Level accreditation of the Prospects' Quality Award offered school co-ordinator Jo Downs a chance to reflect on why she originally decided to follow a CEIAG award, and how the school strives for continual improvement.

She initially used the award framework to record, justify and assess planned developments over the short, medium and longer term. The award standards helped with identification of gaps in careers and work-related provision. Changes mirrored the units of the award, informing policy decisions and indicating the best way for every student to benefit from effective careers education enhanced by comprehensive, timely careers information and first class individual IAG.

10 years on and Jo still appreciates that completing the Quality Award allows her to review and improve practice and also to demonstrate to all stakeholders (and external agencies) those un-examined but vital enhanced outcomes of an excellent CEIAG "offer."

The Career Development Institute

If you care about being a careers professional - join the Career Development Institute

Now well into our second year, many people know that the Career Development Institute (CDI) is the new UK-wide professional body for the career development sector. We have a rich heritage, bringing together the membership of ACEG, ACPI (UK); ICG and NAEGA to create a *single voice* for a diverse sector.

This means that we have a key role to play in influencing UK education and skills policy as it affects those with whom career development practitioners work and a clear purpose to improve and assure the quality and availability of career development opportunities for all throughout the UK.

We have a strong and growing membership of individuals, students and affiliate organisations – over 4200 - all of whom subscribe to a Code of Ethics and are committed to the principles of CPD. We are also the custodians of the UK Register for Career Development Professionals and the National Occupational Standards for the Career Development sector.

In our first year we achieved:

- A powerful brand supported by an evolving website www.thecdi.net; social media (Twitter and LinkedIn) presence; and quarterly magazine *Career Matters*;
- A schedule of events and conferences based on a training needs analysis of members and an Annual Conference and Exhibition;
- A growing media presence with the CDI as the *expert voice* in the field; advising politicians, speaking at conferences and commenting on policy;
- The establishment of the UK Career Development Awards – six sponsored awards including *Careers Adviser/Coach of the Year* and *Careers Teacher of the Year*;
- Business development success winning several major tenders including the National Occupational Standards and projects with the Skills Show.

This year we are focusing on:

- Growing CDI membership - our target is 5,000 members by the end of March 2015
- Building effective partnerships with key stakeholders including the CBI; CSSA; NICEC; Institute of Employability Professionals and National Careers Service providers
- Increasing member value through free training events supported by NICEC



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- Introducing a new quality standard for careers information resources – *Career Assured*
- Promoting the UK Register of Career Development Professionals as the sector equivalent of Chartered Status
- Creating a *Career Progression Pathway* for the sector
- Publishing a directory of qualified and registered career development providers.

For more information visit the website - <http://www.thecdi.net/Join-Us> You can apply online and receive all the benefits of membership – regular News by Email; quarterly magazine *Career Matters*; member rates for CPD and events; networking through regional meetings; a new Community of Interest for careers coordinators and much more.

UK Register of Career Development Professionals

The Register was cited in the Non-Statutory Advice on Career Guidance and Inspiration in Schools (England), April 2014 as a means of assuring the quality of provision of independent career guidance. It is seen as the sector's equivalent of Chartered Status.

Registration requires the individual to hold a qualification in career development at QCF Level 6 or above, equivalent to graduate status. Many registrants also hold post graduate diplomas in career guidance and development and some hold Masters Degrees.

The CDI is currently working to increase the breadth of qualifications for entry to the Register and has recently introduced a Fast Track route for members holding alternative qualifications to those listed

below, in for example careers education, youth and community professional studies and human resources.

The qualifications currently required for the Register are:

- Diploma in Career Guidance
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Guidance/ Development
- Qualification in Career Guidance/Development
- QCF Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Development and Coaching Studies
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Coaching with optional unit in Labour Market Information
- S/NVQ Level 4 in Guidance/Advice and Guidance/ LDSS plus the QCF Level 6 Units or HE Modules in Career Guidance Theory; Reflect on and improve professional practice; Use career and labour market information with clients
- Diploma in Career Guidance combined with the NVQ Level 4 in Guidance

All registrants are currently practising and must keep their skills, knowledge and understanding up to date by undertaking a minimum of 25 hours Continuous Professional Development per year. This is planned, recorded and reflected upon in a dedicated part of the CDI website and monitored as part of the CDI's ongoing commitment to maintain professional standards across the sector.

A critical condition of registration is adherence to the CDI Code of Ethics. This Code is detailed and covers for example, adherence to professional standards; impartiality; maintenance of professional boundaries; updating skills and knowledge; accuracy of information provision; working in an open and transparent manner and in the best interests of the client; promotion of equality and diversity and the need to maintain client confidentiality except where there is clear evidence of risk. As such it is the cornerstone of the practice of a career development professional.

By using Careers Advisers who are on the Register you can be assured of the high quality of the independent career guidance provided. They are entitled to use the post nominal RCDP and a bespoke logo which can be used to promote the quality of the independent career guidance on offer in the schools and colleges in which they work.

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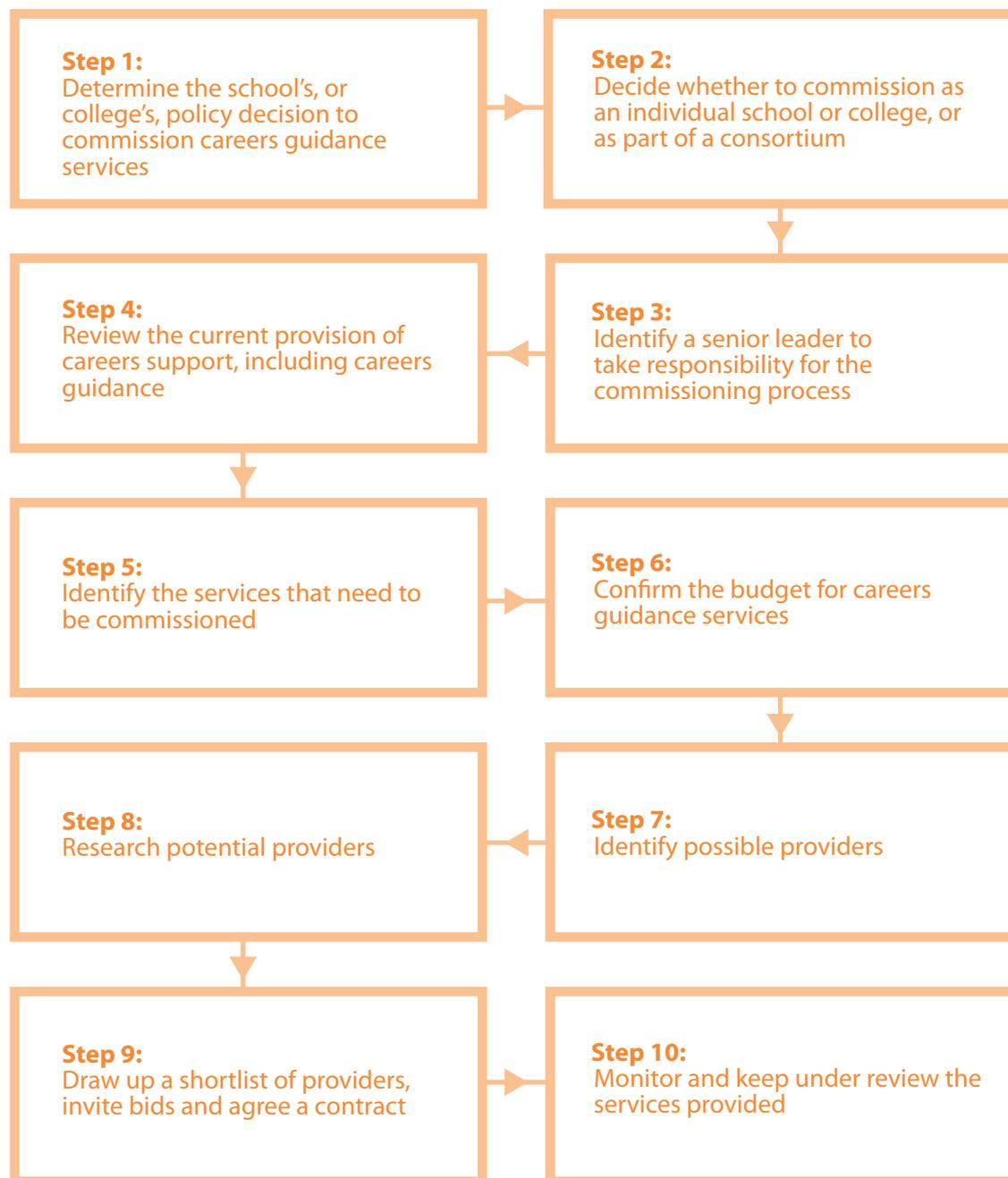
A Step-by-Step Guide to Commissioning Careers Guidance

This section of the guide offers information and advice to schools and colleges on how to commission careers guidance services from external providers.

The Statutory Guidance makes it clear that schools and colleges are free to decide how best to meet the requirement to secure access for students to independent and impartial careers guidance.

This is a new and developing market. Schools and colleges have been used to having available just one service for their locality; providers of careers guidance have been used to contracting with local authorities, not individual schools and colleges; new providers are emerging alongside established organisations.

Whether schools, or colleges, decide to commission careers guidance from a local authority, careers company or individual adviser, CDI recommends these 10 Steps.



The Statutory Guidance makes it clear that schools and colleges are free to decide how best to meet the requirement to secure access for students to independent and impartial careers guidance.

Step 1:
Determine the policy decision to commission careers guidance services

The careers leader in the school or college, together with the senior leader with overall responsibility for careers education, information, advice and guidance, should study the Statutory Guidance and non-statutory advice from the DfE and BIS, and brief the governing body or corporation. They should then seek formal approval to commission careers guidance services. It will be helpful at this stage to determine an indicative budget although the detail of what is needed will come from Steps 4, 5 and 6.

Step 2:
Decide whether to commission as an individual school or college, or as part of a consortium

Schools and colleges may choose to make their own arrangements for commissioning careers guidance services for students or they may decide to do so in partnership with other establishments. There is a strong tradition of collaborative working among secondary schools, and with colleges, in many areas. Commissioning careers guidance services as a member of a consortium, partnership or federation brings several advantages. Firstly, there are economies of scale; secondly, the commissioning process could be led by one senior leader working on behalf of all the schools and colleges in the group; thirdly, the arrangement enables careers advisers to move across the different establishments at various times during the year to meet particular demands and to cover for any absences.

Step 3:
Identify a senior leader to take responsibility for the commissioning process

If the school, or college, is planning to commission services on its own, it will be important to identify who will lead the commissioning process, taking advice from the careers leader. Where schools and colleges decide to collaborate to commission services, the individual establishments will need to agree on a senior leader who will lead the process on their behalf and a mechanism for consulting with each of the consortium partners.

Step 4:
Review current provision

Before starting the process of identifying needs and selecting an appropriate provider, schools and colleges will need to take stock of their current arrangements. This requires a review of what is provided and some evaluation of how effectively it is meeting the needs of all students.

The new statutory arrangements place schools and colleges at the centre of the process, proactively determining what is needed, from whom, rather than responding to a menu of pre-determined services. The commissioning process, therefore, presents an opportunity to look afresh at the existing support offered to students and to take greater control over the provision. Schools and colleges should identify the strengths of their current provision and any improvements they wish to make.

Schools and colleges may choose to make their own arrangements for commissioning careers guidance services for students or they may decide to do so in partnership with other establishments.

Case Study

The Education Improvement Partnership (EIP) in Blackburn with Darwen is a voluntary consortium of schools, working as a legal entity since 2011. We have only one aim: that all our schools are truly outstanding.

The EIP's success is based on its highly collaborative, partnership approach to improving education. Together we benefit from a wide variety of skills, experience, knowledge and contacts - from within the education sector and beyond. Together our like-minded members are provided with a platform to build the skills and support base from which they can draw.

Since the introduction of the Statutory Duty for schools, we have worked together to ensure the provision of independent, impartial careers guidance services and work related learning services. Each school has a service bespoke to meet their needs, delivered by CDI Registered practitioners, with the advantage of the economies of scale that increase cost effectiveness.

Our joint commissioning of CEIAG means we can offer students access to a resource that is locally embedded, individually tailored and which we know meets the national standards set by the Career Development Institute.

Sharon Roscoe, Chief Executive, Education Improvement Partnership (EIP), Blackburn with Darwen
www.eip-uk.com

Step 5: Identify the services that need to be commissioned

This stage involves looking at the total provision of careers education, information, advice and guidance that the school or college considers students should have access to and determining which elements the school or college itself will provide, what the local authority continues to provide in terms of more targeted support for vulnerable or disadvantaged students, before then identifying what services the school or college needs to purchase.

Schools and colleges should decide what advice and guidance they could provide in-house. They should also clarify what support they will continue to receive from the local authority, for certain groups of young people. Over the two years that the new arrangements have been in place, it has become apparent that local authorities differ in how they interpret the requirement to support the most vulnerable young people. Schools and colleges should ask their local authority to confirm which groups of students will receive support, and what services they can expect. Once schools and colleges have identified what provision of advice and guidance they can make available internally, and what access to targeted support they will continue to have, they can then determine what additional careers guidance they need to commission.

When schools and colleges begin to think about what to include in a specification for an external service, the starting point is often one-to-one careers guidance interviews. This is understandable as this is the aspect of careers support that schools and colleges often have neither the time nor the professional expertise to provide. Individual guidance sessions will form the largest part of the specification although schools and colleges can also think differently or more widely about the services needed.

Thinking differently about face-to-face guidance interviews means looking afresh at who needs guidance and when. Under the statutory duty, the only priority groups are those that the school or college decides.

Thinking more widely about the services needed means looking at other activities for students additional to careers interviews: these could include groupwork sessions, drop-in surgeries and support on results days, mentoring, coaching and support in liaising with employers. It also means considering what services should be provided for parents and for the staff involved in careers education, information, advice and guidance. For parents or carers, activities could include information talks at options meetings and access to careers advisers at consultation evenings; for staff, services might include in-service training for tutor teams and access to network meetings for careers leaders.

A template for identifying the services that the school or college wishes to commission and preparing a specification can be found as Annex A to this guide.

Step 6: Confirm the budget for careers guidance services

Schools and colleges have not been given any additional funding to meet the new requirement. Individual institutions are expected to find the money to purchase careers guidance services from within their existing budgets including, in the case of schools, the pupil premium funding. Clearly, however, any school or college will need to identify a budget for services before entering into negotiations with providers and the economies of scale that follow when working in a cluster may help to secure better value.

Step 7: Identify possible providers

For the four decades prior to September 2012 the external careers guidance service for state schools was free of charge, but schools and colleges were limited to using their local, monopoly provider. Now schools and colleges are free to use a provider of their choosing. This is an evolving market and includes a range of providers of careers guidance services, including:

Local Authorities

All local authorities in England are required to continue to provide targeted support and several have also continued to offer a universal careers guidance service, on a traded basis. Some of the latter local authorities offer services only to schools and colleges within their area, while others may sell services to institutions in neighbouring areas.

Careers companies

Most of the careers companies that previously provided services under commission to local authorities are offering services to schools and colleges. At the same time, new organisations, including social enterprises established by groups of careers advisers, are entering the marketplace.

Individual careers advisers

Many careers advisers who worked with schools as part of local authorities or large companies are now offering services to schools and colleges as sole traders.

Individual institutions are expected to find the money to purchase careers guidance services from within their existing budgets.

Education - Business Partnerships (EBPs)

Some EBPs, which have traditionally worked with schools and colleges on work experience and enterprise activities, have recruited careers advisers to offer schools and colleges integrated services for careers guidance and work-related learning.

FE and sixth form colleges and universities

Colleges have within their student services departments qualified careers advisers and all universities have their own careers advisory services. Some have begun to offer careers guidance services to schools.

The CDI will be compiling a directory of providers for publication later this year.

The Career Development Institute (CDI) has a register of careers guidance professionals which can be accessed and searched via the home page of its website, <http://www.thecdi.net>. These qualified practitioners may be self-employed; work as part of partnerships, social enterprises or for small or large organisations.

Case Study

A sole trader reflects on the importance of the UK Register of Career Development Professionals

Being on the UK Register of Career Development Professionals is hugely important to me, as it enables me to promote my professional qualifications and experience and provides quality assurance for those organisations seeking to purchase careers services.

Being a member of the CDI means that I sign up to the Code of Ethics and commit to doing at least 25 hours of continuing professional development, both of which enable me to prove that I work to the highest professional standards.

The Register, which can be searched by region, provides schools, colleges and individuals with a quality-assured 'one-stop' shop for career development services which is crucial now that schools have responsibility for sourcing independent and impartial career guidance. It means that individuals and organisations can commission with confidence, knowing that there is redress via the CDI should services fall below an acceptable standard.

Isobel Freeman of the Career Guidance Consultancy is co-founder of award-winning We Aspire, in collaboration with Nursel Tok.

Step 8: Research potential providers

Commissioning careers guidance services is relatively new territory for most schools and colleges. There are several options available and in researching the possibilities schools and colleges are advised to ask about the following issues:

Range of services

This is the obvious place to start: to clarify the range of services that the provider can offer and to check the list against the services that the school or college wishes to commission.

Quality standards

Schools and colleges will want to be assured that the individual or organisation is a reputable provider of careers guidance services. The recognised UK quality standard for the guidance sector is the *matrix* standard, <http://matrixstandard.com> which is available to all companies, including sole traders.

If the provider is not *matrix* accredited, the school or college should ask what alternative quality assurance arrangements the provider uses. The *matrix* quality standards can be downloaded as a pdf file from the website and provide a useful checklist to assess potential providers.

Professional qualifications of careers advisers and CPD

Another important question is whether the individuals who would be providing careers guidance to students are appropriately qualified and work to a recognised Code of Ethics.

The main professional qualifications for careers advisers are:

- Diploma in Career Guidance
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Guidance/Development
- Qualification in Career Guidance/Development
- QCF Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Development and Coaching Studies
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education
- Post Graduate Diploma in Career Coaching with optional unit in LMI
- S/NVQ Level 4 in Guidance/Advice and Guidance/LDSS plus the QCF Level 6 Units or HE Modules in Career Guidance Theory; Reflect on and improve professional practice; Use career and labour market information with clients

Many careers advisers who worked with schools as part of local authorities or large companies are now offering services to schools and colleges as sole traders.



- Diploma in Career Guidance combined with the NVQ Level 4 in Guidance

To join the UK Register of Career Development Professionals hosted by the CDI, individuals are required to hold a relevant careers guidance qualification at QCF Level 6 or above.

Some practitioners may hold NVQ 4 Advice and Guidance, which is a generic qualification that is not recognised by the Register without three additional QCF Level 6 units or HE Modules:

- Reflect on and improve professional practice
- Career guidance theory
- Use of career and labour market information with clients

CDI advises schools and colleges to check that a deliverer holding the NVQ 4 Advice and Guidance can demonstrate that they have achieved the three additional units or HE Modules above.

In addition to holding an appropriate initial qualification, careers advisers must participate in regular continuing professional development to update their knowledge and skills. Careers Advisers on the Register must complete and record at least 25 hours of CPD annually. The worlds of education, training and employment are constantly changing and guidance practice is continually developing. Schools and colleges should ask how the provider intends to keep up to date, so that the careers guidance offered to students remains relevant and reflects best professional practice.

Impartiality

The Statutory Guidance states that the careers guidance provided to students must be impartial. This means that the guidance offered is in the best interests of the young person and does not favour any particular option. Schools and colleges are advised to ask how the provider ensures impartiality. Being a member of CDI requires the practitioner to work toward an agreed Code of Ethics which includes impartiality as a key requirement.

Experience of working with schools and colleges, and with young people

Schools and colleges will want to be assured that the provider has experience of working not only with schools and colleges but also with students of different ages and across the whole ability range.

Local knowledge

Although students today choose to pursue opportunities in education, training in work further from home that previous generations, initial destinations are usually within the local area. It is important for careers advisers working with the school or college to have up to date knowledge of the local labour market and the education and training opportunities available in the local area. Schools and colleges should ask providers how they will ensure that careers advisers have access to this information. This will be particularly important if the school or college is considering commissioning services from an organisation that has not previously operated locally.

If the provider is not matrix accredited, the school or college should ask what alternative quality assurance arrangements the provider uses.



Even experienced careers advisers can be presented with questions from students, or their parents, that they have not encountered before and require ongoing supervision and support.

Referral and support

Even experienced careers advisers can be presented with questions from students, or their parents, that they have not encountered before and require ongoing supervision and support. Schools and colleges should ask what arrangements the provider has for supporting advisers in these situations, particularly when considering working with a sole trader.

Cover for absence

There will, inevitably, be occasions when careers advisers are not available for work, including because of illness or maternity/paternity leave. Schools and colleges should ask the provider what cover will be available in such circumstances.

DBS checks

Careers advisers working in schools and colleges are usually in situations where they are with young people, often one-to-one, without an adult present. It follows that schools and colleges should ask to see documentary evidence that any careers adviser who will be working in the school or college has a valid and recent Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (these were formerly known as CRB checks).

Public liability and professional indemnity insurance

In the context of careers guidance given to young people by external providers, public liability insurance provides cover for claims for damage or injury caused by a careers adviser while working in the school or college, and professional indemnity insurance provides cover for claims for losses caused as a result of the information or advice provided to the young person. Sometimes the two types of insurance are combined into a single policy for professional liability. Schools and colleges should ask for evidence that the provider has adequate insurance cover.

Costs

Of course, having determined whether or not the provider can supply the services needed, to the quality required, the school or college needs to decide whether it can afford them. Each provider will have its own tariff of charges: schools and colleges will need to negotiate the costs of what they wish to commission.

Costs might be per interview or group session, or for batches of time. Some may quote “all inclusive” others might breakdown delivery from preparation time. Always be clear as well if the price includes any follow up and agree what format and timescale any reports will be provided in.

A template for researching providers can be found as Annex B to this guide.

Step 9:

Draw up a shortlist of providers, invite bids and agree a contract

Having researched potential providers, schools and colleges should follow their usual procedures for obtaining quotations, seeking tenders and awarding contracts.

Step 10:

Monitor and keep under review the services provided

The Ofsted survey of careers guidance¹, published in September 2013, found that four out of five schools did not evaluate their provision of careers education, information, advice and guidance, including the element purchased from an external provider. Furthermore, only a third of careers guidance interviews were graded as good. Schools and colleges are advised to monitor the contract they agree with a provider, review it at least once a term and evaluate the impact annually, before making decisions about re-commissioning for the following year.

Finally, we should not lose sight of the fact that the main reason for commissioning careers guidance services is to ensure that young people receive the best possible support for progression and the transitions they face. Except in cases where the school or college commissions careers guidance services from the local authority that is also providing the targeted service, schools or colleges will be working with at least two providers: the local authority, for young people considered vulnerable, and another provider, for the universal careers guidance service. It will be important for the school or college to establish a means of monitoring which students have been provided with guidance, by whom, so that young people do not slip through the net and so that individuals can be cross-referred where necessary.

1. Going in the right direction? (Ofsted, 2013)

Sources of Further Information

Department for Education. *Careers guidance and inspiration in schools. Statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff.* (April 2014)

Department for Education. *Careers guidance and inspiration in schools. Non-statutory departmental advice for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff.* (April 2014)

Department for Business Innovation & Skills and Department for Education. *Securing Independent Careers Guidance. Guidance for General Further Education Colleges and Sixth Form Colleges.* (June 2013)

www.thecdi.net

www.cegnet.co.uk

www.careersengland.org.uk

Finally, we should not lose sight of the fact that the main reason for commissioning careers guidance services is to ensure that young people receive the best possible support for progression and the transitions they face.

Annex A:

This section of the guide provides a template for schools and colleges on how to commission careers guidance services from external providers

Services for students	Notes
One-to-one guidance interviews	Which year groups? Numbers? When?
Groupwork sessions	Which year groups? On what topics?
Drop-in surgeries	When?
Support on results days	Dates
Other	

Services for parents	Notes
Presentations at information evenings	Which year groups? Dates
Availability at consultation evenings	Which year groups? Dates
Other	
Services for staff	Notes
Careers information support	Publications. Advice on library
Support for careers education	Resources. Curriculum advice. Training. Co-ordination
Professional development	CPD. Network meetings

Annex B:

Template for researching potential providers

Name of provider:	
Contact person:	
Address:	
	Postcode:
Email:	Tel:
Website:	

Services available	Costs	Notes
<p>Quality standards e.g. matrix</p>		
<p>Professional qualifications of careers advisers and professional development eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma in Career Guidance • Post Graduate Diploma in Career Guidance/Development • Qualification in Career Guidance/Development • QCF Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development • Post Graduate Diploma in Career Development and Coaching Studies • Post Graduate Diploma in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education • Post Graduate Diploma in Career Coaching with optional unit in LMI • S/NVQ Level 4 in Guidance/Advice and Guidance/LDSS plus the QCF Level 6 Units or HE Modules in Career Guidance Theory; Reflect on and improve professional practice; Use career and labour market information with clients • Diploma in Career Guidance combined with the NVQ Level 4 in Guidance 		

Membership of the Career Development Institute (CDI) and Registration on the UK Register of Career Development Professionals

Impartiality

Experience of working with schools, colleges and young people

Local knowledge

Referral and support

Cover for absence

DBS checks

Public liability and professional indemnity insurance

Other notes



Now is a key time to be part of your professional membership organisation –the Career Development Institute.

Annex C

Join Us!

If you work in the field of careers education, information, advice and guidance and are passionate about providing high quality services to your students and want to network with like-minded people, now is a key time to be part of your professional membership organisation –the Career Development Institute.

Types of Membership and Prices

The membership fee is £90 for individuals; £45 for students and £150 for affiliate organisations. New members are also asked to pay a one-off admin fee of £25.

Details of the full range of member benefits for each type of membership are on the website and available as PDFs. Joining is easy, you can:

- Complete the online membership form on the website <http://www.thecdi.net/apply>
- Download a membership form from the website <http://www.thecdi.net/Membership-Categories>
- Complete a membership form at any CDI event

Bulk Membership

We offer a Bulk Membership Scheme for organisations and groups wishing to enrol 10 or more members. This method of payment is particularly popular with employers and groups of practitioners because it means that employers and members can benefit from a discounted subscription rate where the memberships are purchased through a single invoice.

Number of Members	Bulk Membership Discount
10-100	10%
101 +	30%

Methods of Payment

- Credit Card: we take card payments over the telephone - please call: 01384 376464.
- Cheque: made payable to the Career Development Institute. Please write the name of the member that the cheque covers on the reverse side, eg Membership for Ms J Smith, and post with your application form to - Career Development Institute, Ground Floor, Copthall House, 1 New Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY8 1PH
- BACS transfer: to the Career Development Institute at Lloyds Bank; Sort Code 30-98-21; Account 25337168. Please make the name of the new member clear as the reference.



Join Us

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the new UK-wide professional membership body for the career development sector. Our members are careers advisers, careers educators, career coaches, career managers and other professionals working in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

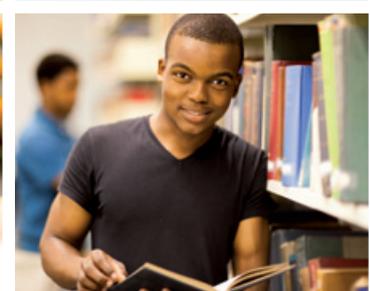
Launched in April 2013, we are a new, contemporary body, with a growing membership of over 4200 individual members and affiliate organisations.

We have a key role to play in influencing UK careers and skills policy and a clear purpose to improve and assure the quality and availability of career development opportunities for all throughout the UK.

Joining is easy

For full details of the member benefits, including joining the UK Register of Career Development Professionals, visit www.thecdi.net

Apply online: www.thecdi.net/apply





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