



# Careers Guidance in Schools and Colleges:

**A Guide to Best Practice and Commissioning Independent Career Guidance Services**

**June 2018**





# Foreword

President, Career Development Institute

April 2018



In 2012 the Government introduced the biggest change in career guidance for young people in England in 40 years. Responsibility for providing access to impartial career guidance was transferred to individual schools and colleges. Evidence from numerous surveys and reports however indicates that the provision of support for young people remains patchy.

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is committed to making sure that every young person receives the highest quality careers guidance and we have produced this guide to help schools and colleges commission the best possible support for their pupils and students.

The guide places the provision of career guidance in the wider context of a planned programme of careers education, information, advice and guidance. Importantly, it offers a practical step-by-step approach to securing access to impartial career guidance that meets not only the statutory requirements but also the professional standards set by the CDI.

As part of a programme to improve career guidance in schools and colleges, the Department for Education published a new careers strategy at the end of 2017. The strategy is based on the eight Gatsby benchmarks, a framework that sets out clear expectations of what schools and colleges should

provide. Benchmark 8 refers specifically to the provision of personal career guidance.

The Careers & Enterprise Company has been given the lead role in supporting the implementation of the strategy in schools and colleges. They have introduced a new £2.5 million fund to support personal careers guidance. They are also working with clusters of schools and LEPs to trial 20 new career hubs, which will focus support on the achievement of the Gatsby benchmarks. The CDI is working with the Careers & Enterprise Company on these projects and we feel sure that this Guide will provide ideas, guidelines and templates which will be of value here.

In summary we hope this guide will provide all schools and colleges with practical information and advice to help you commission the very best careers guidance support for your students.

**Laura Bell**  
President of the Career Development Institute

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

This guide has been written and edited by David Andrews, CDI Policy Associate and Honorary Life Member of the CDI.

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## Introduction to the Guide

In 2012 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, 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 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 their responsibilities to put 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 in England are now providing support to young people 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 guide was first published in July 2014. This new, revised edition has been produced following the launch, in December 2017, of the Department for Education's new careers strategy. The requirements on schools and colleges to ensure that pupils and learners are provided with independent careers guidance remain in place and are now set in the wider context of the eight Gatsby benchmarks for good practice.

The revised statutory guidance for schools<sup>1</sup> and the separate guidance for colleges<sup>2</sup>, published by the DfE set out an expectation that all schools and colleges will use the benchmarks to review and develop their careers programmes. Benchmark 8 states that every pupil and learner should have the opportunity for a personal guidance interview with a qualified careers adviser, whenever significant study or career choices are being made.

1. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/672418/Careers\\_guidance\\_and\\_access\\_for\\_education\\_and\\_training\\_providers.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672418/Careers_guidance_and_access_for_education_and_training_providers.pdf)

2. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/679639/Careers-Guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/679639/Careers-Guidance.pdf)

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



# 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 technical education, and promotes the best interests of the pupils to whom it is given. The DfE's statutory guidance goes on to say that personal careers guidance does not have to be external – it can be delivered by school staff, if trained<sup>3</sup> – but where it is internal it must be supplemented by external sources of support to ensure compliance with the legal duty.

These requirements also apply to academies and free schools, through their funding agreements with the Department for Education. Although independent schools are not subject to the same duty, the Independent Schools Inspectorate has made the provision of impartial careers guidance a factor in determining compliance with regulatory requirements and advises schools in the private sector to follow the Statutory Guidance published by the DfE.

The Technical and Further Education Act 2017 has introduced an additional requirement, with effect from January 2018, on all schools and academies to ensure that there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access all pupils in year 8 to year 13 for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

3. This means that a school could choose to employ a careers adviser to deliver personal guidance. Careers advisers who are members of the CDI work to a strong code of ethics, which comprises 12 ethical principles, see <http://www.thecdi.net/Code-of-Ethics>

## FE and Sixth Form Colleges

All FE and sixth form colleges in England are required to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for all learners up to and including the age of 18, and 19-25 year-olds with an Education, Health and Care Plan. Colleges also have a legal requirement to provide all learners with a wide range of up-to-date reference materials relating to careers education and career opportunities. The DfE's guidance to colleges goes on to say that personal careers guidance does not have to be external – it can be delivered by college staff, if trained – but where it is internal it

must be supplemented by external sources of support to ensure compliance with the requirement in the funding agreements.

Other providers of post-16 education and training, including apprenticeship providers and independent training providers, are encouraged to follow the guidance for colleges as good practice.

## Local authorities

Local authorities continue to have responsibility for providing support for vulnerable and disadvantaged students: this includes students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) up to their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday and those 16-19 year-olds 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.

## National Careers Service

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

## The Careers & Enterprise Company

In 2015 the DfE established The Careers & Enterprise Company, to support schools and colleges with setting up and developing their provision of support for young people. For the first two to three years of operation its focus has been on helping schools to engage with employers, both within school and in the workplace. From September 2018 its remit has been extended to providing support for all eight benchmarks, including the provision of personal careers guidance.

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/>

## The Gatsby benchmarks

International research, funded by The Gatsby Charitable Foundation and led by Professor Sir John Holman, has identified eight benchmarks of good practice for careers guidance in schools:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance.

**In 2015 the DfE established The Careers & Enterprise Company, to support schools and colleges with setting up and developing their provision of support for young people**

There has never been a time when careers guidance has been so important for young people as it is now.

The original report was published in 2014 <http://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/the-benchmarks>. In 2018 a version of the benchmarks for colleges was produced<sup>4</sup>.

With reference to Benchmark 8 the expectation is that every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of the school or college staff) or external, provided that they are trained to an appropriate level, whenever study or career choices are being made. The CDI defines the appropriate level of training as being at least the full QCF Level 6, which is the minimum qualification level for admittance to the Institute's Register of Career Development Professionals.

In schools every student should have at least one interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18. In colleges every learner should have at least one interview by the end of their study programme.

4. <http://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/final-0099-gcg-college-booklet-a5-4pp-rgb-aw1.pdf>

## Best Practice

The statutory guidance for schools (January 2018) and the guidance for colleges (February 2018) 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. Throughout both documents, the full eight Gatsby benchmarks are promoted as a framework for best practice.

The guidance from the DfE is permissive in that it allows schools and colleges to decide how best to meet their responsibilities to ensure access to career guidance. 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 cover all eight benchmarks and that inform, inspire and motivate young people, prepare them for work and help them to understand where different education and training choices could take them in the future. Access to good quality, independent and impartial career guidance is seen as a key component of such support.

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, and the introduction of new providers such as UTCs and studio schools, mean that young people

face a wider range of choices of courses and places to study. Qualifications such as GCSE and A level have changed, new technical education qualifications are being developed 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 (CEIAG).

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 understand their strengths and interests, to make effective use of the information, advice and guidance provided and to develop their career management and employability skills.

## Case Study

### a local authority career guidance service

#### Warblington School, Hampshire

#### 11-16 academy, 670 students

The careers leader, supported by the assistant head with responsibility for the curriculum, manages career guidance in the school. Impartial guidance is provided by Hampshire Futures, part of Hampshire County Council, through a bespoke contract that has been in place since 2012.

The school contracts with the service for 60 days of careers interviews a year; and stipulates the requirement for a Level 6 qualified careers adviser. The service works flexibly to meet the needs of the school and in addition to individual interviews in years 9, 10 and 11, Hampshire Futures provides group work in year 11 and other workshops, talks to students and parents in year 8 (options) and year 11 (post-16 opportunities), and attendance at the year 11 parents consultation evenings and on exam results day.

The school also commissions support from Hampshire Futures for arranging the careers fair and, as a more recent development, the organisation of work experience for the whole of year 10.



**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 and telephone helplines; information talks from colleges, universities, apprenticeship providers and employers; visits to colleges, universities, training providers and businesses.

*[ref. Gatsby benchmarks 2 and 7]*

### Career 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 careers professionals 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 careers advisers for more in-depth guidance. Advisers offering career guidance should be professionally qualified in guidance theory and practice. Guidance from the DfE supports the CDI's view that they should hold a relevant qualification at QCF Level 6 or above and be Registered Careers Professionals. They should also be able to act impartially and this is a key principle in the CDI's Code of Ethics. A later section of this guide provides detailed guidance on commissioning independent career guidance services.

*[ref. Gatsby benchmarks 3 and 8]*

### 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, employability and enterprise education 7-19, and supporting resources, available from

[www.thecdi.net/Careers-Framework-2018](http://www.thecdi.net/Careers-Framework-2018)

*[ref. Gatsby benchmarks 1 and 4]*

**Advisers offering career guidance should be professionally qualified in guidance theory and practice.**

The CDI is a member of the Consortium Board that oversees the national quality award for CEIAG in England, the *Quality in Careers Standard*.

## 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 career guidance.

[ref: Gatsby benchmarks 5 and 6]

## 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 career 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 <http://www.thecdi.net/Professional-Register->

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

The CDI is a member of the Consortium Board that oversees the national quality award for CEIAG in England, the *Quality in Careers Standard*. The award provides a framework for school or college self-review and evaluation and offers a means of externally assessing and accrediting careers programmes. There are 12 licensed awarding bodies for the standard. Information about the standard and contact details for the 12 awarding bodies can be found at <http://www.qualityincareers.org.uk/>

The DfE strongly recommends that all schools and colleges should work towards achieving the *Quality in Careers Standard*.

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

### 3. Quality assured providers of career guidance

The quality standard for the guidance sector is *matrix*<sup>5</sup>. Not only does the CDI recommend that schools and colleges should secure career 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 the DfE on providers of career guidance to adults through the National Careers Service. The Institute does not expect independent careers advisers working as sole traders to gain *matrix* accreditation but instead expects them to be on its Register of Career Development Professionals.

5. <http://matrixstandard.com>

## Case Study

### new careers company

#### The Norwood School, Lambeth

#### 11-18 community school, 860 students

The school commissions careers guidance services from Careers Events Limited. The link adviser for the Norwood School, Alix Boyle, holds a Level 6 careers qualification and in 2017-18 has 65 days committed to the school.

A formal annual agreement sets out the priorities. As well as individual guidance interviews, assemblies and group work, Alix is available at parental consultation evenings and on exam results day. Alix is present in the school each week of the academic year and has a permanent base that is advertised to students on the school's website. All students in Years 10, 11 and the Sixth Form have a one to one interview during the year. Students with greater needs are seen more than once.

The careers adviser works very closely with the school's careers leader, Jessie Nicholas, who is Senior Deputy Head at Norwood. Alix is currently working on a project to boost take up of higher education at Russell Group Universities. She also works on destinations data and supported the recent large scale careers fair. Careers Events offers partner schools careers software as part of the overall agreement.



# The Career Development Institute

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

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector. 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 4,250 - 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.

We provide:

- A powerful brand supported by an comprehensive website [www.thecdi.net](http://www.thecdi.net); social media (Twitter and LinkedIn) presence; quarterly magazine *Career Matters*; twice yearly NICEC journal;
- A schedule of events and conferences based on a training needs analysis of members; free webinars; a CPD resources area and a monthly CDP newsletter;

- A strong media presence with the CDI as the *expert voice* in the field; advising politicians, speaking at conferences and commenting on policy;
- The UK Career Development Awards – ten sponsored awards including *Careers Adviser/Coach of the Year* and *Careers Leader of the Year*;
- 'Careers in Careers' job board, advertising current vacancies in the sector.

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*; NICEC journal; member rates for CPD and events; networking through regional meetings; a Community of Interest for careers leaders and much more.

## UK Register of Career Development Professionals

The Register is cited in the Statutory Guidance for schools and the Guidance for colleges 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. Many registrants also hold postgraduate diplomas in career guidance and development and some hold Masters degrees.



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.



By using Careers Advisers who are on the Register you can be assured of the high quality of the independent career guidance provided.

We also have 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/ Career Development/Career Management/ Career Education and Coaching/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
- Qualification in Career Development/Career Guidance/Career Guidance and Development
- QCF Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development
- 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.

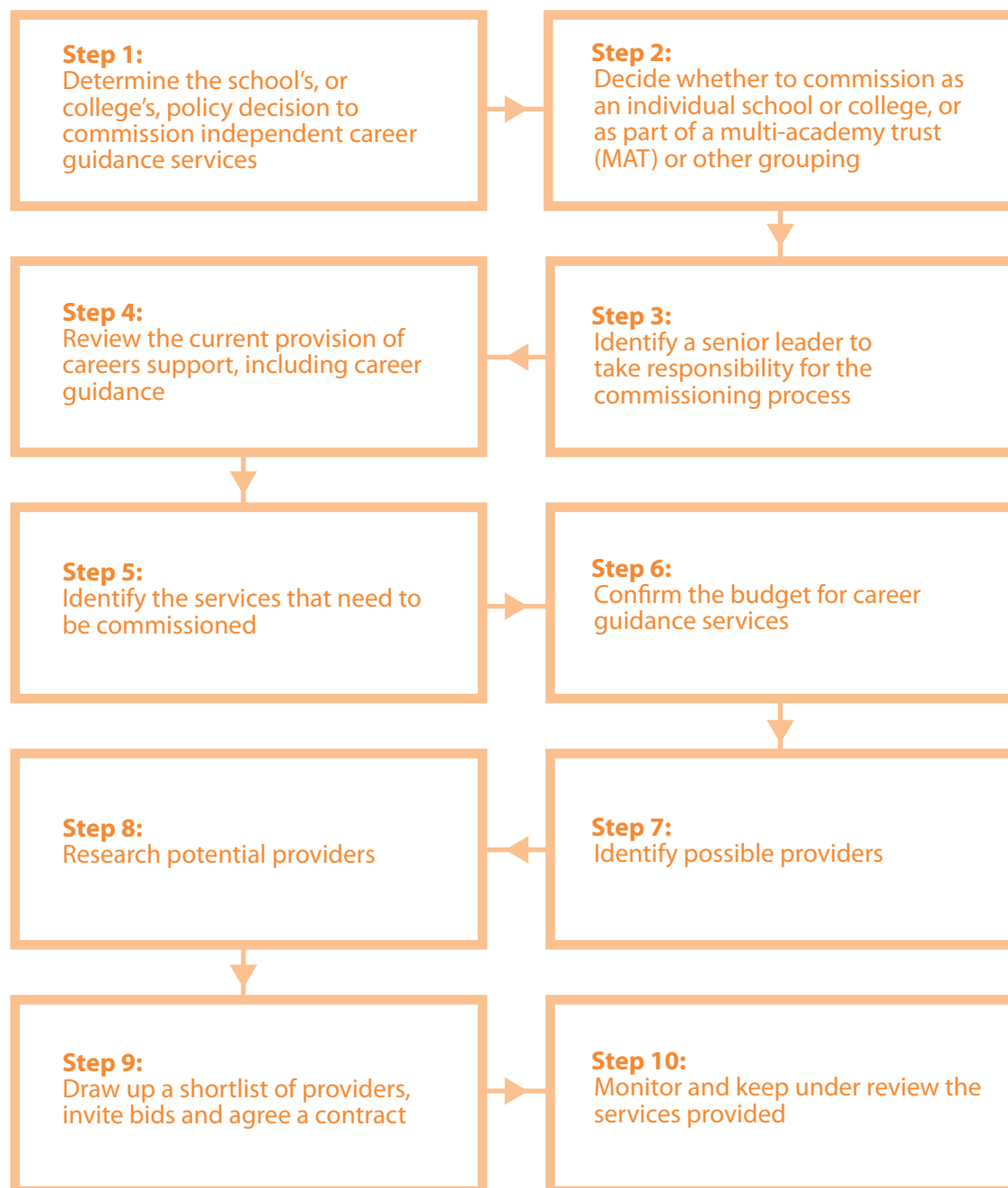
By using careers advisers who are on the Register you can be assured of the high quality of the independent career guidance provided. They are entitled to use the post nominal RCDP and a bespoke logo which can be used to promote the quality of the independent career guidance on offer in the schools and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

# 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 career guidance services from external providers.

Schools and colleges are free to decide how best to meet the requirement to secure access for students to independent and impartial career guidance. In the past schools and colleges were used to having available just one service for their locality; now they are free to purchase services from a range of providers operating in a market that includes both established careers organisations and new providers that have emerged since 2012.

Whether schools, or colleges, decide to commission career guidance from a local authority, careers company or individual adviser, the 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 independent career guidance services

The careers leader in the school or college, together with the senior leader with overall responsibility for careers, should study the guidance from the DfE and brief the governing body or corporation. They should then seek formal approval to commission career 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 MAT or other grouping

Schools and colleges may choose to make their own arrangements for commissioning career 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 career guidance services as a member of a MAT, 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 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 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, taking account of feedback from the young people themselves.

### **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.

## Case Study

### sole trader

### The Wavell School, Hampshire

### 11-16 school, 950 students

Career guidance services are commissioned from 'NC Careers', a sole trader previously employed as a team leader and careers adviser with Connexions South Central and Hampshire Connexions. NC Careers also provides career guidance services to three other schools across North East Hampshire. The careers adviser holds the Level 6 qualification and is on the UK Register of Career Development Professionals.

The careers adviser comes in for one and a half days each week and can provide cover if required on days that she is not available. The adviser sees all those students in Year 11 who ask for an interview or are referred by their tutors. She also ensures that all young people with SEND across Years 9-11 are seen, supports with the mock interview day and enterprise day and attends the parents' evenings for Years 9 to 11.

The contract is managed by the school's careers leader, with support from the head who has oversight of careers.

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.



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

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 time 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 career 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 career 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 career 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 group may help to secure better value.

### **Step 7:** Identify possible providers

For the four decades prior to September 2012 the external career 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 career 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, have entered 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.

#### **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 career 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. A few offer career guidance services to schools.

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

## **Case Study**

### **new social enterprise**

#### **De Aston School, Lincolnshire**

#### **11-18 academy, 937 students**

The academy commissions career development services from Complete-Careers, a partnership of careers guidance and education specialists in the East Midlands. The strategic management of the contract is overseen by the school's Head of Vocational Studies and Careers, while the operational management is performed by the Work Experience Coordinator. The governing body, the headteacher and the finance director provide financial, administrative and legal support as part of the tender process. The Head of Vocational Studies and Careers meets regularly with the lead partner for guidance activities at Complete-Careers to review and plan accordingly.

An experienced careers adviser is assigned to the school for two days per week, for approximately 32 days per academic year, to complete guidance interviews for Year 10 to 13 learners, as well as those with an Education and Health Care Plan and any learners referred by the relevant head of year. The remaining eight days are used for delivering careers education lessons and other activities for learners, and providing support to the careers staff.

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.



### Step 8: Research potential providers

Commissioning career guidance services is still relatively new territory for most schools and colleges. There are several options available and the market for providers working with young people is unregulated. 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 career guidance services. The recognised UK quality standard for the guidance sector is the *matrix* standard, <http://matrixstandard.com>.

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 career guidance to students are appropriately qualified and work to a recognised Code of Ethics.

The professional qualifications required for admission to the CDI's UK Register of Career Development Professionals are listed in an earlier section of this guide. To join the Register 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.

The 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,

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

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 career 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 towards 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 than 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.

#### **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 illness or maternity/paternity leave. Schools and colleges should ask the provider what cover will be available in such circumstances.

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.





### 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). Ideally they should have also completed Safeguarding and Prevent training

### Public liability and professional indemnity insurance

In the context of career 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.<sup>6</sup>

6. The CDI provides information on insurance for careers professionals - <http://www.thecdi.net/New-CDI-Insurance-Scheme>.

### 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.

### 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.

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

### Step 10:

#### Monitor and keep under review the services provided

The Ofsted survey of careers guidance<sup>7</sup>, 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 career 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 career 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 career 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.

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

## Sources of Further Information

Department for Education. *Careers guidance and access for education and training providers. Statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff.* (January 2018)

Department for Education. *Careers guidance. Guidance for further education colleges and sixth form colleges.* (February 2018)

[www.thecdi.net](http://www.thecdi.net)  
[www.careersengland.org.uk](http://www.careersengland.org.uk)  
[www.qualityincareers.org.uk](http://www.qualityincareers.org.uk)  
[www.careersandenterprise.co.uk](http://www.careersandenterprise.co.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
<b>Quality standards</b> e.g. matrix		
<b>Professional qualifications of careers advisers and professional development</b> eg		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diploma in Career Guidance</li><li>• Post Graduate Diploma in Career Guidance/Career Development/Career Management/ Career Education and Coaching/Career Development and Coaching Studies</li><li>• Post Graduate Diploma in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education</li><li>• Post Graduate Diploma in Career Coaching with optional unit in Labour Market Information</li><li>• Qualification in Career Development/Career Guidance/Career Guidance and Development</li><li>• QCF Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development</li><li>• 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</li><li>• Diploma in Career Guidance combined with the NVQ Level 4 in Guidance</li></ul>		

**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 £105 for individuals and school affiliates; £55 for students; and £190 for other affiliate organisations. New members are also asked to pay a one-off admin fee of £25.

If you would like to join the UK Register of Career Development Professionals as a Registered Professional Member this costs £160 and includes your register fee of £55.

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/Join-Us>
- Download a membership form from the website <http://www.thecdi.net/Join-Us>
- 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 +	25%

### Methods of Payment

- Credit/debit card: we take card payments over the telephone - please call: 01384 376464.
- Annual and quarterly direct debit - see website for details - <http://www.thecdi.net/Join-Us/-How-you-can-pay>
- 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 4250 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](http://www.thecdi.net)

Apply online: [www.thecdi.net/apply](http://www.thecdi.net/apply)





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