

Open letter

Re: An Aspirational Nation: Achieving a culture change in careers provision

As you may recall in June 2013 the National Careers Council, which was set up to advise government on how careers provision for young people and adults could be improved, published the above-mentioned report. We called for a culture change in careers provision, including the provision of more career insights and access to independent and impartial career guidance, particularly for young people. This is essential given the high number of young people who are not in work whilst we have employers struggling to find people with the right skills. The need to recognise and tackle the skills gaps was endorsed by industry, education and careers leaders as well as many across government.

The Council has recently undertaken a six month review considering what progress has been made in implementing the seven recommendations in the report. We are pleased that the recommendations were formally accepted by Matthew Hancock, Minister for Skills and Enterprise, in his 'Inspirational Vision Statement' launched by BIS and jointly agreed by DfE (September 2013). For further details of the NCC Interim Report – visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policy-advisory-groups/the-national-careers-council>

We believe that the National Careers Services has a key role in mapping the landscape of careers provision and co-ordinating the efforts of the different organisations engaged in careers work alongside helping schools to understand where they can access help and support. We remain fully committed to achieving an all-age careers service that needs to do more with schools in recognition that careers provision needs to be improved. The link with the economy and UK prosperity is vital in ensuring that young people and their families are informed about the labour market and that we encourage people, for example, to become engineers as opposed to celebrities. There are however two areas that concern us:

1. The National Careers Service would benefit from having an employer-led advisory board, small in size but big in ideas for added value, reach and impact (*Recommendation 2*).
2. More needs to be done for young people and to help schools who whilst they have statutory duty are often unsure what to do to and need some support in this period of transition (*Recommendation 3*).

I trust you and your colleagues will work with the National Careers Council to ensure the necessary 'culture change in careers provision' can be achieved as soon as possible. We will be hosting a conference in June 2014 to gather further views on progress being made. Should you wish to discuss any aspect of the six month review in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact me at deirdre.hughes3@btinternet.com or telephone: 07533545057.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Deirdre Hughes, OBE
Chair, National Careers Council