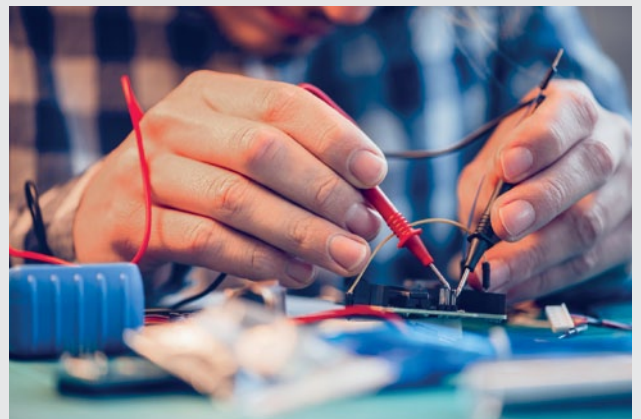
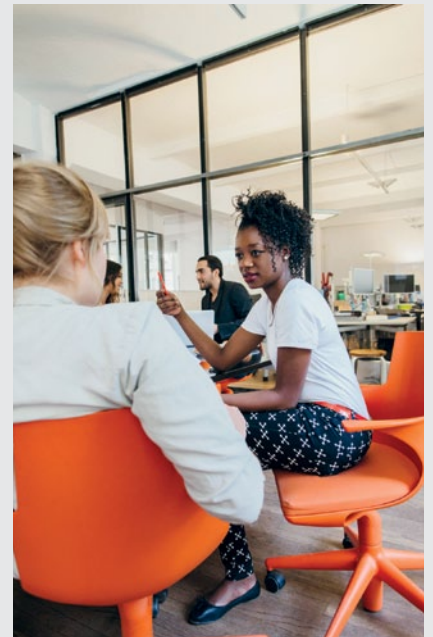


National Careers Council

> Taking action:

Achieving a culture change
in careers provision



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Foreword



In 2012-2013, the National Careers Council spent its first year consulting widely with education, business and careers sector leaders, managers, practitioners, young people and adult consumers of careers provision. Our goal was to find out what works and what more could be done to improve the National Careers Service and wider careers support offer to young people and adults.

We identified actions required on a number of fronts to enable the National Careers Service to become a recognised, trusted, independent and impartial careers service for young people and adults, that works with employers and educators to help engage more people more successfully with the UK economy.



Recommendations that should be simple and straightforward to implement.



Since then numerous reports have highlighted a growing need to give greater attention to careers provision, particularly for young people. Bridging the gap between families, the classroom, and the world of work is critical to breaking down barriers that prevent individuals from making the most of their talents and skills. The evidence-base is clear: careers education and guidance plays a crucial role in this regard. Over the last year, it is apparent that careers provision in the marketplace has been stimulated by Government with evidence of a plethora of new and existing players competing for schools' and colleges' attention. In this report, we focus on the reality of the careers marketplace and the opportunities this brings to consumers and buyers of such services in today's digital age. The careers landscape is complex and confused and we believe the National Careers Service has an important role to play in supporting individuals' access to quality-assured products and services.

The challenge now for this (and successive) Governments is to empower more individuals to achieve good employment (or labour market) destination outcomes. In doing so, it will be necessary to build relevant national and local infra-structures that strengthen links with, and understanding of, the outside world beyond schooling for young people and adults. Taking action to achieve a culture change in careers provision requires urgent national and local leadership. Over the last year progress has been slow. Government needs to provide a stronger leadership role in supporting the necessary change. This year's final National Careers Council report provides recommendations that should be simple and straightforward to implement.

I am tremendously grateful to colleagues in the National Careers Council: Neil Carberry; Nick Chambers; Kieran Gordon; Steve Higginbotham; Brian Lightman; Rajay Naik; David Mc Nerney; Trudy Norris-Grey; Linda Taylor, OBE; Ruth Spellman, OBE; Jenny Rudge, OBE; and Simon Surtees for their dedication and enthusiasm to work together as business, education and careers sector leaders, finding solutions to inform future improved careers provision across England.

I am also indebted to Fiona Kendrick, CEO, Nestlé and to Mike Thompson, Director of the Barclays Early Careers programme for their sponsorship and support in helping Council to produce a Heat Map of careers provision across England and a vox pop video of what people want from and expect when it comes to accessing careers support. Rebecca Fullam, Johnny Grenda, Ralph Cochrane and Robert Canniff are highly commended by the Council for their work. Joe Billington and the National Careers Service Central Team and Prime Contractors have worked closely with the Council and we wish them well with the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Finally, I am convinced that in order to halt the trend of the last decade, where the top part of society prospers and the bottom part stagnates, a renewed focus and investment in careers provision is required. In doing so, this will bring about improved life chances for this and future generations. There are choices; there are actions for all parties to take forward. No evidence suggests the fate of careers provision is sealed. Those in it and those supporting it have to take action sooner rather than later to bring about a culture change in careers provision that serves the needs of individuals, families, communities and our economy.



Dr Deirdre Hughes, OBE
Chair, National Careers Council

Executive summary

The National Careers Council was established in May 2012 by the Skills Minister to advise Government on careers provision for young people and adults in England.

In June 2013, following a year of extensive consultation with leaders from education, business and the careers profession as well as in-depth reviews of careers policies and practices in the UK and internationally, the Council published *“An Aspirational Nation: Creating a culture change in careers provision”*. The Council was pleased that the Government accepted its seven recommendations, which were also welcomed by the Skills Funding Agency and National Careers Service.

The Government asked the National Careers Council to continue its work and to monitor progress against the key recommendations ‘one year on’ and report back to Government in September 2014. In undertaking this task **it is clear that some progress has been made in implementing some of the recommendations** – perhaps the most notable being the recognition by Government of the importance of careers information, advice and guidance and that a culture change in careers provision is required.

But, **one year on, we cannot pretend that the picture now is as we hoped it would be**. Our main assessment of progress since our first report is that, despite some signs of development, not enough action has been taken towards achieving a genuinely relevant all-age careers system. The Council is disappointed with the slow progress made in implementing its seven key recommendations. There is a great deal that still needs to be done – particularly on careers provision for young people – with better support also needed for parents and teachers.

The Council accepts that **moving from a National Careers Service which is currently focused on adults towards a genuinely all-age careers service is not without its challenges**. We need to drive up the quality and impact of careers provision so that every individual gets the help they need to leave education and/or training with the qualifications, skills and experience to be successful on their chosen path. The inspiration agenda is now at the heart of the Government’s vision and reforms. Its aim is for more young people to have the opportunity to gain exposure to employers and work. However, the growing careers market is crowded, confused and complex with a multiplicity of disjointed careers provision. This needs to change. The Council’s work highlights how **these challenges and opportunities can be addressed through a series of straightforward actions**.



The end goal is to align and focus efforts that result in closing skills gaps and reducing skills mismatch, through co-operative local models, supported by a national framework, working in the interests of improving the social and economic prosperity of our nation.

National Careers Council,
September 2014



Key recommendations

This report sets out four recommendations which the Council believes are needed to bring about action and greater investment in a culture change in careers provision.

The Council reiterates its recommendation made in June 2013 to implement an Employer-led Advisory Board, comprising senior representatives from employers, education and career development sectors to guide the work of the National Careers Service. This body should report directly to the relevant Ministers in the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS), the Department for Education (DfE), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It would monitor progress using key performance indicators (KPIs), provide feedback on impact and ensure value for money. It would provide decisive and robust strategic influence to drive forward high quality careers provision across all parts of England.

Recommendation 1

The Government should establish an Employer-led Advisory Board reporting directly to relevant ministers comprising senior representatives from employers, education and the career development profession. Such a body would advise on careers provision, guide the work of the National Careers Service and ensure value for money.

Based on a abundance of research and report findings, it is clear many schools and colleges need support to rise to the challenge of meeting their new statutory duties to provide impartial and independent careers guidance. It is vital that they are able to understand the careers marketplace and the level of services on offer from 1,000+ careers providers. They range from sole traders to organisations employing thousands of staff – not all of which are necessarily of sufficient quality or offer value for money to funding-constrained public bodies. There is an urgent need to help schools and colleges to become ‘informed consumers and buyers’ of careers provision.

Recommendation 2

The Government should provide schools and colleges with free and/or subsidised access to independent and impartial career development professionals’ expertise. This would help in the transition phase to support schools and colleges to meet their new statutory duties.

Such support would achieve immediate improvements in careers education and guidance, particularly for young people. It would help schools and colleges make better use of labour market intelligence/ information (LMI), teacher support, improved education and employer links and work with parents/carers. It would also help them to put in place an effective careers strategy and implementation plan and provide better coherence across local areas.

In order to have effective careers provision for young people, the Council believes in the complementary roles of both employers and career development professionals. Local careers strategies need to find smart ways of linking these together. While Government should support provision, schools too need to focus on it, with greater priority.

Evidence suggests the National Careers Service in its current form appears to be working well for adults. In this report we continue to emphasise the importance of not diluting the current level of careers provision for adults. A recurrent wave of baby boomers will retire over the next 20 years. This mass exodus of knowledge, talent and experience from the labour market across the spectrum of industry sectors will create talent vacuums (alongside new opportunities for young people). The real significant challenge ahead is to fill major skills and talent gaps by harnessing both young people's and adults' knowledge, skills and experience. The Fuller Working Lives framework for action¹, in the light of changing demographics, encourages all to take action to prevent early labour market exit and later life poverty. Mid-life career review is cited within this strategy as one way of addressing some of the issues confronting individuals, employers and others grappling with extended labour market transitions.

In 2013 the Council highlighted that more needed to be done to support young people, parents and teachers to make sense of complex and changing education and labour markets. It was recommended that the National Careers Service was extended and its website improved. In the future, there is a need to address this issue working in partnership with quality-assured leading dynamic online providers and with professional, impartial and independent careers specialists. The National Careers Service has recently created some materials for young people on its website; however, evidence shows this is greatly under-utilised.

Recommendation 3

The National Careers Service should, as a matter of high priority, improve its website to make it attractive and appealing to young people, parents and teachers.

The National Careers Service is uniquely placed to provide such a website. It has the advantage of being able to provide a recognised, trusted, independent and impartial all-age service that works with employers and educators. By providing such a quality service, raising awareness and making this available through its partners and other organisations, this would provide economies of scale.

The National Careers Service should have a clear digital delivery and labour market intelligence/information strategy, particularly for young people, parents and teachers. The service must draw upon available resource and intelligence to better signpost individuals to Government quality-assured provision. Some progress has been made, but links to the Career Development Institute's register of career development professionals and work with other relevant networks to find new solutions that improve access and attract higher levels of user engagement are generally under-developed.

¹ In the main report this term is used to denote qualified, independent and impartial careers specialists such as career coaches, career mentors, careers advisers and careers educators qualified to level 6 or above.

There are many highly successful national and local careers initiatives – and these have been increasing in response to the Government’s inspiration agenda. These initiatives should not simply be left to their own devices; instead, exemplars of good practice should be nurtured such that their growth and impact can be accelerated and extended and economies of scale achieved. This complements and supports the role of specialist career development professionals’ work in schools and colleges.

Recommendation 4

The Government should support the scaling up of existing and successful initiatives and the piloting of innovative local models. This would be best achieved by establishing a careers investment fund administered by the DfE which would ensure a good service nation-wide, though delivered in different and locally-relevant ways, by a range of organisations.

The creation of such a fund would be a major catalyst for relevant organisations to rapidly scale up and help schools and colleges to achieve their statutory duties.

In addition, the fund could also be used to promote innovation and pilot different approaches. For example, a series of controlled trials, working with national and local providers to support young people’s learning and work destinations and evidence on the impact of local careers provision.

Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships should ensure local careers provision reflects the skills needs of the local and national economy, as well as the needs and aspirations of young people and adults across the areas where they live and learn. It requires a national framework with local delivery monitored closely.

Unless this is prioritised and resourced, many young people, particularly those most at risk, are likely to fall through cracks in the system.

The National Careers Council was set up in May 2012² by the (then) Skills Minister to advise Government on careers provision for young people and adults in England. Membership was drawn from a range of senior leaders from education, business, voluntary/community and careers sectors across England.

Following twelve months of stakeholder consultation and extensive reviews of careers policies and practices in the UK and internationally, the Council published 'An Aspirational Nation: Creating a culture change in careers provision' in June, 2013³. This established a barometer by which to evaluate and measure progress enabling Government and stakeholders to build on current strengths and address weaknesses.

The National Careers Council (NCC) report to Government in July 2013 contained seven recommendations:

1. A culture change is needed in careers provision for young people and adults in order to address the mismatch of skills shortages and high unemployment.
2. The development of the National Careers Service should be assisted by the creation of an Employer-led Advisory Board comprising senior representatives from employers, education and the career development profession to help guide its work and ensure it delivers value for money and meets the needs of young people, adults and employers.
3. The National Careers Service should significantly expand its work with schools, young people and parents.
4. Employers should encourage their employees to volunteer to go into schools and colleges to give students insights into different careers, enthuse them about the world of work and provide access to active experience of work, in particular to help address mismatches in young people's career aspirations.
5. The National Careers Service should launch a new initiative to bring together a range of organisations to explore and highlight the importance of 'character' and 'resilience' in a successful working life and identify realistic and effective options for addressing this issue.
6. The National Careers Service should develop and extend its on-line services and bring together key partners in order to consolidate other on-line careers information and tools, enabling trusted information to become more accessible for young people, parents/carers and adults seeking on-line support to their career development activities and plans.
7. In order to bring about the culture change needed in careers provision for young people and adults we need to create a movement which include employers, education and career development professionals. To implement the recommendations and practical steps Government also needs to play its role in supporting this movement and ensure these recommendations and the practical steps in this report are implemented.



Time and again we find too many young people not getting the support they need to make informed choices on their future career. We need a new approach that supports schools and colleges to explain the routes open to young people, whether that's A-levels and university or an apprenticeship.

John Cridland, Director General, CBI Feb 2014



The Government accepted all the Council's recommendations alongside its own response to Ofsted's Thematic Review of careers guidance in schools (December 2012 to April 2013). The Ofsted report, *'Going in the right direction? Careers guidance in schools from September 2012'*, was published in September 2013⁵. The report included recommendations for Government, schools, employers/ employer networks, the National Careers Service and local authorities, to improve the quality and delivery of independent and impartial careers guidance. The inspiration agenda is at the heart of the Government's vision and reforms. The aim is for more young people to have the opportunity to gain exposure to employers and work. A new 'Careers Guidance Action Plan' (BIS/DfE, September 2013)⁶, set out the intentions to implement the recommendations of both Ofsted and the Council (op.cit).

The National Careers Council was also formally invited to continue its work to monitor progress against the key recommendations 'one year on' and report back in September 2014. The Council's remit was agreed with the Skills and Enterprise Minister (Matthew Hancock) as follows:

"To provide advice to Government on a future strategic vision for the National Careers Service and allied career support services as key economic drivers for business growth and opportunities in learning and work. In doing so, the Council will champion a fresh vision for careers services that draws on leading edge developments to ensure high quality provision."

Consequently, the Council has:

- drawn upon UK and international evidence-based findings;
- compiled a 'Heat Map' to ascertain the scale and range of careers provision across England;
- produced a briefing note for school governors and trustees on 'need to know issues' in careers education and guidance;
- conducted an initial review of progress made by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Local Authorities in taking forward a culture change in careers provision; and
- commissioned a series of vox-pop interviews to find out what 'career' means to a wide range of people based on their own experiences and the type of support required.

The current careers provision landscape in England: one year on



Career guidance is critical if young people are to raise their aspirations and capitalise on the opportunities available to them. Yet equally few people would say that all is well with the current system of career guidance in this country. It is especially regrettable therefore that the current situation, in which so many young people are kept in the dark about the full range of options open to them, has been allowed to persist for so many years.

Lord Sainsbury, May 2014



The Council has drawn upon the robust UK and international evidence-base to inform why getting careers provision right is so essential to our people, economy and local communities. From this, we know that **providing high quality careers provision for young people and adults is critical** in supporting transitions from education and training into working life and beyond, most notably for those lacking social⁷ and cultural capital and those most disadvantaged (e.g. OECD, 2010 ; Symonds et al., 2011⁸; ELGPN 2012⁹). A recent IPPR report (2014)¹⁰ indicates:

“In those European countries that have low rates of youth unemployment, careers education and guidance play a crucial role in ensuring a smooth transition from education to work, but it has been badly neglected in England.”

(p.3)

Over the last year, a plethora of evidence-based research and published reports reaffirm the central theme of the National Careers Council report to Government in June 2013 on the urgent need for improved careers provision across England. Some examples are provided in Table 1 below. The Women’s Business Council (2014)¹¹, Lord Young (2014)¹², Lord Adonis (2014)¹³ and many others all emphasise the need for greater attention by Government to improve careers provision across England, particularly for young people.

Table 1

The Association of Accounting Technicians (ATT, 2014) ¹⁴	The Chartered Institute for Personnel & Development (2014) ¹⁵	Careers England (2014) ¹⁶
The Association of Colleges (2014) ¹⁷	The Gatsby Foundation (2014) ¹⁸	Careers Sector Strategic Alliance (CSSA, 2014) ¹⁹
The British Chamber of Commerce (2014) ²⁰	The IPPR (2014) ²¹	The Edge Foundation (2014) ²²
The British Youth Council (2014) ²³	The Local Government Association (2014) ²⁴	The Work Foundation (2014) ²⁵
The Confederation of British Industry (2014) ²⁶	The National Union of Students & the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (2014) ²⁷	The Centre for Social Justice (2013) ²⁸
The Education Select Committee (2014) ²⁹	The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) ³⁰	Unison (2013) ³¹

Since our report, it has become increasingly evident that, despite some signs of progress, **insufficient progress has been made towards achieving a genuinely relevant all-age careers system.**

Jobs, skills and growth are a critical concern for the millions of families who must thrive and strive to build a quality life (CBI, 2014³²; UKCES, 2014)³³. Parents and carers are facing tough times trying to guide their children in the right direction to unfamiliar education and job markets. Skills mismatch remains prevalent and new occupations continue to emerge at a rapid pace. Having, or not having, a job or training (or a fulfilling career) shapes how people view themselves and relate to others. For some people, finding a suitable career pathway is much easier than for others. This is especially challenging for those who have limited support or reasonable access to high quality information, networks and contacts through family and friends. The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2013)³⁴ highlighted the need to halt the trend of the last decade, where the top part of society prospers and the bottom part stagnates.

Bridging the gap between families, the classroom, and the world of work is critical to breaking down barriers that prevent individuals from making the most of their talents and skills. The evidence-base is clear: careers education and guidance plays a crucial role in this regard (ELGPN, 2012³⁵; Frenette et al. 2012³⁶).

The education landscape now requires young people to make early subject choice decisions (some from 13 years old upwards)³⁷. In England's schools, most careers work takes place with 15-16 year olds in Year 11, with 88 per cent of pupils in this year group receiving some form of careers support in 2012/2013 (The Pearsons Think Tank, 2013)³⁸. The raising of the participation age from 16 to 18 years by 2015 (DfE, 2008)³⁹ is becoming a new reality for this generation of young people, parents, teachers and employers. The 16 to 19 study programmes (DfE, 2013)⁴⁰, introduced by Government in response to the Wolf Report (2013)⁴¹, require all learners in full-time education aged 16 to 19 to follow a study programme tailored to their individual needs and education and employment goals. The inclusion of English and mathematics in study programmes will become a condition of funding from September 2014. New performance measures for schools and colleges focus on retention, completion of the learners' core aim and destinations. Making well-informed decisions about whether to follow an apprenticeship, traineeship, or to go or not to go to university requires having access to good quality information and individual support. The quality of destination data will be reliant on robust systems that track individuals' progress.



In those European countries that have low rates of youth unemployment, careers education and guidance play a crucial role in ensuring a smooth transition from education to work, but it has been badly neglected in England.

IPPR, 2014 (p.3)



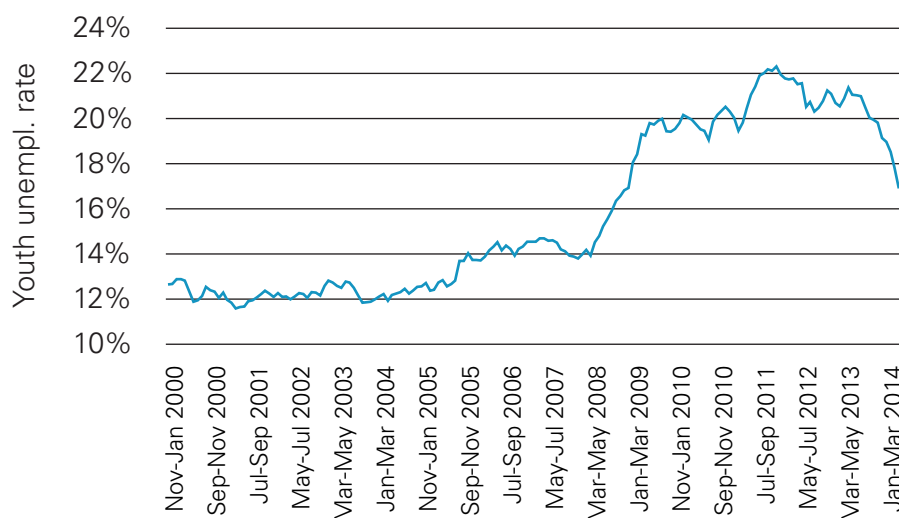
Skills are essential to our economic prosperity, but evidence clearly shows that our national supplies of skills are not well matched to economic demand.

National Careers Council, July 2014 (p.7)



There remains a challenge to ensure young people have the advice and course options to pursue learning that is right for them and the jobs market (The Work Foundation, 2014)⁴². Without this, young people risk dropping out and becoming unemployed from 18, or possibly earlier. There is a need for better co-operation between schools, colleges, training providers and other local services to ensure young people can make appropriate informed decisions. In particular, the growth of small sixth forms and limited amount of mixed college/school provision is a concern.

Youth unemployment was rising even before the recession and remains high today



Source: Labour Force Survey, August 2014

For many 18 to 25 year-olds, the new reality of part-time or precarious work has expanded considerably. Graduate under-employment and youth unemployment should not be ignored. Non-graduates have been particularly affected by a very competitive labour market where low qualifications are a distinct disadvantage in finding work. Unemployment affects around 600,000 18- to 25-year-olds at any one time, but many more experience spells of unemployment. Last year, nearly one million young people claimed Job Seeker’s Allowance (JSA), and over one million stopped claiming. In total, two in every five (or 2.46 million) young people are unemployed or underemployed (CESI, 2014)⁴³. Hodgson and Spours (2013)⁴⁴ highlight that such realities have a potentially negative ‘knock on effect’ and major influence on the decisions of 14- to 19-year-olds for participation, progression and transition into further/higher study or the workplace.

Last year, the Council highlighted that **many young people, parents and teachers are not receiving clear signals on current and future trends in the labour market**. High quality, reliable labour market information (LMI) is in high demand from schools, colleges, training providers and universities. The ‘LMI for All’ web portal (<http://www.lmiforall.org.uk/>) provides valuable open source data, but these organisations require support to maximise the potential for exploiting this resource for all students. In addition, many schools need further information and support on employer contacts and the range of activities they can bring to their institution such as mentors, role models, work experience, talks and visits to the workplace.



Academically trained teachers have often spent most of their lives in education. Their experience of the wider work environment can be limited and their formal and informal advice to students may be biased towards general education and university pathways. They may be reluctant to recommend vocational courses, particularly to bright students.

OECD, 2010 (p.5)



According to the Association of Colleges (AoC, 2014)⁴⁵, **70 per cent of young people trust their parents for careers advice; however many parent's views can often be out of date.** Colleges are clear about their remit for careers guidance and many have good links with employers. Teachers will do their best to meet the needs of students but most are ill-equipped to provide careers guidance, including up-to-date labour market intelligence. Findings from the OECD (2010)⁴⁶ indicate:

“Academically trained teachers have often spent most of their lives in education. Their experience of the wider work environment can be limited and their formal and informal advice to students may be biased towards general education and university pathways. They may be reluctant to recommend vocational courses, particularly to bright students.”

(p.5).

Schools⁴⁷ now face the biggest change to the provision of careers guidance for almost 40 years. After four decades of free access to publicly-funded services (which may have been of varying quality), a statutory duty to secure access for their pupils to ‘independent and impartial careers guidance’ has been placed on schools. Careers work must now compete with other school spending alongside the removal of statutory duties to provide careers education (and work-related learning) within the curriculum. Since September 2013, all further education (FE) colleges and sixth form colleges in England similarly have been subject to a requirement to secure access to independent careers guidance. This forms part of FE college and sixth form college funding agreements. The requirement was introduced alongside **an extension of the age range of the existing careers duty on schools to years 8-13.** Training providers also perform a crucial role in connecting more young people and adults to employers and the world of work.

In this sea of change, there are some signs of welcome developments in careers provision including:

- *A new set of Statutory Guidance and Guidelines for careers provision issued by the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills to schools and colleges. These provide greater clarity on Government expectations, but it will take significant time and adjustment by teaching staff for the new requirements to be implemented equitably.*
- *A number of educational institutions are now purchasing independent and impartial careers guidance; although there are many schools simply paying ‘lip service’ by appointing ill-equipped ancillary staff to deliver careers work.*
- *An increased appetite from employers and sector bodies to engage with careers provision with many contributing towards careers and enterprise activities, for instance, co-creating curriculum resources, delivering staff development activities, running competitions, offering mentors, encouraging people to give career insight talks and producing online resources.*

- *A one-year pilot by the professional bodies representing head teachers and school leaders (ASCL and NAHT) employing dedicated staff to help schools and colleges understand more about education and employer links, including apprenticeships. It is hoped that this one-year pilot, undertaken in partnership with the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD), the Education and Employers Taskforce and with support from the National Apprenticeship Service, will be continued.*
- *A content rich intelligence-base, developed by UK Engineering and other Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) organisations that monitors input and demand from schools and colleges for STEM resources and activities.*
- *A localised series of Skills Roadshows and Big Bang activities, supported by employers, career development professionals and teachers.*

Research findings indicate those institutions committed to strengthening links with employers generally do not view employer activities as a replacement for impartial careers guidance: instead, they view this as enhancing their careers provision. The nature of schools and colleges' engagement in careers provision, including employer contact, varies considerably. Whilst some schools and colleges have managed to make a commitment to ensuring that their students have access to such activities, overall progress remains patchy and inconsistent. Professor Jenny Bimrose et al., (in press)⁴⁸ recently surveyed and conducted interviews with a sample of schools and college staff, employers, National Careers Service providers and senior leaders from business, education and careers sector, on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Findings highlight schools and colleges need help and support to better co-ordinate and deliver on employer, enterprise and career guidance activities. In this context, the National Careers Service could provide a nationally supported facilitative role, as discussed more fully below.

An expanded and complicated careers marketplace

In England, multiple new players have emerged alongside existing providers in a rapidly expanding and complicated careers marketplace. Very little research has been conducted into the effects of market principles applied in careers provision focusing on products and services (Meijers, 2001)⁴⁹, the cost benefits to government and cost benefits to individuals (ELGPN, in press)⁵⁰.

In the last year, many companies have emerged, offering to put schools and colleges in touch with employers generally and/or in specific sectors – at a cost – and others providing schools and colleges with access (often at a cost) to their website services. These services are not all necessarily of good quality. This has led to varied provision of differing standards of quality throughout England. There is increased and increasing complexity in the system. Many schools and colleges report difficulties when it comes to deciding on whom best to trust in supporting them to fulfill their new statutory duties (ASCL, 2014)⁵¹. At present, schools and colleges generally lack time and resource to sift and make sense of this new and fragmented landscape.

There are **issues of cost escalation and how to contain it, quality and inequality in terms of access to trusted careers information and support**. The reality of 'market failure' brings significant costs to individuals, families, communities and our economy.

This raises two questions: what is the role of Government and how can Government support public-sector services to access high quality services offered by private-sector and third-sector organisations?

Between June and August 2014, the Council compiled a 'Heat Map' of careers provision across England. This was designed to ascertain in broad terms the scale and composition of the careers marketplace. Nestlé (UK) provided pro bono support to analyse websites, postcodes and the BIS-owned matrix quality standard database, in order to produce a density and gap analysis report. At the time this work was undertaken, the information was unavailable from the National Careers Service.

The 'Heat Map' results (available on the National Careers Council website)⁵² show over 1,000+ careers providers with costs to schools, colleges, employers, young people and adults ranging from free to thousands of pounds. Products and services include, for example, psychometric testing, careers information systems, aspirational talks, mentoring, enterprise, employability and STEM. Some services and products are focused mainly on schools, with others mainly employer and/or training provider focused. However, the 1,000+ is an under-estimation of the actual careers marketplace in England, since some providers operate:

- through multiple supply chains;
- in more than one town, city or wider geographical area;
- have full or partial national/regional coverage.

These initial findings do not reflect the full range and diversity of products and services. Neither do they include careers-related services from the Jobcentre Plus e.g. pilots in schools, training providers and employment agencies, specifically offering careers advice aimed at schools and colleges. Findings mapped against Local Enterprise Areas (LEPs) highlight:

- a diversity in products and services on offer;
- gaps in provision in certain geographical areas;
- competition and duplication in the 'careers offers' to schools and colleges with significant differences in costs and quality of provision; and
- in some geographical areas schools and colleges' overload in targeted promotional material.

From the 'Heat Map', there is evidence of some enterprising work. It is very clear that careers provision for adults has become well embedded in further education colleges, universities, libraries, and other local community settings. But the findings also demonstrate **overlapping provision and major shortfalls** – it is very much a postcode lottery of provision – particularly for young people:

“My two daughters attend different secondary schools, one has access to high quality independent and impartial careers guidance and the other is left to find her own way. How is this fair and equitable?”
(Parent)



My two daughters attend different secondary schools, one has access to high quality independent and impartial careers guidance and the other is left to find her own way. How is this fair and equitable?

Parent, August 2014



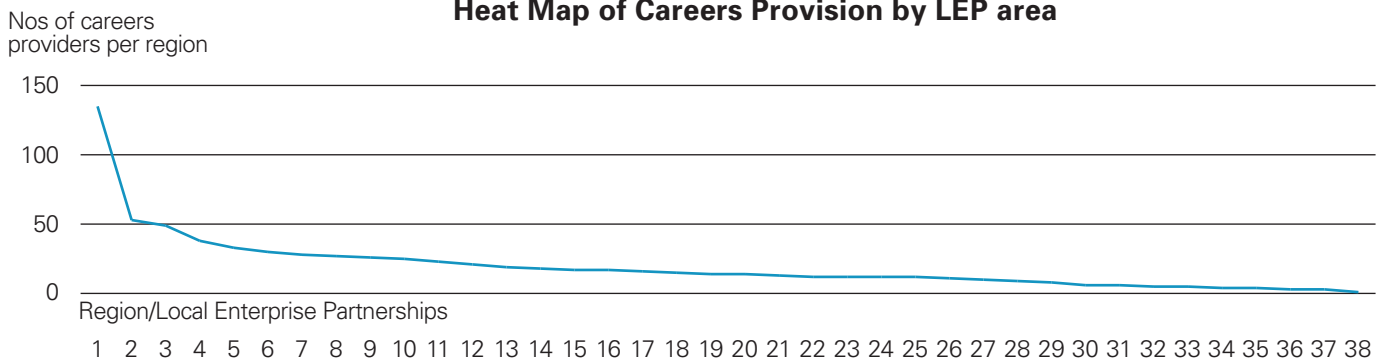
The overall picture is complex and confused – multiple providers now operate in the 'careers marketplace' – but the majority of schools in particular are not informed consumers and buyers – increased cost does not guarantee quality. The Council identified many examples of good or interesting resources and practices that are freely available (or at a cost) to schools and colleges. However, many are either unaware of or unrehearsed in knowing how to make effective use of these services.

Recent findings from the UK Commission for Employment & Skills (2014)⁵³ give a clear indication that the multiplicity and range of employer-led initiatives and constant stream of continuous offers of promotions to schools and colleges for free and/or costed careers products and services have to be managed better, both at a national and local level.

Government could exercise control over the segment in the careers marketplace that it funds directly to help compensate for 'market failure'. Employers, training providers, universities and professional bodies also perform a key role in this regard. Government could also draw upon other policy levers such as Ofsted and quality assurance frameworks to stimulate the careers marketplace in order to reduce complexity and transactional costs, build its capacity, and assure the quality of services in this market.

We suggest the National Careers Service has a key role to perform in this regard, working with and alongside other local providers on the skills needs of the economy, as well as the needs and aspirations of young people and adults across the areas where they live and learn.

Heat Map of Careers Provision by LEP area



The National Careers Service



A recognised, trusted, independent and impartial careers service for young people and adults that works with employers and educators to help engage more people more successfully with the UK economy.

National Careers Council, June 2013 (p.12)



In responding to the challenges facing careers provision in England, the Government established the National Careers Service in April 2012.⁵⁴ The Council is clear that there is a need for clarity on the role of the National Careers Service – this is a key requirement and it is not a straightforward leap from an adult careers service (mainly, though not exclusively for unemployed adults) to a youth and schools' career service. The National Careers Service needs to take a lead to: – Stimulate the market to participate in an improved careers offer to young people and adults – Identify effective strategies for improved career readiness and participation in learning and work – Promote employer engagement in jobs, skills and growth – Offer credible sources of information – Ensure individuals connect to opportunities in the labour market – Monitor, evaluate and report on findings to ensure individuals receive fair access to careers provision.

The National Careers Service is not only a private good for those using the service but also a public good, with potential benefits extending beyond individuals to families, communities and Britain's economy. In its role of trusted, independent and honest broker, the National Careers Service stands at the interface between career development professionals, educational/training institutions and employers. It provides a framework for scalable provision, economies of scale and reductions in transactional costs for careers services to young people and adults across England.

What progress has it actually made since the Council's report in June 2013?

In 2013, the Council set out a future strategic vision for the National Careers Service. We advised Government that the general public should expect to find:

“A recognised, trusted, independent and impartial careers service for young people and adults that works with employers and educators to help engage more people more successfully with the UK economy.”

(National Careers Council, 2013, p. 12 June 2013).

In our report, four of the seven recommendations accepted by Government were aimed at improving the National Careers Service 'careers offer' to young people and adults, including support to parents and teachers. Particular emphasis was placed on not diluting the service to adults, which seemed to be working well. The Council is disappointed with the lack progress made in implementing these four recommendations. Worryingly, figures from 2013-2014 demonstrate that fewer young people are using the service compared to the previous year. This demonstrates urgent work still needs to be prioritised to implement the 2013 recommendations accepted by Government (op.cit).

Achievement and impact

In the two years since its launch, the National Careers Service has built up capacity and expertise initially with eleven Prime Contractors in twelve regions. This will reduce to six Prime Contractors from October 2014 with re-procurement underway for the on-line services. In 2013-2014, two separate telephone/webchat contracts operated for adults and young people.

As at 31st January 2014, 2,619 advisers in the National Careers Service (including those who deliver within custody) were qualified career development professionals² or were working towards a recognised careers information, advice and/or guidance qualification. The Government has made the commitment that it wishes to see 50% of the National Careers Service workforce holding a relevant qualification at QCF Level 6 by 2015. It is recognised that the Career Development Institute (CDI) will play a pivotal role in realising this goal. So far, very limited progress has been made in embedding the directory and register of career development professionals onto the National Careers Service website. We encourage both parties to engage more rapidly towards achieving this goal so that adults, parents and teachers can made effective use of this resource.

Most work with adults is undertaken in co-location arrangements within Job Centre Plus offices colleges, libraries, prisons and community agencies, with strong links established with local and national employers and training providers.

There is no current remit to provide face-to-face guidance to young people below the age of 19 (except to those young people who are 18 and registered unemployed), nor to work directly with schools.

In 2013/14, Table 2 below shows 68,315 National Careers Service face-to-face interviews took place with young people aged 18-19 (an increase of 2.9% compared to 2012/13). These figures do not relate to the National Careers Service contact centre and are not the number of sessions. The figures are based on interventions which are defined as an enquiry, case, or problem for which the customer has requested support from the National Careers Service. A 'priority' customer can have more than one intervention. This work relates directly to the National Careers Service delivery on the DWP Youth Contract.

Table 2

Face-to-face interventions	April 2012-March 2013	April 2013-March 2014
Young people aged 18-19	66,346	68,315
Young people aged 20-24	134,208	134,694

² This denotes qualified, independent and impartial careers specialist such as career coaches, career mentors, careers advisers and careers educators qualified to level 6 or above.

The overall budget for the National Careers Service is provided by a number of government departments. In 2012/2013 this totalled £106m

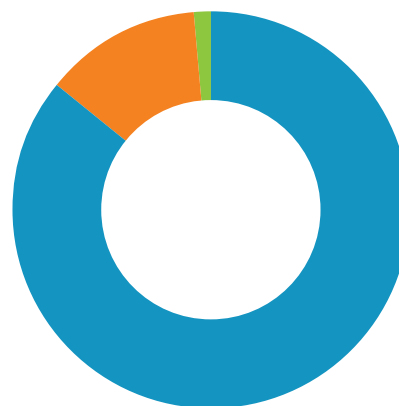
- £84.4m from the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS);
- £14m from the Ministry of Justice;
- £4.7m from the Department for Education (DfE); and
- £1.5m from the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP).

The funding allocation for 2014/2015 is broadly similar, though it is reported by the Skills Funding Agency that the £1.5m allocated from DWP for the Youth Contract is due to end in March 2015 and there are no immediate plans to replace this.

National Careers Service Budget 2013/14

■ BIS	£94m
■ MoJ	£14m
■ DWP	£1.5m

(Source: SFA, August 2014)



In the last 12 months, the National Careers Service has:

- Continued to play an important role in the learning sector by stimulating informed demand
- A strong presence in 3,073 different community venues across England
- Delivered 1.3m face-to-face sessions to 665,000 adults (representing 18% more sessions to 2.3% more adults compared to 2012/13)
- Achieved the ‘matrix quality standard’ accreditation across all Prime Contractors and 85% of adult customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the service; 80% of National Careers Service adult customers reported progress in learning and work after six months; and 57% highlighted the service in being instrumental in achieving this. There has been little change in the figures over the last two years.
- Handled 319,367 calls and webchats from adults
- Received over 15.7m website visits – more than double compared to last year.

The existing requirement to meet the matrix standard for information, advice and guidance currently applies to all prime and sub-contractors. There are currently at least sixteen different quality standard frameworks in England for consumers to choose from. Government could **make better use of its own matrix standard as a lever to control the current careers marketplace**. The matrix standard is currently being evaluated on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills. The findings should help inform the Employer-led Advisory Body on options for quality control – these are due in September 2014. There is scope to establish a national benchmark for the careers sector, to encourage private providers and charities to engage with quality assurance and thereby build consumer confidence in the services offered.

Current provision for adults

National Careers Service performance findings 2013-2014 show that the **adult careers service continues to perform well** in the current arrangements. The National Careers Service Satisfaction and Progression Survey shows 85 per cent of adult customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the service; 80 per cent of National Careers Service adult customers reported progress in learning and work after six months; and 57 per cent highlighted the service in being instrumental in achieving this (In press, 2014)⁵⁵. There has been little change in the figures over the last two years. Research findings based on propensity score matching results highlight added-value returns on investment for careers work with adults due to reductions in levels of Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA) dependency and narrowing the employment gap (London Economics, 2012)⁵⁶.

Financial benefits

Working for longer has a clear financial benefit for individuals, employers and the state, but this needs planning, preparation and management by all concerned if positive economic and wellbeing outcomes are to be realised. It is likely that individuals will need support, advice and new knowledge and skills to make extended life transitions positively. In an ideal world we would all be equipped with a sufficient grounding in career education/whole life planning; would understand our choices and would be able to seek appropriate intervention when needed throughout our adult lives. In reality, adults either are unable to access the advice they need, or often seek advice when it is (almost) too late.

In June 2014 the Minister for Pensions, Steve Webb, launched the Fuller Working Lives framework for action⁵⁷, which, in the light of changing demographics, encourages all to take action to prevent early labour market exit and later life poverty. Mid-life career review is cited within this strategy as one way of addressing some of the issues confronting individuals, employers and others grappling with extended labour market transitions. Planning needs to start early to support individuals and employers prepare to meet this changing environment.



There remains an urgent imperative to expand the National Careers Service’s work with young people, schools and parents.

NCC recommendation 3, July 2013



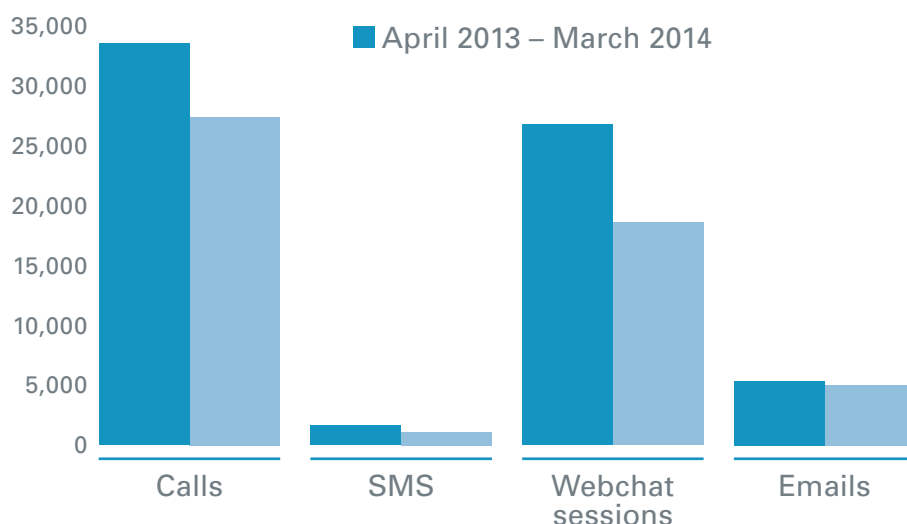
To promote fuller working lives and enhanced later life circumstances, findings from the career review pilots⁵⁸, led by the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) suggest that a clear, well-explained entitlement to a professionally led ‘whole life’ review. In this mid-life and at other key transitions would support more people staying in the work force for longer and making more appropriate decisions, and we recommend that this is implemented. Local providers have a real role to play in developing mid-life career review; union learning representatives and workplace learning advocates have developed a review plus referral approach. We strongly support this approach and trust it will be retained in an embedded career review scheme. Referral to appropriate services is important in delivering a ‘whole-life’ approach. Partnership working in delivering a wide ranging career review offer is critical. Employers, the National Careers Service, Jobcentre Plus, LEPs, the voluntary and community sector, unionlearn and others must become more aware of each others’ services to enable partnerships to develop locally.

The Council continues to emphasize the importance of not diluting the current level careers service for adults. Recurrent waves of baby boomers will retire over the next 20 years. This mass exodus of knowledge, talent and experience from the labour market across the spectrum of industry sectors will create talent vacuums (alongside new opportunities for young people). The real significant challenge ahead is to fill major skills and talent gaps by harnessing both young people and adults’ knowledge, skills and experience.

Current provision for young people

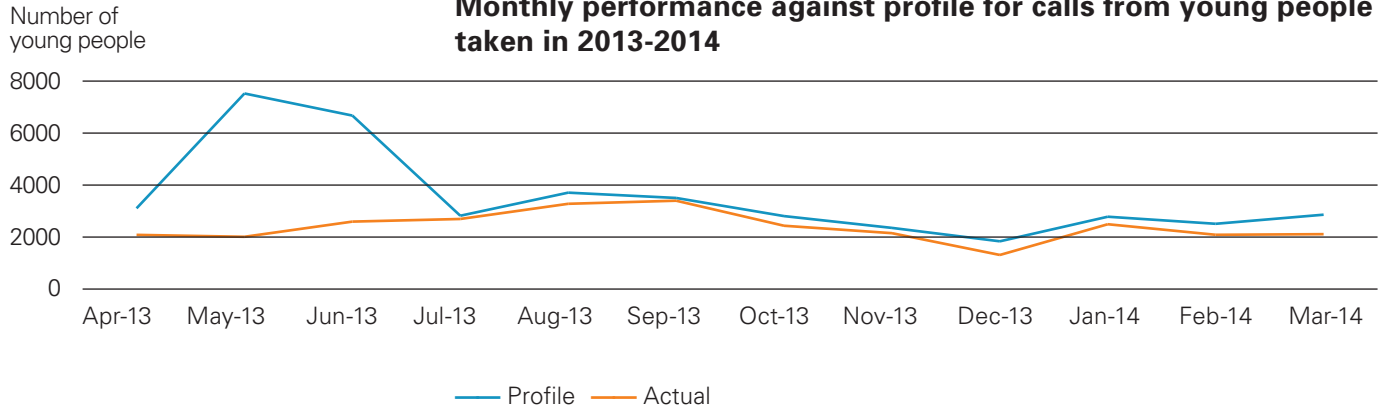
The National Careers Service’s current provision for young people is mainly a telephone helpline, SMS, webchat and email service. As the figures below clearly demonstrate, there has been a continued and steady decline in the use of these services over the last two years.

Helpline and website usage



These numbers represent the total number of contacts and not necessarily the total number of individual young people as some may have phoned or texted on repeat occasions. **These contrast sharply with the number of young people aged 13-18 who might wish to use the service – some 4 to 5 million.**

Monthly performance against profile for calls from young people taken in 2013-2014



Only 2 per cent of respondents agreed that schools were providing young people with sufficient careers advice to make effective decisions on their post-16 education.

Local Government Association⁵⁹



Since last year, some improvements have been made to the National Careers Service website. For example a new section was created to meet the needs of young people (May 2014). The content was developed following user testing with young people that showed three distinct situations:

- I want to do what I love
- I want to do something I'm good at
- I don't know what I want to do.

Articles and occupational resources to support these themes have been developed and will be further enhanced to help young people with their career development. The National Careers Service is also developing content on starting your own business aimed specifically at young people. Time spent in-house creating resources could easily be reduced if the National Careers Service endorsed and promoted trusted and quality assured government-funded provision such as the National Health Service Careers and/or other quality assured free resources.

The National Careers Service currently has no remit or funding from Government to provide face-to-face guidance to young people below the age of 19 (except to those young people who are 18 and registered unemployed), nor to work directly with schools.

“Only 2 per cent of respondents agreed that schools were providing young people with sufficient careers advice to make effective decisions on their post-16 education.”

Local Government Association⁵⁹

The **National Careers Service must help schools to access impartial face-to-face professional careers guidance** including for those young people facing the greatest risks within their school to work transitions. It should work with a range of partners to ensure the discrete needs of young people with Special Educational Needs and Young Offenders are fully understood and fully met through available provision. There is good reason to believe that the impact of an expanded service to young people, parents and teachers could be immediate and significant, if appropriately resourced, targeted and managed. The National Careers Service is well placed to enable and leverage **the efficient provision of key national resources such as labour market intelligence/information (LMI) availability into schools and colleges**, specialist careers professional expertise that can be used to strengthen local employer-led and careers initiatives, allowing teaching staff to operate with full confidence in the careers marketplace. The National Careers Service should provide joint training such as on-line practice-sharing workshops and careers development webinars, to teachers and key partners within LEPs, Local Authorities and the Jobcentre Plus. Where appropriate, higher education institutions should be strongly encouraged to actively contribute in the sharing of good practices on effective career development and employability strategies.

Website usage

The problem remains that very few young people, parents and teachers are aware of and use the service. Professor Jenny Bimrose et al. (in press) indicate not all schools know of its existence. The National Institute for Continuing Education (NIACE) highlights how the Service offers access to professional career guidance for adults, but that this has been a well-kept secret. Its focus has, of necessity, been mainly on those adults who are not in secure, paid work. There are challenges for the service to gain a level of recognition with the general population (both young people and adults). The level of public awareness and usage of the Service remains low, especially in schools – among pupils, teachers, leaders and governors. The website needs to be improved and lessons could be learned from the other home nations (and further afield) in this regard. It is currently difficult to identify how people will access, other than by direct referral, chance or happenstance. Restrictions on marketing the National Careers Service have held back its progress and development. We suggest the service should **publicise the data the UK Commission for Employment & Skills is making available** and encourage people in the career development sector to develop mobile apps and other online device that cater for differing and diverse needs.

Links with employers

In June 2013, we highlighted the necessity for closer working links between the National Careers Service, employers, schools, colleges, training providers, universities and professional bodies to assist with sharing more systematic intelligence on both the demand and supply side. Most of the National Careers Service Prime Contractors do not currently facilitate links between employers and schools or colleges, as this is outside their present remit, but this is likely to change from October 2014 onwards.

It will be important not to duplicate the work of the local education business partnerships (EBPs) and other providers which operate in certain regions. There are some signs of developments of informal partnerships between careers providers, Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and other local agencies e.g. Hull Gold Standard Quality Award. We do believe the National Careers Service could be well placed, along with local providers, to help facilitate and leverage key careers education, information, advice and guidance resources, supported by qualified impartial and independent career development professionals. The National Careers Service should work closely with partners such as Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Chambers of Commerce and, where appropriate, City Deal Initiatives, to **develop 'career hubs' in community settings** so that best practice can be replicated within or outside their area. The Service could play a greater role in promoting the notion of "motivating by experience" – motivation that comes from work experience, expert demonstrations, competitions, visiting speakers and events such as the Skills Show (national and regional) and the Big Bang. Many such activities organised by a plethora of organisations help provide insights into different career routes.

There needs to be more responsive engagement with employers and to local community needs in order to make a more tangible and far reaching impact. The proportion of the National Careers Service budget allocated to Prime Contractors for this aspect of the work (5 per cent of the overall budget) is a modest but a helpful start.

Taking action

The Council recommends a number of key actions which it believes could lead to significant improvements towards high quality all-age careers provision across England.

In order to support this process a strategic body was proposed by the National Careers Council in June 2013.

It should comprise senior representatives from education, employers and the careers profession help guide the work of the service ensuring it meets the needs of young people, adult and employers.



Thousands of students highlight they did not receive enough information to make informed choices about their future careers or the subjects they should study to achieve their ambitions.

The Student Room, 2014



Recommendation 1

The Government should establish an Employer-led Advisory Board reporting directly to relevant ministers comprising senior representatives from employers, education and the career development profession. Such a body would advise on careers provision, guide the work of the National Careers Service and ensure value for money.

The Council reiterates its recommendation made in June 2013 to implement an Employer-led Advisory Board, comprising senior representatives from employers, education and career development sectors to guide the work of the National Careers Service. This body should report directly to the relevant Ministers in the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS), the Department for Education (DfE), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It would monitor progress using key performance indicators (KPIs), provide feedback on impact and ensure value for money. It would provide decisive and robust strategic influence to drive forward high quality careers provision across all parts of England.

From October 2014, the new National Careers Service Prime Contractor arrangements are due to be in place. The Skills Funding Agency highlights that the following key features will be implemented to help achieve the Government's Inspiration Agenda (op.cit), as an addition to, or an enhancement of, the features reported by Council in 2013 (NCC, p.13)⁶⁰. It will:

- Establish a local service where relationships with employers, labour market information, brokerage between schools, employers and intermediaries, engagement with strategic economic priorities and service delivery, can all be managed locally.
- Build brokering relationships between schools, employers and intermediaries into the core of the National Careers Service to encourage the supply of inspiring opportunities.
- Integrate National Careers Service delivery channels so that customers can move seamlessly from inspiring events to online information, to telephone advice, to face-to-face guidance, encouraging self management and ensuring the service meets customer needs.

- Fund the delivery of customer outcomes to ensure the service progresses towards independent career management, learning and jobs. Funding will be focused in supporting customers who are in designated priority groups which have been agreed with Government ministers. (Source: SFA 10/8/14)⁶¹

These ambitious developments, along with new contracts being managed on a 'Payment by Results' basis introduce significant change and 'risks' for both the National Careers Service and its providers. There is already evidence that large numbers of career development professionals jobs are 'at risk' with the de-commissioning of current providers. Also the introduction of a new Client Record Management (CRM) system and related telephone-based portal has yet to be developed, which will place greater responsibilities on Prime Contractors in managing the transition to the new arrangements from October 2014 onwards.

"We need an embedded approach to careers work in schools and we need to teach more about how to prepare for the world of work, including career adaptability and resilience."

(National Careers Council, 2014)

Support for schools and colleges

There is compelling evidence that **some schools are seriously struggling in the immediate period of transition to meet their new statutory responsibilities for careers guidance**. Too many schools have not yet grasped the nettle of putting in place their own careers strategy. There are emerging examples of good and interesting practices, but not enough. There is an urgent need to support schools, in particular to build awareness of and capacity to use destination and labour market intelligence (LMI) effectively with young people, parents, teachers and governing bodies. In the last year, the Council has worked with the National Governors' Association (NGA) and produced a briefing note for school governors and trustees on 'need to know issues' in careers education and guidance⁶².

The Government should support more schools and colleges to meet their new statutory requirements. Ideally, an all-age National Careers Service would help every local area develop high quality resources and expertise to deliver a 'gold standard' model in every institution. The costs however would be considerable – perhaps of a similar scale to those estimated in full by PwC of implementing the National Career Benchmarks in the Gatsby Report (May 2014)⁶³ namely £207 million in the first year and £173 million per year thereafter.

In the current fiscal climate, securing such a level of funding might prove challenging. If such funding cannot be found then Council recommends that other urgent steps are taken by Government to put in place improved careers provision for young people, as well as support for parents and teachers.

Recommendation 2

The Government should provide schools and colleges with free and/or subsidised access to independent and impartial career development professionals' expertise. This would help in the transition phase to support schools and colleges to meet their new statutory duties.

Such support would achieve immediate improvements in careers education and guidance, particularly for young people. It would help schools and colleges make better use of labour market intelligence/



We need an embedded approach to careers work in schools and we need to teach more about how to prepare for the world of work, including career adaptability and resilience.

National Careers Council, 2014



information (LMI), teacher support, improved education and employer links and work with parents/carers. It would also help them to put in place an effective careers strategy and implementation plan and provide better coherence across local areas.

The Council recognises the **complementary roles of career development professionals and employer interactions with schools and colleges, but these do need to link up better**. While Government should support provision, schools too need to focus on it, with greater priority and spending.

We set out below in Table 2 an illustration of the range of options and indicative costs that would support the improvement of careers provision for young people, parents and teachers. In doing so, Government would provide vitally needed support to help schools and colleges to meet their statutory responsibilities and ensure that all registered pupils at the school are provided with independent, high quality careers guidance from year 8 (12- to 13 year-olds) to year 13 (17- to 18-year-olds). This would mean helping pupils (and their parents) to have access to impartial and independent professional careers guidance to help enable them to make informed and appropriate decisions. It would also mean supporting teachers and opening up routes for young people to interact with professionals in their chosen field, via a local network.

The Council would urge Government to give very careful consideration to option 1 which, whilst involving significant financial investment, compares favourably to the investment recommended in the recent Gatsby Foundation report (op.cit). We recognise a 'one-size fits all' approach is no longer appropriate for every school and college because of the diversity in local circumstances and a tight fiscal environment. The CBI has called for a 'local brokerage⁶⁴ model' that supports every young person to have an individual plan for their career learning and development. A national framework is needed to feed into and support local brokerage arrangements.

Clearly, Government needs to support schools and colleges to meet their statutory responsibilities and ensure that all registered pupils at the school are provided with independent, high quality careers guidance from year 8 (12- to 13-year-olds) to year 13 (17- to 18-year-olds). By making a significant investment, this would mean helping pupils (and their parents) to have access to impartial and independent professional careers guidance alongside employer interactions via a local network. We have set out brief illustrations of two other potential options for Government but we are clear that option 3 *alone* will not deliver on the statutory requirement for every young person to have free access to a qualified, impartial and independent careers development professional.

The Council sets out different options for Government to enable schools and colleges to meet their statutory duty and address the confused state of the careers market in responding to this need. There should be incentives as well as challenge for schools and colleges to engage in leading on careers provision – moving from away from 'pain share' towards 'gain share'.

Table 3 – An illustration of how this could be applied to schools

Options	Actions	Cost
1.	<i>Government:</i> Provide all schools and with free access to a full-time qualified, impartial and independent careers professional (qualified at level 6 or above) to support them to deliver on their new statutory obligations from September 2014 onwards.	£131m ³ All 3,280 schools would have access to a full-time qualified career development professional.
2.	<i>Government:</i> Provide all schools with the option of accessing a qualified career development professional (qualified to level 6 or above) working in local clustering arrangements to make effective use of shared services.	£43.7m ⁴ All 3,280 schools would have access to a qualified career development professional who works across two or three local institutions.
3.	<i>Government:</i> Provide up to 30 days per annum of a full-time career development professionals' support (qualified to level 6 or above).	£17.5m ⁵ All 3,280 schools would have access to this level of resource to the level of need, institution by institution, in the early transition phase of meeting their new statutory responsibilities.

In each of the options above, activities would be fully determined by the leadership team in individual schools to support their careers strategy.

The added-value returns would include:

- more career guidance interviews and groupwork with young people from Years 8-13;
- closer working links with parents/carers;
- in-house staff training for teaching and ancillary staff;
- an audit of current provision against the Ofsted framework;
- a careers strategy involving local key stakeholders;
- advice on impartial high quality careers provision in the marketplace;
- collation and analysis of destination data;
- co-ordination of stronger working links with employers, local providers; and the National Careers Service; and
- better use of Labour Market Intelligence and Information.

The Council's view is that this needs to happen as a matter of urgency.

Provision of independent and trusted information

There is also an urgent imperative for the National Careers Service to develop further and extend its online services and bring together key partners in order to consolidate and enable the brand and trusted information to become more accessible – recommendation 6 in the NCC's report 2013.

3 Calculation based on 3,280 schools/ colleges each career development professional earning an annual salary, including on-costs, of £40k

4 Calculation based on 3,280 schools/ colleges being served by a ratio of at least 1 career development professional to 3 local schools/colleges at an average salary of £40k per annum, including on costs = £43.7

5 Calculation based on 3,280 schools/ colleges x 30 days per annum = 98,400 days @ 225 days per FTE = 438 career development professionals x 40k = £17.5m

Recommendation 3

The National Careers Service should, as a matter of high priority, improve its website to make it attractive and appealing to young people, parents and teachers.

The National Careers Service is uniquely placed to provide such a website. It has the advantage of being able to provide a recognised, trusted, independent and impartial all-age service that works with employers and educators. By providing such a quality service, raising awareness and making this available through its partners and other organisations, this would provide economies of scale.

The National Careers Service should have a clear digital delivery strategy, particularly for young people, parents and teachers. The service must draw upon available intelligence to better signpost individuals to Government quality-assured provision. Greater use and promotion of the government-owned and approved quality standards. This would not prevent other standards being used as part of a continuous improvement cycle could be helpful in this regard. Whilst some progress has been made, links to the Career Development Institute's (CDI) register of career development professionals and work with other relevant networks to find new solutions that improve access and attract higher levels of user engagement remain under-developed.

Scaling up provision

Recommendation 4

The Government should support the scaling up of existing and successful initiatives and the piloting of innovative local models. This would be best achieved by establishing a careers investment fund administered by the DfE which would ensure a good service nation-wide, though delivered in different and locally-relevant ways, by a range of organisations.

Employer engagement activities in school and colleges should be promoted alongside careers education and access to impartial careers guidance, not as an alternative to impartial guidance. Strong school leadership is essential to drive forward new conversations and actions on the added-value contribution of employers/employees, teachers and careers development professionals to a whole school delivery plan. There are many highly successful national and local careers initiatives – and these have been increasing in response to the Government's inspiration agenda. These initiatives should not simply be left to their own devices, instead exemplars of good practice should be nurtured such that their growth and impact can be accelerated and extended and economies of scale achieved. This complements, supports and can potentially be integral to the role of career development professionals' work in schools and colleges.

There needs to be more responsive engagement with employers and to local community needs in order to make a more tangible and far reaching impact. The proportion of the National Careers Service budget allocated to Prime Contractors for this aspect of the work (5 per cent of the overall budget) is a modest but a helpful start. However, this funding allocation will not pay for sufficient personnel to organise employer engagement activities for large numbers of schools and colleges and deliver careers support to young people, parents and teachers. Instead, greater consideration should be given by the

National Careers Service to partnering (extending beyond NCS Prime Contractors) and working through existing organisations that already have extensive employer engagement with schools, colleges, training providers and universities. For example, Barclays Lifeskills, Big Bang, Business In The Community (BiTC), Career Academies UK, Career Development Institute (CDI), Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CiPD), Engineering UK, Inspiring the Future, National Grid, National Health Service, Stemnet, The Skills Show, Young Engineers etc.

The Government should also create a careers investment funding framework of around £20m–£25m, administered by the Department for Education (DfE), to accelerate the necessary culture change in careers provision for young people, parents and teachers. This could also facilitate closer working links between the DfE Local Authorities and LEPs.

The creation of such a fund would be a major catalyst for relevant organisations to rapidly scale up and help schools and colleges to achieve their statutory duties.

In addition this could also be used to promote innovation and pilot different approaches, for example, a series of controlled trials, working with national and local providers to support young people's learning and work destinations and research evidence on the impact of local careers provision.

Local Authorities and Local Enterprises should ensure local careers provision reflects the skills needs of the local and national economy, as well as the needs and aspirations of young people and adults across the areas where they live and learn. Unless this is prioritised and resourced, many young people, particularly those most at risk, are likely to fall through cracks in the system.

- Local Authorities have duties to support participation and have strategies and initiatives in place to reduce young people disengagement, which have up to now been largely protected from savings they have to make.
- 16- to 18-year-old disengagement is at the lowest it has been, as we enter the academic year when participation age will be raised to 18
- Despite recent falls, there is a challenge in high levels of unknown in some places. This is a significant challenge relying on the co-operation of all partners including schools, training providers, employers, local providers and other organisations such as UCAS (some of whom do not co-operate).

A local careers strategy, linked to people, jobs, skills, growth and employability plans should support co-ordinated local efforts to identify unknowns and support those disengaged back into learning in line with local authorities, schools and colleges' statutory duties.

The Council hopes that the Government gives careful consideration to its four recommendations which it believes could be implemented quickly and at modest cost.

Annex 1

Some examples of good and interesting careers provision in different settings across England, including schools, colleges, local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and universities can be accessed from:

Association of Colleges

Visit: http://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/Careers_Guidance_in_Colleges_full_report.pdf

Association of School and College Leaders

Visit: http://www.ascl.org.uk/news-and-views/news_news-detail.careers-a-clear-brief-for-schools-and-colleges.html

Career Development Institute

Visit: http://www.thecdi.net/write/FINAL-Best_Practice_Guide-.pdf

Careers England

Visit: <http://www.careersengland.org.uk>

Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS)

Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-for-colleges>

Department for Education (DfE)

Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-for-young-people-in-schools>

Department for Education (DfE) Statutory Guidance

Visit: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/302422/Careers_Statutory_Guidance_-_9_April_2014.pdf

Education and Employers Taskforce

Visit: <http://www.educationandemployers.org>

Higher Education Careers Service Unit

Visit: <http://www.hecsu.ac.uk>

Local Government Association

Visit: <http://www.local.gov.uk/publications>

National Foundation of Educational Research (Nfer)

Visit: <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/LGCG01/LGCG01.pdf>

National Governors' Association

Visit: <http://www.nga.org.uk/Home.aspx>

Ofsted

Visit: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/our-expert-knowledge/careers-guidance>

Open University Careers Advisory Service

Visit: <http://www2.open.ac.uk/students/careers>

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