

By Robert Long,
Sue Hubble,
Philip Loft

1 July 2021

Careers guidance in schools, colleges and universities (England)

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Summary

- 1 Careers guidance in schools and further education colleges
- 2 Careers strategies and Skills White Paper
- 3 Organisations providing support
- 4 How well are schools and colleges discharging their duties?
- 5 Select committee reports
- 6 Extra-parliamentary recommendations and comments
- 7 Careers guidance in higher education

Disclaimer

The Commons Library does not intend the information in our research publications and briefings to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. We have published it to support the work of MPs. You should not rely upon it as legal or professional advice, or as a substitute for it. We do not accept any liability whatsoever for any errors, omissions or misstatements contained herein. You should consult a suitably qualified professional if you require specific advice or information. Read our briefing [‘Legal help: where to go and how to pay’](#) for further information about sources of legal advice and help. This information is provided subject to the conditions of the Open Parliament Licence.

Feedback

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in these publicly available briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that briefings are not necessarily updated to reflect subsequent changes.

If you have any comments on our briefings please email papers@parliament.uk. Please note that authors are not always able to engage in discussions with members of the public who express opinions about the content of our research, although we will carefully consider and correct any factual errors.

You can read our feedback and complaints policy and our editorial policy at commonslibrary.parliament.uk. If you have general questions about the work of the House of Commons email hcenquiries@parliament.uk.

Contents

1	Careers guidance in schools and further education colleges	7
1.1	Requirements on schools	7
1.2	Advice about technical education and apprenticeships	9
1.3	Careers guidance in further education colleges	10
2	Careers strategies and Skills White Paper	11
2.1	Northern Powerhouse Strategy	11
2.2	DfE Careers Strategy 2018-2020	12
2.3	Skills for Jobs White Paper 2021	12
2.4	Education (Careers Guidance in School) Bill 2021	14
3	Organisations providing support	15
3.1	National Careers Service	15
3.2	Careers and Enterprise Company	16
3.3	Jobcentre plus employment advisers: 14-17-year olds	19
3.4	Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge (ASK) Programme	20
3.5	Calls to Streamline Organisations	20
4	How well are schools and colleges discharging their duties?	22
4.1	CEC's State of the Nation Report (2019)	22
4.2	Augar Review (2019)	23
4.3	CEC's Closing the Gap: The Level of Employer Engagement (2018)	23
4.4	DfE's School Snapshot Surveys (2018)	24
4.5	Failing to Deliver? Career Education Provision in England (2017)	25
4.6	All-Party Parliamentary Group reports (2017)	26
4.7	Ofsted Comments 2013-18 and Inspection Framework	27

5	Select committee reports	30
5.1	Public Accounts Committee Inquiries (2018)	30
5.2	Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy Inquiry (2015-16)	30
5.3	Education Select Committee: Follow-up (January 2015)	32
5.4	Education Select Committee Report (January 2013)	33
6	Extra-parliamentary recommendations and comments	35
6.1	Careers England, NAHT & WorthLess? Campaign Survey (2019)	35
6.2	CBI People and Skills: Getting Young People “Work Ready” (2019)	35
6.3	CBI/Pearson Education and Learning for the Modern World (2019)	36
6.4	Sutton Trust Access to Advantage (2018)	37
6.5	Working it Out: Career Guidance and Employer Engagement (2018)	38
6.6	Secretary of State’s December 2014 statement and announcement of the Careers and Enterprise Company	38
6.7	Gatsby Foundation report: international comparisons	40
7	Careers guidance in higher education	41
	Employability skills and careers advice	42

Summary

Overview

Since September 2013, local authority-maintained schools in England have been under a duty to provide impartial careers guidance to pupils from years 8 to 13 (ages 12-18). The Department for Education has published [statutory guidance](#) (most recently updated in October 2018) for maintained schools on their duty to provide careers guidance.

Many academies and free schools are subject to the duties relating to careers guidance through their funding agreements, including those which opened from September 2012 onwards and those which have moved to an updated funding agreement. Academies without the requirement are encouraged to follow the guidance as a statement of good practice.

All further education (FE) colleges and sixth form colleges have been required to secure access to independent careers guidance from September 2013. This requirement is part of FE college and sixth form college funding agreements. The Department for Education has published [guidance](#) for FE and sixth form colleges to draw on in fulfilling this duty.

The quality of careers advice has been subject to frequent criticism, and recent governments have made several reforms, including the establishment of the [National Careers Service](#) and the [Careers and Enterprise Company](#) (CEC), aimed at improving the quality and range of careers advice on offer. In 2019, the Local Government Association [called upon the Government](#) to “end the patchwork of careers activity in England”, and hand funding and control of employment schemes to local authorities (local authorities being responsible for providing a careers service prior to the [Education Act 2011](#)). Also in 2019, the [Augar Review](#) on post-18 education stated that it believed secondary schools “careers support [to be] still underfunded” and recommended that every secondary school become part of a Careers Hub. Careers Hubs, run by the Careers and Enterprise Company, work with schools and colleges to train staff to improve careers advice and provide opportunities to engage with employers.

Higher education institutions are not required to provide careers advice, but nonetheless this service is offered across institutions.

DfE Careers Strategy and Skills for Jobs white paper

The Department for Education’s [Careers Strategy](#) was published in December 2017. It set out a series of measures to be implemented between 2018 and 2020 to improve careers guidance in England, including the introduction of new benchmarks for careers education, an investment fund for

disadvantaged pupils, and a named Careers Leader in every school and college.

The Government's '[Skills for Jobs' white paper](#) on further education and skills, published in January 2021, included further plans to strengthen careers advice. The Government has stated that it will consult on these changes.

Private Member's Bill

On 16 June 2021, Mark Jenkinson presented the [Education \(Careers Guidance in Schools\) Bill](#), which would extend the duty to provide careers guidance in schools. In his [announcement of the Bill](#), Mr Jenkinson stated that the Bill would extend the requirements to provide careers guidance to children in year 7, and also implement the proposals in the Skills White Paper. The Bill has not yet been published.

1 Careers guidance in schools and further education colleges

1.1 Requirements on schools

In September 2012 local authority-maintained schools became subject to a statutory duty to provide impartial careers guidance to pupils in years 9 to 11.¹ In September 2013, this statutory duty was expanded to cover pupils in school years 8 (12-13 year olds) to 13 (17-18 year olds).² There have been other connected reforms, including the disbanding of the Connexions service at the national level, and the establishment of a [National Careers Service \(NCS\)](#) in April 2012.

The Department for Education has published [statutory guidance](#) for maintained schools on their duty to provide careers guidance (most recently updated in October 2018).³

All academies and free schools are subject to a duty to provide pupils with access to a range of education and training providers. Many academies and free schools are also subject to the duty to provide independent careers guidance through their funding agreements, including those which opened from September 2012 and those which have moved to the updated funding agreement. Academies without the requirement are encouraged to follow the guidance in any case as a statement of good practice.⁴

On the duty on maintained schools to provide careers guidance, the statutory guidance states:

1. Section 42A of the Education Act 1997 requires governing bodies to ensure that all registered pupils at the school are provided with independent careers guidance from year 8 (12-13 year olds) to year 13 (17-18 year olds).
2. The governing body must ensure that the independent careers guidance provided:

¹ [The Education Act 2011](#), Pt 4, Sect 29.

² [Careers Guidance in Schools Regulations, SI 2013/702](#), Regulation 2.

³ Department for Education, [Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers](#) (October 2018).

⁴ [Ibid.](#), p. 4 (fn).

- is presented in an impartial manner, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education or work option;
- includes information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes;
- is guidance that the person giving it considers will promote the best interests of the pupils to whom it is given.

3. The Technical and Further Education Act 2017 inserts section 42B into the Education Act 1997 and came into force on 2 January 2018. This new law requires the proprietor of 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 or apprenticeships.

4. The proprietor must prepare a policy statement setting out the circumstances in which education and training providers will be given access to pupils, and to ensure that this is followed. The policy statement must be published and must include:

- any procedural requirement in relation to requests for access;
- grounds for granting and refusing requests for access;
- details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access.

5. The proprietor may revise the policy statement from time to time. The proprietor must publish the policy statement and any revised statement.⁵

The revised guidance published in October 2018 incorporates the requirements of the DfE's Careers Strategy (see section 2.2 of this Briefing Paper).

The DfE's [2017 Careers Strategy](#) adopted the benchmarks of good careers guidance developed by the Gatsby Charitable foundation. Schools were initially expected to adopt the benchmarks by January 2018 in order improve their careers provision.⁶ By 2020, the Government expects schools to work toward achieving all 8 benchmarks, including that all young people should

⁵ [Ibid.](#), pp. 10-11.

⁶ DfE, '[Careers Strategy: Making the Most of Everyone's Skills and Talents](#)' (December 2017), p. 8.

have a careers interview by the age of 16, and an additional interview by age 18.⁷

Gatsby benchmarks

1. A stable careers programme;
2. Learning from career and labour market information;
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil;
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.

[Good Career Guidance: Reaching the Gatsby Benchmarks](#), p. 9.

Gatsby have also published advice for the use of the benchmarks for students with Special Educational Needs or disabilities.⁸

1.2

Advice about technical education and apprenticeships

Requirements of the “Baker Clause”

The “Baker Clause” was introduced as an amendment to the [Technical and Further Education Act 2017](#) by Lord Baker, and requires every state school from January 2018 to give training providers and colleges access to pupils aged 8 to 13 to discuss technical education and apprenticeships.

Under the clause, schools are required to publish a “provider access statement” of how they give access to alternative training providers.⁹ Inspectors are required to establish how effectively this is being delivered in schools.

Enforcement of the “Baker Clause”

In response to a [House of Lords Debate on Vocational Education and Training](#) in October 2019, the Schools Minister Lord Agnew stated that the Baker Clause was being increasingly complied with:

⁷ PQ, ‘[Schools: Vocational Guidance](#)’, 286227, 3 September 2019.

⁸ Gatsby Trust, [Good Career Guidance: Perspectives from the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sector](#) (2019).

⁹ [Technical and Further Education Act 2017](#), Pt 1, ch 2.

We surveyed a number of schools recently and 76% stated that the duty is being partially complied with. A further review this summer found that compliance, although patchy, is improving. In January of this year, a report from the IPPR contained similar findings: 70% of providers found it difficult to access schools in their area, but one in three said the situation had improved. I am not complacent, and we will continue to put pressure on schools to be more open to this.¹⁰

More information on the “Baker Clause” and its enforcement can be found in the Library Briefing on [University Technical Colleges](#).

The Government’s [‘Skills for Jobs’ white paper](#) on further education and skills, published in January 2021, included plans to strengthen the enforcement of the Baker Clause. Further information can be found in section 2.3 of this briefing.

1.3 Careers guidance in further education colleges

Following a [public consultation](#) in 2012 on extending access to careers guidance, all further education (FE) colleges and sixth form colleges have been subject to a requirement to secure access to independent careers guidance from September 2013. This requirement is part of FE college and sixth form college funding agreements.¹¹

The Department for Education has published [guidance](#) for FE and sixth form colleges to draw on in fulfilling this duty.¹²

¹⁰ HL Deb, [‘Vocational Education and Training’](#), 28 October 2019, cc. 858-859.

¹¹ DfE, [Careers guidance: Guidance for further education colleges and sixth form colleges](#) (October 2018), p3

¹² [Ibid](#)

2 Careers strategies and Skills White Paper

2.1 Northern Powerhouse Strategy

The [Northern Powerhouse Strategy](#), published in November 2016, set out how the Government intended to approach careers guidance in the North of England:

The government will work with the North to ensure that local priorities are fed into the provision of careers advice, so that it is employer led, integrated and meets local needs. This will involve joint working on the design of careers and enterprise provision for all ages, including collaboration on the work of the Careers and Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service. Where the government is piloting new approaches to careers advice and guidance, we will ensure areas in the North have the opportunity to be part of any trials taking place.¹³

In 2015, a two-year pilot began in 16 schools and colleges in the North East of England, coordinated by the Local Enterprise Partnership, in order to test the Good Career Guidance benchmarks, set by the Gatsby Charitable Trust. After 2 years, 85% of the participating schools and colleges achieved between 6 and 8 benchmarks, whilst only 50% had achieved at least 1 benchmark in 2015.¹⁴

In evidence to the Education Select Committee in 2018, the then-Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds, outlined further what this commitment to the Northern Powerhouse meant in practice. This included a £5 million investment in the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) to help disadvantaged students receive additional support. Additionally, the CEC, to June 2018, had formed a network of 42 enterprise coordinators and 806 enterprise advisers to work with 741 schools and colleges and 120 special schools and alternative providers in Northern England.¹⁵

¹³ HM Treasury, [Northern Powerhouse Strategy](#), November 2016, p. 14.

¹⁴ Gatsby Trust, [‘Be Inspired’](#)

¹⁵ [Secretary of State for Education to Chair of the Education Committee](#), 13 June 2018, p. 3.

2.2

DfE Careers Strategy 2018-2020

The Government's current [Careers Strategy](#) was published in December 2017. It set out a series of measures to be implemented between 2018 and 2020 aimed at improving careers guidance in England.¹⁶ A full timetable is set out on pages 8-9 of the strategy.¹⁷ Its objectives include, but are not limited to:

- Using the Gatsby Benchmark to improve careers provision;
- Publishing a careers programme by each school & college;
- Naming a Careers Leader for each school & college;
- Providing information about T-Levels, apprenticeships and technical information to pupils;
- Collecting & publishing data on student destinations;
- Improving the National Careers Service website;
- Ensuring every child has at least one encounter a year with an employer. These should include Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) employers.

[Statutory guidance](#) was recently updated in October 2018, setting out how schools should meet the Gatsby Foundation benchmarks for excellence in careers education.¹⁸

From January 2018, Ofsted is required to comment in school and college inspection reports on the careers guidance provided to young people. Ofsted inspectors are asked to bear in mind the Government's Careers Strategy when assessing schools and colleges.¹⁹

2.3

Skills for Jobs White Paper 2021

The Government's '[Skills for Jobs' white paper](#) on further education and skills, published in January 2021, included proposals on careers advice.

The white paper includes proposals to more strictly enforce the 'Baker Clause' (which requires schools to inform pupils about technical and vocational paths), as well as extending careers advice to pupils in year 7 (currently

¹⁶ PQ, [Schools: Vocational Guidance, 286227](#), 9 September 2019

¹⁷ Department for Education, [Careers Strategy: Making The Most Of Everyone's Skills And Talents](#), December 2017

¹⁸ DfE, [Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers: Statutory Guidance](#) (October 2018), pp. 7-9 set out how schools are expected to meet these guidelines and the support available to them.

¹⁹ Ofsted, '[Building Confidence, Encouraging Aspiration](#)', 12 June 2018; Ofsted, [School Inspection Handbook](#) (November 2019), pp. 59, 63; Ofsted, [Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook](#) (July 2019), pp. 29, 39.

required in years 8-13), and reforming the work of existing careers advice bodies.

The paper stated that “at the moment, there is no single place you can go to get government-backed, comprehensive careers information”, and that:

97. We will address this problem by updating the [National Careers Service website](#) to become a single source of government-assured careers information for young people and adults. [...]

98. We will improve both local and national alignment between The Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service to create a clear, all-age careers system. We have appointed Professor Sir John Holman to advise on this alignment, as Independent Strategic Adviser on Careers Guidance, working closely with The Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service. We have developed four principles for increasing alignment which we will implement over the next 18 months as we work towards a longer-term review of the delivery system. (p45)

The paper then set out the following on providing information to pupils about technical paths and more widely, including plans to update the relevant guidance:

102. Students need information about apprenticeships. Currently, only 4% of young people start an apprenticeship after their GCSEs, and in Years 9 and 10 far fewer pupils had been spoken to about technical choices in comparison to academic routes. We commenced the ‘Baker Clause’ in 2018 to address this. It requires schools to provide opportunities for every pupil, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, to meet apprenticeship providers and learn about technical education options. We will introduce a three-point-plan to enforce the Baker Clause: a new minimum requirement about who is to be given access to which pupils and when; tougher formal action against non-compliance; and government-funded careers support for schools to be made conditional on Baker Clause compliance. Alongside this, we will lower the age range of the duty on schools to provide independent careers guidance, requiring schools to offer this support from year seven, bringing it in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks. We will publish updated guidance setting out what we expect for secondary schools (as statutory guidance) and colleges (as a requirement for funding). We will ask Ofsted to undertake a thematic review to provide an up-to-date assessment of careers guidance in schools and colleges and provide recommendations to improve practice.

103. We want careers education and guidance to be embedded in the life of every school and college. To cement this, we will work with the education sector and business to develop a shared approach to careers education that will support young people to understand the modern workplace and develop the career management skills and

attributes they need to compete in today's labour market. We will equip the teaching profession to support a whole-school or college approach to careers education by building careers awareness into every stage of their professional development, from initial training to education leadership. (p47)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Apprenticeships and Skills has stated that a consultation will be published on implementation of the white paper reforms.²⁰

The Library briefing [FE white paper: Skills for Jobs for Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth](#) provides wider information on the white paper.

The proposals in the white paper are now included in the [Skills and Post-16 Education Bill \[HL\]](#) which is currently passing through its parliamentary stages.

2.4 Education (Careers Guidance in School) Bill 2021

At the start of each new parliamentary year, all backbench MPs are invited to enter a ballot. The few MPs who are lucky in the draw may each bring in a Bill of their choosing. In the [ballot held on 20 May 2021](#), Mark Jenkinson was drawn in first position.

On 16 June 2021, Mr Jenkinson presented the [Education \(Careers Guidance in Schools\) Bill](#), which would extend the duty to provide careers guidance in schools. In his [announcement of the Bill](#), Mr Jenkinson stated that the Bill would extend the requirements to provide careers guidance to children in year 7, and also implement the proposals in the Skills White Paper.²¹

The Bill has not yet been published. Second reading debate is scheduled for 10 September 2021.

²⁰ [PQ 174097, 1 April 2021](#)

²¹ Mark Jenkinson MP, [Twitter post, 17 June 2021](#)

3 Organisations providing support

3.1 National Careers Service

The [National Careers Service \(NCS\)](#), [launched in 2012](#),²² provides people over 13 years old with free and impartial information, advice and guidance on learning, training and work opportunities. The service is available in England and is supported by qualified careers advisers. NCS services may be provided face-to-face, via telephone or online. It has a dedicated young people's telephone service.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency in 2019 published its [NCS Satisfaction and Progression Annual Report](#). Based on fieldwork carried out between May 2017 and April 2018, it concluded on public experiences that:

The overall quality of the service continued to be rated highly by telephone and face-to-face customers, with over nine in ten agreeing that it was good (93%). In line with this, the vast majority of face-to-face and telephone customers were satisfied with the National Careers Service overall (84%), consistent with previous years (p.2).

Almost all face-to-face and telephone customers (96%) experienced some form of positive outcome in the six months since their call/meeting. The proportion of customers who achieved any employment progression averaged 54% across the year, the same as in Year 6. Face-to-face customers were much more likely to have progressed into new employment (36% compared with 25% of telephone customers). To a large extent this reflects the differences in their employment status at the time they first had contact with the service (p. 3).²³

The DfE's [Careers Strategy](#) stated that a new National Careers Service website will be launched by the end of 2020.²⁴ The Careers Service will also become "digital first".²⁵

²² Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, [New National Careers Service Launched](#), 5 April 2012.

²³ IPSOS Mori & Education and Skills Funding Agency, [NCS Satisfaction and Progression Annual Report, 2019](#).

²⁴ DfE, [Careers Strategy](#) (December 2017), p. 9.

²⁵ Education and Skills Funding Agency, [Why is a Careers Service Digital First?](#), 14 February 2019.

Economic Evaluation of the NCS

An [economic evaluation of the NCS](#), commissioned by the Department for Education, was published in March 2017.

The evaluation “could not identify a positive impact of the National Careers Service on employment or benefit dependency outcomes” but did “identify a relatively strong positive effect in relation to education and training.”²⁶

3.2 Careers and Enterprise Company

In 2014, the then-Education Secretary, Baroness Morgan, announced the creation of a new careers and enterprise company for schools, the [Careers and Enterprise Company](#) (CEC). The role of the company is to support collaboration between schools, colleges and employers to help pupils aged 12 to 18 access better careers advice, rather than to deliver programmes directly.²⁷ The CEC is required to support schools for free and target resources in areas most of need.²⁸ A targeted “cold spot” was defined by the Chief Executive in 2018 as:

An area of the country where the five or six indicators that we look at as prioritisation indicators for this are particularly poor. We look at where there is deprivation, because we know that deprivation is correlated with this. We look at school results, the GCSE outcomes. We look at apprenticeship starts. We look at how many young people take STEM A-levels and how many women take STEM A-levels. We look at NEETs outcomes and we look at what employers say about young people entering the world of work. Then we just look at which areas of the country are particularly poor on those indicators and then we focus our money there.²⁹

In evidence to the Education Select Committee in May 2018, the CEC published [how each local authority scored on its prioritisation indicators](#).

The [CEC's website](#) provides further information on its work and its [stated aims](#).

The Education Select Committee held accountability sessions with the CEC chair, Christine Hodgson, and Chief Executive, Claudia Harris, in [May 2018](#) and [November 2018](#).

²⁶ DfE, [An Economic Evaluation of The National Careers Service](#), (March 2017), p. 31.

²⁷ DfE, [‘New Careers and Enterprise Company for Schools’](#), 10 December 2014.

²⁸ [DfE to Careers and Enterprise Company](#), 24 April 2019, p. 25.

²⁹ House of Commons Education Committee, [Oral Evidence: Accountability Hearings](#), HC 641, 16 May 2018, Q243.

In May 2019 the then-chair of the Public Accounts Committee, Meg Hillier, stated that the Committee wished to examine the DfE's careers spending, including the CEC.³⁰

Objectives and Programmes of CEC

Under the [2017 Careers Strategy](#), the Government set several goals that the CEC would be responsible in delivering. The current [Grant Funding Agreement](#) between the DfE and CEC provides further details on its objectives. These include:

9. Cornerstone Employers

During 2018 and 2019, the CEC was to triple the number of cornerstone employers committed to work with schools and colleges across the country, including in opportunity areas, to 150.³¹

In its 2017/18 Annual Report, the CEC cites the support of 57 cornerstone employers.³²

10. Careers Leaders

By September 2018, all schools and colleges should have a named careers leader to lead their careers guidance programme.³³ In October 2018, the then-Education Secretary Damian Hinds announced that the number of training places available to support new careers leaders would increase from 500 to 1,300.³⁴

11. Establishment of Careers Hubs

A Careers Hub, funded by the Government but coordinated by the CEC, is a group of between 20 and 40 secondary schools and colleges in a dedicated area that work together to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks. As of December 2019, there are 32 careers hubs in England,³⁵ initially targeting Opportunity Areas.³⁶ In October 2018, the then-Education Secretary Damian Hinds announced that these areas served by these hubs would rise to 40, from the initial intention of 20.³⁷

12. Enterprise Advisors

³⁰ ['PAC to Scrutinise Careers Quango That is Failing to Pay its Way'](#), FE Week, 3 May 2019.

³¹ DfE, [Careers Strategy \(2017\)](#), p. 9.

³² CEC, [Annual Report, 2017/18](#), p. 28.

³³ DfE, [Careers Strategy \(2017\)](#), p. 8.

³⁴ DfE, ['New Education and Skills Measures Announced'](#), 2 October 2018.

³⁵ CEC, ['Our Careers Hubs'](#)

³⁶ The DfE is aiming to increase social mobility in 12 selected Opportunity Areas which face particular challenges. It has published information on [current progress](#) (last updated September 2018).

³⁷ DfE, ['New Education and Skills Measures Announced'](#), 2 October 2018.

The [2017 Careers Strategy](#) stated that all schools should be offered the support of an enterprise adviser by 2020.³⁸ Enterprise advisors support local headteachers to develop a career plan.³⁹ Announcing the role, the CEC described enterprise advisors as:

Volunteers from the world of work (businesses and the public sector, organisations of all sizes including the self-employed). Working directly with school and college leaders, they will be responsible for helping schools and colleges build careers and enterprise and employer engagement plans drawing on their own local business networks. They will be supported by full-time Coordinators who will have simple tools available to lay out the range of programmes available to schools and colleges nationally and locally, for example speakers in schools, CV and skill building, work experience. The Enterprise Adviser network will help ‘join the dots’ at a local level and increase coverage across the country.⁴⁰

In May 2019, there were 2,600 enterprise advisors, and around 2,000 schools and colleges had been matched with an advisor. A CEC-commissioned survey in 2018 suggests that 54% of advisors are women and commit on average 8 hours a month to working with schools and colleges.⁴¹

Funding of the CEC

In the 2014 announcement on the CEC’s creation, the then-Education Secretary Baroness Morgan stated that the new company would receive £20 million in start-up funding for 2015/16, including £5 million as investment funding to stimulate good practice across England. The then Secretary of State for Education said that “in the longer term, the company will sustain itself”.⁴²

In April 2019, the Government stated that it no longer intended for the CEC to sustain itself without government grants. In its statement to the CEC, the Government said:

The nature of the CEC’s work has expanded significantly to deliver the Government’s Careers Strategy to the extent that the CEC and DfE no longer envisage replacing Government funding with alternative sources of income in the way that was originally intended when government set up the CEC.

[...]

However, the Government expects the CEC to continue to leverage additional funding to deliver its objectives, including through the

³⁸ DfE, [Careers Strategy \(2017\)](#), p. 6.

³⁹ CEC, [‘Our Network’](#).

⁴⁰ CEC, [‘New Enterprise Advisers to Connect Young People and the World of Work’](#), 16 September 2019.

⁴¹ CEC, [‘Win-Win: New Research Highlights the Impact of Enterprise Advisers and the Personal Benefits’](#), 13 May 2019.

⁴² HC Deb, [‘Preparing Young People for Work’](#), c. 843, 10 December 2014.

sources of external match funding and support [...] whilst respecting the impartiality of careers provision in schools and colleges.⁴³

In 2018/19, £30.2 million was provided in government grant,⁴⁴ which fell to £24.3 million in 2019/20.⁴⁵

3.3 Jobcentre plus employment advisers: 14-17-year olds

In the [2015 Summer Budget](#), the Government announced the creation of a new Jobcentre plus employment advisor role, working with schools and sixth-form colleges to help improve the ability of young people to find work. In evidence to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee in 2017, the Government stated that the scheme was “not a competitor” to the existing Careers and Enterprise Company. Evidence was heard from witnesses that the scheme should be rebranded to distinguish it from Job Centre Plus.⁴⁶

The new provision, aimed at 14-17-year olds, was initially trialled in 10 pathfinder areas in Greater Birmingham and Solihull.⁴⁷ Following the pilot, the scheme was to be gradually rolled out nationally in England from November 2016.⁴⁸ In 2017, around 1,000 secondary schools in England were intended to be involved (a third of the total).⁴⁹

An evaluation of the programme by the DWP and the Government Social Research Body concluded in 2018 that the programme was “well received by schools and other stakeholders” and that “students themselves typically spoke positively about the programme, particularly those who had received more targeted support”.⁵⁰ The evaluation also recommended that because demand for the programme was expected to grow, it would be necessary for the government to either increase resources or target resources to specific groups.⁵¹

In October 2019, the DWP announced it would extend the programme with an additional £7 million, in order to employ a further 90 advisers and provide

⁴³ [DfE to Careers and Enterprise Company](#), 24 April 2019, p. 25.

⁴⁴ PQ, [‘Careers and Enterprise Company: Finance’](#), HL14901, 3 April 2019.

⁴⁵ [DfE to Careers and Enterprise Company](#), 24 April 2019, ‘Summary Table’.

⁴⁶ Work and Pensions Committee, [Employment Opportunities for Young People](#), HC 586 (March 2017), para 29.

⁴⁷ HM Treasury, [Summer Budget 2015](#) (2015), p. 80.

⁴⁸ DWP and Government Social Research, [Evaluation of Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools Programme](#) (April 2018), p. 12.

⁴⁹ Work and Pensions Committee, [Employment Opportunities for Young People](#), HC 586 (March 2017), para 25.

⁵⁰ DWP and Government Social Research, [Evaluation of Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools Programme](#) (April 2018), pp. 8, 10.

⁵¹ [Ibid.](#), p. 10.

targeted support for those with special educational needs under the age of 24. To October 2019, the scheme has worked with 1,400 schools in England.⁵²

3.4 Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge (ASK) Programme

The Education and Skills Funding Agency provides the [Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge Programme](#) (ASK) free to schools in England to ensure that teachers have the knowledge and support to enable them to promote apprenticeships. The scheme was introduced in 2016, originally for students in years 10 to 13. From September 2019, the programme has been extended to include years 7 to 9.⁵³

The Government stated that in the 2018/19 academic year, the ASK programme reached over 300,000 students across 2,368 establishments.⁵⁴

3.5 Calls to Streamline Organisations

When the CEC was [launched in 2014](#), it was intended to work closely with the [National Careers Service](#) (NCS), established in 2012, which provides careers advice and guidance to people through telephone and digital services in England.

The Business, Innovation and Skills and Education Committees in 2016 reported concerns that there was too great an overlap between the work of the CEC and NCS:

37. There were also concerns about the potential for overlap between the work of the Careers & Enterprise Company and that of the National Careers Service. Katharine Horler, Chair of the Board of Careers England, told us the National Careers Service's inspiration agenda was "exactly the same" as the work the Careers & Enterprise Company was doing. The Science, Engineering, Manufacturing and Technologies Alliance saw "no real reason for the continued existence of the National Careers Service as a separate entity" and called for it to be subsumed within the Careers & Enterprise Company.

⁵² ['DWP Extends Jobcentre Support for Schools Programme with £7m Funding'](#), Schools Week, 11 October 2019.

⁵³ PQ, ['Students: Apprentices'](#), 240522, 3 April 2019.

⁵⁴ PQ, ['Vocational Guidance: Construction'](#), 7737, 30 October 2019.

38. Those running the Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service insisted that their two organisations fulfilled different roles, a point also made by Mr Boles:

The National Careers Service is basically a series of contracts [...] It has a single unified website [...] but in terms of the provision of direct advice, it is a series of contracts. One of the whole points about the Careers and Enterprise Company was to have a business-led organisation that was in charge of the process of bringing businesses much more into the heart of school life [...]⁵⁵

The then-Secretary of State for Education, Baroness Morgan, emphasised the different roles performed by the NCS and CEC:

Nicky Morgan: First, I do not think [schools and employers] are confused [about the respective functions of the two NCS and CEC]. Secondly, I think the NCS and the new company are doing different things. The company, as we have discussed, is very much employer-led, and I think that is not the case with the NCS. The NCS also focuses particularly on a number of priority groups. I want the new company to be very much about going into schools, with a particular focus on 12 to 18-year-olds. The NCS is an all-age service, although of course they will particularly focus on some younger people and lowskilled adults without a level 3 qualification, as well as NEETs, as we have already discussed, and adults facing redundancy.⁵⁶

Following the launch of the Government’s Careers Strategy in 2017, the Chair of the Education Committee, Robert Halfon, said that the Government should “avoid the duplication of the National Careers Service, Careers Enterprise Company and the like, and reallocate the many millions of pounds that go to careers and create a one-stop shop of a National Skills Service.”⁵⁷

In 2019, the Local Government Association called upon the Government to “end the patchwork of careers activity in England”, and hand funding and control of employment schemes to local authorities.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Business, Innovation and Skills and Education Committees, [Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance](#), HC 205 (5 July 2016), paras 37 & 38.

⁵⁶ Education Committee, [Oral Evidence: Careers Guidance For Young People: Follow-Up, HC 333](#), 7 January 2015, Q46.

⁵⁷ [Robert Halfon: Consolidate the UK’s ‘Duplicated’ Careers Services](#), Schools Week, 4 December 2017.

⁵⁸ Local Government Association, [‘Thousands of Young People Missing Out on Vital Careers Support, Councils Warn’](#), 28 October 2019.

4 How well are schools and colleges discharging their duties?

There has been a considerable amount of scrutiny on the quality of careers advice available to children and young people. This section provides an overview of recent reports and reviews.

4.1 CEC's State of the Nation Report (2019)

The CEC assessed progress against the [8 Gatsby Benchmarks](#) in England's secondary schools and colleges. The report relies upon data collected through a self-assessment tool, 'Compass', that 3,826 schools and colleges have used to report their progress against the benchmarks to the CEC.⁵⁹

The [2019 State of the Nation Report](#) shows the proportion of the reporting schools and colleges meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks in their careers programme, as existing in July 2019:

1. A Stable Career Programme- 21%
2. Learning from Career and Labour Market Information- 45%
3. Addressing the Needs of Each Pupil- 20%
4. Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers- 38%
5. Encounters with Employers and Employees- 52%
6. Experiences of Workplaces- 42%
7. Encounters with Further and Higher Education- 21%
8. Personal Guidance- 57%⁶⁰

In its 2017/18 survey, the CEC had found that the average respondent school or college had achieved 2.13 benchmarks,⁶¹ rising to an average of 3.2 of out 8 benchmarks in 2019.⁶²

⁵⁹ CEC, [State of the Nation Report 2019](#) (2019), p. 1.

⁶⁰ [Ibid.](#), p. 42.

⁶¹ CEC, [State of the Nation Report 2018](#) (2018), p. 2.

⁶² CEC, [State of the Nation Report 2019](#) (2019), p. 5.

4.2 Augar Review (2019)

Although schools were outside the remit of the [Augar Review](#), which focused on post-18 education and funding, because careers advice influences the choices that students make for their post-18 career or study, the report did reflect on its delivery.

The report stated that it believed careers support to be under-funded, and called for a roll-out of career hubs between education institutions and employers:

We believe that careers support is still underfunded and therefore recommend that the strategy is rolled out nationally so that every secondary school is able to be part of a careers hub, that training is available to all careers leaders and that more young people have access to meaningful careers activities and encounters with employers.⁶³

The review also expressed disappointment at the relative lack of discussion of technical education and apprenticeships in schools, but supported the “Baker Clause”:

We welcome the new requirement on schools (from January 2018) to allow technical education and apprenticeship providers to talk to pupils, but were disappointed to learn that there is evidence that schools still fail to tell pupils about the full range of post-18 options. We welcome Ofsted’s focus on schools’ provision of independent advice, careers guidance and opportunities for pupils to encounter the world of work, as part of judging pupils’ personal development.⁶⁴

4.3 CEC’s Closing the Gap: The Level of Employer Engagement (2018)

The CEC published [Closing the Gap: The Level of Employer Engagement in England’s Schools and Colleges](#) in 2018. The report explores the level of employer engagement in education in England against the government’s benchmark for schools that each young person encounters at least one employer a year during secondary school and participates in work experience. The report identified a volume gap in the number of engagement and highlighted a patchiness of engagement with employers. Using data from the CEC’s Compass tool, which is based on schools self-reporting careers events, and a further survey of 503 schools in May 2017, it estimated that:

⁶³ [Review of Post-18 Education and Funding](#), CP 117 (2019), p. 55.

⁶⁴ [Ibid.](#), p. 55.

- In Year 7 and 8, only around half of young people participate in at least one encounter with an employer;
 - In Years 10 to 12, around 80% of young people encountered an employer;
 - In Year 11, 8% of schools provide no encounters with employers, whilst 28% report an average of 3 to 10 encounters, as compared to the Gatsby minimum standard of one.⁶⁵
9. The CEC used the data to re-iterate the need for schools to appoint careers leaders and design career programmes for all year groups.⁶⁶

4.4

DfE's School Snapshot Surveys (2018)

In its Winter 2018 survey, the DfE reported on progress against the statutory guidance that a range of education and training providers engaged with pupils in years 8 to 13, that education establishments would publish a policy statement outlining the nature of provider access, and that the institution would adopt the Gatsby Benchmarks to improve their career provision.

The [survey](#) was conducted with 836 school leaders, and 1,010 surveys with teachers.

It found that in the Winter of 2018:

- The majority of secondary schools (95%) had arranged a visit from at least one technical education provider during the past 12 months;
- Secondary schools had most commonly arranged a visit from apprenticeship providers (90%) followed by a visit from an FE college (81%);
- Close to three quarters (73%) of secondary schools had published a provider access statement on their website or were planning to;
- Subjects in which STEM careers are most commonly promoted are the 'science curriculum' (99% of secondary schools), maths (94%) and design & technology (93%);
- The most common ways of promoting STEM careers outside of the curriculum were through 'STEM clubs, societies and weeks' (24%) and through 'links with employers (talks, visits, work experience etc.)' at 23%.⁶⁷
- The [Summer 2018](#) survey had previously assessed other aspects of school's career education, finding that in the summer of 2018:

⁶⁵ CEC, [Closing the Gap: The Level of Employer Engagement in England Schools and Colleges](#) (2018), pp. 6, 7, 14.

⁶⁶ [Ibid.](#), p. 10.

⁶⁷ DfE, [The School Snapshot Survey: Winter 2018](#) (July 2019), p. 11.

- The vast majority of secondary school leaders said that their school had an identified Careers Leader with responsibility for overseeing the school's careers programme (94%);
- 90% of secondary school leaders said that all 14 year old pupils at their school used career paths information to inform their study options;
- In primary schools, the most common approach to careers education was delivery through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons (87%) and topic work (84%). Only 4% said that they did not provide any careers education to their pupils.⁶⁸
- The Summer 2018 survey interviewed 758 school leavers and 1,040 classroom teachers.

4.5 Failing to Deliver? Career Education Provision in England (2017)

The academics Julie Moote and Louise Archer, from King's College London, published '[Failing to Deliver? Exploring the Current Status of Career Education Provision in England](#)', *Research Papers in Education* (2017).

Based on data collected via a national survey of 13,000 Year 11 students attending 296 state-maintained schools and 44 independent schools in Autumn 2014, the paper argued that careers education in England was "currently patterned in ways that may be working to promote inequalities relating to gender, ethnicity and social class". The authors argued that "the majority of careers support is provided by a 'self-referral' system, in which the onus of responsibility is placed on the students themselves", which for pupils created "anxieties in navigating this self-referral support".

The authors recommend that greater targeting of resources was needed and the introduction of monitoring student participation as well as provision by schools.

Findings from the [survey](#) of 2014 included that:

- 63% of students reported receiving careers advice at secondary school;
- 44% of girls wishing to pursue a manual trade received careers information, compared to 66% of boys wishing to do the same;
- 65% of white students reported having met with a careers adviser, compared to 33% of Asian students;
- 64% of students planning to enrol in A-levels reported receiving careers advice, compared to 58% of those planning to pursue part-time work.

⁶⁸ DfE, [The School Snapshot Survey: Summer 2018](#) (September 2018), p. 13.

4.6

All-Party Parliamentary Group reports (2017)

In January 2017, the [All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility](#) published its report [The Class Ceiling: Increasing Access to the Leading Professions](#), which raised concerns about careers advice in schools and universities. The report described the quality of careers advice as “too varied, leaving young people unaware about steps to build a career especially in the most selective professions.”⁶⁹

The [All-Party Group for Education](#) published [How Well Do Schools Prepare Children for their Future?](#) in May 2017. Many respondents to the enquiry reported that careers education, information and guidance was “patchy” and that career development for children with special educational need and disability (SEND) lacked prominence.⁷⁰ The All-Party group recommended that:

The government reinstates mandatory work experience. In order to prevent the organisation of placements adding to teacher workload, secondary schools should have a clear structure for careers provision, with a non-teaching member of staff having overall responsibility.

Careers advice and guidance should always be provided by a qualified, independent and impartial counsellor. There is no point adding stricter CEIAG accountability measures to Ofsted inspections when there are not enough qualified careers advisers. We recommend that the Department defines a minimum qualification that counsellors must achieve and investigates ways to further professionalise the careers guidance sector. The Department should consider the coverage of high quality careers guidance as one of its own key performance indicators.

Children with SEND must be more visible in debates around careers provision. The Department should seek to identify what “good” careers education looks like for children with SEND, so that careers guidance counsellors can receive appropriate training and ultimately forge a strong network of local partnerships with businesses that lead to positive career outcomes for children with SEN (p. 21).

⁶⁹ All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility, [The Class Ceiling: Increasing Access To The Leading Professions](#) (January 2017), p. 9.

⁷⁰ All-Party Parliamentary Group for Education, [How Well Do Schools Prepare Children for their Future?](#), pp. 11, 12.

4.7

Ofsted Comments 2013-18 and Inspection Framework

Current Ofsted inspection framework

Ofsted carries out routine inspections of maintained and academy schools (and some other providers) in line with the current [framework for school inspection](#). The inspection handbook describes the standard of careers advice that Ofsted expects “good” secondary schools to meet:

Secondary schools prepare pupils for future success in education, employment or training. They use the Gatsby Benchmarks to develop and improve their careers provision and enable a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils in Years 8 to 13. All pupils receive unbiased information about potential next steps and high-quality careers guidance. The school provides good quality, meaningful opportunities for pupils to encounter the world of work.⁷¹

Thematic review and Government response (2013)

In September 2013 Ofsted published a thematic review, [Going In The Right Direction? Careers Guidance In Schools From September 2012](#).⁷² This reported that careers guidance in schools was not working well, with only one-fifth of the schools visited being “effective in ensuring that all [...] students in Years 9, 10 and 11⁷³ were receiving the level of information, advice and guidance they needed to support decision-making.”⁷⁴

The report also raised concerns about the breadth of information and guidance students in the surveyed schools were typically given:

The information students received about careers was too narrow. Too many students were unaware of the wide range of occupations and careers that they might consider. About half the schools used their own staff to inform students about careers but these staff often had insufficient training and did not provide students with up-to-date information.

Schools did not work well enough with employers to provide their students with direct experience of the world of work, which would help to broaden students’ minds about possible future employment. Vocational training and apprenticeships were rarely promoted effectively, especially in schools with sixth forms. The A-level route to

⁷¹ Ofsted, [School Inspection Handbook](#) (November 2019), p. 63.

⁷² Ofsted, [Going In The Right Direction? Careers Guidance In Schools From September 2012](#) (September 2013).

⁷³ The thematic review was carried out when the duty only extended to pupils in school years 9-11.

⁷⁴ Ofsted, [Going In The Right Direction?](#) (2013), p. 5.

universities remained the ‘gold standard’ for young people, their parents and teachers.⁷⁵

In September 2013, the Government published its [response](#) to Ofsted’s thematic review in the form of an “action plan” for careers education.⁷⁶

Sir Michael Wilshaw Comments (2015 & 2016)

In [evidence to the Education Committee](#) in September 2015, HM Chief Inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw described careers guidance as a “disaster area” in schools.⁷⁷ In January 2016, he told CentreForum that “preparation for employment remains poor and careers guidance in both schools and colleges is uniformly weak”.⁷⁸

Getting Ready for Work Report (2016)

A November 2016 Ofsted report on enterprise education and work-related learning, [Getting Ready for Work](#), described “limited” chances for children “to take part in meaningful work-related learning or work experience” at key stage 4. The report also stated that a poorly-co-ordinated, “chaotic” environment often existed locally, with projects such as those sponsored by local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) in their infancy and business leaders reporting that there was:

little coherence to provision and a lack of strategy by government, business organisations or individual schools. [Business leaders] were largely unaware of the work of the Careers and Enterprise Company. School-business links were most productive when they were official and between organisations, rather than informal and between individuals. Relationships were often hampered by poor communication between school and business staff and a lack of clarity over what was wanted from the partnership.⁷⁹

Ofsted’s National Director of Education Comments (2018)

Ofsted’s National Director of Education, Sean Harford, stated that on the provision of careers advice in schools, “the current picture is more encouraging than has been the case in the past”. Based on a representative sample of 120 school inspection reports from 2016 to 2018, he noted that “careers guidance within schools is improving” and that the “publication of

⁷⁵ [Ibid](#), p. 4.

⁷⁶ DfE & Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, [Careers Guidance Action Plan](#) (September 2013).

⁷⁷ Education Committee, [The Work of Ofsted: Oral Evidence](#), HC 400, 16 September 2015 (2016), Q26.

⁷⁸ [‘Ambitions for Education: Sir Michael Wilshaw’](#), 18 January 2016.

⁷⁹ Ofsted, [Getting Ready for Work](#) (November 2016), pp. 4-5

the careers strategy has given schools and colleges a solid framework to build their careers around”.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Ofsted, [‘Building Confidence, Encouraging Aspiration’](#), 12 June 2018.

5 Select committee reports

5.1 Public Accounts Committee Inquiries (2018)

The House of Common's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in 2018 published a report on the [Government's strategy to address STEM skills shortages](#). The report stated the Committee's concern about the Government's 2017 Careers Strategy, and recommended that the:

DfE should make better use of data on career destinations and salaries to incentivise young people to work towards careers in particular STEM sectors where there is higher need. As part of its plans to improve the quality of careers advice, DfE should work with Ofsted to consider rating the quality of advice provided in schools.⁸¹

In response, the DfE said it has asked the CEC to focus particularly on STEM when producing toolkits for schools and colleges on what works.⁸²

The PAC also published a [report on the Higher Education Market](#) in 2018, which concluded that “young people are not being properly supported in making decisions on higher education, due in large part to insufficient and inconsistent careers advice”, though also stated that it was too early to judge the success of the 2017 Career's Strategy.⁸³

In response to the inquiries, the Government stated that by December 2020 all schools are expected to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks in full, and from September 2019 Ofsted would introduce new inspection arrangements, including the review (but not the separate grading of) careers advice provided by schools and colleges.⁸⁴

5.2 Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy Inquiry (2015-16)

The Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy, formed by members of the Education Committee and the Business, Innovation and Skills

⁸¹ Public Accounts Committee, [Delivering STEM Skills for the Economy](#), HC 691 (2018), p. 7.

⁸² [Ibid.](#), pp. 7, 13.

⁸³ Public Accounts Committee, [The Higher Education Market](#), HC 693 (2018), p. 5.

⁸⁴ [Treasury Minutes: Government Response to the Committee of Public Accounts](#), Cm 9702 (October 2018), p. 18.

Committee, [announced](#) an inquiry into careers advice, information and guidance in December 2015.

Report

The Sub-Committee published its [report](#) on 5 July 2016. The Sub-Committee stated that it was “very disappointed that careers advice and guidance is still poor in so many schools”⁸⁵ and set out several recommendations for its improvement, including:

- Support for the Government’s intention to legislate to require schools to collaborate with training providers;
- That Ofsted introduce a specific careers guidance judgment, with schools unable to be rated ‘Outstanding’ overall if they had careers guidance that was rated ‘Inadequate’ or ‘Requires Improvement’, and unable to be rated ‘Good’ if their careers guidance was ‘Inadequate’;
- The simplification of careers policy delivery at the national level, with a single Minister and a single Department in charge of co-ordinating careers provision for all ages;
- That all Government-funded careers initiatives, including the Jobcentre Plus support for schools scheme, be brought under the umbrella of the Careers and Enterprise Company, and that that the Government consult on transferring responsibility for the National Careers Service from the Skills Funding Agency to the Careers & Enterprise Company;
- That the Government work with employers and schools to produce a plan to ensure that all students at Key Stage 4 have the opportunity to take part in meaningful work experience.⁸⁶

Government Response

The [Government response to the Sub-Committee’s report](#) was published on 1 November 2016.

In its response, the Government stated:

- That it would not introduce a separate Ofsted judgment for careers guidance, or to attach careers guidance to ratings as the Committee had recommended;
- Careers guidance had come within the remit of a single Minister at the Department for Education, which offered new opportunities for a coherent approach (this followed changes to the structure of

⁸⁵ Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy, [Careers Education, Information and Guidance](#), HC 205 (2016), p. 29

⁸⁶ [Ibid](#), pp. 29-32

government following Theresa May's appointment as Prime Minister, shortly after the Committee's report was published);

- That the Government would not bring all of its careers initiatives within the remit of the Careers and Enterprise Company, and would retain the distinct status of other careers bodies;
- That while a traditional 'work experience' placement may be of greatest benefit to many pupils at Key Stage 4, it may not be appropriate for meeting the individual needs of all pupils, and that schools choose what is most appropriate.⁸⁷

The then-Committee Co-Chairs, Neil Carmichael and Iain Wright, [expressed their disappointment at the response](#), and said Ministers were "burying their heads in the sand" about the quality of careers provision.⁸⁸

The Sub-Committee expressed particular concern about the Government's decisions not to adopt their recommendations about Ofsted judgments and bringing all careers provision within the remit of the Careers and Enterprise Company, and also "that the careers strategy long-promised by Government has still not been produced."⁸⁹

5.3 Education Select Committee: Follow-up (January 2015)

The Committee [announced](#) a follow-up inquiry into careers guidance to its 2013 report in 2014. The DfE submitted [written evidence](#) to the Committee in advance.⁹⁰ The Committee took [oral evidence](#) from the then Secretary of State, Baroness Morgan, on 7 January 2015.

In its [report](#) on the work of the Committee during the 2010-15 Parliament, the Education Committee stated:

39. When we returned to this issue a year after the publication of our report, it was clear to us that careers advice in schools was not improving, so we followed up our inquiry with a one-off session with the Secretary of State in January 2015. Drawing on this session, we recommended in our report on apprenticeships that the Government urgently review the incentives for schools to provide good quality careers advice and recognise that the mantra of "trusting schools"

⁸⁷ Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy, [Careers Education, Information, Advice And Guidance: Government Response To The First Joint Report Of The Business, Innovation And Skills And Education Committees Of Session 2016-17](#), HC 757 (2016).

⁸⁸ Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy, [Government Inaction on Careers Provision Failings is Unacceptable](#), 1 November 2016.

⁸⁹ [Ibid](#)

⁹⁰ DfE, [Careers Guidance Follow-Up Inquiry, Written Evidence Submitted By The Department For Education](#), 3 July 2014.

does not work when the interests of schools and young people are not aligned. This remains a work in progress and should be high up the agenda in the next Parliament.⁹¹

5.4 Education Select Committee Report (January 2013)

The Education Select Committee published [Careers Guidance For Young People: The Impact Of The New Duty On Schools](#) in January 2013. The Committee concluded that the decision to transfer the statutory duty to schools from the national Connexions model was “regrettable” and that it had “concerns about the consistency, quality, independence and impartiality of careers guidance now being offered to young people”.⁹²

The Committee raised specific concerns and recommendations:

We heard evidence that there is already a worrying deterioration in the overall level of provision for young people. Urgent steps need to be taken by the Government to ensure that young people’s needs are met.

[...]

The quality, independence and impartiality of careers guidance offered to young people was a central concern. To help ensure quality, we recommend that schools are required to work towards the Quality in Careers Standard, and to procure guidance services only from qualified providers and individuals.

[...]

There must be accountability measures to ensure that schools provide a good quality careers guidance service for their pupils.⁹³

The Government’s [response](#) was published on the Committee’s website. On the transference to responsibility to schools, the DfE defended the decision:

The decision to devolve responsibility for careers to schools was a response to mounting evidence from a range of respected sources that the national Connexions model was hugely expensive and of questionable value. While there was no explicit transfer of resources,

⁹¹ Education Committee, [Closing The Gap: The Work Of The Education Committee In The 2010–15 Parliament](#), HC 1120 (2015), para 39. The full report on apprenticeships is [Apprenticeships and Traineeships for 16 to 19 year-olds](#), HC 597 (2015).

⁹² Education Committee, [Careers Guidance For Young People: The Impact Of The New Duty On Schools](#), HC 632-1 (2013), p. 3.

⁹³ [Ibid](#), pp. 3-4.

when we made the decision to stop the Connexions service, by making savings on that and other centrally driven budgets we were able to prioritise and protect expenditure devolved to schools during this Spending Review period.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Education Committee, [Careers Guidance For Young People: The Impact Of The New Duty On Schools: Government Response To The Committee's Seventh Report Of Session 2012–13](#), HC 1078 (2013), p. 3.

6 Extra-parliamentary recommendations and comments

6.1 Careers England, NAHT & WorthLess? Campaign Survey (2019)

A [survey](#) by [Careers England](#) (the association for organisations providing Careers information and guidance to schools in England), the [National Association of Head Teachers](#) and the Headteachers' campaign group WorthLess? stated that schools were unable to deliver adequate careers provision due to a lack of funding. Based on a [survey](#) of 191 school leaders and career professionals, the group suggested that:

- Only 10% [of schools] have adequate funding;
- 75% [of schools] have insufficient, limited or no funding;
- Around a 5% of secondary schools receive less than £2,000 in funding per annum. Given [the] average size of secondary school is 1,000 this equates to circa £2 per student [...];
- About a third of secondary schools receive less than £5,000 per annum - £5 per student;
- 84% of schools “strongly agree” or “agree” that careers provision in their schools is now a high priority.

6.2 CBI People and Skills: Getting Young People “Work Ready” (2019)

In June 2019, the CBI published its [People and Skills: Getting Young People “Work Ready” Report](#). It cited the CBI 2018 Report on Education and Skills that said 44% of employers surveyed by the CBI felt that young people leaving school, college or university were not work ready, and that changes should be made to widen the curriculum and better nurture character traits such as resilience.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ CBI, [People and Skills: Getting Young People “Work Ready” Report](#) (2019), p. 6.

On the direction of careers advice, the CBI recommended that:

Alongside a broad and balanced school curriculum and qualifications for getting young people work ready, it is also vital that young people are informed of all their options post-16. This means schools and colleges are supported to achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks [...] and deliver up-to-date careers advice on A-Levels, Apprenticeships and the upcoming T-Level pathways.⁹⁶

The report also highlighted the geographic variation in engagement between employers and schools and college, stating that students in rural and coastal areas often struggle to engage with a range of employers. The report recommended that:

[...] The government's Youth Charter⁹⁷ and Careers Strategy [should] be integrated, recognising the contributions employers make to young people and making it easier for them to support the education system.⁹⁸

Through integrating the Youth Charter and Careers Strategy, the CBI hoped that the Government would create joined up support structure for both businesses and young people.

6.3 CBI/Pearson Education and Learning for the Modern World (2019)

The CBI in partnership with Pearson published its [Education and Learning for the Modern World](#) in 2019. It emphasised that links between employers, schools and universities were extensive, with a larger proportion of the surveyed business reporting an increase in their presence in secondary schools and further education colleges.⁹⁹

The report recommended on careers advice for the Government, schools and employers, that:

- All employers should consider how they play their part in making sure every young person has an experience of the workplace and world of work while they're in education.
- The Gatsby Benchmarks of high-quality careers advice, currently established in secondary schools and colleges, should be adapted so age appropriate careers advice can be given in primary schools. In addition, a greater effort must be

⁹⁶ [Ibid.](#), p. 35.

⁹⁷ The development of a new [Youth Charter](#), was announced by the UK Government in April 2019.

⁹⁸ CBI, [People and Skills: Getting Young People "Work Ready" Report](#) (2019), p. 38.

⁹⁹ CBI and Pearson, [Education and Learning for the Modern World](#) (2019), p. 9.

made to adapt the Gatsby Benchmarks when necessary, such as for those with special educational needs or a disability.

- The Government should expand the number of careers hubs from 40 in order to ensure full coverage. This is estimated to require 140 careers hubs in total.
- To support stronger partnerships the CBI must also play its part. This will be done through a new digital platform that provides best practice and signposts CBI members to the best way for them to make a difference. This is in partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company.
- Schools and colleges should be supported to free up timetabling space and capacity that allows businesses to engage with them in the delivery of careers activities.¹⁰⁰

6.4 Sutton Trust Access to Advantage (2018)

The Sutton Trust [Report Access to Advantage](#) (2018), examining university acceptance rates according to school type and area, found that state school pupils were less likely to attend Russell Group Universities compared to independent and grammar school pupils. The report recommended that discussion of higher education and A-level choices should occur before the age of 16:

All pupils should receive a guaranteed level of careers advice from professional impartial advisers. For those facing disadvantage – or who are at risk of failing to reach their potential – there should be further support available, including being supported to undertake and reflect upon academic enrichment activities for the personal statement. The ‘Careers Leaders’ in schools, established by the government’s Careers Strategy, should ensure that key messages are consistent across staff and based on up to date guidelines.

Advice should happen earlier and include guidance on subject options at A level. Many young people are not getting the right advice when it comes to A level options. Students need more support at an earlier age, that can help them to make an informed choice on their A-level choices. This should include advice on 'facilitating subjects', favoured by Russell Group universities.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ [Ibid.](#), p. 10.

¹⁰¹ Sutton Trust, [Access to Advantage](#) (2018), p. 5.

6.5 Working it Out: Career Guidance and Employer Engagement (2018)

The OECD published a working paper, [Working it Out: Career Guidance and Employer Engagement](#), authored by Pauline Musset and Lucia Mýtna Kureková in 2018. The paper cited common issues with career guidance in schools in OECD countries, including under-resourcing, inadequate knowledge of labour market opportunities, a bias towards academic opportunities being recommended for pupils following completion of secondary education, less guidance to girls and disadvantaged students, and the existence of competing career guidance providers.¹⁰²

As a summary of research on careers guidance, the paper suggested core principles of a good careers education:

- Start early, and continue into later stages in different shapes and intervene at key transition points, with pro-active delivery;
- Ensure that students can talk to career counsellors who are well-trained, independent and impartial;
- Integrate teachers into the provision of career guidance in school-wide approaches;
- Complete these approaches with the opportunities given by ICT technologies and labour market information;
- Ensure that the approaches used are personalised;
- Focus on certain groups, those who need the most assistance.¹⁰³

6.6 Secretary of State's December 2014 statement and announcement of the Careers and Enterprise Company

On 10 December 2014, the then Education Secretary Baroness Morgan made a [statement](#) on preparing young people for work.¹⁰⁴ She said that it was clear schools and colleges needed “additional support” and outlined additional steps the Government was taking in response, including the establishment of new careers and enterprise company for schools:

It is widely acknowledged that careers provision in schools has long been inadequate. To date, we have encouraged schools and colleges

¹⁰² Pauline Musset and Lucia Mýtna Kureková, [Working it Out: Career Guidance and Employer Engagement](#) (2018), pp. 48-49.

¹⁰³ [Ibid.](#), pp. 53-64.

¹⁰⁴ HC Deb, [‘Preparing Young People for Work’](#), 10 Dec 2014, cc. 891-893.

to take the lead. We have placed a clear duty on them to provide students with access to impartial advice and guidance. But, though we published an inspiration vision statement in September 2013 and strengthened the statutory guidance to support schools and colleges in making this vision a reality, it is clear that many schools and colleges need additional support if we are to ensure every young person—regardless of background or location—receives the life-changing advice and inspiration that they need to fulfil their potential and succeed in life. That is a view supported by a number of respected contributors in this area, including OFSTED, the National Careers Council, the Sutton Trust, the Gatsby Foundation and the Education Committee, as well as many employers, sector experts, and schools and colleges themselves. [...]

I have consistently heard calls from both employers and schools and colleges to help them navigate this complex landscape and to spread the good practice that is happening in some parts of the country to all. Today I am answering those calls. I am pleased to tell the House that Christine Hodgson, chair of Capgemini UK and someone with a strong track record of developing young talent, will chair a new careers and enterprise company for schools. This will transform the provision of careers education and advice for young people and inspire them to take control of and shape their own futures.

The company will support much greater engagement between employers on one hand and schools and colleges on the other. It will ensure that young people get the inspiration and guidance they need to leave school or college ready to succeed in working life. It will be employer led, but will work closely with the education and careers sectors. It will also act as an umbrella organisation to help employers, schools and colleges and other organisations navigate their way through the existing landscape. It will provide a vehicle to help other organisations co-ordinate their activities where appropriate.

The company will not itself be a direct delivery organisation, or act in competition with the many existing providers in the market. Instead, it will help schools, colleges, organisations and employers work together in partnership. The company will focus on the offer to young people, initially those aged 12 to 18. It will work closely with the National Careers Service, which will continue to support adults and young people and help the company to bring employers, schools and colleges together.

6.7

Gatsby Foundation report: international comparisons

Some comparative information is available through a 2014 report published by the Gatsby Foundation, [Good Career Guidance](#), which discussed best practice in careers guidance and included visits to six foreign states or countries – Netherlands, Germany, Hong Kong, Ontario, Finland, and Ireland.

[Appendix 1](#) (pages 3-44) to the report sets out the results of these visits, and the relevant systems in place.

7

Careers guidance in higher education

There are no statutory requirements around the provision of careers advice in higher education institutions (HEIs). However, careers advice and guidance is an important student service offered by all higher education institutions (HEIs). University careers offices offer a wide range of services such as: careers advice, help with writing CVs and application forms, interview skills and networking/mentoring opportunities. HEIs careers offices may also arrange campus career fairs where employers can meet graduates. Many university careers centres continue to provide support to their graduates for several years after graduating.

HEIs are autonomous bodies and all HEIs have their own careers service staffed by professionals who are trained in this area. The [Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services](#) (AGCAS) is a professional association for HE careers practitioners, which provides advice to members and aims to develop best practice across the sector.

Due to a range of political, economic and social factors, universities are under increasing pressure to produce highly skilled graduates that are tailored and ready for the graduate labour market. As a result many higher education institutions (HEIs) are investing more resources into their employability and careers services.

Prospects report, [How should universities teach employability?](#) March 2019

[The Higher Education Careers Services Unit](#) (HECSU) is a research charity and agency of Universities UK and GuildHE which works with careers and employability professionals and their institutions and undertakes research into all aspects of graduate employability. HECSU also runs [Prospects](#) the graduate careers information website.

A large amount of data on graduate employment is collected and published in various formats such as the [Graduate Outcomes Survey](#) and the [Longitudinal Educational Outcomes \(LEO\) dataset](#). Information for students on courses and employment outcomes is set out on the [Discover Uni](#) website (formerly Unistats). The availability of data on employability and graduate destinations allows students to make more informed choices about degree courses and employment prospects.

Employability skills and careers advice

Many university degree courses now include employability skills in their curricula and some include compulsory careers sessions. Institutions also offer extra-curricular schemes to help students to develop the “soft skills” which are valued by employers – some of these schemes lead to awards which students can include on their CVs. HE careers services also provide advice on self-employment and entrepreneurship. A survey by the AGCAS outlined some of the initiatives being offered by HE careers services:

Increasingly, strategic priority is being given to activity targeted to specific groups of students, especially those who may be more likely to face barriers going into the job market. Over half of careers services had developed initiatives for non-traditional students (NTS), including students from schools/areas of low HE participation, BME students and students from other disadvantaged backgrounds.

Over two thirds of careers services had developed initiatives for subject-specific students, students with a disability or physical/mental condition(s), and students aiming for self-employment/business start-up. Heads of service also reported the delivery of differentiated careers and employability support to female students, postgraduate students, final-year students and first-year students.

Increasingly, careers services are delivering segmented, inclusive communication campaigns and deploying resources in ways designed to achieve high levels of student engagement. Over six out of ten careers services had adopted new approaches to improve service branding and communication with particular focus on targeted delivery, for example via personalised campaigns aimed at different groups of students.

Employer engagement still remains a core feature of careers service strategies. Heads of service reported the continuing delivery of employer-led activities and other initiatives involving employer input. For example, employer presentations (delivered in 92% of services), employer-led skills workshops/seminars (delivered in 88% of services) and employer attendance at careers fairs (which increased in 52% of services).

Re-affirming the long-standing critical partnerships with employers, the research also highlights careers services’ proactivity in facilitating opportunities to engage employers in a wider range of cross-institutional initiatives relating to careers and employability, including activities in the curriculum. Many heads reported changes to the types of employers they were working with as graduate recruiters respond to calls to diversify their workforce, with many careers services able to reach out and influence employers regarding inclusive recruitment.

The research captures careers services' innovation in evolving external stakeholder relationships beyond 'traditional' employer engagement activity. Nine out of ten careers services had developed relationships with other external stakeholders, including regional/local business associations/networks (86%), district councils (66%) and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) (59%). This activity contributes to the pivotal role that universities have to play in their home regions by facilitating student and graduate awareness of their local employment market.¹⁰⁵

Reports from bodies such as the Social Mobility Commission have indicated that students from widening participation backgrounds have more difficulty accessing graduate jobs than graduates from better-off backgrounds.¹⁰⁶ The [Careers Strategy](#) document referred to evidence which suggests that “undergraduates from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to use university careers services relative to their advantaged peers”.¹⁰⁷ The Careers Strategy therefore recommends that HEIs do more to encourage students from disadvantaged backgrounds to use their career services:

We will ask the Director of Fair Access and Participation and the Office for Students to expect higher education institutions to do more to make sure that students from disadvantaged backgrounds make best use of their university careers services. This may include offering mentors, access to alumni networks or specialist careers outreach programmes.¹⁰⁸

The [Augar Review](#) of post-18 education commented on the importance of access to information, advice and guidance and particularly on the need for advice on alternatives to higher education and on alternative modes of study:

It is equally important that young people and adults have direct access to information, advice and guidance. We welcome the ongoing development of the Unistats website that will allow prospective HE students to better compare not only courses and institutions, but the outcomes students achieve. We also encourage better and more systematic use of outcome data for FE courses and apprenticeships which will help potential students to better understand the benefits of these qualifications. We note the role of UCAS as a central clearing point for HE and encourage government to consider the value of a comparable service for FE students at Levels 4 and above. Prospective students should also be advised of different and more flexible modes of learning including part time and

¹⁰⁵ AGCAS [HE Careers Services Survey - Research Report 2018](#)

¹⁰⁶ Social Mobility Commission, [Unpaid Internships Are Damaging To Social Mobility](#), 23 October 2017.

¹⁰⁷ DfE, [Careers Strategy: Making The Most Of Everyone's Skills And Talents](#) (December 2017), p. 26 para 74.

¹⁰⁸ [Ibid.](#), p. 27.

modular learning, so that they are able to make more informed choices about how they can study.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ [Independent panel report to the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding](#), May 2019, p. 55

The House of Commons Library is a research and information service based in the UK Parliament. Our impartial analysis, statistical research and resources help MPs and their staff scrutinise legislation, develop policy, and support constituents.

Our published material is available to everyone on commonslibrary.parliament.uk.

Get our latest research delivered straight to your inbox. Subscribe at commonslibrary.parliament.uk/subscribe or scan the code below:



 commonslibrary.parliament.uk

 [@commonslibrary](https://twitter.com/commonslibrary)