

Position Paper: Personal Guidance

Section 1. About this paper

This position paper was produced by a task group consisting of Careers England members. It confirms that the term 'Personal Guidance' isn't new, but is valuable, necessary and has a positive impact. In developing this paper, the task group were keen not to duplicate the positive work of The Careers & Enterprise Company's publication, '[Personal Guidance - What Works?](#)', but complement it and add value.

This paper describes what Personal Guidance is and provides evidence through real life case studies of the difference and benefits that clients received, and how it helped them to overcome challenges.

It concludes with an overview of how embedded Personal Guidance is within our schools and colleges and explains what is needed to accelerate progress and deliver an entitlement that every young person can expect to receive.

Section 2. What do we mean by Personal Guidance?

The report '[Good Careers Guidance](#)' by the Gatsby Foundation provides a solid research-based approach to defining the necessary components of good careers support for individuals. The report identifies eight components, known as the Gatsby Benchmarks, which in 2017 underpinned the Government's new Careers Strategy: '[Making the most of everyone's skills and talents](#)'. The key message is that all eight benchmarks are essential to the delivery of good careers support.

Gatsby benchmark eight is Personal Guidance. This is described as 'one to one interactions which take place between a careers adviser and a young person'. Within benchmark eight there is a requirement for schools and colleges to provide young people with access to personal guidance. This should be with a careers adviser who should be trained to a minimum of Level 6.

For ease of definition it is helpful to explain the difference between the terms Personal Guidance and Careers Guidance. The Gatsby Report 'Good Careers Guidance' states that the term Careers Guidance describes all the activities of the eight Gatsby benchmarks; e.g. careers education programmes, work experience, careers fairs, etc. Personal Guidance is the term used to describe a focused one to one interview provided by a trained and qualified careers professional. David Andrews and Tristram Hooley explain it further as: "a structured career conversation between a careers professional and a young person [which] usually takes place one to one". This definition can be expanded as personal guidance is applicable to all ages; not just young people in schools.

Section 3. The value of personal guidance

There is a wealth of evidence that Personal Guidance has a very positive impact. This is well documented in The Careers & Enterprise Company document: 'Personal Guidance - What Works' and the Careers England paper - [The Economic Benefits of Careers Guidance](#).

The impact can be summarised as improving:

- Personal effectiveness - e.g. self-awareness and self esteem
- Career readiness - e.g. career planning and decision making
- Educational outcomes - e.g. improved attendance and attainment
- Value for money - e.g. the impact of personal guidance delivering economic value and educational outcomes

A recent survey by RGG Associates with careers leaders in schools undertaking national careers leader training found that careers leaders (who are key individuals to ensuring all eight benchmarks are delivered in a co-ordinated way) recognise the importance of Personal Guidance as an important component of their careers programme. Indeed they feel it is significant to the success of the careers programme. It contributes to improving motivation, developing career goals, understanding options at post 16 and 18, and understanding labour market information and improving behaviour and attendance.

In the study, the majority of Personal Guidance was delivered via individual interviews with students; mainly in year 11, but also in years 12, 13 and lower down the school. The desire from career leaders was that Personal Guidance should be delivered by a professionally trained careers adviser at Level 6 minimum. The value career leaders attach to Personal Guidance is best demonstrated by the following quotes:

"I feel it benefits the students massively and gives them time and another qualified person to talk to."

"This enables my careers adviser to create a relationship with harder to reach students and enables her to give specific guidance to the individual need of the student."

"Support from a professional, up to date outsider has a real impact on students and their life choices. It's something that teachers cannot provide to the same level or quality."

The one major issue that all careers leaders raised was the need for resources, as summarised in this quote: "More activities would be desirable and possible with more financial support". This is an issue we shall come back to later in the paper.

Note: further information about this survey available from Erica Rowell, RGG Associates; erica@rggassoc.co.uk

Case studies

The following case studies from Careers England members Entrust, CXK, Career Connect and Adviza demonstrate the value of Personal Guidance with clients who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET.

Case study 1. Personal guidance to reduce the risk of NEET - Entrust

Entrust is commissioned by Staffordshire County Council to support young people who are at risk of NEET in year 10 and 11. The risk of NEET cohort is identified from the Risk of NEET Index (RONI) provided by Staffordshire County Council, to schools and Entrust, in conjunction with intelligence from schools regarding individual young people. The following groups are included in the at-risk cohort automatically:

- Single or Dual Role at a PRU
- Supported by YOS
- Looked After
- Electively home educated

Background:

The Staffordshire year 11 cohort in 2017/18 was 8768. The year 11 RONI cohort was approximately 10% of the total cohort.

Young people in year 10 identified as at risk of NEET receive a personal guidance interview focusing on their post 16 plans and the immediate steps they need to take. A careers action plan is produced with these young people.

In year 11 young people receive a minimum of a one-hour guidance interview with a written action plan. The careers action plan is shared with the education provider where the young person is in education, or with other professionals as required. This is done with the consent of the young person.

Activity:

The delivery of personal guidance is undertaken by a level 6 qualified careers adviser. All Entrust Careers Advisers receive a minimum of 6 days organised Continuous Professional Development per year. In addition, careers advisers undertake additional self-identified CPD. This ensures that all guidance given is current, accurate and personalised for the young person.

Pastoral staff in schools can help the young person implement the actions identified in their plan and can re-refer the young person for additional guidance as required. The careers adviser who has delivered the personal guidance to the young person tracks the progress of the young person through year 11 after the personal guidance is given over the summer to the first post 16 destination. This is through direct contact with the young person, the education provider and other appropriate professionals.

Outcomes:

Since 2014 the process has been refined and integrated across the county. The NEET rate in the Staffordshire Annual Activity Survey has fallen year on year from 1.8% in 2014 to 0.8% in 2018.

The targeting of the vulnerable groups in schools for the delivery of personal guidance and the continuity of support for these young people has also had an impact on retention. Staffordshire's

NEET rate in the 2018 NEET Score Card was 1.6%. At the end of January 2019, the NEET rate in Staffordshire was 1.4%, with a Not Known rate of 0.6%.

Case study 2: Building Futures is changing lives in Buckinghamshire - Adviza

Adviza identified that there were a number of adults in Buckinghamshire who needed more intensive support than the existing provision allowed for. Along with seven other voluntary and community sector partners they led a successful bid to the National Lottery focussed on changing the lives of people experiencing barriers and lacking opportunities to find meaningful employment, training or education.

Since delivery began 'Building Futures' has helped over 280 people to choose the right path to training, work experience or a job that works for them.

The key success factors have been the personalised one-to-one support from a careers adviser enhanced by activities that build confidence, employability skills and motivation to help participants become work and education ready. Additionally participants receive valuable life skills and health and wellbeing solutions to ensure they are empowered to take control of their lives and move forward in a positive way.

There have been some remarkable stories and achievements since the project began, like that of Katrina who joined the programme in August 2018, having been made redundant from her job in childcare. She had several issues that affected her ability to work: autism, a hearing impairment, severe asthma, hay fever, dyspraxia, dyslexia, anxiety and depression. Katrina was looking for part-time work and came to Building Futures for some support and guidance in finding a job.

Katrina excelled at Building Futures from day one and was keen to engage with her Careers Adviser. She always attended appointments and fully committed to her individual programme. With the help of her Careers Adviser, Katrina updated her CV and compiled a list of suitable jobs and companies that could be right for her.

One company that Katrina was very keen to work for was Next. As a national company, Next has an online application process which includes a numeracy and English test as well as a personality profile test. A member of the Building Futures team took the time to sit with Katrina while she completed her application form. Unfortunately, Katrina was not successful at passing the personality test and she was therefore not shortlisted for interview.

Building Futures intervened and explained to the store manager that Katrina's circumstances and autism make it hard to complete personality tests to the best of her ability. Katrina was then offered a telephone interview and an in-person interview which she handled with confidence and skill, and she was subsequently offered a job with Next.

Katrina is doing so well that her manager has already put her forward for a pay rise and congratulated her for receiving some exemplary customer feedback for her helpfulness.

"Katrina is a welcome addition to our team; she has been well received by everyone, staff and customers alike. Her best asset is her smile and her amazing customer service. She has had customer compliments via our service survey describing her as:

"Very friendly and helpful"

"Good manners and customer service skills"

“Always smiling and asking me about my day”

“Star staff member!”

Case study 3. St Georges C of E Foundation School - CXK

Evidence of the effectiveness of careers guidance (Personal Guidance) which, utilises a blended approach and partnership working with key members of staff in school to provide a targeted service utilising a combination of one-to-one, group, assembly and email methods of Personal Guidance delivery.

With key indicators for impact against:

- Positive destination and transitions to EET
- Motivation in school
- Self-Efficacy
- Improved career management skills
- Emotional wellbeing

Delivery at St Georges C of E Foundation School utilises a blended approach, making the use of assembly, parents & options evenings, group guidance and targeted one-to-one delivery alongside email and lunchtime drop-in guidance sessions throughout the year. It is one which recognises that students do not always make decisions in a manner that “coincides” with the routine of the school year and points of formal transition. It is a delivery which is underpinned by the principles found within the chaos theory of careers by Jim Bright; recognising points of indecision, change and chance alongside, that of logic, research and LMI.

Through a multi-partner approach which coordinates the work of the careers adviser with that of the family liaison, EAL lead, SENCO, pastoral support and tutor team within school, students are referred in a timely manner for support.

Data from the local authority confirms the effectiveness of the delivery when examined over a three year period. When looking at those from Year 11 who were ‘NEET available for EET’ in 2015 to 2017 the school figure moved from 2.4% at the start of delivery when there wasn’t a full careers guidance programme in place, through to 0.5% in 2017 as the programme became more comprehensive. Compared to the district within which the school is situated which, climbed from 2.1% to 2.6% in the same period (data courtesy of Kent County Council).

The impact of the careers guidance (Personal Guidance) is noted below.

Witness statement from Mr Paul Humphries, Family Support Manager at St George’s C of E Foundation School. December 2018: “The procedure that we have in place at St George’s School to support our students with your help is the best that I know. This is due to us working closely together having meetings where we discuss vulnerable students and the best way to support them so we tailor make a package that best suits that individual.

My role within the school is to attend a number of meetings with outside agencies for our most vulnerable students and adding to the plan in a way to best support them within education. Being able to discuss these students and give them a 1-1 with yourself has been the most productive with the best possible outcomes.

I have received nothing but positive comments from the students that have had these one to one sessions as they say they have liked the way the meeting with them has been constructed with nearly all commenting that they like the 2 plan route approach as they feel less pressure as it shows them that there is always another way to get where they need to be. This has resulted in them coming out of the meeting with more confidence and desire to achieve which has made such a difference.”

Case Study 4: Cranbrook Grammar School - CXK

Evidence of the effectiveness of one-to-one careers guidance (personal guidance). With key indicators for impact against:

- Positive destination and transitions to EET
- Motivation in school
- Self-Efficacy
- Improved career management skills
- Dissatisfaction/Emotional wellbeing

Witness statement from Mrs Christine Newman, Careers Leader at Cranbrook Grammar School.

December 2018: “At Cranbrook School we offer one-to-one personal careers guidance sessions to all students from Year 10 upwards. These sessions are 40 minutes with an independent careers guidance advisor from CXK and a follow up written action plan.

Currently there is a massive demand for these one-to-one sessions particularly amongst the 6th form. The sessions challenge the students’ perception of the working world and higher education and allows them to independently research further the ideas and concepts discussed at the sessions. Action plans are passed to the students tutors approximately 6 weeks after the meetings and tutors then check the progress of students on their action plans and offer further support with this. Students are seeking out appointments from peer recommendation as well as tutor recommendation and appointments are currently booked up for students in Years 11, 12 and 13 and there is a waiting list.

Students seeking advice vary from those who have a clear idea of what they want to do after school but are unsure as to how to get there, those that ‘know what they are interested in’ but have no idea how this fits with the world of work, to the disaffected student who is helped with their motivation with the realisation that there is something outside of school for them.

The impact of these sessions means that the students are confident that they can seek expert help and advice and know where to go to get it. Staff too know that they, can find help with motivation for the students who may be struggling to find their place in the school and with their school work.”

The following is a quote from the Ofsted inspectors from the last inspection in 2015: “Almost all students continue from Year 11 into the sixth form, with virtually no drop out between courses. As a result of the high quality careers guidance and excellent teaching that they receive, almost all proceed to higher education and more than half proceed to leading universities of their choice.”

Case Study 5: Social Impact Bonds - Career Connect

Career Connect was one of ten providers selected in 2011 to deliver a programme to help young people aged 14-24 who were NEET (not in education, employment or training) or at risk of becoming so, as part of the Government’s £30m Youth Unemployment Innovation Fund (“IF”)

The contract value was capped at a maximum of £4.5m; it was structured on a 100% payment-by-results basis and financed with a social impact bond, which was arranged by Triodos Bank and supported by a group of social investors (led by Bridges Ventures and Big Society Capital), who provided up-front funding and ongoing support.

The Career Contract programme – known as ‘Triodos New Horizons’ – ran from April 2012 to April 2015, with results tracked to September 2015. It was the biggest and most ambitious of the 10 programmes commissioned across the two rounds of the Innovation Fund, targeting almost 4,000 beneficiaries. Career Connect targeted six of the outcomes specified on the IF rate card

The targeted outcomes were:

- Improved attendance
- Improved behaviour
- First NQF Level 1
- First NQF Level 2 (GCSE A-C or equivalent)
- Sustained employment for 13 weeks
- Sustained employment for 26 weeks

The programme employed a variety of interventions, included one-to-one assessments, group work sessions and individual coaching session. Regardless of when the young people were recruited, only the outcomes they achieved during the contract period (plus the subsequent monitoring period) counted towards the final total. As such, those recruited towards the end of the programme had less time to achieve multiple outcomes than those recruited earlier in the programme. The table below shows the final results of the New Horizons programme, after three years of delivery plus a final 6-month monitoring period.

	Original forecast	Final results
Beneficiaries	3,928	4,222
OUTCOMES:		
Improved Attendance	1,066	1,315
Improved Behaviour	741	1,779
NQF Level 1	336	2,262
NQF Level 2	196	728
NQF Level 3	0	189
13-week employment	1,102	198
26-week employment	829	154
	4,270	6,625¹

THE PROGRAMME DELIVERED STRONG RESULTS AND VALUE

New Horizons performance, 2012-15	Original forecast	Total achieved	Value of outcome (per latest rate card)	Implied value to DWP of outcomes achieved	Amount actually paid by DWP
Beneficiaries	3,928	4,222			
Improved attendance	1,066	1,315	£1,400	£1,841,000	£1,145,365
Improved behaviour	741	1,779	£1,300	£2,312,700	£982,008
First NQF Level 1	336	2,262*	£900	£2,035,800	£824,670
First NQF Level 2	196	728	£3,300	£2,402,400	£1,057,056
First NQF Level 3	0	189**	£5,100	£963,900	£0
Sustained employment for 13 weeks	1,102	198	£3,500	£693,000	£380,952
Sustained employment for 26 weeks	829	154	£2,000	£308,000	£113,960
Total	4,270	6,625		£10,556,800	£4,504,011

* Includes 392 outcomes that were achieved after the contract cap was hit and thus not paid for by DWP

** Not included in the original forecast so not paid for by DWP

- The New Horizons programme (NH) beat its targets for both beneficiaries and total outcomes delivered
 - o Even after hitting its contract cap, NH continued to deliver positive outcomes
- NH achieved a lower-than-forecast number of employment outcomes; though this was partly because it was more successful than expected in re-engaging young people with education
- The contract provided good short-term value for Government, delivering £10.56m of outcomes during the contract period for an outlay of £4.5m.
 - o This does not include the numerous qualifications and employment outcomes the New Horizons beneficiaries went on to achieve after the end of the monitoring period, which would boost the total outcomes value significantly
- According to the DWP's estimate of the three-year cost of a young person becoming NEET, there will be a direct net cost saving to DWP if 11% of New Horizons' beneficiaries avoid becoming NEET as a result of the programme
 - o According to third-party estimates of the lifetime cost of a young person becoming NEET, there will be a long-term net cost saving to Government if just 2% of New Horizons' beneficiaries avoid becoming NEET as a result of the programme
- Tracking indicates that of those programme beneficiaries who are at least 2 years past their School Leaving Age (cf. p.8), approximately 80% remain in some form of Education, Employment or Training.
- Over 60% of beneficiaries went into 6th form or further education after leaving school.

The programme substantially exceeded its outcomes targets:

- New Horizons worked with 7% more beneficiaries than forecast (4,222 vs 3,928), and delivered 55% more positive outcomes than forecast (6,625 vs 4,270)
- Towards the end of the period, Career Connect had reached its contract cap on some of the outcomes; however, it continued to work with the young people to achieve more of these outcomes, even though it had no financial incentive to do so (i.e. it was not paid for any of them)

Section 4. What help is available?

There are numerous sources of support in England available for career development professionals and those interested in finding out more about CEIAG; each providing a variety of different insights. We have listed a few of the most popular and useful sources below:

- National Careers Service - careers support for young people and adults:
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>
- The Careers & Enterprise Company - strategic guidance for schools:
<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/>
- The Career Development Institute (CDI) - professional body for career development professionals including careers advisers and careers leaders. Details of the UK register of career development professionals, as referenced in the statutory guidance can be found here:
<https://www.thecdi.net/Home>
[https://www.thecdi.net/Professional-Register- \[1\]](https://www.thecdi.net/Professional-Register- [1])
- Careers England - trade association for employer organisations and traders involved in the provision of products and services promoting CEIAG in England:
<https://www.careersengland.org.uk/>
- CEGNET - resources for schools CEIAG programmes:
<http://www.cegnet.co.uk/>
- Careers Defender - independent advocate for CEIAG in schools:
<http://www.outstandingcareers.co.uk/>
- Adventures in Career Development, leading academic commentary on CEIAG:
<https://adventuresincareerdevelopment.wordpress.com/>

Section 5. Finishing the job

The Careers & Enterprise Company's latest [State of the Nation](#) report on progress towards the eight Gatsby benchmarks in schools and colleges shows that just over half of our schools and colleges believe they are delivering benchmark eight on Personal Guidance. The RGG survey of careers leaders identified funding as a significant barrier to making progress in this area. Without a committed careers leader and funding, it is difficult to know how many schools are truly fulfilling the benchmarks. One way to increase the reliability of this data is through use of the Quality in Careers Standard. Completing an independently assessed careers quality award alongside the CEC compass tool is a more robust measure of what is happening on the ground.

Careers England members regularly cite Local Authority funding reductions as a major challenge to providing career support to vulnerable young people in and out of school. In addition, the time-limited ESF resource is significantly limiting the delivery of Personal Guidance to vulnerable cohorts in particular. Uncertainty remains as to how the gap will be bridged when ESF funding ends.

However, the demand for Personal Guidance is growing and often requires a broader and more holistic skill set to support clients who can sometimes present with additional difficulties or barriers. The need for improved financial support goes beyond the costs of face to face delivery of careers information advice and guidance. Careers England members need additional resources to develop skills and knowledge in areas such as:

- Recognising and supporting clients with mental health issues
- Preparing in depth risk assessments
- Safeguarding and Prevent
- Working with vulnerable families who are facing multiple barriers

Careers England is urging the Government to give the necessary financial support to the development and delivery of Personal Guidance as part of the Spending Review due to take place later in the year.

Ends

About Careers England

Careers England Ltd is the sole trade association for organisations involved in the provision of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) products and services in England for people of all ages. Our members provide aspects of some, or all, of the four components of CEIAG: • Careers Education (Career Learning) • Careers Information • Careers Advice • Careers Guidance

The members of Careers England Ltd comprise the majority of prime and sub-contracted deliverers of the National Careers Service. They also deliver careers guidance services for local authorities, schools and colleges across England. Most of our members are charities and social enterprises. We also have a number of sole traders and other organisations who, although not delivery services, are engaged with the careers sector. Full details of all Careers England members, our activities and our publications can be found at www.careersengland.org.uk