

Update on progress made in implementing the May 2004 Council Resolution on guidance throughout life

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1 Introduction

This report provides an update on progress in the UK in implementing the 2004 Council Resolution on guidance. In the UK, the specific term 'guidance' is normally reserved to describe the more intensive support element of a broader range of services collectively referred to as 'information, advice and guidance' (IAG). These services are highly developed across the whole of the UK and are widely available to those in education, in the labour market and in a variety of community settings. However, there are many differences and similarities in the arrangements for the delivery of IAG services across the four constituent countries of the UK: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These arrangements partly reflect differences of geography, culture, complexity and relative population sizes; increasingly, they are also linked to differences in the legal and constitutional responsibilities that apply.

In 1999/2000 certain powers, including those covering education and training, were devolved to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, all of which now have their own administrations: the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Scottish Executive and the National Assembly for Wales. This means that within an overall policy framework emanating from the national parliament in London, the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland enact their own distinctive legislation (though currently Northern Ireland is under Direct Rule from Westminster).

2 Update on progress within the UK

This update covers progress across the whole of the UK. Further information on some of the specific examples cited is given in Appendix 1. A glossary of key IAG providers in the UK is given in Appendix 2, illustrating some of the differences and similarities in delivery arrangements.

2.1 Developing lifelong guidance systems and ensuring greater co-ordination and integration of services

Generally, it is recognised that career guidance is well developed in the UK compared to most other developed countries. It is provided in a diverse range of ways, is widely available across many sectors, and has many highly-developed institutional support arrangements including a strong legislative base, quality-assurance standards, training and qualification frameworks, and research and evaluation support¹. More recent developments in progress in developing lifelong guidance systems in the UK are summarised overleaf.

1 OECD (2003). *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies: United Kingdom Country Note*. Paris: OECD (also published as an Occasional Paper by Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby).

All-age careers services in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, all-age careers services have continued to work towards the development of well co-ordinated IAG available to all young people and adults living in the communities they serve. Careers Scotland is the national career planning service for all citizens of Scotland. It is currently delivered through the two enterprise networks (Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise). The strategic aims for Careers Scotland reflect the national Learning and Skills priorities described in "A Smart Successful Scotland – Strategic Direction to the Enterprise Networks and an Enterprise Strategy for Scotland" which was last revised by the Scottish Executive in November 2004². In Wales, six separate and independent careers companies work according to comparable priorities supported by a high degree of collaboration and joint working. The Northern Ireland Careers Services operates within the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and offers an all-age service. In England, Connexions companies currently provide integrated IAG services for all young people aged 13 to 19, whilst the equivalent services for adults are delivered through a variety of local providers co-ordinated and branded through 'nextstep' networks (previously known as IAG Partnerships).

Developments towards an integrated IAG service for adults in England

In 2003, a National Framework Policy and Action Plan emerging from the Skills Strategy White Paper³ announced a more integrated and effective IAG service for adults in England. This involved a strengthening of the co-ordination of the local IAG networks through the introduction of more robust contractual arrangements for providers, set against clear and ambitious delivery targets, and a re-branding of the previously named IAG partnerships as 'nextstep'. The strategy also involved bringing more closely together the learndirect national information and advice service and the nextstep local information and advice service.

Despite some partial success of the new integrated IAG service, a second Skills Strategy White Paper⁴, published in 2005, announced a fundamental review of IAG services for adults in England. A major review is currently under way and its findings should be published by December 2006. The Skills White Paper refers to "the need to achieve a 'step change' in the level of access to guidance provision, and the wish to do so on the basis of a well-marketed combination of free and charged services" (part 1, para.74). The review will be mindful of the need to ensure greater cost-effectiveness and complementarity of different delivery media and arrangements, and will include a recognition of the potential role of paid-for services alongside those offered free of charge.

Re-configuration of support services for young people in England

In 2004, the government set out a Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners⁵ which outlined a new agenda designed to inform and support major transformation in the design and delivery of

2 The Scottish Learning and Skills priorities are to: (i) improve the operation of the Scottish labour market (ii) provide the best start for all our young people (iii) develop people who are in work and (iv) narrow the gap in employment and reduce economic activity

3 DfES (2003a). *Information, Advice and Guidance Services for Adults: The National Policy Framework and Action Plan*. London: Department for Education and Skills. DfES (2003b). *21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential*. London: Stationery Office.

4 Department for Education and Skills (2005). *Skills: Getting On In Business, Getting On At Work*. London: Stationery Office.

5 Department for Education & Skills (2004). *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners*. London: DfES.

national and local services for all young people. The Education Bill (2004)⁶ set out a framework to support a 'new relationship with schools' and to promote greater autonomy and diversity in the education system. Simultaneously, the Children Bill (2004)⁷ placed a duty on local authorities to make arrangements to promote co-operation between agencies and other appropriate bodies (such as voluntary and community organisations) to achieve five key outcomes⁸ for well-being in childhood and later life. In March 2006, the government published *Youth Matters: Next Steps*, its response to consultation on the earlier *Youth Matters* Green Paper⁹. The document sets out the government's plan for implementing the vision outlined in the Green Paper for making improvements to services for young people, and its commitment to empower young people to make choices and influence decisions about facilities and services locally. By 2008, Connexions services¹⁰ will have transferred into Local Authority Children's Trusts and will operate within direct delivery or sub-contractual delivery arrangements (for further details, see **Appendix 1 Section 1**).

2.2 Broadening access to guidance across the lifespan

For the whole of the UK, progress continues to be made in broadening access to IAG, particularly through the development of differentiated services to enable the most cost-effective match between client need and appropriate delivery systems, including the development of web-based online services.

All-age careers websites for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and the Connexions Direct website for England

The all-age careers services in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are each supported by a website that provides a range of information, advice and interactive services, including: employment opportunities and labour market information (LMI); exploration of career types and careers-matching facilities; and other interactive features such as CV builder facilities and videos. The Careers Wales online service has received particular praise in a recent government inspection report (see **Appendix 1 Section 5** for further details). In England, Connexions Direct offers equivalent on-line information and services, albeit aimed at young people only.

In addition, the Directgov website is an initiative that provides access to a comprehensive range of UK government services and sources of information including those related to lifelong learning, career development and employment opportunities.

6 The Education Bill (2004) and explanatory notes can be found on the Parliament website <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills.htm>

7 The Children Bill (2004) and explanatory notes can be found on the Parliament website <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills.htm>

8 The following five key principles have been promoted to underpin the development of integrated children's services: (i) be healthy; (ii) stay safe; (iii) enjoy and achieve; (iv) make a positive contribution; (v) achieve economic well-being.

9 <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth/>

10 Connexions services were rolled out across England between 2001 and 2003 to provide both universal and targeted services for young people between the age of 13 and 19, and to provide for 20-24 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are yet to make the transition to adult services.

learnirect

The learnirect national service was launched in 1998 to provide free and impartial advice, focussed around call-centre technology, to help adults access further education and training opportunities. This now well-established service has in recent years received around a million calls per year. It is marketed extensively, including prime-time advertising on television. It was extended in January 2006 with the launch of an 18-month pilot to provide more in-depth support in the form of guidance to particular target groups within England (see **Appendix 1 Section 4** for further details). A detailed evaluation of the pilot is being carried out; together with the results of the IAG review for England, this will inform any future development of this extension to the learnirect service.

Development of differentiated service delivery frameworks in Scotland and Northern Ireland

Careers Scotland has developed a differentiated service delivery framework, designed to promote and deliver self-help, assisted and in-depth support services for young people and adults. Careers Scotland delivers differentiated career planning services, supported by strategies and products related to its Education in Enterprise, Inclusion and Employability strategies. Its aims are to: (i) improve the employability and enterprise skills of the people of Scotland, (ii) increase participation in learning and employment, and (iii) be the leading national advocate for the guidance and employability sector. The framework has resulted in a re-organisation of facilities within schools and careers centres designed to provide the appropriate type and level of support to customers of all ages (see **Appendix 1 Section 2** for further details).

In Northern Ireland, a broadly similar model is being developed, again based on the work of Professor James P. Sampson, Florida State University, USA. The Department for Employment and Learning's (DEL) Careers Service is working closely with the Department of Education (DENI) to explore ways in which universal and targeted services to young people and adults can be delivered most effectively (see **Appendix 1 Section 3** for further details). It also provides funding to support the work of the Educational Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA).

Reaching rural communities in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland

Careers Scotland (Highlands and Islands) have produced a series of resources which may be used to support the process of initial self and practitioner-assisted assessment. Targeted at different client groups, the resources encourage clients to reflect on their motivation and approach towards decision-making, thereby identifying issues which they may wish to bring to the guidance process or address through other means.

2.3 Strengthening quality-assurance mechanisms, particularly from a citizen perspective

All key IAG providers in the UK operate in line with formalised systems of quality assurance that are based upon the processes of self-assessment and continuous self-improvement. In addition, the majority of providers are accredited against an externally regulated standard such as matrix

or Charter Mark¹¹, and are usually subject to periodic inspection by an independent inspection service¹². Data on the quality of the management and delivery of services, including user feedback, is made available to the external inspectors and is usually summarised in the published inspection reports.

All key providers in the UK regularly record and report feedback from service users, including consumer reactions and levels of satisfaction with the service. Some providers carry out these surveys themselves, using their own staff (for example, Careers Wales); some use external consultants working on behalf of the provider (for example, learndirect and Jobcentre Plus); others combine both of these methods (for example, Careers Scotland and Connexions Partnerships in England). The main method used is the telephone interview, with postal questionnaires and focus groups being used more occasionally. Generally, the user feedback data is used as part of the providers' continuous self-improvement procedures, with the more favourable feedback being also used for publicity purposes. In the case of several providers, the feedback data is used to measure performance against user-satisfaction targets set by the appropriate government department or funding body (this is the case, for example, with learndirect and nextstep partnerships).

Development of an evidence-based quality-assurance framework in Scotland

Careers Scotland is currently building upon its quality-assurance framework by systematically applying it to each of its strategic priority areas, in order to identify resource issues and 'gaps' that need to be filled, and to embed a culture of evidence-based practice through a bespoke professional development programme supported by case studies (see **Appendix 1 Section 6** for further details).

Development of an all-Wales impact assessment framework, performance indicators and benchmarks

In Wales, in 2004/05, the six Careers Wales companies began the development and implementation of an in-house impact-assessment framework that initially involved the tracking of 1,000 adults three and six months following their guidance interviews.

Parallel to the impact evaluation, Careers Wales also began working with the Welsh Assembly Government on the development of key performance indicators (PIs) and possible benchmarks for IAG services across the whole of Wales (see **Appendix 1 Section 7** for further details).

New standards for guidance interviewing and group work

Careers Wales have produced new standards relating to guidance interviewing and group work. Whilst reflecting the National Occupational Standards, the Welsh (Estyn) Inspection framework

11 Matrix is the UK standard that has been specifically designed for organisations that deliver information, advice and guidance on learning and work opportunities, whilst Charter Mark is a more broadly-based quality standard that has been specifically developed for UK publicly-funded services.

12 The inspection service is provided in England by the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI); in Northern Ireland, by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI); in Scotland, by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE); and in Wales, by Estyn.

and existing good practice, the standards aim to promote a coherent and standardised approach to continuous professional development following initial qualification.

Creation of a new Management Information System (MIS) within EGSA, Northern Ireland

In 2006, the Educational Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA) created a new MIS tracking system and website (www.connect2learn.org.uk) designed to enable the organisation to record, monitor and evidence the impact of its work. This new MIS provides a research framework enabling EGSA and partner organisations to monitor demands and gather data that contributes not only to the organisation's internal needs but also helping to grow the evidence-base in the wider guidance community.

Mystery-shopping exercise in England

In 2005, an independent market research company conducted a major evaluation from a consumers' perspective of integrated information, advice and guidance services in England. The evaluation was based upon 'mystery shoppers' visiting and reporting on IAG services throughout England. The resulting feedback has informed the development of an Integrated IAG Continuous Quality Improvement Action Plan.

IAG quality standards for young people in England

The *Youth Matters* Green Paper proposed new quality standards for the provision or commissioning of IAG through children's trusts, schools and colleges. These standards will be used to ensure that minimum expectations for IAG are being met. The government will consult on and develop these standards with key stakeholders. It will look at how to build on existing standards for careers education and guidance (including the careers education and guidance framework and the matrix Standards for adult guidance). It will ensure that the quality standards also apply to specialist services for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. It will aim to have draft standards ready for consultation by November 2006, and published in 2007.

2.4 Refocusing guidance provision to develop citizens' lifelong and lifewide learning and management skills

Careers education and guidance in Scotland

Careers Scotland has developed an operating model, and a series of resources, specifically designed to support the development of individuals' career planning and management skills. For example, the use of Career Box as a careers education resource for schools and colleges is integrally linked to the Career Planning Journey – a model of career planning which creates a pathway for individuals to understand and plan their career journey 'from engagement to employment' (see **Appendix 1 Section 8** for further details).

End-to-end review of careers education and guidance in England

In July 2005 the DfES undertook an 'end-to-end review' of publicly funded careers education and guidance (CEG) for young people between 11 and 19, focusing on delivery by schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and the Connexions Service (see **Appendix 1 Section 9** for further details).

As a result of the review, a number of recommendations for action were made, intended to help ensure that by age 19 young people will have acquired the career development skills, work habits, knowledge and understanding to make mature informed decisions about employment and associated learning progression. These recommendations included improving direct access to advice through the promotion of existing ICT means, and encouraging schools to adopt a 'whole school' approach incorporating CEG, student support and progression issues, starting in year 7. The findings from the review were used to inform the development of the *Youth Matters Green Paper*.

Train to Gain in England

Train to Gain is the name of a new national skills programme that was introduced across England from April 2006. It is closely based on Employer Training Pilots (ETP) which covered around a third of all Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas in England and which came to an end in March 2006. The Government announced its intention to roll out the pilots across England some time ago and the national programme was originally referred to as the National Employer Training Programme (NETP). However, at the end of 2005 the Government decided to brand the new national programme as Train to Gain (some of the pilots had already been using this brand name at a local level).

Train to Gain is at the very heart of the implementation of the Government's Skills Strategy. It will offer employers free training for employees to achieve a Level 2 qualification (or a Skills for Life qualification) if they do not already have academic or vocational qualifications equivalent to level 2 (e.g. 5 GCSEs at grade A-C or NVQ level 2).

Train to Gain is a service to help companies and other organisations improve the skills of their workforces and business performance by assisting them in identifying and sourcing training provision which will meet their needs – some of which, though not all, may attract a full or partial public subsidy. This new national initiative has guidance provision embedded within its development plan to support employees' lifelong learning and management skills.

New Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) for England

In July 2006, a new Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) was introduced across all nine English regions. The new service is designed to provide greater integration of provision, to ensure that offenders in prisons and those supervised in the community have access, according to need, to learning and skills to enable them to gain the skills and qualifications required to hold down a job and have a positive role in society. The planning, funding and delivery of the new integrated service is being managed by the national LSC. Over the coming year, LSC will invest £130 million from the Department for Education and Skills, together with a share of an additional £30 million of funding sourced from the European Social Fund (ESF), in improving the quality and quantity of offender education, supported by appropriate information, advice and guidance. It is anticipated that even closer working links will be established between statutory and other community and voluntary organisations. The concept of 'a learner journey' has recently emerged to help facilitate improved understanding between and across agencies regarding guidance access points, diagnosis and appropriate interventions, as well as professional development training opportunities.

2.5 Strengthening structures for policy and systems development at national and regional levels

A wide range of networks and partnerships has been established across the UK to help strengthen the development and implementation of lifelong learning and lifelong guidance policies. These include various long-standing professional associations with members in education (at all levels) and in the voluntary and community sector. Such organisations are in regular communication with government policy-makers. The Guidance Council, a UK-wide membership organisation for all those with an interest in guidance, has undergone considerable downsizing over the last two years and in the coming months it is expected to close.

In addition, a number of web-based initiatives have been led by professionals within the UK to connect practitioners, policy-makers and researchers with a professional interest in guidance issues and help create a virtual guidance community.

National Guidance Policy Forum

In 2004, the UK-wide Guidance Council led a bid by six member-states to secure EU funding over a two-year period to establish and promote the development of National Guidance Policy Forums (NGPF) in each country. Consultations have taken place with policy-makers from each of the UK home countries and other stakeholders on potential arrangements that could enable collaboration on issues of mutual concern. Planning is under way for an International Symposium on Public Policy and Career Development to be held in Scotland in 2007.

Sector Skills Councils

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are employer-led, independent organisations that bring together employers in their sectors, learning providers, trade unions and professional bodies. They cover the main sectors across the UK, currently accounting for approximately 85 per cent of the UK workforce. Their key goals are to reduce skills gaps and shortages, improve productivity, and increase opportunities for work and training. All SSCs are licensed by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, in consultation with Ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Skillset, the SSC for the audio-visual industries, is currently leading on a project funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) that aims to bring industry and information, advice and guidance services closer together. The first part of this initiative requires that SSCs determine how information, advice and guidance support their sectors' skills priorities. Second, they will work collaboratively to ensure that relevant LMI is disseminated effectively to the guidance community. Third, they will offer ongoing support to career practitioners using LMI to offer an enhanced service to clients. In order that the second objective is met, the existing LMI for careers practitioners on the National Guidance Research Forum (NGRF) website will be audited on a sector-by-sector basis; LMI will then be collected and published to fill the gaps identified. To meet the third objective, continuous professional development will be offered to practitioners from the guidance community: this will comprise a series of regional workshops to assist with the interpretation and application of LMI during guidance sessions with clients; the workshop template will also be made available to advisers online, thus reaching a wider audience. Throughout the project¹³, each SSC will upload additional and more detailed

13 For more information about the SSC's IAG project, contact Ann Mason, Project Manager (e-mail: anm@skillset.org).

occupational information on to their websites. In addition, they will plan and deliver their own information, advice and guidance services to complement local and national provision, by offering a further point of contact for clients requiring more in-depth, specialist information on particular industries. Links can also be made with existing regional initiatives and related European developments.

Overall, this initiative will ensure that career practitioners in publicly-funded careers agencies will be supported in their work by providing easy access to the most authoritative source of industry LMI on the NGRF website and providing a training framework that will eventually be used by other SSCs across the Skills for Business Network.

Regional Skills Partnerships

Since 2003, the first Skills Strategy White Paper announced the creation of Regional Skills Partnerships for England as a means of ensuring that businesses and skills organisations work together to equip regional workforces with the skills required to meet the needs of regional economies. The partnerships include representation from the Regional Development Agencies, the Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus, Small Business Service, Business Link, sector networks such as Sector Skills Productivity Alliances, higher education institutions and other partners.

Lifelong Learning Partnerships

A network of over a hundred Learning Partnerships¹⁴ was set up across the UK in 1999 to promote a new culture of provider collaboration across sectors (schools, FE, work-based learning and adult and community learning) and to rationalise the plethora of existing local partnership arrangements covering post-16 learning. They are non-statutory, voluntary groupings of local learning providers (ranging from the voluntary sector to further and higher education institutions) and others such as local government, Connexions, Careers Services, trade unions, employers and faith groups. In 2003, the National Learning Partnership Network (NLPN) was established to promote, at a national level, the local and regional role of learning partnership in future development, implementation and achievement of national initiatives to support lifelong learning.

National Resources Service

A National Resources Service (NRS) was established in 2004, allied to the announcement of a more integrated and effective IAG service for adults in England in the first DfES Strategy Skills White Paper referred to earlier. The NRS provides tools, guides, diagnostics and databases to the national and local IAG service community. Its website contains basic information, links to existing resources and an email enquiry service (see www.advice-resources.co.uk). Amongst other NRS products is the Learning Directory, a national database containing information on over 950,000 courses from more than 7,000 providers in the UK and linked to by around 100 different web interfaces.

14 <http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/>

National Guidance Research Forum

The National Guidance Research Forum (NGRF) website¹⁵ was launched in 2004 as a forum for supporting dialogue between practitioners, researchers and policy-makers, and for the creation and dissemination of information and ideas across the guidance community. The content of the site includes labour market information, effective guidance modules and a research database linked with the National Library Resource for Guidance (NLRG) managed by the Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby. With support from DfES, the NGRF was developed by an interdisciplinary team of researchers from the Universities of Warwick and Derby, together with the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC), Cambridge. In addition, a National Guidance Research Forum strategic group was formed in 2004, led by the UK Guidance Council; the work of this aspect of the Forum has now been completed.

European Guidance and Counselling Forum¹⁶

The European Guidance and Counselling Forum (EGCRF) is being developed as a European 'sister site' to the NGRF by guidance practitioners, researchers and policy-makers in each of five current partner countries – UK, Denmark, Finland, Greece and Slovenia. This European development is being led by the Institute of Employment Research (IER), University of Warwick, with an initial focus upon equal-opportunity issues in lifelong guidance and learning (see **Appendix 1 Section 10** for further details).

15 The NGRF website is available at: <http://www.guidance-research.org>

16 The EGCRF pilot website is available at: <http://www.guidance-europe.org>

Appendix 1: Further detailed examples illustrating progress made across the UK

1. *Re-configuration of support services for 13 to 19-year-olds in England*

In March 2006, the government published *Youth Matters: Next Steps*, its response to consultation on the earlier *Youth Matters* Green Paper. The document set out the government's plan for implementing the vision it had outlined in the Green Paper for making improvements to services for young people, and its commitment to empower young people to make choices and influence decisions about facilities and services locally.

Consultation on *Youth Matters* ended on 4 November 2005, with over 19,000 responses from young people – one of the largest responses to a government consultation from any group. About 1,000 responses were received from professionals, parents and organisations. In addition, the government collected views through consultation with 'hard to reach' young people and their parents, and through regional events involving local partners.

The government wants to see all young people achieving the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes, with Children's Trusts at the heart of their services.

Chief executives and directors of children's services in local authorities have already received a letter from the Minister of State for Children and Families about funds of £115m being made available to make this vision a reality. This will mean that, over the next two years, around £500,000 will be available in an average local authority, and £2m in the very largest authorities. Guidance for delivery of the Youth Opportunity Fund and the Youth Capital Fund has also been published. In addition, a Youth Opportunity Card will be piloted in 10 areas over the next two years.

Information, advice and guidance services for young people will be more flexible and easier to access. For those young people experiencing difficulties, there will be better-targeted support, co-ordinated by a lead professional. This is currently being piloted in 14 pathfinder local authority areas.

Subject to parliamentary approval, a new duty on local authorities will ensure that young people have access to a wide range of positive activities. There will be a strong local offer of places to go and things to do, in the context of national standards.

Youth Matters: Next Steps forms part of the government's wider youth offer, which includes more support for families, more youth-friendly, accessible health services and greater access to sports, culture and the arts.

2. *Development of a differentiated service delivery framework for Scotland*

In 2003, Careers Scotland began to implement a differentiated service delivery framework based upon the work of Professor James P. Sampson and his colleagues at Florida State University. This model was further developed by Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions, supported by the Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby. The theoretical base of the model applies cognitive information processing (CIP) theory to the process of career problem solving and decision-making.

The key elements of the CIP model in practice include:

- Screening for career decision making readiness.
- Matching levels of service to individual needs.
- Using career theory to help individuals manage their career planning.
- Using career resources that are appropriate for individuals.
- Using staff teamwork in delivering services to individuals.
- Provision of common staff training for delivering resources and services.

In essence, the service delivery framework aspires to the *right* level of support being offered to the *right* person at the *right* time.

It was agreed to pilot a service delivery framework model in 25 secondary schools and 12 Careers Scotland centres from January to August 2003, with an evaluation to inform a future rollout to further schools and centres during 2004. The evaluation activities were varied – questionnaires, focus groups, desktop research, photographs – with the bulk focussed on staff who were delivering the model and customers on the ‘receiving end’. A generally positive picture across the country emerged from the evaluation and many examples of good practice have been identified.

3. *Development of a differentiated service delivery framework for Northern Ireland*

In 2006, Professor James P. Sampson introduced a new Enhancing Careers Service Project (ECSP) working closely with staff from the Northern Ireland Careers Service in the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). The ECSP is currently piloting a new service-delivery framework in 4 pilot centres. Simultaneously, the careers service has invested in developing an evidence-based framework to support and inform its work with key policy-makers, practitioners and consumers DEL and the Department for Education recently held a Futuresearch consultation event designed to bring together policy-makers, managers, practitioners, researchers and young people to explore the potential for developing further an all-age careers education and guidance service. A joint Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy is currently being developed and should be issued for consultation in the late autumn.

4. *The new learndirect telephone guidance pilot*

In January 2006, learndirect extended its existing telephone helpline service to deliver personal guidance aimed at adults requiring a level 3 qualification or those returning to work following a career break. This new service is being run on a trial basis and aims to offer action-planning guidance to 70,000 adults provide during the 18-month trial period.

The new telephone service is being delivered according to a three-stage model with advisers moving callers through the following stages as and when required by the caller:

- Exploration/action planning.
- Support and review.
- Motivation and exit.

The average time spent with the caller over the telephone is expected to be approximately 60 minutes in total. However, it is expected that callers will spend additional time between calls on action planning, and other related personal work, with email or the postal service providing a means

of sharing the action plans developed. The launch of the new service was supported by a multi-million pound national advertising campaign including prime-time 30-second television advertisements that stressed the role of guidance in identifying career routes to personal advancement and fulfilment.

The trial will be evaluated to test the effectiveness and appropriateness of the telephone medium in delivering personalised guidance services, and independent contractors will assess the quality of the guidance offered. All telephone calls made throughout the trial are being recorded digitally, together with screen shots of the advisers' desk-top PCs, and this information will be a key input to the evaluation. The results of the trial will inform the outcomes of the current review of IAG arrangements for adults in England.

5. *All-age careers website for Wales*

The on-line careers service for Wales, run by Careers Wales, has been highly praised in a recent inspection report from Estyn, the body responsible for the inspection of education and training in Wales.

Careers Wales Online provides interactive careers information and advice for all ages, with sections for employees, professionals, adults, and clients up to the age of 19. The inspection service was especially impressed with the innovative nature of the site, in particular the CV wizard, the variety of informative videos, the interactive exercises and the Learning Choices database for learning and work opportunities.

Careers Wales Online is available at: <http://www.careerswales.com/>

The full Estyn inspection report on Careers Wales Online can be downloaded at: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/reports/estyn-careers-wales?lang=en>

6. *Development of an evidence-based quality-assurance framework in Scotland*

Careers Scotland is accredited against Charter Mark, and has adapted the European Foundation Quality Management (EFQM) model to support its Quality Assurance Strategy based upon a commitment to continuous improvement and a focus on results in terms of meeting the needs of customers and stakeholders. It has also utilised the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation to provide a focus upon 'results' in term of four levels of customer impact: (a) satisfaction; (b) learning; (c) behaviour; and (d) longer-term results.

Careers Scotland has published a series of quality standards and impact measures. Its document *Quality Standards, Impact Measures and Evidence of Standards Being Met* sets out a series of quality standards and provides examples of the type of evidence, including customer impact, that would be required to demonstrate that these standards are being met. The document indicates the standards of quality expected both at the individual staff level and at the organisational level to support individuals' career planning as they work towards forming and implementing well-informed and realistic career decisions.

Careers Scotland is currently building upon its quality-assurance framework by systematically applying it to each of its three operational priority areas: (i) investing in the workforce of the future – best start for all young people; (ii) reducing economic inactivity among young people – narrowing the gap; and (iii) improving productivity through personal career planning. Through this

process, Careers Scotland is: (a) mapping its quality standards and expected outcomes against each key area of operation; (b) identifying resource issues and 'gaps' that need to be filled; and (c) developing a range of case-studies and exemplars to support staff in developing their professional practice. Careers Scotland has produced its own bespoke continuous professional development programme to help embed key features of its organisational ethos and underpinning operating principles, including an emphasis upon quality assurance and evidence-based practice. One module specifically relates to reflective practice and is designed to encourage practitioners to reflect upon their experiences at work in order to improve their practice and make their work more fulfilling.

Careers Scotland has been very active in commissioning and/or undertaking a variety of evaluations of a wide range of key processes, initiatives and services. Up to early 2006, 25 substantial evaluations of Careers Scotland projects and services have taken place, resulting in the submission of written reports and recommendations to senior managers. Linked to this, an overall audit of evaluation activity within Careers Scotland has recently been carried out by the Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby.

Careers Scotland has established formal structures to review its products and services and provide an overview of continuous self-improvement processes.

7. *Development of an all-Wales impact evaluation framework and performance indicators and benchmarks*

In 2004/05, Quality Managers from all of the six Careers Wales companies designed, developed and successfully implemented an in-house impact assessment framework that involves the tracking of 1,000 adults three and six months following their guidance interviews. The findings of the impact survey demonstrated the positive impact of the Careers Wales adult guidance service, and provided material to support the companies' continuous improvement systems. The majority of respondents said that as a result of the guidance interview they were clearer about their career plans, had carried out actions to achieve their plans, and had experienced significant career-related life-changes where the guidance had been a main or contributing factor. Respondents also reported 'softer' outcomes from the guidance interview, reflecting the added value of guidance in terms of confidence, encouragement, sense of purpose, and greater focus.

It has been argued¹⁷ that the all-Wales impact evaluation, as an essentially in-house evaluation, is likely to have a greater and more direct impact in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of services than would more traditional external 'one-off' research projects carried out by external consultants. The involvement of the companies' quality managers ensured greater ownership of the process and that the results were fed back into mainstream quality-assurance processes. The evaluation was implemented at relatively low cost; it is therefore more likely to be developed and implemented further in the future and more likely to become established practice within Careers Wales quality-assurance and management-information processes. Although not a contractual requirement for 2006/07, it is likely that the Career Wales companies will adapt and apply the evaluation framework to suit their quality-assurance requirements in the future.

17 Reed, K., Mahony, K. & Gration, G. (2005). *Career Guidance for Adults in Wales - Making a Difference*. Derby: Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

Parallel to the development of their impact evaluation framework, Careers Wales also began working with the Welsh Assembly Government on the development of key performance indicators (PIs) and possible benchmarks for IAG services across the whole of Wales. The findings from the all-Wales guidance evaluation have been forwarded to the National Assembly to help inform the work on the development of performance indicators and benchmarks. It has been agreed that the PIs to be piloted in 2006/07 are:

- Percentage of clients sustaining a positive outcome.
- Percentage of CEG clients indicating that their Key Stage 4 guidance interview(s) helped to inform their decisions about career and learning choices.
- Percentage of adult clients where a guidance interview with a Careers Wales adviser helped to make a career or learning-related decision.
- Percentage of young people identified as having special educational needs, and involved in transitional planning, achieving an initial positive outcome.
- Percentage of Careers Wales Online users identifying it as helping to support their career and learning-related decisions.
- Percentage of post-16 Youth Gateway clients achieving an initial positive outcome.

It has been proposed that the first three of these PIs will be assessed against performance data collected by independent external agencies.

8. *Careers education and guidance in Scotland – Career Box and the Career Planning Journey*

Career Box is a flexible teaching and learning resource developed by Careers Scotland as part of its commitment to careers education and guidance in schools and colleges, and as part of the implementation of its strategic priority to contribute to 'providing the best start for all young people'. This is a national resource that offers teachers a suite of around 100 lessons to ensure a consistent, coherent approach to career education for children and young people aged 3-18 years. The resource provides a range of interactive games, quizzes, multiple-choice worksheets and lessons, with links to approved Careers Scotland and other partner websites. Career Box provides benefits for schools and teachers in helping to provide 'real-life' and relevant contexts for learning and in helping to link core skills to their future use.

Career Box can be made available as a series of CD-ROMs or it can be accessed on-line. Schools are given their own unique username and password; thereafter they can make use of a variety of lessons and activities which have been designed to fit with the existing curriculum. Career Box also offers a range of enhanced delivery methods. The CDs can be uploaded on to the school computer network, enabling young people to work on computer-based activities individually. Alternatively, content can be projected in presentation format for group work, or worksheets can be downloaded and printed if a more traditional route is preferred.

Careers Scotland is committed to ensuring that Career Box is dynamic and will grow and develop in line with changes to the curriculum. Career Box was developed to deliver the 4 learning outcomes of *Career Education in Scotland: A National Framework* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2001) and makes a significant contribution to the Scottish Executive's Determined to Succeed strategy. It also addresses the career education recommendations of HMIE quality indicators in Enterprise in Education.

The use of Career Box in schools and colleges is integrally linked to the Career Planning Journey – a model of career planning which creates a pathway for individuals to understand and plan their career journey ‘from engagement to employment’. Developed by Careers Scotland, the aim of the model is to enable individuals to make well-informed and realistic decisions about their future careers and to help them manage subsequent transitions. Emphasis is placed on helping an individual’s thinking and decision-making skills, awareness of self and opportunities, and preparation required for transition and development of insight into the world of work. Used in context with Career Box, the Career Planning Journey can encourage the development of self-managed skills in planning and learning, offering parallels with other self and peer-assessment initiatives – for example, personal learning planning, engaging young people in their own learning, and building skills through self-evaluation.

9. *End-to-end review of careers education and guidance in England*

In July 2005 the DfES undertook an ‘end-to-end review’ of publicly-funded careers education and guidance (CEG) for young people between 11 and 19, focusing on delivery by schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and the Connexions Service. The policies covered by this review are intended to meet the needs of nearly 5 million (from 2002/03 data) young people between 11 and 19 in England.

The review focused on the effectiveness of the delivery chain involved in meeting specific Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets and other high-level objectives, from Ministerial policy decisions to the provision of services to the intended beneficiaries. It reflected the four key themes in the government’s public sector reform programme: national standards; devolution and delegation; customer choice; and flexibility. It also addressed how effectively the government’s principles were being taken forward on equal opportunities, promotion of e-government and reduction in bureaucracy.

The report¹⁸ resulting from the review provides several recommendations which it hopes will contribute toward the vision that “young people by the age of 19 should have acquired the career development skills, work habits, knowledge and understanding to make mature informed decisions about employment and associated learning progression”. These recommendations include:

- asking Ofsted to review careers education as part of their inspection process;
- promoting existing ICT and improving direct access to advice; and
- encouraging schools to adopt a ‘whole school’ approach, incorporating CEG, student support and progression issues, starting in year 7.

The full report can be found at: <http://dev.cegnet.co.uk/resource/content/files/704.doc>

18 DfES (2005). *Report of the End to End Review of Careers Education and Guidance*. Nottingham: DfES.

10. *European Guidance and Counselling Research Forum (EGCRF) - building dialogue between research and practice across Europe*

The European Guidance and Counselling Research Forum (EGCRF) is a Leonardo-funded initiative to support the on-line collaboration of guidance practitioners, researchers and policy makers in each of the five partner countries – UK, Denmark, Finland, Greece and Slovenia. The Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick is leading on the project, with the Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby providing support through the National Library Resource for Guidance (NLRG).

The EGCRF is based on the process that led to the creation of the National Guidance Research Forum website in the UK. The NGRF site was developed through an innovative ongoing consultative process which involved extensive face-to-face and on-line participation by members of the communities the site is intended to serve. In each of the five partner countries, expert groups have been formed selected from the target groups for the website. These groups have met face-to-face to discuss issues of policy and practice related to equal opportunities and discussions have continued on-line. Content emerging from this dialogue is in the process of being translated into the languages of each partner, together with more extended commentaries in English, as part of the continuing process of new knowledge creation for the network. This will ensure the development and transfer of innovation in training and continuing professional development to the wider community of guidance and counselling practitioners through the use of ICT.

A pilot website was launched in January 2005 to support the project and provide a framework for the presentation of the content emerging from the dialogue between partners and within the expert groups. It is planned that a public version of the site will be launched in 2007, presenting summaries of the knowledge created to date and providing facilities for the continued dialogue and knowledge creation from the wider European guidance community.

The EGCRF and the NLRG are making use of the latest web-based technologies to support the retrieval, storage and sharing of knowledge. Particular use is being made of open-source social software (del.ici.ous) as a means of extending links between the community of users and of providing a user-friendly interface for the presentation of extensive source material. To find out more, visit the European Guidance and Counselling Research Forum pilot website at: <http://www.guidance-europe.org>

Appendix 2: Glossary of the key information, advice and guidance (IAG) providers in the UK

Careers Scotland: Careers Scotland provides free careers information, advice and guidance to the people of Scotland - whatever their age, background or circumstances. The service was established in April 2002 as part of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. There is a Careers Scotland Director within each enterprise network and some differences in management and delivery but both adhere to a common national brand and operate according to common strategic objectives contributing to the economic and social well being of Scotland.

Careers Wales: Careers Wales is the national brand for the all-age careers information, advice and guidance services funded by the National Assembly for Wales. Established on 1 April 2001, it combines the strengths and best practices of the six Careers Companies working in Wales. Careers Wales works with young people from the age of 11 (and some primary-school work in Education Business Activities) upwards, and with adults, to provide them with the information, advice and guidance to help achieve their career development goals.

Connexions: Connexions is the UK government's support service for all young people aged 13 to 19 in England. It aims to provide integrated advice, guidance and access to personal development opportunities for this group and to help them make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life. Connexions is being delivered through local partnerships covering the same geographical areas as the Learning and Skills Councils (LSC).

EGSA (Educational Guidance Service for Adults): Based in Northern Ireland, EGSA is a major independent provider of IAG services for adults on learning and work. EGSA also offers a unique blend of skilled advice, a comprehensive information base, extensive experience, insight and local knowledge to organisations interested in learning and development solutions to motivate and maximise the talents and capabilities of their staff. EGSA is recognised as an 'Investor in People' organisation and is accredited to the matrix quality standard.

Employment Service of Northern Ireland: The Employment Service of Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). The service is delivered within the context of the Jobs and Benefits initiative designed to co-locate local employment and benefits services within single sites across Northern Ireland by March 2006. Although a separately administered initiative with its own policy objectives and performance targets, Jobs and Benefits is the Northern Ireland equivalent of Jobcentre Plus in England, Scotland and Wales.

Further Education Student Support Services: The provision of student support services, including career guidance, is well-established in UK further education institutions offering mainly sub-degree courses to students post-16. Typically, the support is managed through specialised student services 'units' whose staff will often include qualified careers advisers and/or student counsellors. The services have their own professional association – the National Association of Managers of Student Services (NAMSS).

Higher Education Careers Advisory Services: The provision of careers guidance for students in higher education is well-established in universities and degree-awarding colleges in the UK with, typically, specialised careers advisory 'units' staffed by qualified professional careers advisers. Reflecting its status and importance in higher education, the service has its own professional association – the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS). The

service is also supported by the Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU), which was established in 1972 to provide news and information about research and development in career-related learning and career guidance in higher education.

Jobcentre Plus: Jobcentre Plus was launched in April 2002, across England, Scotland and Wales, to bring together the Employment Service and parts of the Benefits Agency that delivered services to working-age people. Jobcentre Plus aims to help more people into work and employers to fill their vacancies, and to provide people of working age with the help and support to which they are entitled.

learnirect: learnirect operates a network of more than 2,000 online learning centres in England, Wales and Northern Ireland providing access to a range of e-learning opportunities. It also provides a national telephone helpline and website for adults wishing to access integrated information, advice and guidance on opportunities for learning and employment. Some differences apply across the three countries in terms of funding arrangements, performance targets, and quality assurance. Equivalent, but separate, arrangements apply in Scotland (see below).

learnirect Scotland: learnirect services are delivered by the Scottish University for Industry (SUfi). SUfi was established by the Scottish Executive as a private limited company in 2000. It became a non-departmental public body, responsible to Scottish Ministers, in April 2005, and retains its private limited company status. It provides a telephone helpline and website in Scotland for adults wishing to access integrated information, advice and guidance on opportunities for learning and employment.

nextstep: nextstep is the brand name for local face-to-face information and advice (IA) services funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). There is a nextstep service in each of the 47 local LSC areas in England; for each, a single main contractor is responsible for managing the delivery of IA services and targets through the co-ordination of a network of sub-contractors. These networks typically include: colleges of further education, voluntary and community organisations, and some trades unions and employers.

Northern Ireland Careers Service: The Northern Ireland Careers Service operates within the Department for Employment and Learning's Skills and Industry Division. It offers an all-age careers guidance service throughout the province. Its mission is "to assist economic and social development in Northern Ireland by improving the effectiveness of clients' career planning and decision-making skills" and "to ensure equality of service to young people and adults within an open and responsive, progressive and innovative culture". Careers advisers are based in Careers Offices, Job Centres, Jobs and Benefit Offices across Northern Ireland.