Career Research & Development

Careers Education in Schools and Colleges:
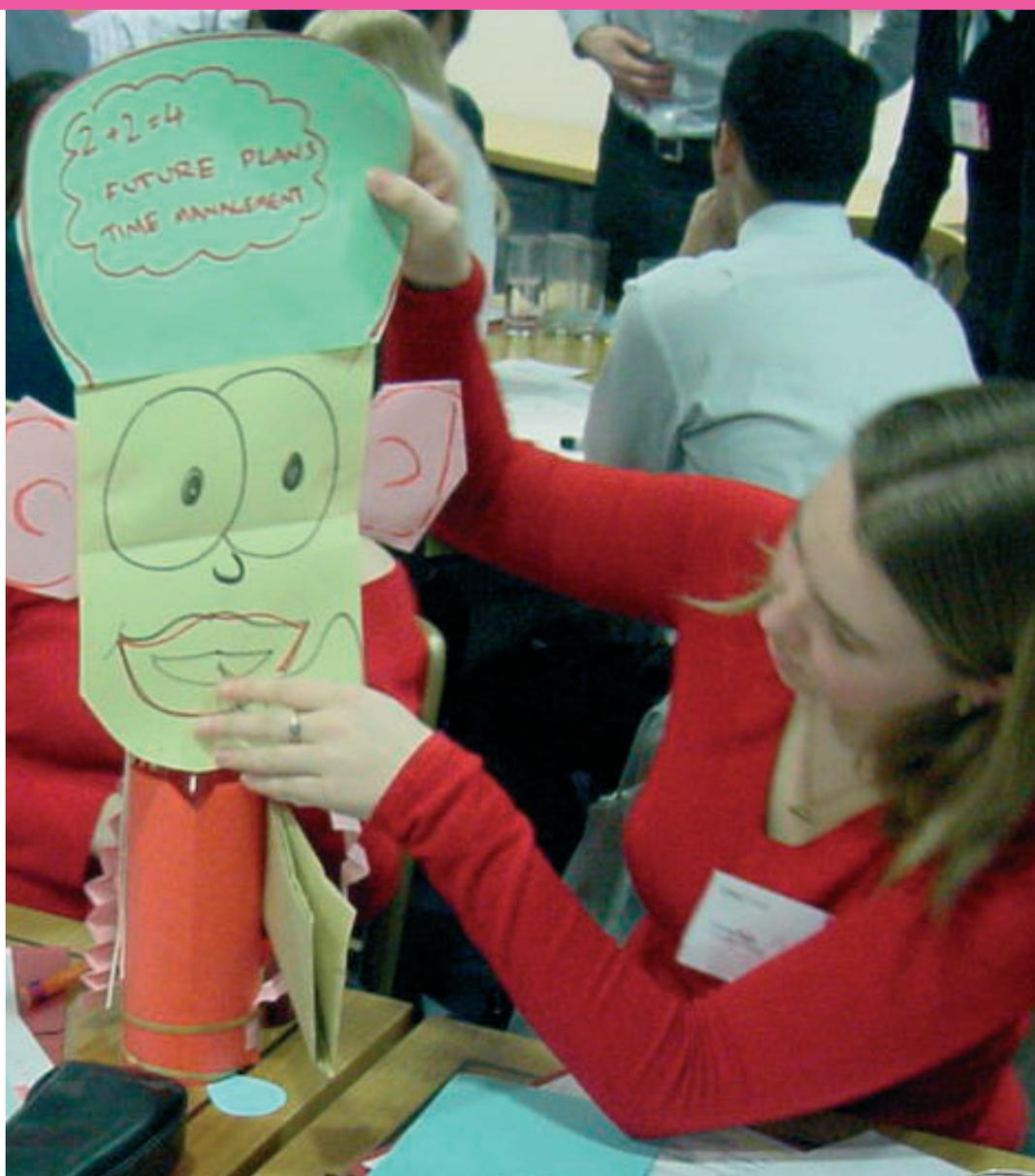forever clinging to the edge of the timetable

Signposter:
pointing the way to personalised information

Managing Career Learning:
RIP or what?

A Short History of Careers Education Policy in England

NICEC
National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling

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Contents

Guidelines for contributors
Contributions are welcomed. Main articles should normally be 1,000-3,000 words in length. They should be submitted to the editor by post or email at the above address. Taped contributions are welcomed.

Career Research and Development: the NICEC Journal is published by CRAC (Careers Research and Advisory Centre), an independent educational charity founded in 1964. CRAC aims to promote the importance of and encourage active career development and career-related learning for the benefit of individuals, the economy and society.

Aims and scope
Career Research and Development: the NICEC Journal is published for:
- Career practitioners working in schools, colleges, Connexions partnerships, higher education careers services, adult guidance agencies, companies, community organisations, etc.
- Trainers, lecturers, advisers and consultants working with career practitioners.
- Individuals working towards qualifications in career education, career guidance and career management.
- Government departments and business and community organisations with an interest in the work of career practitioners.

It sets out to:
- Promote evidence-based practice by making theory, policy and the results of research and development more accessible to career practitioners in their day-to-day work.
- Encourage discussion and debate of current issues in career research and development.
- Disseminate good practice.
- Support continuing professional development for career practitioners.
- Help practitioners to develop and manage career education and guidance provision in the organisations in which they work.

Editorial

Careers Education at the Crossroads

The broad theme of this issue of the journal is careers education and guidance (CEG) in secondary schools in England. Once again, we find ourselves at a crossroads as careers education prepares itself for yet another of its periodic metamorphoses. It remains to be seen whether careers education emerges stronger or weaker from this expected transformation. Of course, none of this matters unless you are a professional working in the field who feels that careers education is chronically undervalued.

Every Child Matters, the reform of Key Stage 3 and, above all, the 14-19 reforms will drive the transformation of careers education in the next few years; and what emerges could be better than what we had before. The nagging suspicion is that the underlying weakness and immaturity of the careers education field will resurface. Until there is a route in initial teacher training for careers teachers and a section in the curriculum division of the DfES that focuses on careers education, improvement will be hampered. In the opening article, David Andrews, NICEC Chair and Senior Fellow, shows how the position of careers education in secondary schools in England has fluctuated in line with changing political priorities in the curriculum from the 1970s to the present day. He poses some interesting questions about the choices that need to be made if careers education policy is to recover from its relatively weak position currently. The Government appears to have made the connection between the provision of good information, advice and guidance (IAG) and the effective implementation of its 14-19 reforms; but it seems not to recognise that effective career development learning (careers education) is part of that equation too. David Andrews suggests that employers involved in the development of specialised diplomas could, perhaps, exert their influence on the Government to raise the profile of CEG. He also hints at the need for civil servants in the Curriculum Division of the DfES to oversee careers education policy – looking back, it is remarkable the difference that capable and pro-active civil servants made to the development and importance of careers education in 1987-8, 1994-7 and 2001-3. The pattern seems to be that we re-launch careers education policy every seven years. That could make 2008 a very interesting year!

Bill Law adds weight to the maxim 'What do they know of CEG that only CEG know'! He uses his deep understanding of psychology, sociology and cultural theory to argue the need for more radical curriculum structures and learning processes. He believes that careers education will flourish when it is pulled more into the centre of the curriculum. He too is drawing attention to the relatively weak position of careers education in the curriculum as it clings to the edge of the timetable. Inadequate inputs and weak curriculum structures have eroded the careers education base so that it focuses almost entirely on 'procedural knowledge' (i.e. how to do a CV, complete the paperwork for work experience and fill out a college/UCAS form). There is no time for more challenging goals related to boosting the self-esteem of young people, helping them to make sense of their own story and life roles, clarifying their work values, improving self-efficacy and decision-making, exploring the world of work and preparing for lifelong career development. Bill argues that only a more ambitious 'life role relevant' curriculum can make a real difference to young people's lives.

Many of the issues raised by David Andrews and Bill Law are taken up by Barbara McGowan in her account of a fifteen-month career-development project in the London Borough of Islington. She presents the RIP framework which she developed to help the schools focus on what it is that they were managing and how to manage it better. It is a beguilingly simple but effective matrix of nine elements that need to be considered in planning, delivering and evaluating careers education provision. Bill Law commented that progress moves in the direction of complexity. The RIP model can accommodate increasing complexity and make it seem more manageable. Both Barbara and Bill are holding out hopes that the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) will reflect some of this new thinking about careers education in developing their current proposals for curriculum reform. Bill Law's exploration of the impact of cultural change on the way we need to approach careers education now is reflected in Leigh Henderson's and Brian Stevens's article about the development of the Signposter Programme. The development of online services for young people such as Connexions Direct, 'the site' and 'b-live' are changing the way that young people get help for themselves. The development of e-portfolios is also changing the way that young people plan, record and present the evidence of their personal career development. The Signposter Programme is one example of a commercial enterprise to provide an e-portfolio and information service on lifestyle choices, learning and employment opportunities for 14-year-olds upwards.

NICEC News

Projects

Tony Watts is the Lead Expert, working with Ronald Sultana, on a European Training Foundation project on career guidance policies in the MEDA region (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and Western Bank and Gaza Strip). The project extends to the Middle East the policy review methodology used in previous OECD, World Bank and EU studies. It includes national reports, three expert visits – to Egypt (Tony Watts), Jordan (Chris Evans) and Tunisia (Ronald Sultana) – and other elements. It is to be completed by November 2006.

New fellows

We welcome Judy Alloway and Allister McGowan as new fellows. Judy has extensive experience of guidance in the adult sector and FE and was chair of the Guidance Council. Allister is a past president of the Institute of Career Guidance and was chief executive of VT Careers Management.

'At the Cutting Edge'

NICEC regrets that the conference announced in the last issue of the NICEC Journal has had to be postponed.

Decisions at 18: From Admissions to Decisions
University of Warwick, 3-4 April 2007

Formerly known as 'Admissions to Higher Education', CRAC's flagship conference has traditionally provided a wealth of up-to-date and timely information to careers, admissions and guidance professionals at all levels since 1964. Decisions at 18 will continue to disseminate valuable information on the topic of entry to HE. Additionally, it will build on the theme and include workshops on the broader field of school and college leaver careers options, and will provide an independent, professional forum for careers practitioners to engage in constructive discussion and effective knowledge transfer.

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Lyn Barham
Anthony Barnes
Ruth Hawthorn (Deputy Chair)
Dr Charles Jackson
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Dr Peter Plant
John McCarthy
Professor James P Sampson Jr
Professor Ronald Sultana

NICEC Office
Julia Jones

# A Short History of Careers Education Policy in England

David Andrews

I have called this article a short history of careers education policy in England because careers education itself has not featured in school curricula in England for very long and has only been subject to policy attention in recent years. After a brief overview of the early years I will review the policy context for careers education over the past two decades and then discuss current issues and questions for the future.

Careers education: the early years

Careers education lessons did not appear on school timetables until the 1960s. This is not to say that schools had not previously taught some of the topics now covered in careers education, particularly transition skills such as making applications and preparing for interviews, but these were often covered in other lessons such as English. As schools began to develop programmes of careers education, sources of support to careers teachers started to emerge, for example the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) in 1964 and, in 1969, the National Association of Careers Teachers (NACT), later to become the National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers (NACGT) and now the Association for Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG). Courses run by HM Inspectorate also played an important role.

The 1970s saw considerable growth of careers education, particularly following the publication in 1977 of Bill Law's and Tony Watts's book *Schools, Careers and Community* (Law and Watts, 1977), which identified four elements of careers education: self awareness; opportunity awareness; decision learning; and transition learning (to become known as 'DOTS'). This was one of the first publications to come out of the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) which was founded, as a partnership between CRAC and the then Hatfield Polytechnic, in 1975. Teachers were appointed to the position of head of careers and the new local authority careers services, set up in 1973, began to offer training courses for careers teachers. One of the earliest examples of support from Government was the development in 1973 of the Careers Library Classification Index, as a joint enterprise between CRAC and the Government-funded Careers and Occupational Information Centre (COIC). Later in the 1970s the government funded a major careers education and guidance development project through the Schools Council.
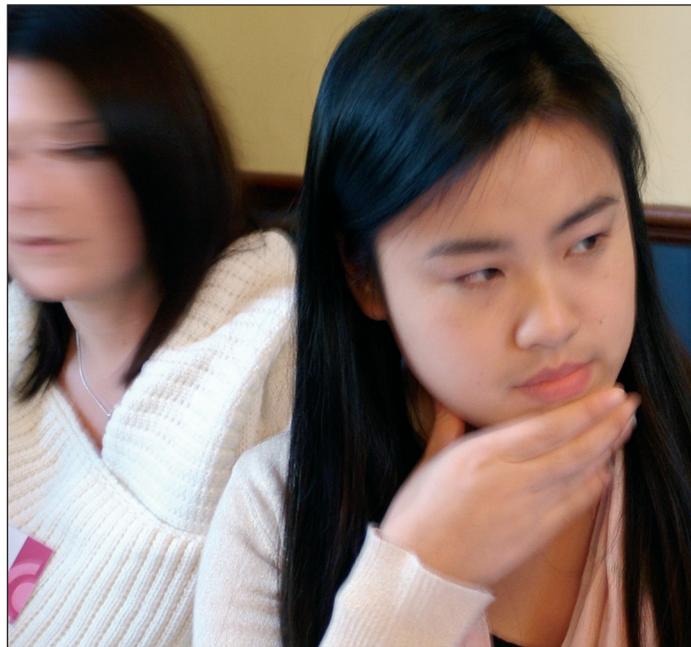
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The 1980s: vocationalising the curriculum

Developments in careers education continued into the 1980s and were given a significant boost through the Government's major curriculum initiative of that decade, the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI). Interestingly this curriculum development programme did not come from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) but from the Employment Department (ED). In its pilot phase (1983-88) the focus was initially on developing technical and vocational options for targeted groups of pupils within secondary schools but by the time the programme was extended across the country the focus shifted to making the 14-18 curriculum more vocationally relevant for all pupils. It was in this extension phase, which ran from 1987 to 1997 that careers education and related aspects of schools' work, notably work experience and recording achievement, received considerable support. The initiative was managed by local education authorities (LEAs) and was generously funded. Schools, working in consortia, had access to money and support for curriculum development and in-service training in return for developing their curricula in response to the priorities of TVEI and one of these priorities was careers education and guidance (CEG). From the mid-1980s there was a substantial growth in the number of LEAs appointing advisers and advisory teachers specifically to support CEG, and these staff worked in partnership with development managers in the careers services.

Starting in the mid-1980s Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) published a series of discussion documents on the 5-16 curriculum, under the general title *Curriculum Matters*. The second in the series (DES/HMI, 1985) stated that "careers education needs to be timetabled in the later years of secondary education" and a similar view was stated in the Government's White Paper *Better Schools* (DES, 1985). In 1988 HMI published a further discussion document specifically on careers education (DES/HMI, 1988), which re-stated the importance of careers education in the curriculum and drew heavily on the DOTS model when defining its aims.

Probably the clearest statement about careers education from Government in the 1980s appeared in Working Together for a Better Future (DES, ED, Welsh Office, 1987).

"Where then does careers education, information and guidance come into all of this? The answer is – or should be – right at the centre. Different schools organise careers education and guidance differently. No single model is best. But clear and effective arrangements are essential."

This document was published in April 1987. Three months later the DES published a consultation document on The National Curriculum 5-16 (DES/Welsh Office, 1987) and this included no mention of careers education. A decade that had brought a lot of support ended with the position of careers education looking precarious.

The 1990s: securing a place in the national curriculum

The 1990s were dominated by firstly the introduction of the national curriculum in England and then the subsequent reviews of the requirements. In 1990 the National Curriculum Council (NCC) published curriculum guidance on careers education and guidance as one of five cross-curricular themes (NCC, 1990). While the guidelines offered support for careers education, careers teachers and curriculum managers struggled to see how the suggested activities could be accommodated within the schemes of work for the core and other foundation subjects, or within the limited time available beyond a heavily prescribed national curriculum. By the middle of the decade, however, the situation had begun to improve. Firstly, there was some relaxation of the statutory requirements, both in terms of the number of compulsory subjects at key stage 4 and in the level of detail of what had to be covered in each subject. Secondly, further guidance was published: in 1995 the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) published *Looking Forward* (SCAA, 1995) and then in 1999 the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) published *Learning Outcomes from Careers Education and Guidance* (QCA, 1999). Thirdly, the Government provided dedicated funding for the in-service training of careers teachers, through both the Grant for Education Support

and Training (GEST) which ran from 1995 to 1998 and the Careers Service INSET budget which started in 1995 and continued until the initial years of the Connexions service.

The decade ended on a high note when, through the Education Act 1997, the Government, influenced by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and arguments focused on the economic benefits of CEG, introduced legislation to make careers education, for the first time in England, part of the compulsory curriculum. From September 1998 schools had a statutory duty to provide planned programmes of careers education in Years 9, 10 and 11, i.e. the final three years of compulsory schooling. In one sense this was a major achievement, as ten years previously there had been no reference to careers education in the proposed national curriculum but, in another sense, careers education was still in a relatively weak position. It was part of the statutory curriculum but only in three years and outside the national curriculum, without a prescribed programme of study. During various reviews of the national curriculum, the careers professional associations campaigned for a programme of study but only succeeded in having some references to careers education included in the non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education (PSHE).

The 21st century: mid-term review

The dawn of the new millennium ushered in further policy support for careers education. In 2001 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) established the national Careers Education Support Programme, which continues to the present day, and took the decision to publish a national framework of recommended learning outcomes for CEG. The national framework (DfES, 2003) still uses the DOTS model as the structural basis for the framework of recommended learning outcomes, although the model has been updated to promote a more active and participative approach to career planning on the part of the learner, a change first introduced in *Looking Forward* and continued in the later guidelines from QCA. Thus self awareness becomes self development, opportunity awareness becomes career exploration, and decision learning and transition learning have been combined into career management.

The CEG framework broke new ground in that it was the first, and still the only, curriculum guidance to extend beyond the statutory years of schooling to age 19. The policy intention was that it should apply not only in school sixth forms but also to 16-19 year learners in colleges and in work-based training. At the same time the statutory requirements on schools to provide careers education in the curriculum were extended, with effect from September 2004, to include Years 7 and 8. It seems likely that these developments were made easier to introduce because policy responsibility for careers education was located in a division of the DfES that was separate from the division that had policy responsibility for all other aspects of the

school curriculum. This was a legacy from earlier times when responsibility for the whole curriculum, except careers education, was located in the DES while responsibility for careers education was located in the Employment Department (ED), within the division responsible for the Careers Service. In the middle of the 1990s, when the then Department for Education (DfE) was merged with the ED to form the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), policy responsibility for careers education remained in a separate division though links were established with the Curriculum Division. When the DfEE was later split into the DfES and the Department of Work and Pensions, responsibility for careers education remained within the DfES but still in a separate division.

Although the publication of the national framework and the extension to the statutory duty on schools strengthened the policy position of careers education in the curriculum, the position of careers education in practice was often still relatively weak, partly because it lacked the status of being a national curriculum subject and partly because it had to compete for curriculum time with new requirements such as the need to accommodate the new national curriculum subject, citizenship, and the requirement to provide work-related learning for all pupils in key stage 4. Further, having benefited from the policy lead being located separately from responsibility for the rest of curriculum policy, some of the disadvantages of this arrangement were beginning to become evident. For example, careers education was often omitted from lists of statutory requirements in government publication on the school curriculum.

By 2004 the Government itself had come to question the position of CEG and the DfES set up an 'end-to-end review' of CEG. The review, published in 2005 (DfES, 2005a), found that there was a problem over the priority given to careers education in schools, colleges and work-based training and included the conclusion that:

"the greatest potential for improving CEG delivery lies in driving up the quality and relevance of careers education in schools;"

The Green Paper that followed the review *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005b) was mainly concerned about new arrangements for the provision of information, advice and guidance services for young people, but included the statement that:

"Our vision is... all young people should have access to personal development learning, delivered through the curriculum, covering careers education…"

Following several months' consultation the DfES published a policy document (DfES, 2006) which regrettably included no reference to careers education and nothing about how the vision proposed in the Green Paper was to be achieved in practice.

In the meantime, QCA began to review the position of all those elements of the curriculum focused on personal development learning, including careers education, with a view to supporting more integrated approaches to these inter-related areas of the curriculum. At the time of writing, one proposal that is being considered is to merge the careers education framework with the framework for work-related learning and enterprise, into a single strand of economic well-being.

Careers education: present and future

Having reviewed the past, where are we now? Careers education is part of the statutory curriculum from age 11 to age 16, outside the national curriculum, with a non-statutory framework 11-19. It is supported by a national support programme, linked to local support provided mainly through Connexions partnerships, careers companies and, to a lesser extent, LEAs. Its position in the school curriculum remains relatively weak however and there is no evidence of a national strategy to implement the vision put forward in *Youth Matters.*

One other policy development needs to be considered for its possible impact on careers education. The replacement of management allowances for teachers with Teaching and Learning Responsibilities is leading to an increase in the number of individuals from professional backgrounds other than teaching being appointed to the role of careers co-ordinator in schools. While this arrangement has several advantages, 'non-teachers' find the tasks associated with curriculum leadership for careers education challenging (Andrews, 2005). It remains open to question whether having a careers co-ordinator with more time to devote to planning and managing careers education will lead to an improvement in careers education or whether their lack of experience of curriculum planning will lead to a lowering of quality.

Questions for the future include:

- Should careers education be given the status of a national curriculum subject, with a statutory programme of study?

- Should careers education become part of something larger such as economic well-being or personal development learning, and, if so, should it be merged with work-related learning and/or personal, social and health education (PSHE)?

- Should policy responsibility for careers education be re-located to the Curriculum Division with the DfES?

- Should a national strategy for improving careers education be developed and implemented?

One thing is certain: we cannot allow the position to remain the same as it is now. Despite being part of the statutory curriculum, careers education is still in a relatively weak position in the school curriculum. It is often

forgotten: for example, we have national CPD certificates for teaching citizenship and PSHE, but no equivalent professional development opportunity for CEG. I suspect, however, that for change to be brought about, stakeholders other than educationalists will have to promote the need for improvement. Ten years ago the legislation to strengthen the position of careers education came about partly because of pressure from employers and the world of business. One policy initiative that has a high priority within the DfES at the moment is the introduction of specialised diplomas. These require employer engagement. Young people will also need high quality CEG when making choices about these new pathways. Perhaps now is the time to re-engage employers in the debate about the benefits of careers education.

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Careers Education in Schools and Colleges: forever clinging to the edge of the timetable?

Bill Law

Bill argues that we should put a hold on our habitual defence of careers education. He wants to take another look, but from a point of view outside of careers education and guidance. Looking outside, at what is happening in our communities, suggests useful ways of understanding how young men and women make up their minds about what they will do in their lives.

It also suggests useful ideas about what we can best do to help them.

The issues for careers education raised here concern:

- changes we now face;
- emerging cultures;
- working with cultural realities;
- the help that is now needed;
- the implications for curriculum.

These concerns lead to new proposals to the QCA for how careers education should now be organised. The proposals are headed 'LiRRiC – life role relevance in curriculum'. They carry a hope that we need not forever cling to the edge of the timetable.

An article in an earlier edition of the *Journal* (Law, 2005a) argues that the cultural impact of globalisation and its technologies is at least as important to careers work as their economic impact. The government white paper *Youth Matters* makes cultural change a starting point:

"The internet, mobile phones, digital TV and games consoles have transformed the way young people use their leisure time. Texting and chat rooms are for many an essential means of communication. The web is today's newspaper, gossip column and encyclopaedia all rolled into one" (para 44).

There's nothing surprising about talking of the future in terms of new information technologies. But *Youth Matters* inverts habitual thinking: its story does not start with how the technologies can serve careers work, it speaks of how they are already changing the lives of young men and women. The impact is cultural – changing the way people learn, and how they influence each other. And we are barely beyond the beginning of that trend.

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We should not underestimate it. If people are changing the ways they learn, then we must think again about how we help.

Changes we now face

The general shape and structure of the trend is not in dispute:

- There is a massive expansion in how people find out what they need to know – including information and impressions of working life.
- That access itself develops self-propelled ways in which people make up their own minds about what they will do.
- And the resulting networks are colonised by groups seeking to influence what people do – urging a multiplying range of social, ethnic and commercial allegiances.

And so <google>, <wikipedia> and <myspace> are not just tools; iPod, camera-phone and game-box are not just toys; *East Enders*, *Big Brother* and gossip are not just pastimes. They frame beliefs, values and expectations, and that is a culture – carrying messages about 'who we are', and 'who can be allowed to have a say in our lives'.

There is little dispute about the facts; but different commentators point to different features. Some complain about what the trends mean for what young people do and don't do – about work, on politics and in social-and-leisure life. But philosopher Stephen Law (2006) points to what the trends are doing to young people: he characterises the situation as a 'war for children's minds'. It runs psychologically deeper than we have yet fully appreciated. Neuroscientist Susan Greenfield looks inwards – towards the impact on thinking of...

"...sounds and sights of a fast-paced, fast-moving, multimedia presentation displacing any time for reflection."

Policy commentator David Goodhart (2006) looks outwards – pointing to how a multiplicity of influences moves people away from a shared citizenship towards detached individualism, in limited group alliances.

"A sense of national purpose has been replaced by the idea of individual self-actualisation – or by a narrower group identity" (pp.32-33).

Careers education and guidance has been quick to respond to the economic impact of globalisation. But we are here looking at a second-wave cultural impact. Cultural beliefs, values and expectations influence what people do. We have been ready to adjust to changing economy; I find it hard to see how we can reasonably ignore cultural change.

Cultures of flexibility, tentativeness, and distrust

We need better to understand the interweaving elements here. There is no single and uniform transformation. There is variety and variability – working out differently in different neighbourhoods and with different groups. All are relevant to careers education.

Global trends need new technologies. And there is increased informal use of the net (Vernon, 2005). But these trends are not wholly technology driven: the experience of friendship is changing (Pahl, 2000); the significance of gossip grows (Dunbar, 2004); and the demand for respect is increasingly insistent (Sennett, 2003).

Social observer Nick Barham (2004) reports the interaction with technology. He speaks of flexibility and tentativeness in how young people use texting and blogging to assemble accounts of what is going on:

"Kids have several virtual personalities... passports to different behaviours. The fluidity is expressed by two favourite phrases:.. "like" and "sort of". They acknowledge the impossibility of knowing anything completely, or of getting any closer than an approximation. Everything is metaphor. Nothing is real" (pp.206 & 288-9).

Literary academic Terry Eagleton locates all of this in an historical perspective. His account of the changing ways in which people think and talk, leads (rather grumpily) to a contrast between traditional and emerging cultures. He sees flexibility and tentativeness as...

"...centre-less, hedonistic, self-inventing, ceaselessly adaptive – which fares splendidly in the disco and supermarket, though not quite so well in the school, courtroom or chapel" (p.190).

Sociologist Frank Furedi adds a further theme – a pervasive scepticism. People want knowledge on their own terms.

"Today the very possibility of knowing has been called into question by people who claim that the world has become too complex to understand... The sense of powerlessness with which change is perceived has weakened people's belief in the possibility of knowing what lies ahead" (pp.54-59).

Sociologist Anthony Giddens (1994) links all of this to contemporary anxiety. He interprets what is happening as the development of self-propelled strategy for dealing with risk – a rejection of dependence in favour of...

"..an inner confidence which comes from self respect... in a constant flow of experience" (p.192).

Maybe. But there are deeper historical roots. The eighteenth-century enlightenment was a rejection of arbitrary authority – in its day of crown and mitre. Theologian Jonathan Sacks (1997) regrets its undermining of tradition. Stephen Law (2006) asserts its valuing of independent thought.

There is, of course, change associated with globalisation. It actually reaches us in three waves: economic, cultural and environmental. All have, and will, change the way people think about work. The full extent of its flows and vortices deserve a deeper research effort than it has yet attracted from our field.

Sociologist Zymunt Bauman rates his reputation for being able to characterise the impact. He uses the term 'liquid modernity" (2000): a shift of focus from production to consumption (p.151); a drive for instant gratification (pp.155ff); and a loss of confidence in traditional authority (pp.165ff) – all stemming from a sense of the precariousness of experience (pp.160ff).

Advertising copy writers (who are also smart people) may have located and plumbed these dynamics better than some academics. Advertising is a cultural document (and useful to alert careers educators). It would expose a fatal flaw if commerce were shown better to understand our students than we do.

Philosopher Onora O'Neill points to what she takes to be the central issue. Her Reith Lecture (2002) speaks of a 'crisis of trust'...

"New information technologies are ideal for spreading reliable information, but they dislocate our ordinary ways of judging one another's claims and deciding where to place our trust."

Economist, cultural commentator, political economist, literary theorist, philosopher, sociologist, theologian and advertising executive agree: there has been an erosion of deference. It is a trend with some momentum and is probably irreversible. We now live in a world where élites are subject to sceptical scrutiny – whether politicos, traders, journos, medics or boffins. Their pronouncements invite suspicion.

Are teachers on that list? Actually young people may never have thought of school-learning as likely to be useful in their lives. But – with other sources to draw on, other people to heed, and other ways of acting on what they say – claims to exclusive authority will not go down at all well.

Working with the cultural realities

What to do? Onora O'Neill urges tighter standards for professional information providers – she is thinking of politicians and journalists. She looks outward for a strengthening of professional behaviour; but Susan Greenfield looks inward. She points to the need for people to have time and space to...

"...pose appropriate and meaningful questions."

Careers work is involved in that outward-inward issue. The outward strategy broadly corresponds with what is urged for careers work: tighter standards, for example to ensure impartiality. The inward strategy is the enlightenment strategy; it supports people in their struggle to sort things out for themselves.

The two do not exclude each other. Stephen Law is clear about this: enlightenment values do not pull back from the expert communication of facts – nor even the opinionated communication of beliefs, values and expectations. But they insist on people being free to subject all to independent scrutiny.

If we mean to go any distance down the questioning path, we need an understanding of how people learn to question. In the recent past we have drawn ideas from sources pointing to the importance of 'emotional intelligence', 'instrumental enrichment', 'learning circles', 'multiple intelligence' and 'neuro-linguistic programming'. But we need to go on looking; for these are psychologically-based responses to culturally-located events.

David Goodhart's reference to group identity is significant. Economist Amartya Sen (2006) develops the point, seeing people cajoled into group membership – some framed on a world-wide basis. Young men and women derive much of their identity from such allegiances. But, he argues, people may be drawn in on terms which actually harm their interests. And people do not always initiate membership, sometimes they are claimed by the group.

Philosopher Michael Kenny (2004) agrees that we are dealing with group phenomena. And he characterises them as an extension of the enlightenment trend. That trend, he argues, has long-since moved on from doubts about crown and sceptre, to a questioning of the white, male, middle-class hegemony. And now? He traces a multiplicity of alternative allegiances...

"...a new kind of politics founded on social identity... in a host of movements, groups and cultural communities... whose influence, appeal and impact appear to be growing." (p.1).

Identity politics speaks of allegiance to one's own – once defined by gender, race and social class. Michael Kenny argues that such allegiances are becoming more varied and more specific. He has a point: people explicitly identify themselves in terms of shopping and other preferences, sporting and other commitments, ethnic and other kinships, religious and other values. In critical moments the group manifests 'who I am', and that self speaks and acts for the group.

In careers work, it is Paul Willis (1977) who has blazed the first trail towards an understanding of such allegiances. Hemakes authentic contact with a group of psychologically different lads bound together by shared cultural identity. It is spoken of as over-against other groups. The 'lads' see themselves as not like the 'ear'oles' – so called for their teacher-compliant behaviour. This was in the 1970s: there really is nothing new about the erosion of deference at school.

The language has changed: 'chavs' and 'boffs' have supplanted 'lads' and 'ear'oles'. And we have the group terms – 'gang', 'posse' and – especially – 'crew'. These days crews display the icons, logos and mantras that express allegiance. But, like the 'lads', they tell stories that celebrate the beliefs, values and expectations of the group – and the protection that the group affords. Then and now, membership is prized.

Easy talk of 'peer-group pressure' does less than justice to the depth and dynamics of all of this. We have not done enough recent work on understanding it. Memoirist Bernard Hare (2006) offers more than few leads by the telling the story of the Leeds-based 'shed crew' – pretty-well wholly in cultural terms.

Amartya Sen and Paul Willis agree: cultures can entrap people in behaviour which is contrary to their own interests. That inhabitance forms habits-of-mind. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1973) compresses the two ideas into a single term – 'habitus' (pp.97-98). He points to how culturally acquired habits-of-mind are negations of autonomy.

What sort of help?

Careers education is in no position to enable people to deal with these socio-emotive pressures. The *Real Game* serves as a test for what currently happens. It has a reputation for being among the best of the off-the-shelf packages – a litmus for issues raised here. Recent work uses an input-process-outcome model for scrutinising such schemes-of-work (for example, Law, 2005b). Suggestions for improvement in The *Real Game* activities coming out of this work are:

(1) expand the base for learning;
(2) enable learning-to-learn;
(3) organise for transfer-of-learning.

All three findings raise demanding issues. We need a wider-ranging and more systematic account of learning than we have so far gleaned from psychology. Stuart Maclure's and Peter Davies's (1991) survey of ideas about how learning is linked to social action is useful. As is Sara Meadows' (1993) survey of the evidence on how children think as individuals and in a social context. Knud Illeris's more-recent (2002) collation of what is known about the tensions between cognitive, emotional and social influences is particularly useful.

1. Expand the experience–base

The social-and-cultural arena is where people learn from experience – the 'university of life'. *Youth Matters: Next Steps* (DfES, 2006) urges the educational value of such direct-and personal experience:

> **"something to do, somewhere to go, someone to talk to" (strapline).**

This is informal learning, valuing one's own and other people's stories. A careers-work finding consistent with this hypothesis comes from researcher Sara Bosley (2004). She observes that learners place special trust in people they can actually meet. There are two aspects: they value 'insider knowledge' based on that person's direct involvement in work; and they value talk in terms which 'resonate' with their own experience of life.

Her work re-examines and updates community-interaction theory (Law, 1981) which points to the importance of social attachments as influences on career development. Researchers Phil Hodkinson and his colleagues (1996) have significantly expanded that thinking by drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus'. It opens the door to an understanding of how individual attachment can develop into group allegiance.

The experience of attachment and allegiance can only be conveyed through narrative. Contemporary sociologist Charles Tilly (2006) uses real-life reports of critical incidents to locate a range of ways of talking about why things happen. He contrasts 'stories' and 'codes'. Codes are specialised formulas for setting out how things go together; he says 'X-to-Y matching' is an example. By contrast, stories are popular but looser accounts of experienced causes and their effects.

This two-fold analysis is reflected in careers-education method. Codes appear in the information-based matching analyses incorporated into our worksheets, data bases, tick-lists and psychometrics – versions of which appear in *The Real Game*. But narrated experience can do other useful things: identify points-of-view, locate events in a social context, explain change-of-mind, and suggest how one thing leads to another.

In learning theory, Sara Meadows' survey points precisely to that distinction between coded analysis and narrated experience. She surveys what is known of semantic and episodic memory (1993, pp.278-282). Semantic learning defines, analyses and lists what is known; it is how experts help us to know about things. Episodic learning is biographical: it is developed over time from direct-and-personal encounters with what is going on.

Ideas about attachment, habitus and episodic learning have been built into the coverage-processes-influences (CPI) analysis of careers work (Career-learning Network, CLN, 2005). It characterises these narrated experience bases for learning as 'inner life and other people'.

But because cultural membership – and the stories it exchanges – is as likely to entrap as to liberate, we need to say more. CPI suggests strategies for expanding and multiplying the experience base for career-learning – in pursuit of 'new places to go, helpful people to meet, useful things to do'. It counterpoises cultures of origin with alternatives. It interferes with habits-of-mind and makes change-of-mind a possibility.

The culture of origin need not, then, be the culture of destination. But only a more ambitious curriculum, even than The *Real Game*, can sustain a programme for what needs to be done.

2. Enable learning-to-learn

There is no argument here that narrated experience trumps coded expertise. As Charles Tilly insists, these are not superior and inferior ways of knowing, they are just different. Each offers its own perspectives on what a person might do. And there is a lot to know. Learning for work-life action in the contemporary world is as demanding as learning for anything.

This is where Susan Greenfield's plea for 'appropriate and meaningful questioning' comes in. Questioning is a learning process: it is about how people learn rather than what people learn – process rather than coverage. The greater the complexity, and the greater the rate of change, then the stronger the case becomes for careers work to help young men and women to learn how to question – or, more broadly, to learn-to-learn.

Rate-of-change is the usual argument for learning-to-learn: whatever people learn today will soon be out-dated; they therefore need to know how to go on learning. But that is only part of the argument: learning-to-learn means knowing when you are under social and emotional pressure. It also means knowing how to deal with it. These are critical abilities for young people dealing with technologically-enhanced cultural pressures.

Learning-to-learn points careers education in the direction of helping students to learn how to find things out, how to know whether you can believe them, how to check that out, and whether you need to know more. In psychology it is set out as critical thinking; in philosophy as the epistemology of why we should believe anything; in sociology as understanding 'habitus'. And where other people have an interest in what people do there will be such pressures.

Sarah Meadows calls the learning response 'metacognition' – cognising cognisance. She summarises evidence to show that it is a combination of abilities – to plan, seek, check, monitor and adapt (1993, pp.78-81). One implication is to engage learners in a range of different views. The disagreements help students to identify the different things that are going on in different processes. It is called the need for a 'theory of mind' – an understanding not only how I come to know, but how *other people* do it differently.

CPI assembles this thinking into a progressive sequence, inviting students to wonder when people have enough to go on, how they sort it into useful order, what is important to them, how it helps to explain how things got this way, and what anybody can do about it.

It applies the inward strategy advocated by Susan Greenfield. It develops the critical thinking advocated by Stephen Law. And, while gathering new information is always useful in any here-and-now situation, learning-to-learn is an acquisition with lifelong usefulness.

3. Organise for transfer-of-learning

Transfer-of-learning is an absolute requirement of careers work: it means that what is learned in one setting will be used in another. If what students learn in careers education does not make a difference to what they do in their lives, then it is not working.

Transfer is an outcome, but more than a learning outcome – it is a living outcome. Learning outcomes are set down in terms that are observable in the classroom. But doing well in a classroom is not an indicator of transfer. Its indicators will not come from conventional classroom assessment.

The requirements are demanding. In their survey, Stuart Maclure and Peter Davies draw attention to how learning for action in life requires high levels of abstraction, based on an understanding of underlying principles (1991, p.xxviii). People can then apply those principles in a variety of situations. In her survey, Sara Meadows points to how transfer-of-learning requires that learning is encoded, so that learners can see links between what is being learned and where it is to be used. Such markers must be made in some depth and detail (1997, pp.81-87).

CPI takes on board both indicators of transferability. On the need for deeper understanding: its account of process describes a stage-by-stage learning progression – from initially sensing the situation to arriving at an explanatory understanding of it. This is a requirement if the students are to be able to anticipate the consequences of their own action in life.

On the necessity of encoding: CPI urges the use of 'life-role markers'. Every decision, transition and moving-on is negotiated in role – whether in domestic, neighbourhood, work or citizen roles. The situation is always of being: (1) in that position; (2) with those people; and (3) taking on that task. Conventional careers education and emphasised the importance of skills for tasks; but there is more to learning-for-life than that. We need deeper and more detailed ways of indicating how learning can be transferred.

In CPI putting a marker on a life role therefore comes from a discussion around (1) 'this is where you will be', (2) 'this is who you will be with', and (3) 'this is what you will be taking on'. It is a useful a start-up activity. But, in order to get both specificity and range of transfer, CPI describes a follow-through along the lines (1) 'where else can you use this learning?...', (2) 'with whom?...', (3) 'doing what?...'.

The base-line requirement for transfer is that the classroom reminds students of their lives so that their lives remind them of the classroom. There is no slick formula here. It needs talking through – processing.

The implications

So, does our future belong to information technology? In the input-process-outcome analysis technology is not a method (a process) it is a resource (an input). And it is only one possible resource. We should resist the random effects of 'digital distraction'.

There are two ways to be practical about resources. One is to make the process fit the input. The more professional way is to find the input that best serve the outcomes. And, in that respect, expanded community-contacts and useful time slots – for processing – are at least as significant as new technologies. No doubt, existing and upgraded technologies will figure somewhere as resources. But probably not in the way that we have been using them in the past. We have barely begun to recognise the opportunities that emerging technologies can bring to enabling the questioning of narratives. And that is where this argument leads.

It says we must first adapt the technologies to the needs, not the process to the technologies. Stuart Maclure and Peter Davies are acutely aware of how radical are these implications (1991, pp.201-223). They move us way beyond tick-box and click-mouse routes to ready-made outcomes.

Some of the most demanding resource implications concern useful time:

- enough time – this level of complexity needs time to process learning;

- long-block time – and units of time to allow enquiring, questioning, narration, trial, testing and adaptation;

- at the right time – with good timing, so that students grasp the learning as-and-when the need for it comes into view.

It needs room for manoeuvre – so that that learning can be organised as a series of episodes, or as a continuous process, or interleaved with experience-based work. To do it means abandoning careers education as a marginal add-on to mainstream curriculum.

Education-academic John Gray (2005) comments on marginal tendencies:

"Many schools have fairly primitive ways of accommodating innovations – they simply bolt them on to existing efforts and then find themselves overloaded. Ways of funding and supporting initiatives which encourage more coherence and develop a greater and enduring capacity for change might increase the likelihood of reforms taking root" (p.89).

They might!

The LiRRiC proposals

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is currently undertaking root-and-branch thinking for 11-19 curriculum. Part of that 'blue-sky' thinking is LiRRiC – a proposal for 'life role relevance in curriculum' (Law, 2006). The LiRRiC strategy finds the resources to meet the needs.

But the analysis of learning needs set out here is wide ranging. It accepts no clearly-bounded body of knowledge; it imports from a range of disciplines. This article has drawn on economics, psychology, sociology, political economy, theology, philosophy and cultural theory. This process of wide-ranging acquisition has maintained careers work in a decades-long series of adaptations. The more we have taken on board the more we have been able to work out new and useful things to do. Indeed, we have long-since passed the point where the term 'careers education and guidance' any longer fits: much of what we do is neither 'careers education' nor 'guidance'.

It is not that complexity is invariably a good thing; but evolutionary progress is always towards complexity. And an assumption of LiRRiC is that we will not enable autonomy except by facing up to the complexity and liquidity of contemporary realities (see Law, 2005; following Dennett, 2003).

Accordingly, a LiRRiC programme would draw on academic knowledge as well as careers-work applications, calling in community-based experience as well as professionally-based expertise, and working with an 'other-than-careers' as well as a 'careers' focus.

The result is a wider, life-work-balanced and integrated whole-curriculum timetabling strategy. It would take careers work off the edge of timetable. More than that, it locates it where it can inform on-going whole-curriculum reform.

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Links

An account of the LiRRiC proposals:
www.hihohiho.com/magazine/features/caflirric.html

This article is abstracted from *The Copenhagen Strategy – Thinking Outside the Box*:
www.hihohiho.com/underpinning/cafculture.pdf (from August 2006)

Information about *The Real Game* can be found on their website: http://www.realgame.co.uk/

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Managing career learning – RIP! or what?

Barbara McGowan

Finding time for designing, developing and managing careers work can seem a bit of a luxury when all too often the name of the game seems like survival. With new partnerships and new curriculum frameworks on the horizon, and attention to curriculum integration with enterprise and work-related learning as a requirement – to name just some of the everyday demands – there is quite sufficient to keep the best minds out of mischief. Management for coherence and progression can seem a far cry from this everyday world of the careers co-ordinator.

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Getting to grips with such a re-think of careers work was the focus for a fifteen-month career-development project in the London Borough of Islington from 2004 – 2005. The work, now complete in its first development stage, involved 8 institutions: an 11-18 school, three 11-16 schools, two special schools, a work-based learning provider, and the local further education and sixth form college. The brief was to rescue careers work from the margins – bring it in from the cold – and enable it to be, and to be seen as, a central feature of the main curriculum. That work has been written about elsewhere (McGowan, 2006b) – this is about the model that emerged for managing the development of career learning.

Change in careers work is not optional – QCA are engaged currently in a re-think of the role and place of careers work in the curriculum, with implications for learning design and delivery. Even without this imperative, most careers work merits a health check from time to time – often recognised but rarely undertaken in a world of constant initiatives. Offered here is a simple matrix – a 9-faceted framework arranged as 3 x 3 – for taking a look at what is happening in careers work, for responding to change, and making sure that the work always reflects what young people need.

The RIP model:

R ationale: What is the nature and scope of careers work?	R elevance: How can we be sure we are meeting the needs of young people?	R elationships: How and where can new activity link with existing work?
I deas: What new ideas are there for this work?	I nfrastructure: What is in place to support this work?	I nfluence: Who can best promote and enable this work?
P reparation: What needs to be done?	P lanning: How can we ensure sustainability?	P reparation: What needs to be done?

No elements are stand-alone; all depend for their efficacy on their relationship with the others. However, working with any one of the nine features can help to anchor career learning and strengthen the career offer to young people.

Working with all nine features was an enormous challenge for the Islington schools, but those who engaged with it discovered it was a way of 'eating the elephant in bite-sized chunks' – and it worked.

The rationale for the RIP model is presented below: the support for managing it into action appears elsewhere (McGowan, 2006c). Its relevance to the current changing situation of careers work is highlighted.

The first strand – 3Rs:

This strand is like the bedrock of the work – establishing the foundations. Without some attention to the issues here, it is very difficult to be confident that other features of the work are sufficiently focused, coherent and can offer learning that will support sustainable choice.

Finding a Rationale: what is the nature and scope of careers work?

Answering this question is becoming increasingly important as the contexts in which careers work is being developed and delivered are changing. Careers work is not designed, developed and delivered in isolation; it is most effective through partnerships with those who share a common focus and values, but those partners are shifting, and partnerships are metamorphosing into new configurations.

Credible, collaborative partnership work and development needs consensus about the proper concerns of careers work, at least within the institution, and with the staff of the agencies with which it works – especially Connexions or its equivalent, and increasingly the Local Authority and local Children's Trusts. Without this consensus collaboration is difficult; it is hard to integrate clear role functions, and parallel, complementary and mutually supportive activities.

> If partners do not thoughtfully identify points of convergence, young people can be exposed to fragmented experience and even ambiguity, instead of experiencing coherence from the support they receive.

There are several frameworks for supporting this kind of discussion; for example, the QCA three-fold framework of Career Exploration, Career Management and Self-development. Bill Law's CPI framework (CLN, 2005) of Coverage, Process and Influence, makes links with the QCA framework above, but offers a much developed model for scoping career learning, with a comprehensively worked rationale. Attention to some credible, thoughtful underpinning, whatever its origin, is crucial for professionalism, coherence and collaboration.

Demonstrating Relevance: how can we be sure we are meeting the needs of young people?

The National Framework 11-19 (DfES, 2003) suggests a cluster of learning outcomes for Key Stages 3, 4 and post-16; and this is a useful starting point from which to examine needs. However, these general, recommended learning outcomes need to be evaluated against the complex and varied realities of the local situation, and of the individual and often challenging circumstances of many young people.

Most career programmes involve a great deal of effort, resources, time and expertise. But the only certain way to know that the career offer is relevant, i.e. it responds to experienced needs, is to conduct a needs analysis for a specific group of young people. Making generalised assumptions may not be as accurate a reflection of young people's perspectives as may be supposed; and variables occur from one catchment area to another.

> Without establishing this level of relevance it is difficult to know that what is being offered is effectively supporting the young people who are receiving it, at the time they need it, and that scarce resources are being used well.

Professional experience can create a first draft framework of learning needs relevant to the local context, which may usefully draw on the National Framework mentioned above. But this needs to be tested for validity by sharing it with 'significant others' – a group which may include colleagues who are careers specialists, and those who are not, young people, parents, governors and local employers. The aim is to share what is proposed, enquire whether others agree or disagree – and find out why – and collect other suggestions. More points of view can add richness and depth to the thinking, and can verify – or not – the initial professional suggestions for the learning. Once established this baseline can be kept under review, and used as the foundation for programme design and development. This, or another method of ensuring relevance, is not optional – young people need to be able to recognise and value the support we offer.

Establishing Relationships: how and where can new activity link with existing work?

All development work needs to identify and build on what is already usefully happening – and in most cases there is probably more than is immediately recognised.

Those responsible for the career offer frequently feel they are working in isolation, on the margins of the main curriculum and its concerns. Establishing agreement on a framework of career learning outcomes for young people, that is known to reflect need, offers a strong basis for mapping sources of existing and potential support. It can be used to canvass support from those colleagues who are sympathetic to the purposes of careers work, and who are working in other areas across and beyond the subject curriculum.

An integrated approach raises awareness of the nature of career learning in a wider arena; enables the person responsible for careers work to co-ordinate the learning; and encourages curriculum support.

Sharing such a baseline can help colleagues to identify where and on what terms they can, and are willing to help. It is a way of knowing where what they are doing already supports this learning, and what else might be done, either differently or additionally. Backing from everyone, even when they are interested, is very unlikely – but some collaboration is highly probable. The larger the network of curriculum partners, the greater the chance that all young people will be enabled to engage with the learning.

It is critical for coherence that career learning consolidates as well as innovates.

The three features above – rationale, relevance and relationships are mutually dependent. Without a clear rationale, it is difficult to establish what might be useful learning for young people: without a understanding of what is relevant there can be no basis for curriculum collaboration; and without knowing who is contributing what to career learning it is hard to build coherence for young people, however comprehensive the understanding of scope and need.

The second strand – 3Is:

This is where the work interfaces with the institution – the public appearance of career learning. Without some attention to the issues raised in this strand it is difficult to be confident that the work has curriculum status and institutional recognition.

Exploring Ideas: what new ideas are there for this work?

There is probably a fair degree of unanimity about the key tasks for careers work:

- in many settings, to encourage the majority of young people to see themselves as having more extensive opportunities than their immediate family or community setting might support or suggest;

and

- in all settings, to enable young people to access appropriate career relevant learning to make and implement sustainable decisions within these wider horizons.

New thinking with and beyond the frameworks here will not be optional in the near future: QCA are developing a coherent framework of personal development learning. This does not merely re-position where careers work is located, it demands some new thinking about how it will be developed and delivered in a new context.

Without some willingness and ability to engage with developmental thinking, new ideas and different ways of doing things, there is no new territory to move into and the status quo remains.

There are existing tools and frameworks for exploring ideas for career learning, for example the QCA framework of self-development, career exploration and career management referred to above, and its translation into a cluster of learning outcomes in the *National Framework for Careers Education* (DfES, 2003). A more developed approach can be found in Bill Law's much extended and developed DOTS framework, CPI: *C*overage – **what** young people need to know; *P*rocess – **how** we can help them to deal with what they find out; and *Influence* – **who** and what is affecting them as they plan for their future (CLN, 2005).

Whatever the starting point, change is currently high profile and inevitable in the field of personal and career learning. Without some visible engagement with developmental thinking, career learning is in danger of both institutional and client invisibility.

Reviewing the Infrastructure: what is in place to support this work?

A key strength for careers work, both now and in the future, is the extent to which there is an effective organisational and management infrastructure to support its delivery.

Careers work needs to be managed from a significant middle-management position; and the work needs to be carried out in a manner similar to any other mainstream area of the curriculum. This brings with it the need to respond to hard accountabilities, as well as offering negotiating strength and flexibility.

Managing career learning in this context means negotiating collaborative partnerships within and beyond the curriculum; identifying and agreeing who will do what, either with traditionally career-relevant roles like tutor teams, or with new and different colleagues. It means a curriculum plan that is reviewed and evaluated at least on an annual basis; with teaching and learning methods that support a variety of learning styles. It means effective

leadership for both staff and curriculum, and an ability to interface with and contribute to school development planning, including budgeting and training. It means being wiling to be accountable for targets and outcomes.

> Without this commitment to investment in an infrastructure of good practice it is very difficult to establish any status or, to some degree, credibility for careers work. All other curriculum areas are required to operate in this manner, and failure to institute the same kind of order and profile for careers work undermines it.

There are undoubtedly some real issues for individuals related to levels of resourcing and institutional ethos. But where 'careers' is a recognisably responsible and status-holding role for the individual, it generates motivation, commitment, and a sense of empowerment to communicate with confidence with senior managers.

Accessing Influence: who can best promote and enable this work?

This is an important key to any sustainable development of careers work. It is usually thought that senior leadership support is critical for careers work, but equally crucial is professional authority:

- the *role* authority of senior managers is a significant factor in the ability of the careers co-ordinator – and other partners – to influence the institutional development of careers work;

- equally the *professional* authority of the careers co-ordinator is critical if there is to be any informed and sustainable development.

> Careers work needs both kinds of authority to prosper; if one is missing it makes no significant difference on the overall impact of career learning as to which one that is. New partnerships and the need to negotiate new pathways for career guidance provision will make serious demands on the need for both strong role and professional authority.

It is crucial for the health of career learning that schools have the ability to bring both role and professional authority to discussions about career provision in the future. Some of these negotiations will be with external partners who may be changing, and who may not have engaged in these kinds of discussion before. A clear understanding of what is needed, and the basis on which it will be available to the institution, from whom and when, will require leadership inputs from both the senior leadership group and the professional careers coordinator. Less than effective internal partnerships here can seriously detract from the development of internal and external learning opportunities for young people.

The three features above – ideas, infrastructure and influence – are mutually dependent. Without some good ideas, there is no new ground to move into; without an effective underpinning of good practice, there is no supporting context in which good ideas can be nurtured; without access to institutional support, it is hard to achieve any substantial recognition for, and embedding of, any development, however good the thinking.

The third strand – the 3Ps:

This is concerned with the operational aspects of careers work – the practical tasks that must be tackled for careers work to have substance. Without some attention to the issues raised in this strand, it is very difficult to have confidence in the robustness and sustainability of the career offer.

Effective Preparation: what needs to be done?

Any periodic reflection on how careers work might be developed, whether to respond to local needs or national initiatives, needs to begin by establishing some clarity about what is already there. It is critical that this is a well-thought-through process; the thoroughness with which this is tackled will help to determine how robustly any new activity is anchored and integrated.

> The new QCA curriculum framework for personal development learning will become the working document for integrating careers work into the curriculum. Looking for links and connections to existing work, and exploring potential for development will be critical steps in the successful implementation of career learning in this new context.

Any significant review of the career offer needs to look at both provision and management. Examining only provision will provide a picture of what is there, but may not offer sufficient comment on its depth, quality and sustainability. Reviewing how the learning is managed will provide a perspective on the anchor points, the extent of institutional commitment that can be accessed, who is involved, and on what terms. It can be helpful to conduct this as a professional discussion between key people, both inside and outside the institution; this is more likely to attract support for any subsequent action.

Any proposed change benefits from some reflection on its links and connections. Any significant shift in responsibilities and structures, such as may now be emerging in some local areas, requires a more systematic approach. Various tools for review and evaluation are available: this approach is implicit in some of the career award schemes; CEGNET has the Improving Quality Checklist available; and the work in Islington used a DIY approach through self-review frameworks – What you are doing and How you are managing it.

Building Partnerships: who needs to be involved?

The career offer to young people depends on effective partnerships; it is not easily developed and delivered either by a single person, or in one curriculum area. But building useful partnerships can be a challenge.

Internal partnerships can strongly support coherence in student learning, but they are vulnerable if colleagues have insufficient understanding and/or commitment to careers work – for example, tutors can be conscripts and not volunteers! Other collaborating partnerships may be strong and effective, but may not be able to offer support to a whole year group – for example, planned learning opportunities in collaboration with humanities staff at Key Stage 4. Frequently, the quality of the outcomes is affected by the strength of the professional relationships, and the commitment this generates; and the robustness of the management procedures, including resources, that are in place to underpin the work.

External partnerships can contribute expertise that is difficult for internal staff to offer – like market-related information. However, there is the danger that an external partner may not have a strong alignment with the school's focus and priorities, or share a mutual understanding of the nature and value of aspects of the work. In addition, there can be mundane challenges for external partners, like those around working with younger people, and accommodating the rigid requirements of the school organisation – timetables and terms. Frequently, the outcomes are affected by the robustness of the contracting process, and the clarity of the initial agreements; and the management structures in place to support the initial negotiations, and to offer sufficient backing to sustain the commitments.

> When partnerships can be made to work well, they bring benefits to both partners and clients: in professional support/colleagueship; wealth and diversity of contribution; and the capacity to respond more dynamically, immediately and holistically to the career needs of young people and their families.

Effective and sustainable partnerships need time to build a common understanding of the work, and mutual trust. They require individuals with high levels of knowledge and expertise; and a strong underpinning of management and planning systems, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

New partnerships with some different individuals and/or organisations are part of the future – both internally and externally to institutions.

Sequencing Planning: how can we ensure sustainability?

New and different demands in the world of career learning – new partnerships, different colleagues and an altered curriculum frame – are going to require adjustment and change in curriculum, staff and organisational arrangements.

Managing sustainable change means recognising the interdependence of these aspects. Curriculum change can put pressure on staff and structures to accommodate difference, for which they may be unprepared and/or resistant. Professional development of staff is needed to build capacity to respond positively and effectively, and enhance individual motivation. Equally, the implications for the organisation's structure and planning need to be identified from the beginning so that new 'demands' can be integrated, rather than emerging as a thorn in the side later.

Whatever changes are initiated and planned for, it is essential that they are both manageable and sustainable. This takes resource – time, effort, expertise – and the means to make a commitment for their future. Where planning is weak, underdeveloped and/or under resourced, little advance will be made.

The need for change and development in careers work is an inevitability. There is curriculum change emerging from QCA; workforce re-modelling in progress as more non-teachers are employed as careers co-ordinators; and differing accountabilities within the Ofsted framework.

> Managing careers work in the increasingly complex context of existing and emerging partnerships is becoming a very significant aspect of the work of the careers- co-ordinator; the title 'careers work manager' (Andrews, 2004) may be more appropriate for the kind of responsibilities involved.

The three features here – preparation, partnerships and planning – have a similarly interdependent relationship as in the other strands. Without sufficient preparation, learning opportunities available through later planning and collaborative partnerships lack strong foundations; without careful planning, the potential from effective preparation and the variety of learning experiences offered through partners may be lost; and without effective partnerships the capacity to offer extended learning opportunities is much diminished, however substantial the preparation and planning for the rest of the work.

The RIP model outlined above can be used in whole or part as a tool for revisiting aspects of career learning as they find their way into the melting pot. It can act as a framework for evaluating new initiatives and packages. It

has a role in fulfilling the on-going responsibilities of an annual health-check on the career offer. And it can be used to support a root and branch re-think of how to manage the development of career learning.

Working with this agenda may bring professional development implications for a wider range of colleagues. These could include senior manages as well as specialist careers staff, and others who find themselves in roles where they must respond to the world of career learning – a new world that brings different demands and possibilities, resources and accountabilities, and partners and commitments.

This looks like the future for careers work.

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Signposter – pointing the way to personalised information

Leigh Henderson and Brian Stevens

Many institutions will experience forms of structural change as the nature of employment alters and the power of the individual increases. Much of this structural change will be organic, not imposed. It will be facilitated by individuals handling change through learning and adopting what is new and different. Over time the empowered individual will be able to judge and take more risks than is the case today.

The successful institutions of 2020 will be nodes of concentration in a knowledge and communications network.

All of this will be supported by transformational government initiatives at local and national levels.

The Signposter Programme, with its capability to identify and serve communities and encourage personal development within them, will be a key contributor to the success of these new forms of organisation and to the changes to existing organisations.

The mission and ambition of the Signposter Programme are set in this context.

Since 2000, globalisation through technology has been levelling the playing fields so that countries like India – and many others – are now able to compete equally for global knowledge work as never before.

In all parts of the world there is increasing recognition of the power of learning for all individuals and for their contribution to the economy and society.

The resulting move to personalised learning and to individuals' greater responsibility for their own development has profound effects on relationships – between employers and employees, between institutions and individuals, between Government, employers and individuals.

Within this changing dynamic in the UK and across the world, access to a rich harvest of personalised information on lifestyle choices, led by choices of learning and employment opportunities, is a prerequisite for individuals of all ages and stages.

The ambition of Signposter is to provide that access.

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The demographic context for the Signposter Programme

Chris Humphries CBE, Director General, City & Guilds, has set out a demographic challenge in his 2006 paper, *Skills in a Global Economy.*

In the paper, Mr Humphries points out that there are two primary causes of the demographic challenge facing the UK.

The first is the dramatic fall in the UK birth rate between the 1991 and 2001 census from 2.4 live births per woman lifetime to 1.6. This brings the rate to below the 'replacement rate' of 2.1. The result will be a drop of 600,000 fewer 15-24 year olds in the UK in 2020 than in 2010.

The second cause is the increased longevity due to better health care. People can and do work longer – beyond the traditional pension age. At the same time, actual working life has been shrinking, due to more young people staying in education and the growth of early retirement.

Humphries points out that the outcomes will be increased competition between industries and employers to attract young people to their occupations and businesses and older workers will seek to extend their working lives by engaging in yet more learning.

He asserts that individuals will need access to information and personalised support to be able to make informed choices. He writes:

"But to impact on the forward planning inside a college, or to be able to help a 17 or a 42 year old make an important learning or career choice, that data needs translating into very accessible information and communications available in their language, through their media and when they need it.

The UK needs a much more effective, well informed and professional careers information, advice and guidance service, supported by a national interactive website of diagnostic, information and advisory functions that makes such all-age support nationally available.

The technology to create such an Internet based system is now widely available and understood, and the data sources needed to inform it are described above, and can be extended to meet requirements as the system evolves. That system could then provide the key background information service to support locally-tailored and locally-based adult information advice and guidance services to offer additional guidance support as required."

This forms the demographic context for the vision of the Signposter Programme to 2020.

The background to the Signposter Programme

The Signposter Programme has been developed by FEdS Consultancy from around the year 2000 from the initial concept of Advancement that has its origins at UCAS.

The focus of that original concept has remained steady and tight. Certain key principles underpinning the project have remained unchanged, although the project itself has become more mature, better understood and more extensive.

The original concept has been developed into the business concept called the Signposter Programme.

FEdS worked closely with UCAS, the LSC and numerous other partners. Oracle Fujitsu and Nokia are the technology partners. Oracle has played a significant development role since the very early stages.

There is a confused and confusing part-provision of information provided by an increasing number of initiatives, some of which relate to each other but most of which do not. This led to the fourth recommendation of the Morrison Report, commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills in July 2002 to create a network, which is coherent for the individual customer:

"A plethora of organisations and products exist to inform, guide and enable learners to progress. These include course information services, job search agencies, careers services and records of achievement. However, there is no single agency that rationalises all of these functions and delivers a single pathway that learners can take that begins at course registration and takes them right through into work. *Which Way?* is our working title for such a tool.

We recommend that Government supports the development of a single learning-to-work support and guidance route map.

The 2004 *Which Way?* Review showed that not much had changed in the intervening two years.

The Office of the e-Envoy and the Cabinet Office are concerned, beyond the fields of information on learning and employment, to create coherence across the Ministries on e-Government.

It is probable that plans may be considered to bring the Government-based systems for e-Government together into one centrally controlled network.

But, because the fields of learning and employment are subject, in the former case, to being completely devolved and, in the latter case, to being partly devolved, and because the fields of learning and employment both spread far into the private sector, it would not make sense to conceive of a network centrally controlled by the Government in Whitehall.

The development of a national, virtual infrastructure of interlocking services would make sense if we could provide the most complete and coherent access to information and advice on learning and employment opportunities for individuals throughout the UK and across the public and private sectors.

The Signposter Programme will play a significant part in the realisation of this concept.

The need for personalised information

We are living in a changing culture where:

● Individuals are expected to be increasingly self-dependent and to take responsibility for their own development.

● An individual's working life will increasingly be dependent on the ability to develop existing skills and knowledge, to acquire new skills and knowledge and to be able to transfer both skills and knowledge to different work environments.

- The discontinuous change in business development, brought about by sharpened competition and new technologies, requires individual businesses to be more nimble on their feet and to manage more deftly the skills and knowledge they require of their employees.

- Attitudes are changing towards people with disabilities who will increasingly want access to personalised information.

- Demographic changes will necessitate access to relevant information for the increasingly large proportion of older people.

The notion of loyalty has changed as individuals understand increasingly that their continued employability lies in their own hands.

For this new world, learning structures and support systems have to focus on the needs of the individual.

Increasingly, at key life moments, individuals will need access to clearly structured and relevant information, backed up by access to relevant advice and guidance.

But we have not yet made the significant change from a supply led learning system to a demand led system. Much of the necessary infrastructure is not yet in place; one of the missing pieces in that infrastructure is access to full and coherently structured information. This is the message contained in the 2004 *Which Way?* Review and is implicit in the Foster Review and the interim report by Lord Leitch.

The Signposter Programme

The Signposter Programme describes the provision electronically of information on lifestyle choices to all learners over the age of 14 – with a particular emphasis on information about choices in learning and related employment opportunities.

- This is a service free to all individuals, regardless of age or stage, up to a certain, as yet undefined, level – beyond which the learner will have the option to buy further services; for instance the option to have help constructing a CV.

- The programme is built around the needs of the individual. It is based around an i-portfolio (an intelligent portfolio), which is secure for, and wholly owned by, the individual and which is lifelong. The individual, by using his or her portfolio intelligently, activates the system to supply personalised information.

- Beyond the significant database of portfolios, the Signposter Programme will not build any databases of information. It has no need to; there are large numbers of fine databases in both the private and public sectors. The Signposter Programme is creating business partnerships with those information providers so that the Signposter search capability can access the information wanted for any transaction by an individual.

- The Signposter Programme is creating a powerful network; it has no interest in owning existing territory.

- The Signposter Programme is built on a multi technology platform. Individuals will be able to access the system through PCs, PDAs, mobile telephones and digital TV.

- There is no banner advertising or marketing on the system beyond what individuals choose to access – and there is no direct access to any individual holding a portfolio on the system.

- In the learning and related employment areas, there is the choice of two enquiry pathways: 'I want to be …' and 'What can I be?'

i-portfolio

The i-portfolio which sits at the centre of the Signposter system is important for several reasons:

- From 2005, the QAA requires that all university undergraduates have their own personal planning programme.

- In the Further Education sector there are numerous learning logs, which are more organisation-centred than individual-centred.

- The Progress File, recently discontinued by the DfES, was being developed through schools, some further education colleges and small and medium-sized enterprises, but not uniformly through any of them.

- Key to the Tomlinson thinking for development post 14 was that every individual should have an e-transcript, which was conceived by the Tomlinson Group as an electronic file to hold details of qualifications and achievement in the skills area. That should be part of a fuller portfolio. The Government's response to Tomlinson has not negated this requirement. Indeed it will form part of University Entrance requirements from 2008.

- The development at QCA of a new Framework for Achievement has further urged the need for an e-portfolio.

- In the report of the Burgess group on degree classifications, it is suggested that a transcript of performance might replace the current degree classifications.

- There is currently no coherent Government policy towards the development of e-portfolios.

- All of these points lead to the development of a lifelong portfolio, which is at the heart of a cultural change towards developing the capacity for reflective learning and providing personalised learning.

- Portfolios are increasingly the culture of the adult world of work. But corporate learning logs are rarely owned by the individual employee because others, such as compliance officers, need to have access.

The portfolio contains at least five domains, which are consonant with the Tomlinson thinking:

- Qualifications

- Tested skills, such as functional mathematics/numeracy and communications and ICT

- Personal awareness skills, which are not tested but which are recognised and developed. The development of these broad skills comes through the three related questions;
  - What have I done?
  - What have I learned from what I have been doing?
  - What evidence do I have of that learning?

- A library of evidence supporting the development of the personal awareness skills

- A statement of aspiration, which is at the heart of reflective learning responding to the questions; Where do I wish to go? How am I going to get there from where I am at the present?

The Signposter i-portfolio (intelligent portfolio) is special:

- It is owned by, and secure for, the individual.

- It is lifelong and allows the owner to migrate information in from other portfolios which need to be used at certain stages.

- It is intelligent in that proactively it brings new information to the attention of the individual as the pattern of individual preferences becomes more evident from the information placed in it.

Signposter Ltd & icom Ltd

The Programme is a private sector initiative for public benefit, run by two companies in tandem:

- Signposter Ltd, a company limited by guarantee, has responsibility for the strategic development of the learning and related employment areas.

- icom Ltd is the operational company, which also has responsibility for the strategic development of the broader lifestyle choices.

- The two companies are linked by legal contract and by a Strategic Group, made up of three Directors from each company with an independent Chairman. This will oversee that the operational developments are within the strategic frameworks set out by Signposter Ltd and by icom. The Strategic Group will also be the first point for the resolution of any dispute.

- Each company is dependent on the other for the Signposter Programme to be effective.

The companies will earn income from the services and products they develop:

- Private and public sector companies will be able to reach their strategic targets more quickly, completely and cheaply by investing in the Signposter Programme.

- Aspects of the technology developed for the Programme will become products.

- Additional information and data services will also be developed out of the Programme itself. None of these will involve the sale of any personalised information.

- Services to the individual: The essential service providing access to information on learning and employment opportunities to the individual will be free. However, beyond a certain level of information – such as the need for specialist one-to-one guidance or the development of an individual portfolio or on-line CV – fee-paying services will also be developed for the individual.

- This was indicated as a wished-for service in the UCAS/CfBT research studies by MORI in 2002 and one that young people and their parents would be prepared to pay for. Nearly 450,000 young people access UCAS for university information each year.

- A National Employment Notice Board. Individual learners will be given the opportunity to post their portfolio/CV on a national notice board, which will be re-configured in response to enquiries from organisations to reflect national, regional or local requirements – for instance for

a major food retailer considering opening a new store in Cardiff and requiring a number of people with a certain range of skills. The national notice board will become a means of accessing that information, a service provided to organisations for a fee.

- Knowledge Management. The Signposter system will be able to provide generic information of significance to workforce development programmes at the regional development level or the individual Learning and Skills Council areas as well as to private sector clients; but none of this will be personal information.

- Recruitment. Both public and private sector organisations will be able to use Signposter by providing a matrix of desired and required characteristics for potential recruits.

- This will at least allow potential applicants to make an earlier judgement as to whether they are suitable or not by matching their own profile to that required by the recruiting organisations. Reducing the number of 'hopeless' applications is an important cost saving for companies.

- e-Learning. In addition to providing information on learning and employment opportunities, Signposter will provide direct links into learning opportunities. This could be a route to a wider market for corporate universities wishing to make fuller use of non-competitive learning resources.

- Another possible example is the probation service. Probation officers are required to provide a 'Thinking Skills' course for people committed to community service.

Strategic alliances & partnerships

Significant work with partners will need to be carried out so that individual enquirers can have access to a complete and coherent range of information and advice, both on learning opportunities and on employment opportunities.

Significant areas are already covered by UCAS, City & Guilds, learndirect, HotCourses and others – but these do not interlink – and there are additional areas that will need to be drawn in:

- Professional Bodies

- Chartered Institutes

- The growing, mutual opportunities to be gained by linking closely to the Sector Skills Councils Network

- Trade and Business Organisations such as the Confederation of British Chambers of Commerce, the CBI and the TUC

- Private sector job agencies for which there is currently no network

- Awarding Bodies and Examining Bodies:

  – In the vocational field there are over 100 different bodies but City & Guilds has some 52% of the market.

  – QCA has the remit to develop the national database of qualifications held by individuals.

Work experience and personal development

Work experience should be a significant part of this Signposter development.

96% of young people in Key Stage 4 have up to 10 days work experience and for many of them this can be a life-changing experience. As the work-related curriculum is now statutory, that percentage is moving nearer the 100% mark. Work experience would have played a key part of the Tomlinson proposal for Core Learning, and it will play a key part in the proposed specialised diplomas.

This experience should be a learning experience as well as an experience of work. This forms the basis of the work FEdS has carried out with Marks & Spencer and HSBC to reformat their work experience – for something like 5,000 young people each year in these two companies – into an opportunity to develop their personal and inter-personal skills.

There is, at the moment, little direct knowledge of the numbers taking part in work experience and little knowledge of the benefits the individuals and organisations gain.

Whilst it is not possible to expect companies of all shapes and sizes to send back information on young people's work experience, it would be entirely reasonable and feasible that there should be a 'psychological contract' with young people doing work experience to complete an on-line self assessment – either on their own or with a peer group or with a teacher or mentor or parent.

This would be the learning process of the young person, reflecting on the three key questions:

- What have I been doing?

- What have I learned?

- What evidence do I have of that learning?

The Association of School and College Leaders is fully supportive of this development. So too is the Department for Education and Skills.

The individual learners would use the exercise to include relevant items in the e-portfolio that they will be encouraged to develop within the Signposter framework.

This same form, properly designed, could give both qualitative and quantitative information, providing a better appreciation both to companies and to central government, of the impact of this still, as yet, largely unknown investment of resource by individuals, companies, schools and the Government.

This would engage every year an entire year group.

Such a feedback from the individual learner would go direct to Signposter, which would have the capacity to manage this incoming data and to cut it in a variety of ways to provide information for individual companies, central government and regional authorities.

What are the implications for career education and guidance practice?

Signposter provides, at long last, an opportunity to ensure that the development of career management skills is user-led – supported by professional support as required. Through Signposter, individuals are empowered to explore their own learning and employment needs and aspirations alongside other lifestyle opportunities.

If they choose to use all of Signposter's functionality, individuals will have begun to learn to develop and manage their own careers, including learning, through means that are natural to them and relevant to their family and social contexts. The implications for career education and guidance are significant.

In the future, career education and guidance professionals will be able to work as facilitators in the career development of their clientele in an individually focused way that has frequently been unachievable in the past.

Signposter fits seamlessly into the 'Life-Role Relevance in Curriculum' model discussed by Bill Law elsewhere in this issue of the NICEC Journal.

Organisations involved in, or interested in, career education and guidance will have the opportunity to explore the Signposter Programme and its implications for career education and guidance in the coming months.

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