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# GOOD CAREER GUIDANCE



GATSBY



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# FOREWORD

## BY LORD SAINSBURY OF TURVILLE

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Settlor of the Gatsby Charitable Foundation



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



THE NEED TO TAKE  
SUSTAINED ACTION TO  
IMPROVE CAREER GUIDANCE  
IS MORE PRESSING  
THAN EVER



In my 2007 review of science and innovation policies for the previous government, I identified actions required on a number of fronts which I considered essential if the UK was to remain economically competitive in the coming decades. In the review's final report, 'The Race to the Top', I noted the widespread consensus – across both the public and private sectors – that the career guidance on offer in this country was severely lacking. It was considered insufficient, of dubious quality, and often provided too late to meet the needs of the majority of young people.

Numerous other reports, issued before and since mine, have been heavily critical of career guidance provision in this country. Yet the situation has certainly not improved and, with employers reporting difficulties in filling skilled job vacancies at a time when high levels of youth unemployment persist, the need to take sustained action to improve career guidance is more pressing than ever. But blame for the undoubted shortcomings in career guidance cannot be laid at the feet of the current government alone. Over the last 30 years governments of every hue, while reorganising and renaming the system, have spectacularly failed to take the actions necessary to improve the quality and consistency of career guidance provision for all young people. It is an appalling history which reflects well on no-one.

It was against this background that, last year, my charitable foundation, Gatsby, commissioned Sir John Holman to examine what pragmatic actions could be taken to improve career guidance in England's secondary schools. From our first meeting to discuss the project, John and I were in agreement that, rather than add to the pile of reports criticising the current system, what was needed was work which would identify good practice in career guidance – both here and abroad – and then point the way to embedding such practice in all of our schools. John set about this challenge with typical tenacity. His reflective insight and thoughtfulness have resulted in a report which offers practical steps that schools, employers and government working collaboratively can take to improve career guidance.

That John found no 'magic bullet' or panacea will come as no surprise to anyone who has examined this area. But his call for all schools to be supported in embedding clear, stable, long-term programmes of activities which are understood by teachers, pupils, parents and employers alike, is compelling.

I am tremendously grateful to John and all those who have supported him in producing this excellent report. I commend it to everyone committed to ensuring that all young people in this country are supported in making informed choices about their future. If the principles of this report are followed, I am convinced that collaborative action by key players can, for the first time in a generation, address current deficiencies and deliver a world-class career guidance system in our schools that is both effective and efficient.

David Sainsbury  
Settlor

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# INTRODUCTION

## FROM SIR JOHN HOLMAN

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This report is about career guidance in English secondary schools, and how it could be made better. Career guidance has been much criticised, but what would it look like were it good? To find out, we visited six countries where we knew from earlier studies that both career guidance and educational results are good, and we talked to teachers, pupils and ministry officials. We also visited five independent schools in England because we had heard good reports anecdotally, but could find little literature. In addition, we studied the available literature on career guidance in state schools. From all this input we made a judgement on what ‘good’ looks like. These judgements are in the form of eight benchmarks, identifying different dimensions of good career guidance.

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 WHOLE  
 ”

We surveyed English secondary schools to see how they measure up against the benchmarks, and we asked PricewaterhouseCoopers to do an independent exercise to identify the costs of implementing the benchmarks across the system. Drawing on all this work, we have made a set of recommendations about how the English system could improve.

The Gatsby Charitable Foundation's particular interest is in ensuring that pupils are aware of the opportunities that careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) open up. However, we have not overtly sought to separate out STEM from career guidance in general, which is what most of our benchmarks are about. The report is almost entirely about career guidance in secondary schools, which is where many of the make-or-break decisions are made, but most of the principles set out in the benchmarks apply to further education colleges too. Likewise, although the report focuses on the English system, the benchmarks would be equally applicable to the other nations of the UK.

We have interpreted 'career guidance' very broadly to include all those activities intended to assist young people in making decisions about future education, training and jobs. As we discovered, good career guidance means linking different activities together to form a coherent whole.

Many people have contributed to this report. However, I am especially grateful to Professor Tony Watts, Jo Hutchinson and Dr Tristram Hooley of the International Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby for contributing their expert knowledge of career guidance in this country and overseas, and additionally to Jo Hutchinson for her efficient project management. Finally I am most grateful to Nigel Thomas of Gatsby for his support and wise advice throughout this project.



John Holman  
 University of York  
 April 2014





06. From all this input we made a judgement on what 'good' looks like. These judgements are in the form of eight benchmarks, identifying different dimensions of good career guidance (Section 3). The benchmarks are summarised in Table 1.
07. We surveyed a 10% sample of English schools, to see how they measured up against the benchmarks (Section 4).
08. We asked PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to assess the cost of the benchmarks (Section 5.1). This meant we could identify the costs of implementing the benchmarks in each school and across England. PwC also assessed the economic benefits of better career guidance (Section 5.2).
09. We used these results to make ten recommendations about how the English career guidance system could improve (Section 6).

## THE BENCHMARKS

### SECTION 3

10. Our work suggests that there is no single 'magic bullet' for good career guidance: it is about doing a number of things, identified in our benchmarks, consistently and well.
11. One can think about career guidance in terms of 'push' and 'pull' factors. 'Push' factors are school-based; 'pull' factors come from employers. Push and pull complement each other; and our conclusion from this study is that employer-pull is as important as school-push.
12. The eight benchmarks are listed in the right hand table. The full benchmarks in Section 3 are each accompanied by one or more indicators which make it possible to measure a school's performance against the benchmark.

Table 1: Eight benchmarks for providing good career guidance

1 A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME	Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents, teachers, governors and employers.
2 LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION	Every pupil, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.
3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH PUPIL	Pupils have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.
4 LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS	All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.
5 ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES	Every pupil should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.
6 EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES	Every pupil should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.
7 ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION	All pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.
8 PERSONAL GUIDANCE	Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

&lt; 1%

The percentage of a school's budget required to implement all the benchmarks in a medium-sized school outside London.



## THE SCHOOL SURVEY SECTION 4

13. The questions in the school survey were derived from the benchmarks. The results of the survey show how a representative sample of English schools measures up against each of the benchmarks.
14. The results show that schools are presently a long way from fulfilling all the benchmarks: no school fulfils more than five of the eight. But in many cases, schools partially fulfil them and by doing a little more they could get there.

## COSTS AND BENEFITS SECTION 5

15. We commissioned an assessment of costs and benefits from PwC. They used the Standard Cost Model to estimate the cost of implementing each benchmark in a range of schools of different sizes and locations in England (Section 5.1). This work involved breaking down each benchmark into a set of tasks and estimating how long each task would take, and who would carry it out. From this, they estimated the cost of implementing all the benchmarks in an 'average' school. Aggregating the school costs across England gave an estimate of the cost of implementing them across the whole system.
16. The cost of implementing all the benchmarks in a medium-sized school outside London is estimated at £53,637 in the first year and £44,676 per year thereafter. This is equivalent to £54 per pupil from the second year onwards. This is less than 1% of schools' budgets.
17. These estimates work on the assumption that schools would be starting from scratch with career guidance. In reality, all schools are already doing some careers work so the actual costs are likely to be lower.
18. The estimated cost of implementing all the benchmarks across England is £207 million in the first year and £173 million per year thereafter.
19. PwC assessed the benefits of improved career guidance in terms of higher skills and qualifications, leading to higher earnings, and reduced likelihood of being not in employment, education or training (NEET), leading to lower costs to the Exchequer (Section 5.2).
20. Comparing the costs with the benefits, PwC estimate that, for example, if one more pupil is prevented from becoming NEET, the avoided cost to the Exchequer would be enough to provide career guidance to the benchmark level for 280 pupils (Section 5.3).
21. In addition to the longer term economic benefits, shorter term benefits accrue during pupils' school careers, including better motivation and higher attainment (Section 5.4). Schools should consider these when deciding the priority they give to career guidance in the school budget.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### SECTION 6

22. Our ten recommendations are presented in detail in Section 6, and summarised on page 10. In drawing them up, we followed these principles:

01. Minimise statutory requirements to allow schools the autonomy to produce the career guidance programme that works best for their pupils;

02. Optimise incentives to encourage schools to prioritise career guidance among the many other demands on them;

03. Provide support through the National Careers Service, which currently has a very limited remit with schools;

04. Improve access to employers so all schools can provide multiple encounters for their pupils with the workplace.

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AND HIGHER ATTAINMENT

”





Table 2: Recommendations

1 EIGHT BENCHMARKS	To schools, government, Ofsted and employers	We recommend Benchmarks 1 to 8 as defining the elements of good practice in career guidance. Schools should be guided by them when setting their own careers programmes, and Ofsted should be aware of them when making judgements about the quality of career guidance in a school.
2 THE SCHOOL CAREERS PLAN	To government and schools	Every secondary school should be required to have a Careers Plan, published on the school's website.
3 DESTINATIONS DATA	To schools and government	Every secondary school should be responsible for publishing the destinations of all pupils for three years after their leaving date. The published destination data should be at an aggregated level, showing the main categories of employment, apprenticeship and further and higher education. The responsibility should be placed on schools, but they should have the support of HESA, NCCIS and other agencies that are currently involved in collecting destination data for the government.
4 THE NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE	To government	<p>The remit of the National Careers Service (NCS) should be extended to give it unequivocal responsibilities towards schools. It should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Significantly expand its work with schools, young people and parents;</li> <li>– Develop and extend its online services targeted at schools, young people and their parents, and support training in their use;</li> <li>– Provide a channel for live labour market information from the 'LMI for All' data source;</li> <li>– Disseminate good practice in career guidance to schools;</li> <li>– Collaborate with employers' organisations to broker employer encounters with schools;</li> <li>– Support schools in creating their Careers Plan.</li> </ul> <p>To make it more responsive to employers, the NCS should be reconstituted as an independent agency with its own board on which employers are strongly represented, alongside schools and colleges.</p>
5 CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION	To government	Alongside career information, live labour market information should be available to all schools through the 'LMI for All' service. This should be accessible through the NCS website as well as other outlets. Those involved in career guidance should be trained in its use.
6 CURRICULUM LEARNING AND CAREERS	To the National Centres and their funders	The National STEM Centre, National Science Learning Centre, and National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics should lead exemplary work to show how curriculum resources for science, technology, engineering and mathematics teachers can more effectively showcase career learning opportunities.
7 A REVIEW OF ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND THE WORKPLACE	To employers and business-link organisations	Employers, their representative organisations and organisations promoting business links should cooperate in a comprehensive review of what they offer. The review should focus on what could be done to make sure every school has enough employer links to meet the benchmarks in this report.
8 EMPLOYER GOVERNORS	To employers and schools	Every school should have a member of their governing body who has a remit to encourage employer engagement and to take a strategic interest in career guidance.
9 ENCOUNTERS WITH YOUNG AMBASSADORS	To the National Apprenticeship Service, further and higher education and employers	Employers and further and higher education institutes should investigate the potential for greatly expanding existing programmes for sending young ambassadors into schools from apprenticeships, colleges and universities.
10 CAREER ADVISERS	To government and schools	The government's guidance for schools should be amended to make it clear that personal guidance can be provided by both internal and external advisers. Advisers can be a member of school staff, provided they are trained to an appropriate level to give advice that is in the best interests of the pupil.



## WHY IS CAREER GUIDANCE SO CRITICAL?

IF YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RANGE OF CAREERS OPEN TO PEOPLE WITH THE RIGHT QUALIFICATIONS, THEY WILL HAVE A CLEARER IDEA OF THE ROUTES TO BETTER JOBS

Good career guidance has never been more important. Changes in technology and in the labour market mean that increasing numbers of jobs require specific education and training. This has produced new vocational options which, at present, are not well understood by many young people or their teachers. Furthermore, the decision to go to university now means a major financial commitment, rather than being a safe default choice.

Career choices are closely tied in with educational choices: once a pupil has some idea of their future career, they can make informed choices about which subjects to study. These choices can make a big difference to future earnings.<sup>1</sup> For example, people with A level mathematics on average earn 10% more in their lifetimes than those without.<sup>2</sup> These are benefits to individuals; in Section 5 we describe some of the economic benefits to the country as a whole.



Career guidance is important to social mobility. If young people and their families know more about the rich range of careers open to people with the right qualifications, they will have a clearer idea of the routes to better jobs. This knowledge may already be available to pupils from families of graduates and professionals, but if most of your family are unemployed or in low-skilled jobs, how would you know?

Many young people have internalised ideas about what 'people like them' might do and where they might fit into the education system and the labour market. For some this is about class, for others ethnicity or gender.<sup>3</sup>



ONCE YOU  
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Career guidance actively tackles these assumptions about what are appropriate jobs for girls and boys, black or white, rich or poor. Such assumptions are often mixed up with a weak understanding of what particular jobs involve. Once you find out what a 'scientist' actually does, or discover all of the different ways in which you can be a scientist, you may find it easier to imagine yourself into that role.

So every pupil – whatever their home background – needs to:

- Understand enough about career options to enable them to make informed decisions, whenever choices are open to them;
- Understand that choosing STEM subjects opens doors to careers that would otherwise be closed;
- Understand enough about the world of work to know what skills they need to succeed in it.



## SCIENCE CAREERS AND SCIENCE CAPITAL

The ASPIRES project has used longitudinal studies to look at young people's interest in science and in becoming scientists. It found that families are the major influence on pupils' career and study aspirations, because family interactions generate 'science capital'. ASPIRES defines this as the "science-related qualifications, understanding, knowledge, interest and social contacts" that the family has. Where science capital in their family is high, young people are much more likely to opt for science qualifications because they understand that science and mathematics can lead to a wide diversity of post-16 routes. The converse is also true, which makes career guidance especially valuable for pupils from homes with low science capital. ASPIRES advocates embedding STEM careers awareness into science lessons, linking curriculum learning to careers and applications.<sup>4</sup>



## THE SEARCH FOR ‘GOOD’

THERE IS NO SINGLE  
‘MAGIC BULLET’ IN  
CAREER GUIDANCE.  
IT IS ABOUT DOING  
A NUMBER OF THINGS –  
IDENTIFIED IN OUR  
BENCHMARKS –  
CONSISTENTLY  
AND WELL

Career guidance in English schools has been much criticised over the years. Most recently, Ofsted (September 2013)<sup>5</sup> and the House of Commons Education Committee (January 2013)<sup>6</sup> produced important but critical reports. They pointed in particular to:

- The patchy provision in schools since the 2012 policy to delegate all responsibility for career guidance to schools;
- The uneven availability of personal career guidance;
- The shortcomings of the National Careers Service in its provision for schools;
- The lack of clarity on schools’ responsibilities relating to career guidance.



## 2.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION IN ENGLAND

In April 2012, the government launched the all-age National Careers Service (NCS). At the same time, the former network of 'Connexions' offices and advisers, which had been criticised as being excessively focused on young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), was wound up. Since 2012, the NCS has been offering career advice and guidance via online and telephone services for all ages (13 or over), but face-to-face services only for adults.

Alongside these new arrangements, schools have had, since September 2012, a duty to "secure that all registered pupils at the school are provided with independent careers guidance during the relevant phase of their education".<sup>7</sup> The definition of 'relevant phase' was extended in December 2012 to include Years 8 to 13.<sup>8</sup>

The Statutory Guidance that supports the above legislation, issued in April 2014, defines 'independent' guidance as "external to the school. External sources of careers guidance and inspiration could include employer visits, mentoring, website, telephone and helpline access".<sup>9</sup> This definition points to the importance of encounters with employers (and recent government announcements have also indicated a change to the remit of the NCS to give it a role in brokering employer engagement).<sup>10</sup> Our study strongly supports increasing employer engagement, but also shows there is more than this to an effective careers programme.

Under the legislation, responsibility rests entirely with schools. Given that there is no longer a national network giving face-to-face advice, schools have responded to this duty in a variety of ways: sometimes using local authority services where these are available, sometimes using private specialists and sometimes, as the Ofsted review suggests, doing very little.

## 2.2 OUR METHOD

Defining what constitutes good practice in career guidance is challenging. There is a considerable amount of research in the area.<sup>11</sup> However, much of this evidence depends on studies from the USA and on work from the 20th century. The published evidence base provides some useful pointers; in this project we have supplemented this with an in-depth look at places of repute where there is evidence that good practice exists and is respected and valued by pupils, parents, employers and teachers.

From these studies, we have made professional judgements about the elements of career guidance that make up good practice. Thus, the methodology of our report is more like that of the inspectorate Ofsted, with professional judgements based on fieldwork, rather than a set of quantitative measures of impact. We believe that this holistic approach is appropriate because one of our key findings is that there is no single 'magic bullet' in career guidance. It is about doing a number of things – identified in our benchmarks – consistently and well.

The timetable for our study is in Figure 1.

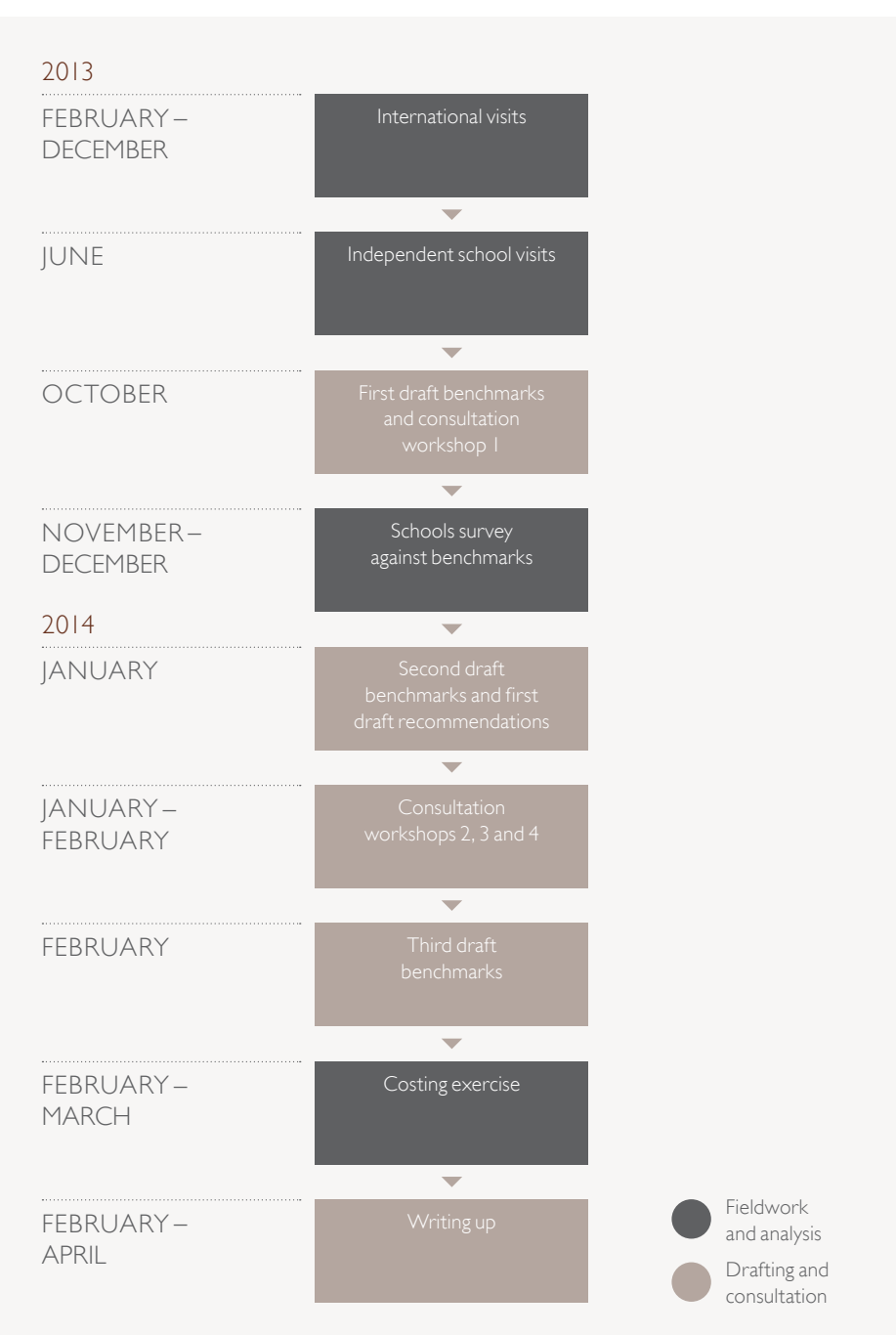


Figure 1: Timetable for our study

## 2.3 THE OVERSEAS VISITS

In the last decade, global comparisons have become common in education policy-making. This is partly due to the greater availability of comparative data (notably from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) studies) and partly because education is now seen as a fundamental necessity for global economic competitiveness. Prominently, studies of successful overseas education systems informed the revision of the National Curriculum for England.<sup>12</sup>

International comparisons need to be handled with care if they are not to end up as cherry-picking exercises in which the international evidence is used to justify prior beliefs. Our approach has been to use international case studies to reflect on practice in English schools, and to provide calibration.

In selecting which countries to visit, we were able to draw on a series of international comparative studies carried out by bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation; the European Union; and the International Labour Organisation, which have so far covered the career guidance systems in 55 countries.<sup>13</sup> We decided to look at countries which had successful education systems, successful economies and had (in most cases) been shown to have effective career guidance systems in the international studies.

Details of these visits and their findings are in Appendix I of the full report.<sup>14</sup> The countries chosen were:

- **The Netherlands**, chosen for its successful education and its cultural similarity to the UK. We visited general and vocational schools in the Breda area and met policy-makers and academics in Utrecht;
- **Germany**, chosen for its successful general education and outstanding technical and apprenticeship routes. We visited general and vocational schools in Osnabrück, Lower Saxony, and met officials, employers and academics in Osnabrück and Bielefeld;
- **Hong Kong**, chosen for its successful education and its historic links with the UK education system. We visited a general secondary and a vocational school, and met officials, academics, employers and career guidance specialists;
- **Ontario, Canada**, chosen for its successful education and the broad similarity of its school system to England's. We visited three schools in Toronto with varying degrees of vocational and academic specialism, and met officials from the Toronto School Board and the Ontario Ministry of Education as well as career guidance specialists;
- **Finland**, chosen for its highly successful education and celebrated career guidance system. We visited comprehensive schools and an upper secondary school in Jyväskylä and Helsinki, and met academics and officials from the Finnish National Board of Education in Helsinki;
- **Ireland**, chosen for its successful and rapidly improving education system and its cultural similarity to the UK. We visited a school in Dublin and met officials at the National Centre for Guidance in Education.



### GERMANY: LOW YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

A remarkable fact about Germany is that the youth unemployment rate is lower than the general rate. In 2010, unemployment for 15-24-year-olds was 6.8%, compared with the general rate of 7.7%. Compare this with 18.2% and 7.2% for the UK in September 2013 (Office for National Statistics).

Low youth unemployment is linked to Germany's highly structured training and qualification system. There are almost no jobs for people without qualifications, so remaining in education or training is the norm until people are qualified to go into a job. This makes good career guidance in schools all the more important.



WE DECIDED  
TO LOOK AT  
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CAREER GUIDANCE  
SYSTEMS IN  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDIES





## 2.4 THE VISITS TO INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

Whilst an extensive literature can be found on career guidance in English state schools, with few exceptions<sup>15</sup> little has been written about practice in independent schools, though we had heard anecdotally that good practice could be found there.

We made five half-day visits to independent schools. We asked professional associations (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference; Girls' Schools Association; the Brightside Trust; and the Good Schools Guide) and academic contacts to nominate schools where good practice could be found, and we selected:

- **Berkhamsted School**, a co-educational school in Hertfordshire, mainly a day school with some boarders;
- **Downe House**, a girls' boarding school near Newbury;
- **Dulwich College**, a boys' school in South London, mainly a day school with some boarders;
- **King Edward VI High School**, a girls' day school in Birmingham;
- **Magdalen College School**, a boys' day school in Oxford.

In each half-day visit we met senior school leaders, career guidance staff, teachers and pupils. Details of these visits and their findings are in Appendix 2.

## 2.5 INTERPRETING WITH CAUTION

A problem with any international study is that a range of cultural, political and economic factors are likely to drive educational success. Much of the context that is observed in international studies is impossible to replicate from one country to another. In Hong Kong, the driver of educational achievement is the relentless ambition of parents – not just the better-off – to get their children into the best schools and the best universities. In Finland, education is fundamental to national identity, being closely identified with the development of the national language. Such cultural factors cannot be reproduced, so when we saw something that worked in another country we had to think carefully about whether its success was tied to culture and context, or could possibly be transferred. Similar caution was needed in interpreting what we saw in independent schools.

## 2.6 FROM FIELDWORK TO BENCHMARKS

Having completed the fieldwork, we studied the literature on practice in English state schools: a summary of key resources is in Appendix 3. From all this evidence, both first- and second-hand, we produced the first draft of our benchmarks. The goal was to identify the key aspects of career guidance and, as far as possible, to specify what good practice would look like. Specification was important, because we wanted enough detail to be able to measure schools against the benchmarks. The process and discussions leading to each of the benchmarks are summarised in Section 3. At this point we tested the first draft benchmarks in a consultation workshop of employers, school leaders and career guidance specialists. The benchmarks were subsequently revised.

We then used the eight revised benchmarks to survey a 10% sample of English state schools, to see how the schools measured up against each (Section 4). This gave us an idea of where schools are already doing well, and where the priorities for action lie. This gave us some rich data to use in three consultation workshops: one with headteachers and their unions; one with employers; and one with academics and career guidance specialists. A list of those who attended the consultation workshops is in Appendix 4. We also used these workshops to try out some preliminary policy recommendations.

## 2.7 COSTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The consultation workshops enabled us to revise the benchmarks before getting them costed. For this work, we engaged independent consultants from PwC to use standard methodology to cost each benchmark. This meant we could balance costs and benefits to give a clearer sense of priority and sharpen the recommendations.

## THE BENCHMARKS

EMPLOYERS CAN  
GIVE AN AUTHENTIC  
PICTURE OF WORK  
THAT SCHOOLS ALONE  
CAN NEVER CONVEY,  
BUT THEY NEED TO  
WORK IN CLOSE  
COLLABORATION  
WITH SCHOOLS

In this section we present our eight benchmarks and show how we arrived at them. Each benchmark relates to an area of school activity, with indicators for measuring schools against the benchmark. All the benchmarks are described from the point of view of schools: this is important because decisions about career guidance are made by school leaders and governors. In our recommendations (Section 6) we make some proposals for how government and other stakeholders might support and incentivise schools, but in the end it will be schools themselves who decide and take the actions.

The clear message from all our studies is that **there is no magic bullet**. There is no single action that schools could use to transform the quality of career guidance. In all the places where we saw good career guidance, it was a matter of having a clear, stable programme that is known and understood by teachers, pupils, parents and employers. When the school has a programme that includes a clear set of activities and actions, and when the school carries out all or most of these well, career guidance is good.

### 3.1 THE OVERALL PICTURE

You can think about career guidance in terms of 'push' and 'pull' factors.<sup>16</sup>

'Push' factors are school-based: good information and careers education, personal guidance tailored to individual needs, and, above all, inspiring teaching that gives pupils the right qualifications. 'Pull' factors come from employers who show pupils what the workplace is like and inspire them with the opportunities of work, through measures including direct experience of the workplace and meeting employers and employees in person. Push and pull complement each other, and our conclusion from this study is that employer-pull is every bit as important as school-push. Employers can give an authentic picture of work that schools alone can never convey. However, employers need to work in close collaboration with schools, as we saw brilliantly exemplified in Germany (Appendix I). Between them, schools and employers need to provide what further education expert Frank McLoughlin calls a "clear line of sight to work".<sup>17</sup>

Above all, there needs to be a plan, owned by the school and known to teachers, students, parents and employers, showing how the push and pull factors work together.

The eight benchmarks are shown in Figure 2.

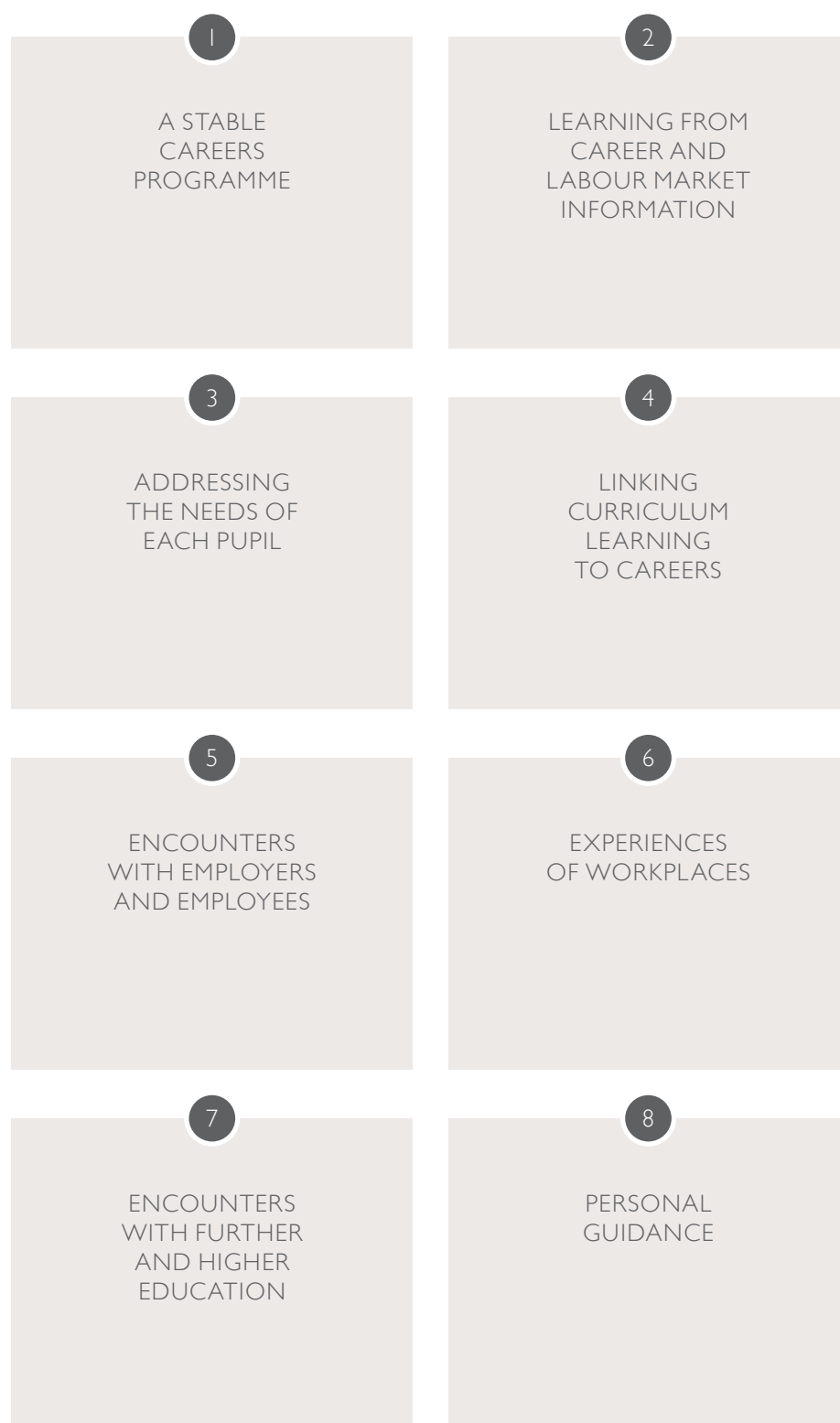


Figure 2: The eight benchmarks for careers guidance



## BENCHMARK 1: A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME

Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents, teachers and employers.

Every school should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it.

The careers programme should be published on the school's website in a way that enables pupils, parents, teachers and employers to access and understand it.

The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from pupils, parents, teachers and employers as part of the evaluation process.



## THE NETHERLANDS: THE SCHOOLDEKAAN

Dutch career guidance programmes are usually planned by the *schooldekaan* (careers coordinator). The traditional function of this person was to provide information and one-to-one advice and it was often a late-career promotion. But the role in some schools is changing, particularly among younger *schooldekanen*, towards that of coordinator of career guidance activities across the school. Activities include:

- Providing information (increasingly through websites);
- Providing one-to-one career counselling;
- Coordinating careers activities by the team of tutors, including some active contributions to tutorial sessions;
- Facilitating school-industry links.

## 3.2 BENCHMARK 1: A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME

This benchmark subsumes the other seven benchmarks, which define the components of the careers programme. Some of the places that we visited (such as Finland and Ontario) had developed curriculum guidelines for their careers programmes. We do not advocate this for deregulated English schools, but we do believe that schools should not only have their own programme but should make it known to pupils, parents, teachers and employers through their website and general literature.

Stability is important. In countries like Germany and Finland, the career guidance arrangements are known and understood by all concerned: parents and pupils know where to go and what happens next; employers know when and how to work with schools. Career guidance policy in England has been almost continuously changing since the Second World War.<sup>18</sup> We are not saying it should stop evolving, but we do believe that some cross-party agreement on external stability would be helpful, so that – once the right support and incentives are in place – schools can get on with developing and implementing their programmes.

The careers programme needs backing at senior level. Without exception, wherever we saw good career guidance, it had the explicit and active backing of the school principal, and was embedded in the school structures. In Finland, Ontario and Ireland, where the guidance counsellor tradition is strong, school leaders themselves have sometimes been guidance counsellors earlier in their career. In these systems, the senior guidance counsellors are often a key part of the school's decision-making structure and commonly have offices near to the principal's. In England, the roles are defined somewhat differently, but career guidance must have strong backing from the headteacher and senior leaders and be embedded into the structures of the school.

The careers programme needs to be coordinated and led by an appropriately trained person, who might be called the Careers Coordinator. Almost every English secondary school already has such a person (though sometimes with different titles), but they need to have the confidence of the headteacher and to be appropriately trained and supported. They will work with whatever other staff the school has decided should deliver the programme.





STABILITY IS IMPORTANT. IN COUNTRIES LIKE GERMANY AND FINLAND, THE CAREER GUIDANCE ARRANGEMENTS ARE KNOWN AND UNDERSTOOD BY ALL CONCERNED; PARENTS AND PUPILS KNOW WHERE TO GO AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT; EMPLOYERS KNOW WHEN AND HOW TO WORK WITH SCHOOLS



#### BENCHMARK 2: LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

Every pupil, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.

By the age of 14, all pupils should have accessed and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.

Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to their children.

#### 3.3 BENCHMARK 2: LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

This benchmark is about the availability of good quality information about jobs and career paths. The labour market is ever-changing, and it is impossible for even the best-informed careers specialist – let alone the regular classroom teacher – to have all the facts at their fingertips. In the past, schools have tried to meet this need by a combination of a well-stocked careers library and encounters with employers, but the internet presents new challenges and great opportunities.

Access to up-to-date career and labour market information (LMI)<sup>19</sup> is important for social mobility. If pupils and their parents know what pay you get for different jobs and where and how numerous the vacancies are, they are in a better position to make informed choices about future study and training. They are more likely to make choices that will lift them socially and challenge their stereotypical assumptions about the right job for 'people like me'. LMI serves other purposes: for example, helping to strengthen the signals about what the labour market needs and what skills and qualifications are needed to succeed in it. At present it is clear that young people's understanding of what the labour market wants is often weak.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, although aspirations are often high, knowledge about how to realise them can be far weaker.<sup>21</sup>

Young people form their aspirations about careers, and whether STEM subjects are likely to be useful to these careers, early on.<sup>22</sup> So familiarity with LMI needs to start young if pupils are to build up a full and realistic picture of the job market, and parents need to be involved as well.

Germany has some superb examples of career and labour market information, organised at a federal level. The Federal Employment Agency (FEA) office that we visited in Osnabück had an exemplary collection of paper and digital resources on jobs, LMI and career routes. LMI is available at the local (sub-regional) level, supplied directly by the FEA network headquarters in Nuremberg.

Recommendation 5 has proposals for how this benchmark could be supported.

### BENCHMARK 3: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH STUDENT

Pupils have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations.

Schools should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each pupil, and subsequent agreed decisions.

All pupils should have access to these records to support their career development.

Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations for at least three years after they leave school.

### 3.4 BENCHMARK 3: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH PUPIL

No-one could disagree that "a school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations", as Benchmark 3 suggests. However, it is hard to put into practice. Unrealistic aspirations can act in both directions: in Hong Kong and in some of the independent schools we visited, the challenge was often to lower expectations to make them more realistic. One independent school had to work hard to get pupils to think of careers in STEM other than medicine.

Other benchmarks are important in achieving this goal: encounters with employers (Benchmark 5) and further and higher education (Benchmark 7) are critical.

The indicators for this benchmark are mainly in terms of record-keeping. We saw some excellent examples of digital record-keeping in Finland and Ontario, and at Dulwich College. Well-kept electronic records are a way to maintain consistent advice even if the adviser changes, and they help pupils, parents and advisers to keep on top of agreed actions and next steps. In Finland, the 'Wilma' pupil management information system is well established in the schools we visited and enables parents, pupils and teachers to keep in touch about all school matters including career guidance. Ontario is introducing Individual Pathway Plans which has interesting possibilities for England.

This benchmark includes an indicator on collecting data on pupils' education, training or employment destinations. We believe this is important, not only for purposes of record-keeping for the individual pupils, but also because good records can be valuable when it comes to getting alumni back to act as ambassadors (Benchmark 5). Destination data could also be an important way of incentivising schools to deliver good career guidance – (see Recommendation 3).



### ONTARIO: INDIVIDUAL PATHWAY PLANS

The Individual Pathway Plan (IPP) is a web-based tool which provides a structure for pupils' career development activities and an online space where resources and reflections relating to career development can be saved.

Typically, an IPP tool provides access to a bank of career profiles and an interest-matching facility, as well as a host of optional modules including, in some cases, opportunities to interact online with employers. The Plan is owned by the individual but follows a structure that can be determined at province, school board and school level. The Ontario Education Department sees the IPP as the tool with which their career guidance policy, 'Creating Pathways to Success', will be implemented.

The IPP is currently delivered through two commercially available software packages (*My Blueprint* and *Career Cruising*). These were in use in the schools we visited, but the IPP idea is new and has yet to be fully realised. Educators at all levels were optimistic about the likelihood of the IPP being successfully implemented and embedded in practice, and it seems to offer a simple way to structure and drive pupils' individual career planning. It is designed to be easily completed, using occasional (10–20 minute) sessions. There will be a requirement that every pupil discusses their Plan with a member of staff at least twice a year, and shares it with their parents.

The implementation of IPPs has been carefully mapped by the Ontario Ministry of Education: the first stage is to provide funding and discuss with stakeholders before formally mandating its use.



#### BENCHMARK 4: LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS

All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.

By the age of 14, every pupil should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.



#### THE NETHERLANDS: TECHNASIUM

*Technasium* is a bottom-up nationwide movement to get open-ended, real-life projects embedded within schools. We saw an example at Newman College, Breda. There are 14 *Technasium* networks in the country, comprising about 75 schools in all. Pupils who opt for *Technasium* spend nearly 20% of their curriculum time working on 'real-life' problems posed by companies or institutes: this includes a day in the company and a visit to the school from company representatives. The culmination is a presentation of findings to the company that posed the problem; universities are usually also involved.

The programme has strong potential for developing problem-solving and enterprise skills as well as linking STEM to the world of work.

#### 3.5 BENCHMARK 4: LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS

We were told several times (for example, in Finland and Ontario) of the opportunities that classroom teachers have to relate careers to their teaching. Teachers of science and mathematics can increase the relevance of their teaching and foster career learning by linking their curriculum to examples from the world of work: for example, radiography technician (physics), food analyst (chemistry), conservationist (biology) and actuary (mathematics) – the examples are numerous.

In Finland and Ontario we were told that teachers are expected to know about the career opportunities arising from their subject and to make sure that pupils are taught accordingly. But it seems that the extent to which teachers were doing this in practice was patchy, and heavily dependent on the teacher's own personal experience. Putting this alongside what we know about practice in England, it seems that this is an area where aspirations run ahead of reality: nowhere have we seen it being done consistently well.

Yet the opportunities are clearly there: subject teachers see far more of their pupils than guidance specialists do, and often have a close relationship with them. Subject teachers can be powerful role models to attract pupils towards their subject and the careers that flow from it. There is evidence from the USA that this approach actually works: CareerStart is a programme in which mathematics, science and other subjects are "taught using illustrations from real jobs, enabling pupils to understand how course content is applied outside the classroom". A longitudinal study of over 7,800 pupils in schools in North Carolina indicates that:

"Schools implementing CareerStart, compared to control schools, had higher career-relevant instruction, show higher pupil engagement in school, and had improved test scores in math and reading. High-school data indicate CareerStart pupils score higher on end-of-course tests and have more credits toward graduation."<sup>23</sup>

Giving teachers experience of working in industry, as recommended in the Perkins Review of Engineering Skills<sup>24</sup>, is an excellent way to equip teachers to inspire and inform their pupils about careers in industry.

Even so, this benchmark remains aspirational, and needs support (see Recommendation 6).



#### HONG KONG: WORKING TOGETHER TO GET PUPILS INTO EMPLOYMENT

In Hong Kong, about 20% of pupils go from secondary school to one of the vocational institutions such as the Institute of Vocational Education that we visited in Chai Wan. Pupils in these institutions are seen as having so far failed in secondary education.

There is a striking commitment across the entire staff to getting pupils into employment. Everything is focused on careers: when pupils enter the college, the course they join is promoted as a career rather than a qualification. Teachers, most of whom have experience of industry, work with counsellors and school management to see that no pupil slips through the net and it is teachers' responsibility to follow up with their pupils once they have graduated, to check on and report their progress. The target is for 90% of pupils to be employed three months after leaving, and this is usually met.

## BENCHMARK 5: ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

Every pupil should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.

Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter\* with an employer.

\* A 'meaningful' encounter is one in which the student has an opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace.



### 3.6 BENCHMARK 5: ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

Careers are about employment, and employers are an important part of the career guidance mix. They provide the 'pull' to complement the 'push' from schools. In every country we visited there was strong emphasis on giving all pupils encounters with employers and people in work.<sup>25</sup> Benchmark 5 is about giving pupils multiple opportunities to learn from employers about the world of work. It is related to, but distinct from, Benchmark 6, which is about first-hand experiences of the workplace, including work experience. We believe a combination of multiple encounters with employers together with first-hand experience of workplaces is the best way to build a rich picture of the world of work. Where possible, this should include encounters with self-employed people, given that this is such an important part of the economy.

In addition to our international evidence, the research evidence is strong about the impact of employer engagement on pupils' future prospects.<sup>26</sup> Anthony Mann of the Education and Employers Taskforce points out:

"The 7% of young adults surveyed who recalled four or more activities while at school were five times less likely to be NEET and earned, on average, 16% more than peers who recalled no such activities. The findings are not linked to highest level of qualification."<sup>27</sup>

The current government also believes strongly in the power of employer engagement to drive career guidance. Launching the government's 'Inspiration Vision' in September 2013, Skills Minister Matthew Hancock said:

"We need to provide more inspiration for young people, more real-life contact with the world of work so that when they come to make big decisions, they understand where different choices could take them in the future. The best motivation and advice tend to come from people in jobs themselves. I am calling on employers to offer more to schools and colleges, so that we are building the workforce they need for the future."<sup>28</sup>

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In the independent schools we visited, it was remarkable how many opportunities pupils were given to meet employers and employees (often alumni) and find out about work. It is as if pupils are being regularly 'bathed' in the world of work through multiple encounters, so they are getting a broad perspective of employment opportunities. There are many ways that pupils can be given such encounters while in school, including:

- Visiting speakers – in assembly, in lunchtime talks, in special one-off events, etc;
- Careers fairs;
- Enterprise events (e.g. mini-enterprises);
- Other work simulations;
- Mentoring by employers;
- Mock interviews and CV writing;
- 'Speed dating' events.<sup>29</sup>

Speakers visiting the school can be quite junior employees or apprentices, with whom pupils can more readily identify. Alumni are particularly valuable.

This approach to multiple encounters with employers was conspicuous in Germany and the Netherlands, particularly in the vocational schools where there are many opportunities to encounter work, thanks to close relations between education and employers. The vocational schools, being by their nature focused on employment, are especially good at this (the *Gymnasia*, where most pupils are preparing for university entry, did much less of this kind of thing). We were particularly impressed in Germany with the way that apprentices and trainees are encouraged to communicate directly with pupils when employers visit schools (or when schools visit workplaces). A number of UK employers, including Rolls Royce, are beginning to do this too, and we think more should do so (Recommendation 9).

The approach of the German and Dutch vocational schools to providing employer encounters is harder to replicate in the English comprehensive school, though the small but growing number of University Technology Colleges now operating in England offer interesting possibilities.



## INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AND ALUMNI

All the independent schools we visited had strong alumni programmes. The main driver is fundraising: alumni can be loyal and generous donors, and for this reason independent schools have excellent alumni databases, often run by the school in collaboration with the alumni association. But alumni are also a valuable asset to careers programmes, and many of the schools draw on their alumni databases when setting up talks, and arranging visits and work experience.

## BENCHMARK 6: EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES

Every pupil should have first-hand experiences\* of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.

By the age of 18, every pupil should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.

\* As far as is possible, schools and employers should ensure these are positive experiences.

### 3.7 BENCHMARK 6: EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES

This benchmark is about first-hand experience of the workplace, in contrast to Benchmark 5 which is about school-based encounters with employers.

In all the countries we visited, work experience was strongly in evidence. There is good evidence of the impact of work experience in giving pupils a more realistic idea of the workplace.<sup>30</sup> Work experience opens pupils' eyes to the realities of the workplace: the need to dress and behave in the expected way, to arrive punctually and follow instructions accurately. These needs are true at school as well as work, but in the workplace both the expectations and the sanctions are often stronger. Work experience is especially valuable to pupils from deprived backgrounds where experience of work in the family or in the local community may be limited to low-skill occupations.

Until August 2012 schools in England had a statutory duty to provide work-related learning.<sup>31</sup> This duty was often interpreted by schools as a work experience placement during the summer term of Year 10. The simultaneous arrival of hundreds of thousands of 15-year-olds looking for placements meant that quality was often variable.

Our school survey suggests that under 50% of schools now provide traditional work experience for under-16s. However, as part of the raising of the education participation age to 17 in England, work experience now forms a required part of 16-19 study programmes, in which schools and colleges are expected to offer their post-16 pupils 'high quality and meaningful' work experience.

The changes to work-experience requirements have alerted schools to the possibility of a more flexible approach to giving pupils first-hand experience of the workplace. Experiencing the workplace does not have to involve the traditional one or two-week placement. From our visits, and from elsewhere, we have heard of effective experience programmes involving:

- Work shadowing, in which a pupil accompanies an employee through their working day;
- 'Take your son or daughter to work' days in which pupils accompany a parent to work;
- Extended school visits to workplaces;
- Episodic work experience over a longer time period, interspersed with periods in school.

There is no doubt that extended work experience can have a greater impact than short encounters. In Ontario and Ireland we saw what might be the gold standards in work experience: the Co-operative Learning and Transition Year approaches.

Extended programmes like these are hard to accommodate within the English system, so in Benchmark 6 the indicators are for at least one 'experience of the workplace' before and after the age of 16. 'Experience of the workplace' can be interpreted flexibly, and could include lighter-touch approaches such as work shadowing as well as traditional week-long work experience.



## GERMANY: GIRLS' DAY

Germany has similar problems to the UK in low participation by girls in engineering and the physical sciences. Solving this problem is of direct interest to employers looking for ways to tackle the serious shortages of STEM skills in Germany's surging economy.

We heard of many initiatives to tackle the problem, many of them involving employers. One is 'Girls' Day', whereby businesses, research centres and other institutions put on simultaneous open day events for girls, mainly aged 14-15. In 2013 this was held in April and involved 108,000 girls and 9,200 events across Germany. More than 1 million girls have been involved since the initiative started 10 years ago. A wide range of partners are involved in organising these events, including employers, trade unions and trade associations as well as schools.

These events, and other initiatives, seem to be having a positive effect: between 2010 and 2011, the proportion of females entering engineering courses increased by 19.7% and the proportion entering maths and science by 14%.





## ONTARIO: CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING

Work experience in Ontario schools could be described as 'all or nothing'. As part of its educational reforms Ontario has begun to grow a strong, formal work experience programme known as Co-operative Learning (CL). Pupils can opt to take very substantial blocks of CL as part of their high schooling (from one to eight credits, where one credit is equivalent to 110 hours). CL opportunities are credit-bearing and can be taken in any area in which pupils can find a willing employer. The schools we visited had dedicated CL teachers to lead the employer liaison and to support pupils to prepare for and reflect on their placements.

CL is a universal entitlement, but is still a minority activity in Ontario and tends to be used more heavily with vocational pupils than with those bound for university. We were told that Toronto is at the forefront of CL, so it is likely that the schools we saw were atypical of Ontario – or Canada – as a whole. CL learning is seen as the jewel in the crown of Ontario's Pupil Success Programme, and represents a gold standard for work experience – but few university-bound pupils take it because they prefer to concentrate their efforts on academic courses that carry the credits they need for university.

Our school survey (Section 4) indicates that participation in work experience is patchy across English schools, and it seems that only a minority of pupils are now getting the traditional experience. Part of the problem is the availability of placements: at present only 27% of employers offer placements.<sup>32</sup> The Perkins Review of Engineering Skills calls for the engineering community to work with employers to encourage and support provision of work experience for post-16 students.<sup>33</sup>

The employers we have spoken to (including representatives of the Confederation for British Industry, the Federation of Small Businesses, and the manufacturers' organisation EEF) tell us that the supply will come if the demand is there, and this is supported by UKCES.<sup>34</sup> In Recommendations 7, 8 and 9 we have more to say about how the supply and demand for employer encounters and placements could be stimulated.



## IRELAND: THE TRANSITION YEAR

An unusual and imaginative feature of Irish secondary schools is the optional Transition Year (TY) between the Junior and Senior cycles at age 16/17, taken by about two-thirds of pupils in the school we visited (St Mary's Secondary School in Dublin). During TY, the regular curriculum is replaced by a year of preparation for life beyond school, involving work experience, personal skills development, visits to universities and businesses, enterprise education, overseas visits and other experiences arranged by the school. Much of an Irish pupil's career preparation will depend on whether they have taken the TY. In St Mary's School, there was a selection process before pupils were admitted to TY to test their commitment to stick with the less structured format of the year.

The only flaw in the otherwise excellent TY concept is that it is optional.



## FINLAND: WORK EXPERIENCE (TET)

Finland has the most systematic and structured approach to work experience (which they call TET) that we have seen. Employers are supportive of the work experience that all pupils in Grades 7, 8 and 9 (ages 13-16) undertake and are positive about hosting pupils as well as accommodating young people as part of the vocational education placement system.

The arrangements at Vaajakoski Comprehensive School, Jyväskylä, are typical.

- Grade 7: Three days of 'working life experiences', often in a parent's workplace, or in a business selected from a local database. Additionally, one day on 'school as a working place', where pupils meet the people who work in the school.
- Grade 8: Five days of work experience. Pupils arrange this themselves and are given lessons on how to go about securing a work placement. Pupils who don't have family networks can ask their school for support.
- Grade 9: Nine days of work experience at age 15/16.

The national curriculum regulations require that schools must have a plan for contact with employers. Most schools organise employer contacts for themselves, but there is also a national website which provides a directory of local employer opportunities.

### BENCHMARK 7: ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

All pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounter\* with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including Sixth Forms, colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and pupils.

By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and pupils.

\* A 'meaningful' encounter is one in which the student has an opportunity to explore what it's like to learn in that environment.

### 3.8 BENCHMARK 7: ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

For many pupils the immediate concern about their future will not be with work, but with their next stage of study. For them, guidance is more immediately concerned with choosing the right course at university or college than with choosing the right job. This is particularly true in schools where most pupils go on to university, such as the *Gymnasias* (grammar schools) in Germany and the Netherlands, and in all the English independent schools we visited. It is also true in English selective schools and in some highly academic comprehensive schools.

In England, the landscape of educational choices is changing. The increase in university tuition fees to £9,000 a year has been accompanied by the growth of an increasingly attractive range of alternatives, including apprenticeships. It is important that pupils do not simply go to university as a default option, instead having the opportunity to consider the alternatives even if they are unlikely to take them. This benchmark is about making sure pupils see, at first-hand, what it is like to continue their study or training in further education, on an apprenticeship or at university. Since choices about the first two of these are often made before the age of 16, these encounters need to begin before that age.





Encounters with universities and colleges can include:

- Formal talks by staff and pupils;
- Visits to universities and colleges;
- Informal social events with opportunities to meet staff, pupils and apprentices.

The most effective encounters are often those where school pupils meet older students from universities, colleges or apprenticeships. These encounters can be very powerful and persuasive, especially if the older pupils are alumni of the school or are from the same ethnic or socioeconomic community as the school pupil: 'I did it, and you could too.'

All the overseas schools we visited had well-structured programmes for introducing pupils to their options for further study at the appropriate age. In Germany and the Netherlands, where pupils are channelled at age 11 into general academic or technical schools, this is simpler to organise than in comprehensive schools where all the further study options are relevant.

A consistent message from further education colleges in England is that schools (especially 11-18 schools which are keen to retain their pupils after the age of 16) do not give colleges enough access to pupils to showcase their programmes.<sup>35</sup> It should be a universally respected tenet of career guidance that it is impartial in advising pupils on the best choices for them: there is more about this in Benchmark 8.





## BENCHMARK 8: PERSONAL GUIDANCE

Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

Every pupil should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18.

## 3.9 BENCHMARK 8: PERSONAL GUIDANCE

Every school we visited, including the English independent schools, offered personal career guidance, usually in the form of a one-to-one interview with a careers adviser (who may or may not be a member of school staff). In the best cases, this guidance is closely integrated with the pastoral system, so that although the personal careers interviews may be infrequent, they can be followed up by form tutors or their equivalent. The best examples also made a connection between the personal guidance and the wider careers programme.

The school leaders to whom we spoke thought personal guidance important because it:

- Tailors advice to individual needs;
- Can direct pupils towards the information sources of most use to them, and the actions most relevant to them;
- Can (and always should) give impartial advice that has only the pupils' interests at heart.

Alongside our evidence from international practice, there is research evidence that personal guidance has an observable impact on young people's careers and progression.<sup>36</sup>

## Models for personal guidance

We have seen several well-established models:

- **Guidance counsellors.** Many countries use the guidance counsellor model for personal advice, and we saw effective examples in Finland, Ontario and Ireland. Guidance counsellor – usually qualified teachers with substantial additional training – are embedded in the structures and routines of the school and are frequently centre stage in a way that careers teachers in England may not be. They are closely involved in the school's pastoral organisation, and often play a central role in deciding the school timetable. Guidance counsellors have a broad remit, covering personal and social counselling, as well as career guidance, and the extent to which they have expertise in careers and time to focus on it varies across systems and schools.
- **External advisers.** In Germany, the well-established Federal Employment Agency offers pupils career guidance interviews as well as information. The advantage of this approach is that external advisers are totally impartial and are specialists with a range of labour market and study information at their fingertips.
- **Teacher-advisers.** A common model (which may be combined with the above two) is to use members of the school teaching staff who have been appropriately trained to give personal guidance. We saw elements of this approach in Hong Kong, the Netherlands and Ontario.
- **Senior leaders.** In one English independent school we visited, every pupil in Year 11 had a personal interview with the school principal. This approach is not uncommon in independent schools, though it may involve house tutors rather than the principal. It has the advantage that it is likely to be taken seriously by the pupils, and enables the principal to keep in touch with individuals, though it is expensive in terms of senior staff time and raises issues about impartiality.





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PROGRESSION

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In the deregulated English state system, it is neither possible nor necessary to impose a single system. In the days of the national Connexions Service, there was a network of external career advisers who would visit schools. As a legacy, England currently has a cadre of external career advisers, some employed by the local authority, some self-employed, who are available for schools to use if they wish. Interestingly, in the Netherlands, the notion that schools would buy specialist guidance services from the former regional guidance offices (equivalent to the former Connexions Service in England) has now largely been abandoned, and most of the regional guidance offices have disappeared. On the other hand, it is notable that many independent schools in England buy in external services, from organisations like Inspiring Futures and Cambridge Occupational Analysts.

Rather than specifying a particular model, the indicator for our benchmark is that the interview should be with an adviser who is appropriately trained to have the necessary guidance skills, the knowledge of information sources and the essential impartiality to do the job. This person might be an external adviser (the professional association for career guidance practitioners, the Career Development Institute, maintains a register of qualified practitioners), or might be one or more trained members of the existing school staff, whose careers role could be part-time or full-time. Note that the person who leads and coordinates the careers programme (Benchmark 1) does not necessarily have to be the same person primarily involved in giving personal guidance.

Personal guidance should raise aspirations and open doors, and should be tailored to individual abilities and needs (Benchmark 3). Pro-forma interviews conducted against a standard reporting template are of little use unless they respond to the individual.

#### **Compulsory or optional?**

Some of the places we visited (notably Finland, Germany, Ireland and Ontario) expect every pupil to have at least one careers interview, and usually more, while they are in school. In other countries it was optional. Given the impact that high-quality guidance can have at a critical stage of a pupil's career, we think at least one interview should be the expectation for all pupils, though we stop short of saying it should be compulsory.

Timing is important. Personal guidance should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made, though it should also be available on an occasional basis, given that pupils' conceptions about themselves and their careers are developing all the time, and do not always coincide neatly with the timing of curriculum choices.

#### **3.10 PRIORITISING THE BENCHMARKS**

In the light of the school survey and the costing exercise, we have something to say about priorities for implementing the benchmarks – see section 6.4.

## THE SCHOOL SURVEY

# HOW DO ENGLISH STATE SCHOOLS CURRENTLY MEASURE UP AGAINST THESE BENCHMARKS?

We wanted to get an idea of how schools measure up against the benchmarks to understand how close to these standards English schools currently are. This was important for drafting our recommendations.

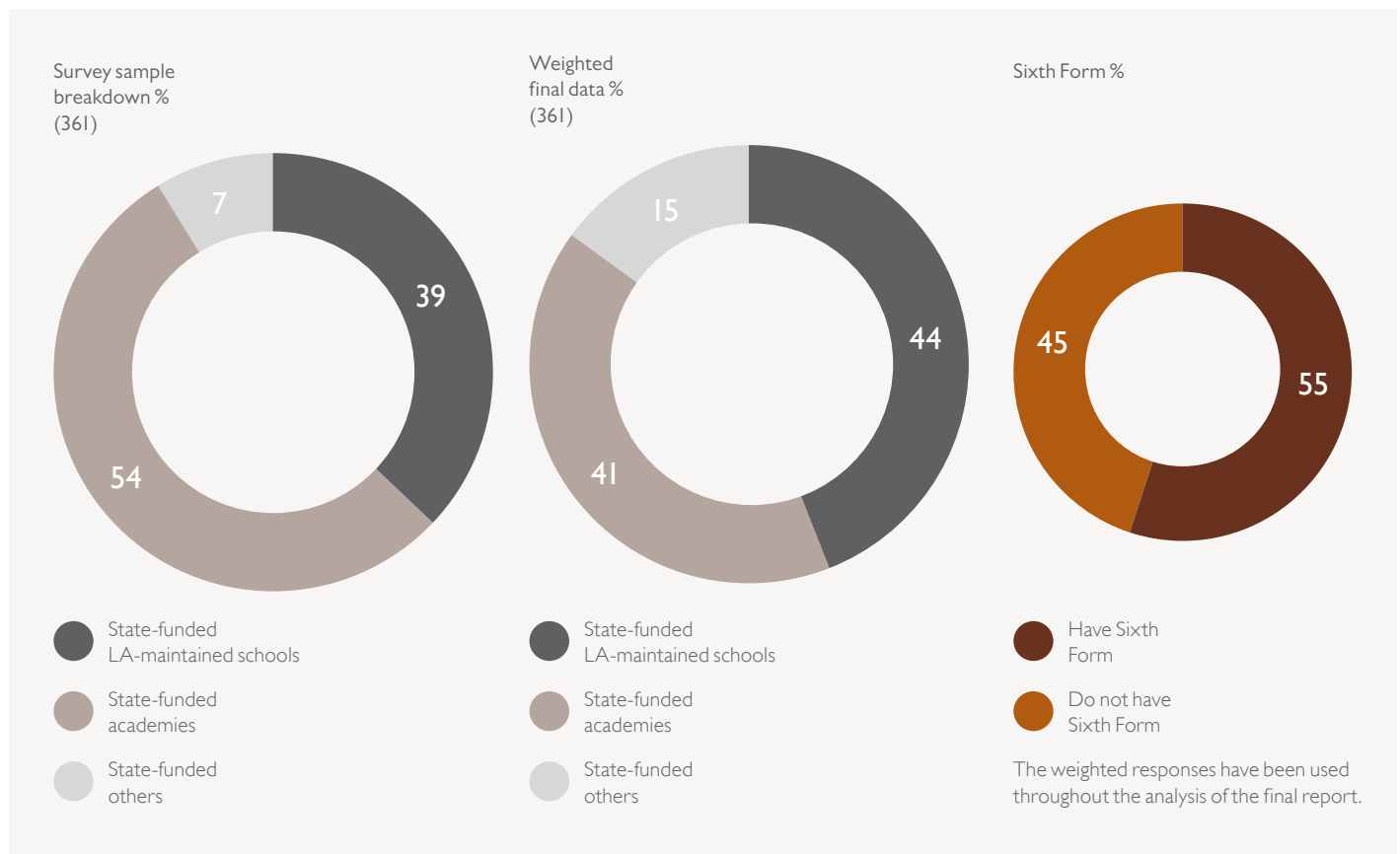
### 4.1 THE SURVEY

Details of the school survey are in Appendix 5. Our target was to get a response from 10% of mainstream English state secondary schools: with 361 responses we came close to that.

All respondents completing the survey held senior positions within their school and were either members of their School Leadership Team or involved in the provision of career guidance.

A broadly representative sample of secondary schools throughout England was achieved by setting quotas on the overall survey. Schools taking part were spread across all regions of the country and included a range of types. In the final data, the sample structure was weighted to be in line with the total state secondary school population in England. The breakdown by type of school is in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Breakdown of schools surveyed



#### 4.2 A SNAPSHOT OF CAREER GUIDANCE WITHIN THE RESPONDING SCHOOLS

Before making the comparisons with benchmarks, we asked some general questions to see how career guidance was regarded in the school.<sup>37</sup>

##### The statutory duty

Survey respondents were asked if they were aware of their statutory duty to secure access to independent and impartial career guidance:

**85%** were aware

**84%** said they did secure such access

##### Importance of careers work to the school culture

School leaders were asked to judge the importance of their careers programme to their school culture and ethos:

**89%** of them found their careers programme to be to be either very or quite important

**88%** did not want to lose any of their current provision, but rather wanted to increase and extend it

##### Importance of career activities

When asked which of the activities offered were most important, the most frequent responses related to provision of:

**43%** one-to-one career guidance interviews

**30%** work experiences

**27%** careers fairs

**22%** careers education within PSHE

From the survey evidence, schools see the importance of providing career guidance for their pupils and recognise the value of providing a range of different experiences. But what do they currently offer their pupils?

### 4.3 COMPARISON WITH THE BENCHMARKS

The results in Table 3 outline how many schools fulfilled all of the conditions within each benchmark. The benchmarks include several components. For example, the first one states that every school should have a structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team, and an identified and appropriately-trained person of authority responsible for it. There are therefore three conditions that a school has to meet before it can be said to achieve the benchmark; the survey asked questions about each of these conditions. The full results from each of the questions can be found in Appendix 5.

The percentages in Table 3 measure affirmative responses (where the benchmarks state 'all pupils', we have assumed a more pragmatic measure of between 91% and 100% of pupils). However, a significant minority of respondents stated that they did not know the answer to some questions. For example, 22% did not know whether every year, from the age of 11, pupils had participated in at least one meaningful encounter with an employer, and 42% could not say whether pupils had opportunities to learn about STEM careers. This is not surprising and reflects the findings of previous research.<sup>38</sup> It suggests that some senior school leaders do not know the detail of their career guidance provision.

### 4.4 WHAT PROPORTION OF SCHOOLS ACHIEVE SOME OR ALL OF THE BENCHMARKS?

Fulfilling all the components of all the benchmarks is very demanding. Figure 4 shows that 69% of schools achieved at least one benchmark and 39% achieved at least two. But only 2% of schools achieved five of the eight benchmarks, and no schools achieved six or more benchmarks.

The benchmarks represent a high standard, but is the standard so high that it was unrealistic for schools to achieve them? Or, would schools have to simply adapt and extend their current practice to achieve more, or even all of the benchmarks? To test this we analysed the data to see whether schools achieved a set of 'relaxed benchmarks'. These lowered the threshold for benchmark achievement so that for instance, where the benchmark says 'all pupils' this is relaxed to 51% or more pupils. The criteria for the relaxed benchmarks are set out in Table 12 in Appendix 5.

When the thresholds were relaxed, we found that many more schools achieved them. 88% achieved at least one of the 'relaxed' benchmarks, 50% achieved three, 13% achieved five and 1% of schools achieved all eight. This is not to argue for relaxing the benchmarks, but rather to demonstrate that many schools already deliver a lot of good career guidance activity and that, with some adaptation and extension, reaching all eight benchmarks is realistic.

#### NOTES ON TABLE 3

Some of the indicator statements in Table 3 are worded differently from those in the benchmarks in Section 3 of this report. This is because the school survey used an earlier version of the benchmarks.

- A 88% of schools allocate an individual with responsibility for careers; 44% of these individuals are members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- B 6% of schools regularly evaluate their provision. This includes feedback from pupils (73% of these schools), teachers (54%), parents (39%) and employers (39%); 21% of these schools seek feedback from all four groups.
- C Where schools indicated that between 91% and 100% of pupils participated in an event, this is viewed as indicating that 'all' pupils participate. 32% of respondents said they did not know the proportion.
- D Pupils have access in 72% of the 202 schools that keep records.
- E Destination data is collected for Year 13 leavers by 84% of all schools with Sixth Forms.
- F 30% of schools with Sixth Forms (n=184) provided a positive response to this question.
- G 53% of schools provide encounters with Sixth Forms; 45% of schools have an encounter with colleges; while 21% of schools have an encounter with apprenticeship providers. 23% of schools said their pupils had encounters with all three.
- H 21% of schools with Sixth Forms (n=184) provided a positive response to this question.

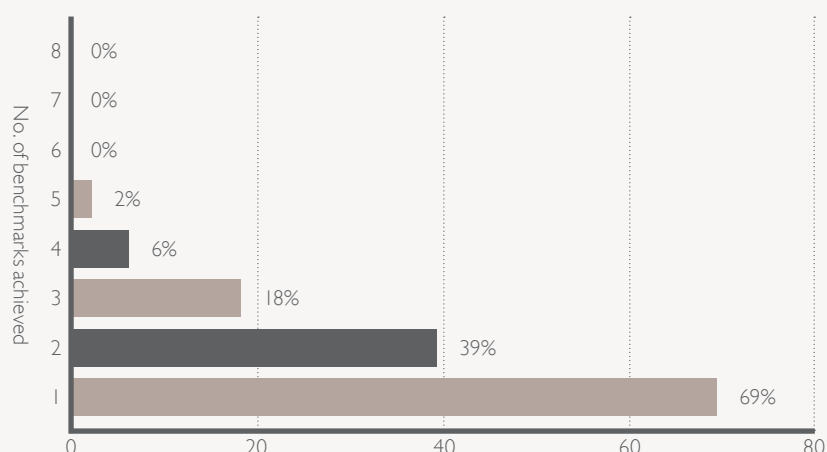


Figure 4: Proportion of schools achieving some or all benchmarks

Table 3: Comparisons with benchmarks

		% of schools that meet each element within the benchmark
1 A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME	1.1 Every school should have a structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained person of authority responsible for it. <sup>A</sup>	71%
	1.2 The careers programme should be published on the school's website in a way that enables pupils, parents, teachers and employers to understand the school's offer in this area.	19%
	1.3 The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from pupils, parents, teachers and employers as part of the evaluation process. <sup>B</sup>	66%
2 LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION	2.1 By the age of 14, all pupils <sup>C</sup> should have accessed and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.	20%
	2.2 Parents and carers should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to their children.	72%
3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH PUPIL	3.1 A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations.	73% (stereotypes) 88% (aspirations)
	3.2 Schools should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each pupil, and subsequent agreed decisions.	56%
	3.3 All pupils should have access to these records to support their career development.	42% <sup>D</sup>
	3.4 Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations after they leave school. <sup>E</sup>	79%
4 LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS	4.1 By the age of 14, every pupil should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.	20%
5 ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES	5.1 Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter with an employer.	39%
6 EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES	6.1 By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.	46%
	6.2 By the age of 18, every pupil should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.	30% <sup>F</sup>
7 ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION	7.1 By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounter with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including Sixth Forms, colleges, and apprenticeship providers. <sup>G</sup> This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and pupils.	23%
	7.2 By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and pupils.	21% <sup>H</sup>
8 PERSONAL GUIDANCE	8.1 Every pupil should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18.	44% (age 16) 22% (age 18)

## 4.5 SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SCHOOLS

The results of the survey were tested for significance within each component to see whether particular types of schools were associated with particular elements of the benchmarks.

The most frequently observed statistically significant relationships<sup>39</sup> were found to be associated with schools with an 'Outstanding' grading by Ofsted and schools with a careers quality mark.<sup>40</sup> Note that these are associations, but they are not necessarily causal relationships. It is also worth noting that 38% of schools with a quality mark are also graded as 'Outstanding', so there is a significant overlap between these two characteristics.

Schools graded by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' are significantly more likely than those graded as either 'Good' or 'Requiring improvement' to:

- Have a structured careers programme that is written down (*Indicator 1.1*);
- Evaluate the effectiveness of their careers plan every three years (*1.3*);
- Secure systematic feedback from pupils, parents and employers every three years (*1.3*);
- Have a particular individual with responsibility for careers work and advice (*1.1*);
- Keep systematic records of individual advice (*3.2*);
- Say that all pupils have had at least one direct experience of a workplace (*6.1*);
- Rate the careers programme as being 'very important' for pupils (*1*).

Schools with a quality mark for career guidance are significantly more likely than those without to:

- Have a structured careers programme that is written down (*1.1*);
- Publish their careers plan on their school website (*1.2*);
- Evaluate the effectiveness of their careers plan every three years (*1.3*);
- Secure systematic feedback from pupils, parents, employers and teachers every three years (*1.3*);
- Have an individual responsible for careers who is also part of the school senior leadership team (*1.1*);
- Encourage parents to access and use information about labour market and future study (*2.2*);
- Rate the importance of the careers programme as being 'very important' for pupils (*1*).

## 4.6 COMMENTARY ON THE SURVEY

This analysis shows how far English schools have to go before they would achieve all of the benchmarks. But to be fair, none of the overseas schools that we visited, even the most exemplary, would have achieved them all. Most of the benchmarks have several components, and achieving all of them would be a challenge for even the best schools. This suggests the need for some kind of prioritisation of the benchmarks. The cost of implementing each benchmark is also a significant factor, and in Section 5 we describe the costing exercise.

In the tables opposite we have categorised the benchmark indicators according to how readily, in our judgement, they could be achieved by schools that are not already achieving them.

### NOTES ON TABLES 4, 5 AND 6

- A The critical word here is 'actively'. It would be interesting to discover how actively the schools interpret the benchmark in practice.
- B In the revised version of this benchmark, we are proposing that records of destinations should be kept for three years, which is much more challenging.
- C We were surprised to see the low proportion of schools that achieve this indicator. It may be that pupils are visiting universities under their own or their family's initiative, and the school is not recording this.
- D This is a challenging indicator for two reasons: we are expecting pupils to start doing this when young (age 14); and it is difficult to get accurate labour market information and make it accessible to this age group. See Recommendation 5.
- E Although obviously attractive, this turned out to be a challenging indicator to achieve in all the countries we visited.
- F It is likely that the schools in our survey interpreted this as traditional work experience (e.g. a week-long placement) rather than the lighter-touch options that we are proposing in Benchmark 6.
- G The original benchmark used for the survey was in terms of 'a professional career adviser'. The revised benchmark clarifies that this does not mean they necessarily have to be external to the school.

Table 4: Indicators already being achieved by most schools, and could readily be achieved by all, given the right incentives

		% of respondents in survey
1 A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME	1.1 Every school should have a structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained person of authority responsible for it.	71%
	1.3 The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from pupils, parents, teachers and employers as part of the evaluation process.	66%
2 LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION	2.2 Parents and carers should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to their children.	72%
3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH PUPIL	3.1 A school's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations. <sup>A</sup>	73% (stereotypes) 88% (aspirations)
	3.2 Schools should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each pupil, and subsequent agreed decisions.	56%
	3.3 All pupils should have access to these records to support their career development.	72%
	3.4 Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations after they leave school. <sup>B</sup>	79%

Table 5: Indicators only being achieved by a minority of schools, but could be relatively easily achieved by all, given the right incentives

1 A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME	1.2 The careers programme should be published on the school's website in a way that enables pupils, parents, teachers and employers to understand the school's offer in this area.	19%
7 ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION	7.1 By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounter with providers of the full range of learning opportunities, including 6th forms, colleges, and apprenticeship providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and pupils.	23%
	7.2 By the age of 18, all pupils who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and pupils. <sup>C</sup>	21%

Table 6: Indicators only being achieved by a minority of schools, harder to achieve by all because of the time and cost involved, but could be done, given the right incentives

2 LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION	2.1 By the age of 14, all pupils should have accessed and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options. <sup>D</sup>	20%
4 LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS	4.1 By the age of 14, every pupil should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers. <sup>E</sup>	20%
5 ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES	5.1 Every year, from the age of 11, pupils should participate in at least one meaningful encounter with an employer.	39%
6 EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES	6.1 By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have. <sup>F</sup>	46%
	6.2 By the age of 18, every pupil should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have. <sup>F</sup>	30%
8 PERSONAL GUIDANCE	8.1 Every pupil should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18. <sup>G</sup>	44% (age 16) 22% (age 18)

## COSTS AND BENEFITS

# ADOPTING OUR PROPOSED BENCHMARKS WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE A COST, BUT AGAINST THIS ARE THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF BETTER CAREER GUIDANCE

We commissioned PwC to estimate the costs of implementing each benchmark, and we also asked them to estimate their economic benefits. Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 below are based on PwC's full report, which is online at [www.gatsby.org.uk/GoodCareerGuidance](http://www.gatsby.org.uk/GoodCareerGuidance).

### 5.1 COSTS OF APPLYING THE BENCHMARKS

We anticipate that schools will work towards all eight benchmarks simultaneously, but PwC estimated the cost of activities required to achieve each benchmark separately. They also assumed that all schools start from a position where none of the benchmark activity is currently taking place. This will tend to underestimate the current state of career guidance in English schools and overestimate the additional cost of introducing the benchmarks.



“

PwC ESTIMATE THAT  
THE TOTAL COST OF ACHIEVING  
ALL THE BENCHMARKS IN A TYPICAL  
SCHOOL WILL BE EQUIVALENT  
TO £54 PER PUPIL FROM  
YEAR 2 ONWARDS

”

PwC assumed that schools will continue to provide careers education as part of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and will work with other parties to provide individual plans for young people with special educational needs. They also assumed that local authorities will retain a statutory duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training for all resident young people aged 16-19 and that they will continue to work with schools to identify those in danger of becoming NEET. PwC have, therefore, attributed no additional cost to this activity.

#### Approach

PwC used the Standard Cost Model to estimate the economic costs of the benchmarks. This involved using activity-based costing to break down each benchmark into its component activities and then gathering cost information relating to a small cross-section of 'typical' schools which were then extrapolated across all state-maintained schools in England.

PwC's analysis considers the costs of establishing and operating the benchmarks, focusing on the costs incurred by schools only. They do not consider any additional costs for the National Careers Service or others involved in the career guidance system. PwC do not attach a cost to any time spent by pupils nor do they include any costs incurred by parents and employers on the basis that any additional costs incurred by each of these stakeholders are at least offset by benefits to them.

PwC's assessment of the potential costs of each benchmark has involved the following five steps:

- Identifying who needs to do what for each benchmark;
- Determining the size of the affected population (i.e. the number of schools by type); and the frequency with which each task needs to be completed;
- Estimating the unit costs (i.e. cash and time) associated with each set of activities;
- Identifying the effect of school characteristics (i.e. size, type and location) on delivery costs; and
- Determining the overall costs of undertaking the activities (as the product of the unit cost and the quantity).

PwC's approach to assessing the costs of the benchmarks has been largely desk-based, drawing on the knowledge of the International Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby (iCeGS). PwC used data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Department for Education (DfE) as well as various other official publications and published reports. Details of all the sources are in PwC's full report.

#### The school delivery model

In consultation with iCeGS, PwC developed a school delivery model for the English context which forms the basis of their cost analysis. This model comprises a core team that is responsible for delivering career guidance with the assistance of a support team.

The core team is led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), who is accountable to the school's Headteacher, Board of Governors and other senior stakeholders for the delivery of career guidance in the school. The Careers Coordinator reports directly to the SLT member on matters related to career guidance and is responsible for the design, development and implementation of career guidance. The Administrator (or Administrators, depending on resourcing requirements) provides administrative assistance for career guidance activities.

The careers support team is comprised of career adviser(s), class-based teachers and IT support, all of whom aid the delivery of career guidance in the school.

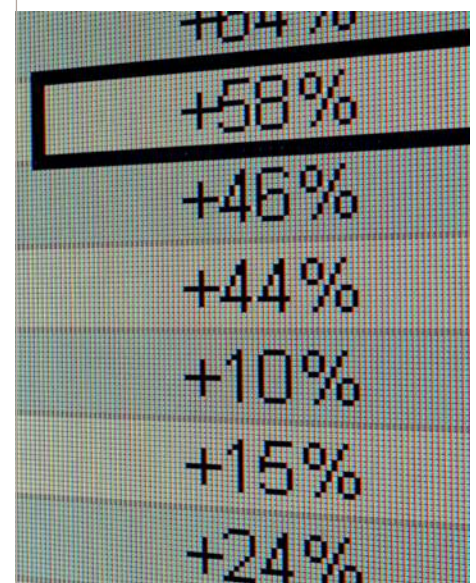


Table 7: Annual cost of achieving the benchmarks in a typical school

Benchmark activity		Employment costs	Expenses	Total
1 A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME	The core team responsible for career guidance in each school will develop and manage the implementation of a stable, structured career guidance programme with subject matter input from class-based teachers, the career adviser(s) and IT support.	£18,525 in Year 1 £9,564 thereafter	–	£18,525 in Year 1 £9,564 thereafter
2 LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION	The core team will design and implement a strategy for collating/purchasing and distributing career path and labour market information, which will be delivered in class by the career adviser(s).	£1,864	£1,000	£2,864
3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH PUPIL	The core team will oversee data input into career guidance records for each pupil. Records will be maintained by the career adviser(s) with some input from IT support.  The school will purchase an alumni tracking system and the careers administrator(s) will be responsible for using it to track pupil destinations for at least three years.	£2,852	£800	£3,652
4 LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) teachers will maintain their knowledge about the link between careers and curriculum learning. This will be achieved through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and supported by the development of external networks by the core team, career adviser(s) and class-based teachers.  The school will incur additional expenses relating to professional membership fees and teaching cover (to facilitate attendance at CPD).	£14,635	£800	£15,435
5 ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES	The core team will be responsible for providing pupils with at least one meaningful encounter with an employer per year.	£1,363	–	£1,363
6 EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES	The core team will be responsible for the design and management of the process for providing workplace experiences, which will be implemented by the career adviser(s).	£8,074	–	£8,074
7 ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION	The core team will be responsible for encouraging encounters with further and higher education, including covering transport costs for those pupils who would otherwise be unable to afford it.	£1,363	£270	£1,633
8 PERSONAL GUIDANCE	The core team will be responsible for managing and arranging structured interviews with pupils, which will be conducted by the career adviser(s).	£2,091	–	£2,091
Total cost of achieving benchmarks in first year		£50,767	£2,870	£53,637
Total cost of achieving benchmarks from second year onwards		£41,806	£2,870	£44,676

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IF ONE MORE  
PUPIL IS DETERRED  
OR PREVENTED  
FROM BECOMING  
NEET, THE AVOIDED  
COST TO THE  
EXCHEQUER WOULD  
BE ENOUGH TO  
PROVIDE THE  
BENCHMARKS  
TO 280 PUPILS

”

### Estimated costs

There are two main types of costs associated with the delivery of the benchmarks:

- The employment costs related to achieving the benchmarks;
- Any additional expenses incurred (e.g. subscription fees, teaching cover, etc.).

PwC considered these costs separately. Table 7 shows the costs associated with delivery of the benchmarks in a typical school (i.e. a medium-sized school outside London and the Fringe Area).

PwC assumed that all schools start from a position where none of the benchmark activity is currently taking place. They allowed additional time in the first year of implementation for the initial design of the career guidance programme. PwC believe this will require a broader consultation and research exercise than the subsequent annual reviews and updates. Based on the information in Table 7, PwC estimate that the total cost of achieving all the benchmarks in a typical school will be £53,637 in the first year and **£44,676 per annum thereafter**. This is equivalent to **0.9% of total revenue expenditure<sup>41</sup> in 2012/13 or £54 per pupil** from the second year onwards.

The cost of the benchmarks is sensitive to school characteristics such as size (i.e. the number of pupils and teachers), type (i.e. whether or not it has a sixth form) and location (i.e. pay-scale area). Table 8 summarises the cost of achieving the benchmarks by school type and location from the second year onwards.

Table 8: Sensitivity analysis: Total cost of achieving the benchmarks by school type and location from the second year onwards

	Inner London	Outer London	The Fringe Area	Rest of England
Small	£48,264	£46,942	£40,608	£38,472
Medium	£56,874	£55,380	£47,053	£44,676
Large	£77,445	£75,649	£62,184	£59,161
Sixth Form	£76,744	£74,978	£61,784	£58,708

PwC estimate that the total cost of delivery will range from £45,209 to £92,466 in the first year and £38,472 to £77,445 from the second year onwards in small schools in the rest of England and large, Inner London schools respectively.

PwC then used DfE data on school size and location and the total number of pupils to estimate the overall school delivery costs across England as a whole. They estimate the total cost of achieving all the benchmarks across England will be **£172 million per year** from the second year onwards. This is equivalent to approximately **1.8% of gross expenditure<sup>42</sup> and £54 per pupil per year**. Considering these costs over the course of a pupil's journey from Year 7 to Year 13, PwC estimate the total cost per pupil in a school with a Sixth Form outside of the Fringe Area will be £196.

Using the DfE's projections of expected pupil numbers, PwC estimate that in 2021/22 the total cost of implementation will be **£181 million per year or £52 per pupil** (i.e. the cost per pupil is actually expected to decrease because the 5% increase in total cost is offset by a projected increase of almost 11% in pupil numbers during this time).

These cost estimates relate to school-level provision only. PwC have not included the costs of providing career guidance to those pupils who leave school at the end of Year 11 and attend a further education college because they have assumed that those costs are borne by the colleges themselves.

## 5.2 THE BENEFITS OF USING THE BENCHMARKS

More effective career guidance can potentially lead to economic and social benefits for the individual pupil, for employers, for the government and for the country as a whole, which offset the costs to schools of implementing these benchmarks.

PwC developed an impact pathway which describes, in a simplified way, how the career guidance embodied in the benchmarks (as a package of measures) can be expected to drive positive economic and social outcomes. This is based on a review of previous analyses of the economic and social contribution of schools career guidance.<sup>43</sup> Our review suggests that economic and social outcomes are likely to arise from a sequence of links (see Figure 5):

- Pupils get a better understanding of potential work and progression routes;
- Pupils are, therefore, better motivated to commit to education and acquire the skills and qualifications they require for a successful working life and, as a result, are likely to achieve more;
- Pupils with higher skills and qualifications are likely to achieve better outcomes in the labour market (e.g. higher earnings, better likelihood of employment and greater satisfaction in their working life);
- Pupils are less likely to spend protracted or frequent periods not in education, employment or training (NEET) which means that their wellbeing will be greater and they will impose relatively fewer costs on the public finances and on society.

PwC reviewed the existing literature to identify evidence which can be used to inform an understanding of the potential benefit of the benchmarks. In practice, in the time available, this analysis is necessarily illustrative rather than exhaustive.

PwC note that there is limited empirical evidence on the relationship between all elements of the career guidance benchmarks, pupil motivation and attainment. They therefore focused on the potential implications of two related outcomes:

- An increase in the earnings of young people who either acquire more skills and qualifications and so increase their lifetime earnings and/or increase their probability of finding employment, which will be reflected in higher incomes for them as individuals and also higher receipts for the Exchequer (as they pay more tax on their earnings);
- A potential reduction in the number of young people who are NEET.

“SCHOOLS NEED TO ASSESS THE BENEFITS TO THEIR PUPILS OF BETTER CAREER GUIDANCE, AND IN MANY CASES THESE BENEFITS ARE NOT TO BE SEEN UNTIL SEVERAL YEARS AFTER THEY HAVE LEFT SCHOOL”

Research for the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) has estimated the returns to intermediate and low-level vocational qualifications<sup>44</sup> and higher education<sup>45</sup>, both in terms of an increase in the lifetime earnings of the learners and benefits to the Exchequer. There are also a number of studies which estimate the economic and social costs associated with growing numbers of young people being NEET. Some of these costs are borne by the young people themselves (e.g. wage scarring, reduced employability, fewer or lower qualifications, reduced self-confidence), while others are borne by the Exchequer and society as a whole (e.g. additional benefit payments, higher cost of crime, higher healthcare costs, lost tax revenues, etc.).

Figure 5: Overview of impact pathway



### 5.3 INTERPRETATION OF THE COSTS AND BENEFITS

PwC gleaned some sense of the scale of the potential economic and social benefits of the career guidance benchmarks relative to their costs of delivery by comparing the lifetime cost of providing one pupil with career guidance throughout their school career with the estimated total return (i.e. increased lifetime earnings for the individual, enhanced income tax and National Insurance receipts to the Exchequer and potential cost savings for public finances in areas such as benefits, crime, healthcare etc.).

On the basis that the expected lifetime cost is approximately £200, then if:

- One more pupil is encouraged to attain an undergraduate degree (when otherwise they would only have acquired A levels), this would be enough to offset the costs of providing the benchmarks to **985 pupils**;
- One more female pupil is encouraged to attain a foundation degree (when otherwise they would only have acquired A levels), this would be enough to offset the costs of providing the benchmarks to **535 pupils**;
- One more pupil is encouraged to attain a Level 2 apprenticeship (when otherwise they would only have acquired a Level 1 qualification), this would be enough to offset the costs of providing the benchmarks to **between 395 and 610 pupils**;
- One more pupil is encouraged to attain a Level 3 apprenticeship (when otherwise they would only have acquired a Level 2 qualification), this would be enough to offset the costs of providing the benchmarks to **between 665 and 990 pupils**;
- One more pupil is deterred or prevented from becoming NEET, the avoided cost to the Exchequer would be enough to provide the benchmarks to **280 pupils**.

### 5.4 BENEFITS TO SCHOOLS THIS SECTION IS NOT PART OF THE PWC REPORT

PwC's work includes an estimate of the overall cost of implementing the benchmarks in all schools in England. However, it is not practical to suggest that these costs should be met by the government passing additional earmarked funding directly to schools. The well-established principle of school autonomy means that it is not possible to ring-fence any additional funds exclusively for use to improve career guidance.

So, to implement the benchmarks, schools will have to find the necessary funds from within their own budget. For most schools, this means they will need to increase the priority of career guidance within their budget. Although the amounts involved are small relative to the overall budget (less than 1% of total revenue expenditure), we appreciate that schools have many other competing calls on their budgets, and this is at a time when school funding is at best at a standstill.

Schools need to assess the benefits to their pupils of better career guidance, and in many cases these benefits are not to be seen until several years after they have left school. That is why we believe that publishing destination measures is an important part of incentivising schools.

But there is evidence that good career guidance also brings benefits in the shorter term, while pupils are still at school.<sup>46</sup> These benefits include better motivation of pupils once they have clear goals for future study and careers, leading to:

- Higher self-esteem;
- Higher attainment;
- Reduced drop-out rates.

Taken together with the long-term benefits to pupils' future lives, these benefits stand up strongly against competing priorities.

Finally, there is the pupil premium.<sup>47</sup> Given the special benefit of career guidance for pupils from disadvantaged homes (Section 1), there is a strong case for directing pupil premium funds towards making improvements to career guidance.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

# THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS ARE ABOUT HOW SCHOOLS COULD MAKE CAREER GUIDANCE A HIGHER PRIORITY

### 6.1 HOW OUR RECOMMENDATIONS LINK TO THE BENCHMARKS

Our recommendations are detailed in section 6.4 below. The first recommendation, not surprisingly, is that these benchmarks should be used by schools, Ofsted and the National Careers Service in deciding what quality career guidance looks like. In Recommendation 1, however, we also have something to say about priorities among the benchmarks.

Our other recommendations are about how schools, and the systems that support them, could make career guidance a higher priority so they do better against these benchmarks.

The government has given schools the responsibility for determining their career guidance and we do not recommend reversing this policy. Schools are well placed to decide their own needs. But we believe schools need:

- The right incentives to prioritise career guidance;
- The right central and local support;
- Better access to employers where they do not have this already.



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EMPLOYERS IN ENGLAND TOLD  
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THE MESSAGE WAS: 'IF THE DEMAND  
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## 6.2 THE PULL AND THE PUSH

The April 2014 Statutory Guidance from DfE gives guidance on schools' statutory duty to "secure independent and impartial careers guidance for young people in schools". It describes how "employers, schools and others will work together to inspire young people about the world of work, opening their eyes to the range of learning and career opportunities that are open to them", but it is for schools to determine the details of what they should do. Our study tells us that a combination of employer 'pull' and school 'push' is needed for good career guidance, and our recommendations are designed to create the conditions needed to bring about this balance.



## 6.3 PRINCIPLES BEHIND THE RECOMMENDATIONS

### Principle 1

#### Minimise statutory requirements

Our starting point is that new statutory requirements on schools should be kept to a minimum, in the spirit of school autonomy. We would want to add as few additional requirements as possible, but we do recommend that there should be new requirements to publish a careers plan on the school website (Recommendation 2) and for schools to produce and publish their own destination statistics (Recommendation 3).

### Principle 2

#### Optimise incentives

Where possible, we believe that change should be brought about by providing the right incentives for schools. Our survey suggests that most school leaders already recognise the importance of career guidance, but are not always giving it the priority it needs, because of all the other demands on them. Ofsted inspections and performance tables shape the behaviour of most schools, and this can marginalise activities that are not central to improving the indicators that preoccupy schools: results in external examinations.

So we need to think about how schools can be incentivised to do better with career guidance. Ofsted is a powerful influence on schools, and the inspectorate has said that career guidance will be explicitly checked in future inspections.<sup>48</sup> This will be a critical incentive, but it is important that the right things are checked. We commend these benchmarks to Ofsted as a basis for reporting.

Given the importance of employer 'pull', it is critical that Ofsted comes to a view on employer engagement as well as on the 'push' coming from schools. Ofsted's 2014 School Inspection Handbook talks in general terms about "independent information, advice and guidance to assist pupils on their next steps in training, education or employment", but goes into no detail about what this looks like when it is good.<sup>49</sup>

Much more could be made of **destination measures** as incentives. In the university sector, comparative data on employment destinations is of great interest to prospective pupils, and the same could be true for school pupils and their parents. Our school survey shows that the majority of schools are already collecting some destination data for their leavers; our proposal is that this should become a *requirement* for all pupils for three years after their leaving date. If robust destination data are centre stage in school performance tables, this will be a powerful incentive for heads to make sure their pupils are fully informed about the range of options that could be right for them. There are other benefits from collecting destination measures, and these are described in Recommendation 3.

A further incentive for schools, which already exists, is the option to seek the award of a career quality mark.<sup>50</sup>



## UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGES

University Technical Colleges (UTCs) in England were developed in response to repeated demands from industry for an increased number of well-educated, high-status technicians and engineers. UTCs are:

- New schools for 14-18-year-olds with around 600 pupils, and a longer school day;
- Sub-regional, implying travelling distances of up to one hour;
- Backed by a university and local employers, and sometimes further education colleges;
- Offering a curriculum focused on technical education. For 14-16-year-olds this is 60% general and 40% technical; for 16-18-year-olds it is 40% general and 60% technical.

The JCB Academy in Staffordshire was the first UTC, opened in September 2010 in a converted industrial mill. Its curriculum specialises in engineering and it has strong links to engineering companies including JCB and Rolls Royce.

UTCs have the potential to provide the kind of high quality technical education found in Germany and the Netherlands, but so far only 17 are open, with a further 33 in development. Their strong links to employers mean that they are in good position to give pupils multiple encounters with employers and the workplace, and to integrate career guidance strongly with the curriculum.



#### STEM AMBASSADORS AND STEMNET

STEMNET (the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network) is a charity established in 1996 and funded partly by BIS and DfE. It works with thousands of schools, colleges and STEM employers to enable young people to meet inspiring role models and experience hands-on STEM activities that bring learning and career opportunities to life.

STEMNET's main programme is STEM Ambassadors, a network of over 27,000 volunteers from a very wide range of STEM occupations across engineering, digital and life sciences who promote STEM subjects to young learners in a range of practical and engaging ways. 40% of STEM Ambassadors are women and 13% are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with nearly 60% aged under 35.

#### Principle 3 Provide support through the National Careers Service

Under current arrangements (Section 2.1), schools make their own decisions on how they provide career guidance. This autonomy has advantages, but we think that many schools would benefit from greater central support. In its September 2013 review, Ofsted said that the NCS “made little contribution to careers guidance in the schools we visited”. We recommend that the NCS should be given a more explicit remit for career guidance in schools. More details are in Recommendation 4.

#### Principle 4 Improve access to employers, further and higher education

Employer-pull is probably the most important way that career guidance can be improved, yet in its September 2013 review, Ofsted reported that “links with employers were perhaps the weakest aspect of career guidance in the 60 schools visited”. Some schools do well in this area (for example, the University Technical Colleges), but most schools have a long way to go before they have anything like the rich variety of employer relationships that we have seen in our visits to Germany, Finland and the Netherlands. DfE's April 2014 Statutory Guidance gives schools a steer in this direction, which we welcome.

There is no shortage of schemes in England to link employers with schools and colleges. These include:

- STEM Ambassadors and STEMNET;
- ‘Inspiring the Future’ from the Education and Employers Taskforce;
- ‘Business Class’ from Business in the Community;<sup>51</sup>
- Career Academies UK;<sup>52</sup>
- Initiatives run by local Chambers of Commerce or Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Potentially, all these programmes are capable of expansion. But when we consulted employers in England, we got the firm impression that the problem is at least as much one of demand as of supply. Employers in England told us of unanswered offers of help or unfilled vacancies in work-experience placements. The message was: ‘If the demand is there, the supply will come.’ The measures we are proposing to incentivise schools to address the ‘pull’ and ‘push’ of career guidance should increase schools’ demand for encounters with employers. However, we need to know more about coverage: how many schools are involved in engagement, what are the patterns and where are the gaps (Recommendation 7)?

School governors with knowledge of the local business community are often well placed to make introductions to employers, and we support the Confederation of British Industry’s proposal that there should be a member of every governing body with a remit to improve employer engagement (Recommendation 8).<sup>53</sup>



#### INSPIRING THE FUTURE

‘Inspiring the Future’ is a free, online brokering service provided by the Education and Employers Taskforce, a charity. It puts volunteers into state schools and colleges to talk about their jobs and their employment sectors. Volunteers, who range from apprentices and graduates to senior leaders, offer to visit a local state school or college for ‘one hour, once a year’ to provide first-hand career insights. Teachers select volunteers in their area from a menu of job profiles and then contact them directly.

Inspiring the Future is easy to use and has had rapid growth since it started in July 2012. By March 2014 it had nearly 13,000 volunteers from 3,500 organisations, and 75% of state schools and colleges had registered, sending over 20,000 messages to volunteers.





## 6.4 OUR TEN RECOMMENDATIONS

Below we set out our ten recommendations. Each is followed by further explanation.

### RECOMMENDATION 1: THE BENCHMARKS

To schools, government, Ofsted and employers

We recommend Benchmarks 1 to 8 as defining the elements of good practice in career guidance. Schools should be guided by them when setting their own careers programmes, and Ofsted should be aware of them when making judgements about the quality of career guidance in a school.

#### Prioritising implementation of the benchmarks

Our school survey shows that schools will not find it easy to implement all the benchmarks at once, and the costing exercise confirms that some will need more resource than others. This implies that schools will need to phase in some aspects of their careers plan, according to the resources available and where they already stand in relation to each benchmark.

The first priority is to have a well-organised and well-understood careers programme (Benchmark 1), because this subsumes all the other benchmarks. Closely tied to this is Benchmark 3 (*Addressing each pupil's needs*), although the measurement of pupil destinations, which is part of this benchmark, may take longer to put in place. Given what Ofsted has said about the weakness of employer links, many schools may need to address Benchmarks 5 and 6 (*Encounters with employers and Experiences of workplaces*) as a matter of high priority. Many schools will have elements of Benchmark 7 (*Encounters with further and higher education*) in place, but our school survey suggests they will need to do more to introduce pupils to the full range of learning opportunities, including both academic and vocational routes, if they are to meet the benchmark.

Most schools will already have something in place to give personal guidance to pupils (Benchmark 8), but our school survey suggests that most are well short of the benchmark. Similarly, many schools will have systems in place to provide career and labour market information (Benchmark 2), but most will need to extend its use to younger pupils, and to make more use of the growing availability of digital sources.

It is in Benchmark 4 (*Linking curriculum learning to careers*) that most schools have furthest to travel (and not only in England). Our costing exercise suggests that this is also the most costly to do well, because of the extensive training needed. This benchmark is one that most schools are likely to implement over several years.

### RECOMMENDATION 2: THE SCHOOL CAREERS PLAN

To government and schools

Every secondary school should be required to have a Careers Plan, published on the school's website.

*This recommendation relates to Benchmark 1.*

#### Further detail on this recommendation

Publishing the Careers Plan is important to enable pupils, parents and employers to know what will be available to them, and as a basis for obtaining feedback from them.

### RECOMMENDATION 3: DESTINATIONS DATA

#### To schools and government

Every secondary school should be responsible for publishing the destinations of all pupils for three years after their leaving date. The published destination data should be at an aggregated level, showing the main categories of employment, apprenticeship and further and higher education. The responsibility should be placed on schools, but they should have the support of HESA, NCCIS and other agencies that are currently involved in collecting destination data for the government.

*This recommendation relates to a number of benchmarks, because it is about incentivising schools to raise the priority of career guidance – and it has additional benefits too.*

#### Further detail on this recommendation

Publishing reliable destination data will help incentivise schools to prioritise career guidance. But there are other advantages in schools collecting and analysing their own destination data, as DfE's April 2014 Statutory Guidance acknowledges. It is an important part of self-evaluation: by looking at trends and patterns, schools can check how well they are succeeding in raising aspirations and challenging stereotypes (Benchmark 3). Collecting this data helps the school to maintain a comprehensive database of alumni to whom they may be able to turn when the school is running events such as those linked to Benchmark 5 (*Encounters with employers and employees*) and Benchmark 7 (*Encounters with further and higher education*).

At present, DfE compiles destination data (aggregated at the school level) for all state-maintained secondary schools. However, only data on 'education' destinations (universities and colleges) are currently published in the official school performance tables. Although data for employment and NEET destinations are compiled, they are currently published only as an 'experimental statistical release', buried in the DfE website. This is because DfE does not yet have confidence that the employment data – which is collated from a variety of sources (the School Census, Individual Learner Record, Higher Education Statistical Agency and National Client Caseload Information System) – is robust enough for full publication.

We recommend that schools should be required to collect and publish **their own** destination data, for three years from the date of each pupil's leaving. Schools would collect the data at the individual pupil level, but publish it in aggregated form. They would be assisted in doing this by DfE supplying to them directly the data that are currently collected as above. DfE would send schools the data, and schools would then check it and add additional detail beyond the broad categories used by DfE. This arrangement would shift the responsibility to schools, which would often be in a position to provide more nuanced and accurate data than the automated processes used by DfE.

The obvious objection to this switch of responsibility from DfE to schools is that it could be open to abuse. Institutions could be tempted to 'massage' the data to make themselves look better. But the data provided by DfE would make this much harder to do, because the official data would calibrate that of the school.

We appreciate that this is an additional burden for schools, not only because they have the onus for collecting and collating the data, but also because we are proposing that it should be done for three years after leaving. The rationale for three years is that it is difficult to tell from a one-year follow-up how the pupil's future career has settled. Pupils' lives are in flux after leaving school, and gap years, indecision and wrong turns add to the instability. But after three years, most pupils will have completed their education or apprenticeship and you can get a more realistic picture of where they have settled.<sup>54</sup>

One concern about using destination data for accountability purposes is that it is heavily dependent on contextual factors: schools in deprived socioeconomic areas will find it much harder to look 'good' than those in well-off areas. But this is true of most school performance measures. If parents and inspectors can take account of contextual factors when judging exam results and absence rates, they can do so with destination measures too.

Finally, the process of collecting pupils' destinations is increasingly helped by social media. Setting leavers up as a LinkedIn group, for example, gives a ready-made medium for schools to keep up with pupils after they have left. 'Future First' has also developed a database management system that allows schools to manage their alumni networks nationally.

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SCHOOLS TO FIND  
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#### RECOMMENDATION 4: THE NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

To schools, government, Ofsted  
and employers

The remit of the National Careers Service (NCS) should be extended to give it unequivocal responsibilities towards schools. It should:

- Significantly expand its work with schools, young people and parents;
- Develop and extend its online services targeted at schools, young people and their parents, and support training in their use;
- Provide a channel for live labour market information from the ‘LMI for All’ data source;
- Disseminate good practice in career guidance to schools;
- Collaborate with employers organisations to broker employer encounters with schools;
- Support schools in creating their Careers Plan.

To make it more responsive to employers, the NCS should be reconstituted as an independent agency with its own board on which employers are strongly represented, alongside schools and colleges.

*This recommendation relates to a number of the benchmarks.*

#### Further detail on this recommendation

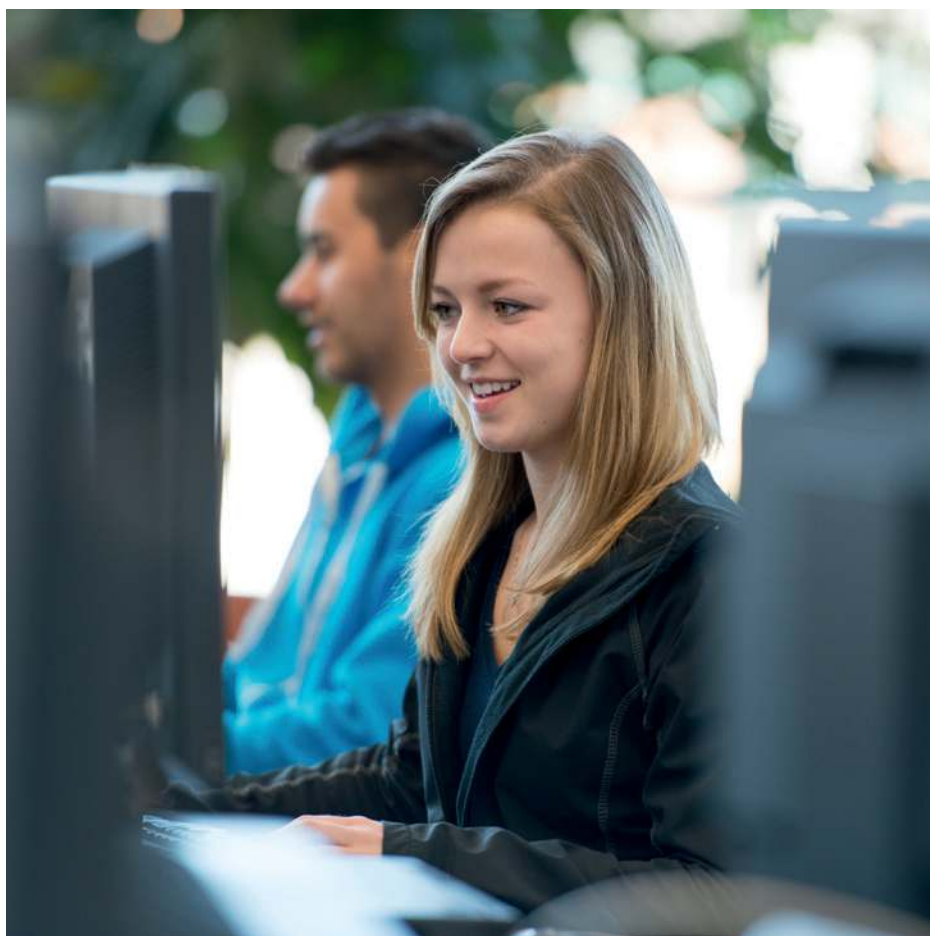
In its report ‘An Aspiration Nation’, the National Careers Council made a number of recommendations relating to the NCS.<sup>55</sup> We have drawn on these in making our own Recommendation 4.

We believe there is a compelling case for making the NCS more independent as a separate body with its own board and with strong employer, school and college representation. At present, the NCS is not a ‘service’ in any independent sense. As a part of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), it has no independent board and its main role is to commission contracts for ‘area-based contractors’ who deliver sub-regional services for personal advice to adults. As part of the SFA (which is itself a part of BIS), the NCS has a low national profile and, crucially, there is no direct way for employers or other stakeholders to influence its policies and activities. A possible model for its future status would be the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), the government-funded organisation responsible for supporting the professional development of teachers in further education. Although it receives government funds, ETF is an independent charity with its own board.

Both Ofsted and the Education Select Committee have pointed out how little direct support the NCS provides for schools, despite being an all-age careers service. This is not the fault of the NCS, but of its remit and funding, which is mainly directed towards guidance for people who are beyond school age. We believe that this needs to change, so that the NCS provides leadership and support for career guidance in schools as well as for adults.

With its extended remit for schools, the NCS would be able to support schools in reaching other benchmarks, relating to programme planning, labour market information (LMI), record keeping and employer encounters.





#### RECOMMENDATION 5: CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

To schools, government, Ofsted and employers

Alongside career information, live labour market information should be available to all schools through the 'LMI for All' service. This should be accessible through the NCS website as well as other outlets. Those involved in career guidance should be trained in its use.

*This recommendation relates to Benchmark 2.*

#### Further detail on this recommendation

Career and labour market information takes many forms and includes information about what current and future jobs exist, what they are like and the skills and values that people need to succeed in them, as well as other factual information about entry qualifications, wages, promotion and location. LMI is found in many places but it is difficult to keep up-to-date and accessible.

The government, through the UK Commission on Employment and Skills, has made excellent progress in developing the 'LMI for All' service.<sup>56</sup> This draws on existing surveys such as the Labour Force Survey and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, to provide live data on such LMI as pay, vacancy rates and qualifications for entry. These data are available for anyone to access, but need to be made available to schools and their communities in a form that is attractive and intelligible to young people.

Career advisers need to have detailed knowledge of the available sources of LMI, especially the channels for 'LMI for All' and they need to be trained in their use.

#### RECOMMENDATION 6: CURRICULUM LEARNING AND CAREERS

To the National Centres and their funders

The National STEM Centre, National Science Learning Centre and National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics should lead exemplary work to show how curriculum resources for science, technology, engineering and mathematics teachers can more effectively showcase career learning opportunities.

*This recommendation relates to Benchmark 4*

#### Further detail on this recommendation

Our international visits showed that, attractive though the idea may be, it is difficult in practice to consistently embed career awareness in the regular curriculum. The National STEM Centre, National Science Learning Centre (NSLC) and National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics (NCETM) are in a good position to take a lead in developing exemplary resources to show how this could be done. The NSLC, for example, already includes STEM careers awareness in its programmes. NSLC could go further and systematically include careers awareness into its training modules to show teachers how such resources can be embedded in their teaching. This opportunity should be explored on a broad front, to include assessment materials as well as resources for teachers to use in the classroom.

Unlike most of our recommendations, this one is directed specifically towards teachers of STEM subjects rather than more generally across all school subjects. This reflects the Gatsby Charitable Foundation's specific interest in STEM as a driver for economic growth, but the principle of relating the curriculum to careers extends across other subjects too. Note that engineering teachers are included here, although in reality engineering is very much a minority subject at school level.



#### RECOMMENDATION 7: A REVIEW OF ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND THE WORKPLACE

To employers and business  
link organisations

Employers, their representative organisations and organisations promoting business links should cooperate in a comprehensive review of what they offer. The review should focus on what could be done to make sure every school has enough employer links to meet the benchmarks in this report.

*This recommendation relates  
to Benchmarks 5 and 6.*

#### Further detail on this recommendation

Both our school survey and Ofsted's September 2013 review suggest that employer engagement is the area where schools have the longest distance to travel, yet employer 'pull' has as much potential to transform career guidance as school 'push'. The NCS has begun work to see what additional support it can provide for school-employer engagement, but in the end this will work best if it is led by employers.

It needs to be easy for schools to find employers who are willing to engage and who meet their needs. 'Inspiring the Future', with its 'dating agency' approach, has the potential for high capacity. But with a bewildering array of national schemes to choose from, there could be a more coordinated approach to organisation and communication with schools: for example, the 'single point of entry' called for by the Education and Employers Taskforce.<sup>57</sup> But before committing to any such actions, we need more quantitative data about coverage: how many schools are involved in engagement, what are the patterns and where are the gaps?

There is an extensive literature on what makes for effective encounters between employers and schools: for example, publications by the Education and Employers Taskforce.<sup>58</sup> But we have not seen any work that describes quantitatively the degree of employer engagement with different schools, which would make it possible to assess geographical patterns, gaps in coverage and types of engagement. Before going further, such information is needed. Once the quantitative data is available, it should be easier to see what needs to be done to radically improve the quantity and quality of employer engagement in English schools.

Employers and employer organisations should take the lead – perhaps in partnership with third-sector funders – in a wide-ranging review of education-employer engagement, to answer the questions:

- Who are the main agents on the employer side? Individual employers? Business link organisations? Local Enterprise Partnerships?
- What is the involvement of large, medium and small employers?
- What motivates employer and employee involvement with schools, and what networks do they utilise to facilitate that involvement?
- What is the frequency of employer encounters as defined in Benchmark 5? What are the variations between types of school and between regions?
- What types of encounters have the greatest impact on pupils?
- Where are the major gaps (by geography and by school type) in coverage?
- What could be done to give more consistent coverage?
- What would need to be done to (say) double the proportion of schools reaching Benchmark 5 (*Encounters with employers*) from 39% to 80%?

This would need to be a major study, providing robust data from a representative cross-section of English schools.

## RECOMMENDATION 8: EMPLOYER GOVERNORS

### To employers and schools

Every school should have a member of their governing body who has a remit to encourage employer engagement and to take a strategic interest in career guidance.

*This recommendation relates to Benchmarks 5 and 6.*

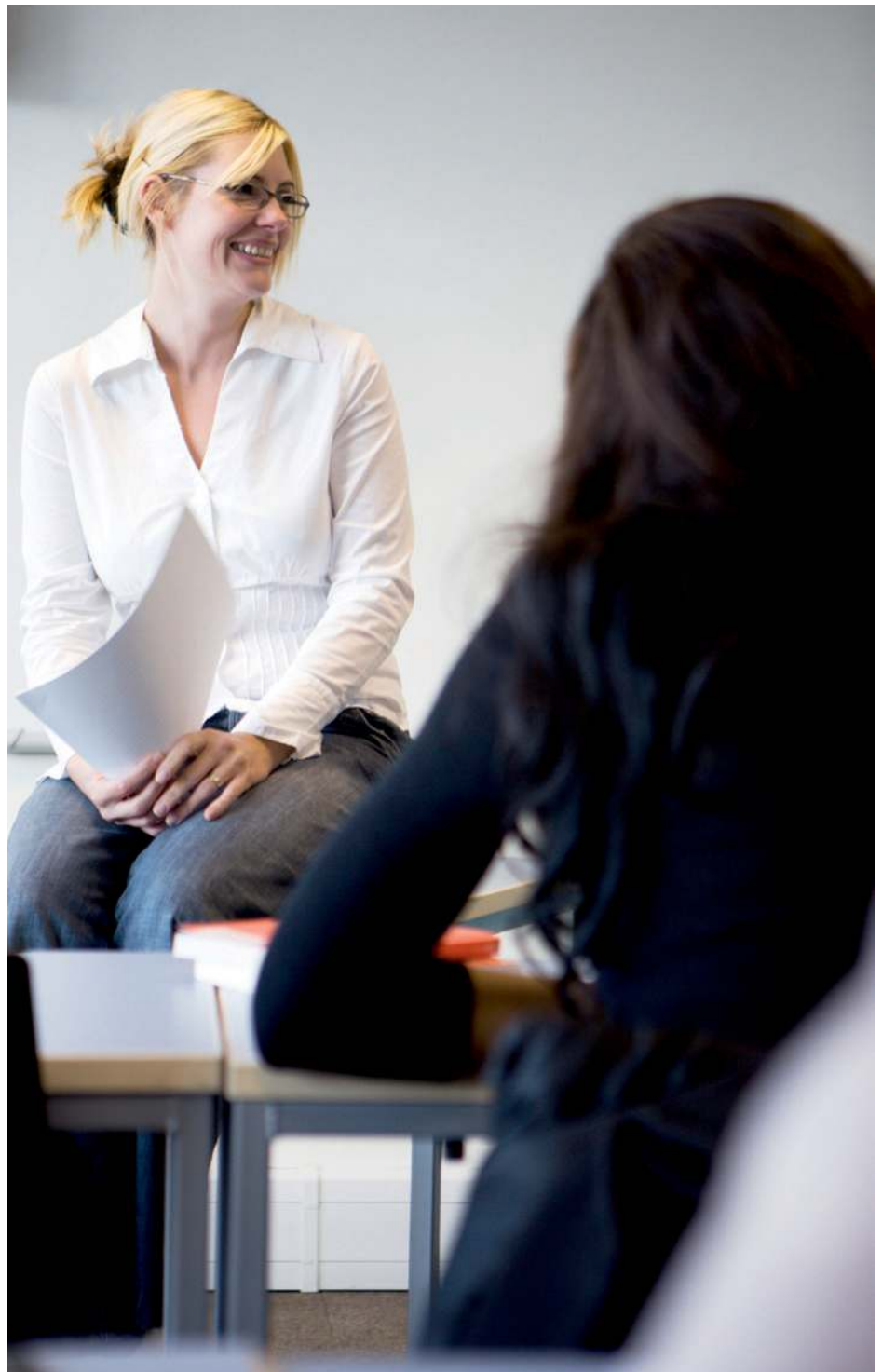
### Further detail on this recommendation

Governors are well placed to act as brokers between schools and employers. Many schools already have one or more governors who take an interest in employer engagement: we recommend that this should be the case for every secondary school. We would stop short of saying it should be made a statutory requirement, but recommend that it should be something that Ofsted would look for when they inspect a school.

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GOVERNORS ARE  
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AND EMPLOYERS

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## RECOMMENDATION 9: ENCOUNTERS WITH YOUNG AMBASSADORS

To the National Apprenticeship Service, further and higher education and employers

Employers and further and higher education institutes should investigate the potential for greatly expanding existing programmes for sending young ambassadors into schools from apprenticeships, colleges and universities.

*This recommendation relates to Benchmark 7.*

### Further detail on this recommendation

We have seen the evidence, from our overseas and school visits, of the power of young people to inspire their peers towards particular careers or courses of study. When a young person meets another who has come from the same background and has gone on to success, that can motivate them in a way that encounters with older people cannot. There are good examples of this kind of ‘ambassador’ approach in the outreach work that many universities are already doing with schools.

The best way for schools to find young ambassadors is from their own alumni, but we also see value in a ‘Young Apprentice Ambassador’ programme that would give schools access to young role models who can visit schools and explain from their own experience what being an apprentice involves. This might be of interest to the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), though it is a very different concept from the existing NAS ‘Apprenticeship Ambassadors’ programme, whose members are senior business leaders who promote apprenticeships to other businesses.



Similarly, there is potential for a ‘Student Ambassador’ programme to bring students on vocational and undergraduate courses into schools. Again, this is best done through alumni or through partnerships with local colleges and universities, but there is a case for considering some kind of national network, perhaps through an extension of the remit of STEMNET or based on the ‘Undergraduate Ambassador’ programme.<sup>59</sup>

Universities are required to engage in school outreach through their access agreements with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). Schools should make the most of this both to provide opportunities for curriculum enhancement and to give their pupils opportunities to meet student ambassadors.

## RECOMMENDATION 10: CAREER ADVISERS

To government and schools

The government’s guidance for schools should be amended to make it clear that personal guidance can be provided by both internal and external advisers. Advisers can be a member of school staff, provided they are trained to an appropriate level to give advice that is in the best interests of the pupil.

*This recommendation relates to Benchmark 8.*



### Further detail on this recommendation

From September 2012, schools have had a duty to “secure independent and impartial careers guidance for young people in schools” (Section 2.1). The emphasis on independent and impartial career guidance is important. Career guidance needs to be given in the interest of the young person only – while this may seem obvious, it is possible for advice to be biased in favour of a particular institution. For example, in 11-18 schools there is an incentive to keep pupils (especially high-achieving ones) in the school, even if it might be in their best interest to go to a college or an apprenticeship. Hence the emphasis on impartial advice that is in the interest of the young person alone.

But in interpreting ‘independent and impartial’, there has been a tendency to assume that advisers have to be external to the school. Indeed, this is reinforced by the April 2014 Statutory Guidance which defines ‘independent’ as “external to the school” (though the associated non-statutory advice states that “schools can retain in-house careers advisers”).<sup>60</sup> While it may be appropriate for some schools or for some pupils, we do not think that external advice is necessary in every case. In all the countries we visited, it was normal practice for guidance to be provided by a trained member of school staff (though sometimes, as in Germany, augmented by external advisors). We see no reason why that should not apply in England, provided the member of staff has appropriate training (as assured by membership of the Career Development Institute register, for example) to ensure that their advice is impartial, well-informed and in the interests of the pupil alone, and that the principle of impartiality is affirmed by the school.

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## CONCLUSION

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Many of the people who read this report will not have had to rely solely on career guidance from their school, because it will have come from their family. This will also be true for many pupils at school today, but for many others their best hope lies with their school for guidance to set them on the road to a fulfilling job and life. Our study has shown us that good career guidance is not complicated: it is a matter of schools doing a number of things consistently and doing them well. Our benchmarks show what these things are, and our recommendations show how conditions can be improved to make it easier for schools to do them.

In the end it is for headteachers and governors to take the lead in prioritising career guidance more highly. By reaching these benchmarks they will put in place a career guidance system that measures up to the best we have seen, and they will help set up their pupils not only for the rest of their education but for the rest of their lives.

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## APPENDICES

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### APPENDIX 1 REPORTS FROM THE OVERSEAS VISITS

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### APPENDIX 2 REPORTS FROM THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL VISITS

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### APPENDIX 3 KEY LITERATURE RESOURCES

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### APPENDIX 4 CONTRIBUTORS AND CONSULTEES

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### APPENDIX 5 THE SCHOOL SURVEY



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