

# **Summary of Consultation Responses**

## **Preparing for Success – Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy (October 2007).**

### **1.0 Introduction**

1. The Department of Education's *Revised Curriculum and Entitlement Framework* and the Department for Employment and Learning's *Success through Skills*, highlight the need for an independent all-age strategy for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.
2. The Departments agreed that a new strategy should be developed within the context of genuine consultation and following detailed stakeholder involvement, *Preparing for Success - A Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Strategy for Northern Ireland*, was issued for consultation on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2007.
3. The overall purpose of the strategy is to make policy proposals for the future development of CEIAG and to outline proposals that will address the needs of individuals of all ages. It aims to develop effective career decision makers leading to increased and appropriate participation in education, training and employment.
4. This document summarises the key messages drawn from the responses during the consultation process. Each response has been analysed and will be used to inform future policy.
5. The Department of Education and the Department for Employment and Learning are grateful to all those who responded to the consultation document.

### **Consultation Process**

6. The draft strategy was developed following pre-consultation discussions with an extensive range of stakeholders. The "futuresearch" methodology was used and almost 60 key stakeholders, including young people and adults, participated in the research and developed an initial action plan which has helped form the basis of the draft strategy.
7. Following approval from both the Minister for Education and the Minister for Employment and Learning, the draft strategy issued for consultation on 22 October 2007 to bodies in the education, employment and guidance sectors, futuresearch participants, other stakeholders and interested parties. In

addition, schools were emailed about its availability. The document was also available through the DE, DEL and Careers Service websites. The consultation was initially due to close on 21 December 2007. However, following requests from a number of organisations, this date was extended to 28 December 2007.

8. Responses were received from 94 organisations in the following categories;

- 3 Business Education Partnerships,
- 4 Business related organisations,
- 18 Post primary schools and representatives of children and young people
- 7 Further Education Colleges and related organisations
- 6 Higher Education Institutions (or parts thereof)
- 9 Other education related organisations,
- 4 Councils,
- 6 Careers Advice and Guidance related organisations,
- 5 Disability related organisations,
- 11 Sector Skills Councils and related organisations, and
- 21 other organisations.

A full list of respondents, in alphabetical order, can be found at Annex A.

## **Overview of Consultation Responses**

### *General*

9. Responses were mainly positive, both generally and in relation to specific answers to the ten questions set out in the consultation document. In relation to the specific questions, the percentage of organisations directly expressing disagreement did not rise above 11%. The main areas which raised concern were careers advice and guidance for adults and the alignment of impartial careers information, advice and guidance with the needs of the economy.

### *Funding*

10. The analysis of the responses identified some common themes. Overwhelmingly, organisations expressed concern about the availability of resources; money, time and staff, to implement the strategy. Several organisations raised the issue that the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review was not yet known and questions were asked as to where the funding for the proposals would come from. In addition, the issue of Careers Teachers' time was raised. In many cases, teachers are involved in CEIAG as well as having other teaching and/or management responsibilities and many organisations suggested that there should be more resources for CEIAG in every school.

### *Social Exclusion*

11. In relation to young people and adults vulnerable to social exclusion, a number of organisations suggested that 14 specialist Careers Advisers was insufficient for the number of target group A and B clients requiring the service.

### *Continuous Professional Development*

12. The proposals for training, continuous professional development and work related training for both Careers Teachers and Careers Advisers were welcomed by a number of organisations, many of whom offered suggestions on how these should be carried out.

### *Labour Market Information*

13. Most organisations agreed on the benefits of the provision of up-to-date labour market information and that this needed to be provided in a variety of formats in order to be accessible to all. It needs to be both current and future looking and local, sub-regional, regional, national and global in nature. It was the general agreement that Sector Skills Councils should be heavily involved in the provision of this information.

### *Careers Resource Centres*

14. In general there was support for the creation of Careers Resource Centres and the differentiated service described in the draft strategy. Some organisations expressed the desire to see the outcome of the pilots in Belfast and the North West before making a firm commitment. Similarly, many organisations asked for sight of DE's "*Preparing for Success – A Guide to developing Effective Career Decision Makers*" and details of the IQRS.

### *Marketing*

15. A further key theme was the need for greater marketing of CEIAG generally but particularly to adults in order to inform them of the benefits of seeking advice and guidance and the availability of the service.

### *Business Engagement/Networks*

16. The importance of partnerships and links with business was stressed by many organisations. Partnerships were sought between all agencies, in particular voluntary and community groups, and government agencies along with greater consistency in existing partnerships such as that already in place between Careers Advisers and Transition Co-ordinators. Support for the creation of a forum of CEIAG delivery partners was unanimous although there were many questions about the terms of reference, structure and membership of the forum.

*Clarity of CEIAG Roles*

17. Responses revealed a number of areas of confusion, in particular around the difference between Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance and who should be responsible for which part. There was some reluctance over the issue of impartiality, both from schools and from employers and their organisations. Both the **matrix** Standard and the Adult Guidance Review were areas of some confusion.

*Implementation details*

18. There were also questions in relation to operational issues, specific objectives and timelines, responsibilities, terms of reference, structures etc.

## Summary of Responses

### General Comments

Seventy organisations either provided a general response or made general comments in addition to providing specific responses to the 10 questions in the consultation document.

This section provides an analysis of the general comments which indicated that 80% agreed and 20% were largely neutral or had an issue with specific aspects of the proposals. None of the organisations who responded said that they totally disagreed with the proposals.

The main themes of the general comments were as follows;

- sufficient resources (money, time, staffing) are essential;
- there is limited reference in the document to the role of Higher Education. Overall a 'joined up' approach is required with integration of services and collaboration between all agencies related to CEIAG;
- there is a need for a greater focus on how adults will receive advice and guidance;
- LMI / website needs to be up to date, appropriate, differentiated and accessible to encourage clients of all abilities to make use of the facilities;
- a formal infrastructure of training and continuous professional development activities is suggested for those working with young people to allow access to the skills needs and economic demands of business. Training is also required around disability, in particular; communication, equality of opportunity and engagement;
- little or no mention of business or employer involvement which should be an integral part in the policy development process, management and implementation;
- important that CEIAG programmes in schools are delivered by qualified careers teachers who must be given the necessary time and training required to achieve the qualifications;
- a sustained media campaign and relevant marketing are required;

- the CEIAG Guide “Preparing for Success – A Guide to developing Effective Career Decision Makers” and IQRS details mentioned in the strategy were not available therefore it was not possible to comment on their content;
- the document contains little acknowledgement of the Revised Curriculum and its emphasis on skills, capabilities and learning for life and work;
- work experience activities should be available to all;
- business education links need to be fostered, developed and sustained at both regional and local levels.

**Question 1. Do the proposals to develop Labour Market Information and to develop the Careers Service website as an information hub, meet the needs of clients and the CEIAG community?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 88% agreed, 2% disagreed, and 10% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- LMI needs to be user friendly, accurate, up-to-date, relevant to client needs, reliable, interactive and informative;
- LMI must present all of the following; present and future trends, employer information, discrete occupational groups, information relating to SMEs, earnings data, emerging skills and occupations.
- external stakeholders need to be involved in the process in order to develop a fully joined up approach, e.g. Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), the Educational Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA), Labour and Education Forums, University Careers Services, Public, voluntary and community bodies, NGRF and employers;
- LMI must be local, sub-regional, regional, international and global;
- LMI must be accessible to all types of learners e.g. young people, adults, job changers, ex offenders, vulnerable, disconnected. Equality of access is essential with support for those of different ability levels, with learning difficulties, poor IT skills, those socially excluded or with English as a second language.
- a range of access points is essential e.g. libraries, other agencies, community centres, youth centres, kiosks, telephone contact points, touch screen, networks, multimedia applications and databases, leaflets, electronic bulletin, group sessions and be subject to a communication strategy;

**Question 2. What are your views on the proposals in relation to the provision of Careers Advice and Guidance for Young People?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 86% agreed, none disagreed, and 14% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- appropriate resources / funding / facilities required;
- work-based learning / work experience is important. Links with business sector with support from employers need to be developed;
- input from careers teachers, subject teachers, tutors and careers advisors, employees, parents, sector skills councils and FE/HE education institutions, should not be seen as an add on;
- access for young people to CEIAG at an earlier age, benefits career planning;
- Careers Service needs to be renewed and to develop a more proactive, innovative and knowledgeable approach to the opportunities available to our pupils, with sufficient numbers of careers advisers available;
- careers teachers need time for teacher training, professional development and to work with young people;
- Head of Careers in school should be a full time post and should co-ordinate inter related activities, Learning for Life and Work, Entitlement Framework, 14-19, work related learning and partnership with the Careers Service;
- young people should have access to impartial careers advice and guidance which challenges stereotypes. They also need access to LMI which identifies skills needs and career opportunities locally and globally;
- parents should be involved in the careers process;
- need to promote entrepreneurship and enterprise;
- area based planning should link with Careers Resource Centres.

**Question 3. Do you support the proposals to provide different levels of service in Careers Resource Centres, depending on client need i.e. self-help, brief staff-assist, and individual case-managed services?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 71% agreed, 3% disagreed, and 26% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- need to await outcome of pilots;
- success of the model is dependent on accurate assessment of client needs. Staff training is vital;
- Government need to commit significant resources to meet demand and standards of service;
- marketing needs to be considered;
- largest number of clients likely to be “individual-case-managed”, therefore need to ensure capacity and resources meet demand.

**Question 4. What are your views on the proposals in relation to the provision of Careers Advice and Guidance for Adults?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 83% agreed, 6% disagreed, and 11% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- needs to be properly resourced (money and staff);
- consider using the voluntary and community sector to engage hard to reach adults and explore appropriate partnership roles;
- adults need to proactively engage through marketing;
- location of Careers Resource Centres needs careful consideration and perhaps a mobile unit should be considered;
- need to explore development of employability skills in adults and careers education for adults;
- keen to see outcome / evaluation of Resource Centre pilots (needs careful evaluation and consideration);
- access to advice and guidance must have local access points, flexible times and take place in a neutral environment (accessibility is very important).

**Question 5. What are your views on the proposals in relation to the provision of Careers Advice and Guidance for Young People and Adults vulnerable to social exclusion?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 86% agreed, none disagreed, and 14% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- Careers Advisers to work closely and develop partnerships with relevant voluntary, community, statutory bodies, Sector Skills Councils and external agencies, and to build up trust and rapport with socially excluded groups;
- Careers Advisers to work closely with Education and Library Board Transition workers. It is important to ensure there is no duplication of work;
- Careers Advisers need to be given the training and resources to support this client group, cohort of 14 Careers Advisers is inadequate to meet the needs of this client group;
- early intervention of sound careers advice and guidance is critical;
- need to include; clients with a criminal record, immigrant population, ethnic groups, homeless, women returners, lone parents and clients with language problems, in this group;
- potential difficulty of learners accessing information, advice and guidance outside of their community;
- develop links between DEL provision and post-19 / Higher Education / Further Education.

**Question 6. Do you consider that the proposals in relation to the implementation of quality assurance indicators and the matrix Standard will address concerns about the quality of CEIAG provision?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 79% agreed, none disagreed, and 21% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes, suggestions or questions raised were as follows;

- considerable resource implications; staff, time and money;
- concern in schools as very little known about the **matrix** Standard. Some confusion about the Standard was displayed by various organisations;
- concern about the need for two quality systems required i.e. IQRS and **matrix** Standard. Need to explore potential to link standards and consider periodical review by the Inspectorate.

**Question 7. Do you support the formation of a forum for CEIAG delivery partners?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 91% agreed, 3% disagreed, and 6% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes, suggestions or questions raised were as follows;

- forum should include representatives from Employers, Sector Skills Councils, stakeholders, parents, Education and Library Boards and eventually the Education and Skills Authority;
- community and voluntary organisations should be included in forum.
- forum needs authority and resources. Need to clarify function, terms of reference, remit and membership;
- forum to use a consistent approach and assist in the future development of the CEIAG strategy;
- forum needs to be aware of economic issues;
- need to exercise caution about establishing yet another group which could prove to be a distraction rather than part of the improvement process for young people and adults;
- crucial that this forum becomes a vehicle for actioning shared ideas around best practice rather than just acting as a 'talking shop';

**Question 8. What are your views on the proposals to develop flagship Careers Resource Centres and offer services under the Extended School provision?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 71% agreed, 2% disagreed, and 27% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- needs to be well funded and resourced;
- many young adults leave school with attitudes which negate against returning for careers advice in later life. Other publicly funded venues e.g. Further Education premises or libraries may provide a suitable alternative base to schools;
- number and location of centres will be critical to success. Need balance between under and over provision;
- welcome move away from Jobs and Benefits offices;
- need to know outcome of pilot flagship resource centres before proceeding;
- more appropriate to place services in Entitlement Framework Communities (Area Based Planning/Bain Report).

**Question 9. Do you agree that a review of the provision of work-based learning opportunities, for staff involved in careers provision, is required?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 45% agreed, none disagreed, 53% neither agreed nor disagreed and 2% sought clarification.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- development of a strategic approach is required;
- professional development/training is necessary for all CEIAG staff and all teachers should have at least one module of careers training;
- essential that resources (budget) and time are made available for continuous professional development;
- vital to have work related learning aligned with continuous professional development for all CEIAG staff;
- standards and consistency are important for all CEIAG staff;
- qualifications / career paths are important for all CEIAG staff;

**Question 10. Do the proposals adequately address concerns about the alignment of impartial careers information, advice and guidance and the needs of the economy?**

Sixty-six organisations responded to this question. 61% agreed, 11% disagreed, and 23% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The main themes raised were as follows;

- Learning for Life and Work curriculum is underpinning thread, together with the Pupil Profile (electronic version);
- enterprise / entrepreneurial capabilities / options to be encouraged;
- DETI and Invest NI (and Sector Skills Councils) involvement sought to ensure linkages to the economy and growth sectors with up to date LMI and importance of STEM based skills;
- must not lose sight of the aspirations of the individual as opposed to the needs of the economy;
- parents and family have important and crucial role;
- Framework (DE guidance / map alluded to as core need) and partnerships needed for school / world of work engagement;
- implementation resources (budgets) essential;
- strategy focuses on 4-19, leaving a gap in dealing with adults in the workplace;
- all groups generally supportive and willing to assist as appropriate.

**Alphabetical list of Responses**

1. Access to Benefits
2. Advice NI
3. Antrim Borough Council
4. ANIC
5. Ballyclare High School
6. Ballymena Business Education Partnership
7. Belfast Boys' Model School
8. Belfast City Council
9. Belfast Education & Library Board (BELB)
10. Belfast Metropolitan College
11. Big Lottery Fund
12. Bloomfield Collegiate
13. Business in the Community
14. CCEA
15. CCEA Additional Response
16. Council for Administration (CFA)
17. Christian Brothers' Secondary School, Belfast
18. CITB -Construction Skills NI
19. Collegiate Grammar School Enniskillen
20. Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
21. Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
22. Devenish College
23. Disability Action
24. Eastern Health & Social Services Board (EHSSB)
25. EGSA
26. Engineering Training Council (NI)
27. Epilepsy Action
28. E- Skills UK
29. FE Careers Forum
30. Federation of Small Businesses
31. FOSEC
32. Girls' Model
33. Go Skills
34. General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI)
35. Holy Cross College Strabane
36. ilex Urc Ltd
37. Improve Ltd The Food & Drink Sector Skills Council
38. INTO
39. Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG)
40. Institute of Directors (IoD)
41. Institute of Physics in Ireland
42. John Kerr – FutureSearch Participant

43. Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
44. Learning & Skills Development Agency (LSDA)
45. MENCAP NI
46. NAEGA
47. NASEN
48. Newry & Mourne District Council
49. NI Court Service
50. NIACRO
51. Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People (NICCY)
52. NISCA
53. NIPSA
54. North Belfast Business Education Partnership
55. North Eastern Education & Library Board (NEELB)
56. North West Regional College (NWRC)
57. North West Workforce Development Forum
58. Northern Regional College (NRC)
59. NUS-USI
60. Parity Solutions Ltd
61. PRRT
62. QCG University of Ulster (Magee Campus)
63. Queens University Belfast
64. Royal Belfast Academical Institution (RBAI)
65. St Cecilia's Derry
66. St Colmcille's High School
67. St Louise's Comprehensive College
68. St Patrick's Keady
69. St Peter's High School Derry
70. St Rose's High School, Belfast
71. School of Education – University of Ulster
72. Sector Skills Development Agency - Skills for business
73. Sentinus
74. Skills Active
75. Skills for Logistics
76. Skillsmart Retail Ltd
77. South Eastern Education & Library Board (SEELB)
78. South Eastern Regional College (SERC)
79. Southern Regional College (Newry Campus)
80. Strabane Grammar School
81. Stranmillis University College
82. Strategic Policy Division, DFP
83. Summit Skills
84. The Greater Vision Partnership
85. The High School Cookstown
86. The Open University
87. UFI – Learn Direct
88. University and College Union

89. Victoria College
90. Volunteer Development Agency
91. Western & Southern Education and Library Board
92. Women's Support Network
93. Workers Educational Authority (WEA)
94. Workforce Development Forums