

August 2011

# Helping individuals succeed: Transforming career guidance

# Foreword

Good career guidance has the potential to raise aspirations and broaden horizons. It can help people to develop self-awareness and resilience, to source and evaluate information and make sound decisions about learning and work. Clearly, well prepared, motivated job applicants and employees are an asset to employers and a key contributor to business growth.

Rapid advances in technology provide an opportunity to transform the delivery of career guidance. Our aim in this work was to understand more about how greater use of technology in career service provision might improve the quality of services on offer and encourage more people to access them.

In the course of our work, we consulted extensively with practitioners, researchers, policy makers, trade unions, Sector Skills Councils and other stakeholders in the career guidance sector. I'd like to thank all those who contributed their time through meetings, survey responses and attending events.

Technology offers a range of benefits, but the potential of the web for communication is perhaps the most important. Technology provides additional ways to offer 'person to person' contact with a career practitioner, but also to communicate with peers, employers and other experts. We are not recommending that all career guidance should be moved online and we recognise that not everyone uses web-based technology. Rather we envisage a careers service built around the professional career practitioner – one that seamlessly integrates web with telephone and face to face services to create a flexible, blended model which encompasses information, advice and guidance and suits individuals.

People are already using a wide range of careers support offered by the public, private and voluntary sectors. If governments could broker relationships between public and commercial and voluntary organisations to harness their innovation and expertise, we believe there is real potential to enhance services in a cost efficient way.

Although our proposals are aimed mainly at governments and public agencies in the UK, this report and the extensive evidence base that sits behind it are relevant to a much wider audience. I hope it provides a stimulus for discussion and leads to improvements that help more people make informed career choices.



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# Executive Summary

High quality career guidance is a key component in the effort to help individuals into learning and work and to assist them to sustain employment and reach their full potential. In this report we set out to identify the characteristics of effective career guidance, the role of new technologies in enhancing this and the part that government and national agencies might play in securing greater quality and impact from the public investment in career services.

Currently, the public sector focuses primarily, or solely, on careers provision that it funds or can influence directly through contracting. Our central proposition in this report is that governments and their agencies should think more creatively about how they can develop effective mechanisms (ideally largely self-regulating) to work with wider stakeholders to ensure they meet individual needs and deliver policy goals.

Career support takes a variety of forms and comes from a range of sources. Where it is effective, it can bring benefits to individuals, the economy and society. It can help develop the type of informed, empowered citizen best placed to navigate an environment of more personalisation, choice and change - evident not only in the context of education and employment, but in wider society.

Evidence suggests that individuals in the UK are currently using a wide range of career support services offered by the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Informal support also comes from family, friends and colleagues. Access channels include face-to-face interviews, telephone helplines, and increasingly, web-based services. Taken together, the options available form a 'careers support market', meaning a space where individuals can make a decision about the support that best meets their needs.

Developments in internet technologies have already transformed the provision of information about jobs and courses through, for example, links to employers' websites and the use of video clips. But new technologies are also transforming the delivery of career advice and guidance. Use of diagnostic tools help people understand their skill sets and motivations; simulations and games offer an interactive way for individuals to explore different working environments and job roles. Most notably, the widespread use of telephone services and the latest developments in interactive web technologies are causing us to recast the concept of face-to-face advice and guidance within a broader range of approaches that includes 'one-to-one', such as mentoring through telephone or the web; 'many-to-one', as in blogs, and 'many-to-many' through, for example, user forums.

A multi-channel approach to providing career guidance is in varying stages of development in the public sector across the UK. Meanwhile the private and third sectors continue to develop and innovate at pace. Within an environment in the UK where most careers services are free at the point of access, social enterprises and charities in particular are looking to forge new collaborations that will provide sustainable business models for the future. Private companies might also see opportunities for co-investment or closer working with the public sector.

As the public sector builds its offer, recognising that it does not have a monopoly on resources, know-how, or user loyalty, governments and agencies need to address a number of challenges, not least to identify where they can capitalise on strengths and best prioritise energy and public resources. Far from diminishing the impact of public careers services, new technologies and mutually beneficial partnership approaches with the private and third sectors offer real

opportunities to improve the quality of the public offer, extend its reach and tap into the latest innovations as they emerge.

Working at its best, a public careers service operating effectively within a wider career support market would display the following features:

- Multi-channel access (web, telephone, person-to-person) that is well signposted and caters for individuals of all ages, both those entering work or learning and those seeking to change job and progress.
- Sufficient quality assurance to engender confidence in services without disproportionate bureaucracy.
- Optimal use of new technology to widen access to services, enrich the user (and advisor) experience and deliver best value for money.
- Best use of the latest assistive technologies to widen access for people with disabilities.
- Innovation and greater impact encouraged through a range of approaches that includes private/third sector partnerships.
- Careers practitioners confident in using technology who provide the full range of career guidance to support individuals to become more self-sufficient.
- Technology used not only to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services, but also for developing the competencies needed by career professionals.
- High quality Labour Market Information (LMI) – information about job vacancies, employment trends, job roles, career structures, earnings, etc – available and accessible for advisors, individuals and businesses.
- Developers able to find and use data to develop new products and services where these fill a gap in the market.
- Individuals with digital literacy, information handling and career management skills make best use of online provision.
- Individuals as service users drive change to services and their needs are used to evaluate how the system is working.

## **Proposals for action**

Governments and public agencies have the opportunity to greatly enhance the delivery of career guidance. We believe this can be realised through the following actions.

### **1. Governments to help broker new relationships between different parts of the sector**

- **Broker relationships across the career support market to harness innovation and expertise and enhance the public offer**

Exploring how the expertise and innovation of the private and voluntary sectors can be harnessed and joint working facilitated between different parts of the career support market. By doing so this can support enhancement and augmentation of publicly funded career guidance and reduce duplication. There are existing models of practice that could be extended and built on, and current and emerging groupings of providers in the public, private and voluntary sectors that could be used as a starting point.

- **Use new relationships between different parts of the career support market to support a blended model of provision**

Joining up services in this way provides a model for providing a 'person to person' service that extends current face-to-face services to ensure that access to skilled career practitioners is made available to the widest possible audience at a time and place that suits the individual user. The 'person to person' service should be linked with web and telephone services to provide a multi-channel but **blended** offer which could be a combination of publicly funded provision and provision from different parts of the wider career support market. The blended model of provision should harness the potential of technology but have different options available for those people who are not able or do not want to access provision on line.

- **Stimulate innovation by making data and information accessible and encouraging organisations to use this**

As an increasing numbers of data sets are made available, it is important that data is in an accessible format that developers can easily find and use. This has the potential to facilitate new and innovative ways of presenting information whilst increasing the consistency and robustness of the products developed and made available.

One way of directly stimulating innovation and drawing attention to available public data would be to run a government sponsored competition. This could be aimed at small-scale developers and a financial reward offered to organisations that make the most innovative use of public information for career guidance purposes.

## **2. Governments work with key agencies and stakeholders to assure the quality of provision**

At present the career support market is complex and largely unregulated. In order to navigate such a market effectively individuals need information to enable them to identify provision that meets agreed standards and is appropriate to their needs. Quality assurance can be driven by users in a 'bottom up' way or by government or funding organisations in a 'top down' way. Both methods are worth exploring.

- **Encourage organisations and users to make better use of social networking and peer review sites**

There are a number of examples of sites where users can provide feedback directly about the service or product provided. Promoting peer review, alongside use of other quality assurance mechanisms, is a powerful and cost effective way of helping to quality assure careers services accessed by individuals.

- **Continue to develop a national quality kitemark for careers provision**

Work to develop a national kitemark that recognises high quality careers provision both online and offline.

## **3. Governments work with key agencies and stakeholders to support individuals to make good use of the career support market**

Some individuals may need support with digital literacy, career learning and career management skills to make more effective use of career support services.

- **Careers practitioners to inform and help individuals to become more self-sufficient**

Careers practitioners should support those who need assistance to make good use of options and opportunities available, evaluate the information presented to them and develop the skills needed to successfully manage their careers. This is an integral part of the careers practitioner's role and their training should focus more on the use of ICT and the changing nature of labour markets.

Individuals can, and ideally should, be well on the way to developing career learning skills by the time they leave statutory education. In particular, schools in England should consider this when fulfilling their new duty to secure 'access to impartial and independent' careers guidance.

- **Explore further the ways in which people make decisions about their careers and use this to inform development of provision**

Successful career guidance has traditionally been considered to be a 'matching process' between the skills of individuals and the skills required for the jobs available in the labour market. The underpinning assumption here is that individuals make rational decisions based on information available to them. However, we know that people's beliefs, motivations and values, amongst other factors, also influence the decisions they make. Increasing use of technology, particularly Web 3.0 developments, provide the opportunity to better tailor the information provided online. Further work to explore the factors that shape behaviours and decisions could support this.

#### **4. Governments work with key stakeholders to make LMI available and accessible**

There is a wealth of LMI available at a national level much of which can be broken down to a regional level - both data relating to job forecasting and also more qualitative intelligence. This provides a robust source of data. However, many careers practitioners report that they do not have sufficient information about their local labour market. There are a number of related issues here. Sometimes data can be broken down to a local level but careers practitioners may not know how to access it or this type of data may not be suitable for particular clients.

- **Explore options for how to use and share local LMI**

A range of options could be explored including:

- Standardising vacancy data to bring together the main sources including Jobcentre Plus, private recruitment agencies and employers' own websites to present vacancies in a consistent way and indicate the source. Jobcentre Plus is taking work forward that will have a positive impact on this.
- Using local partnership structures to use and share local LMI. This would employ a 'collect once, use many times' approach.

We know that some local areas are using, sharing and presenting information about their local labour market effectively. The UK Commission is carrying out work in 2011-12 to identify this good practice and draw out principles and success factors that could be used in other places.

## **5. Governments to support the professionalisation of the careers practitioner workforce**

The role of careers practitioners in providing support that individuals trust and understand to be objective and robust will continue to be vital in a developing career support market. However, technology has the potential to bring a paradigm shift in the way that services are delivered requiring practitioners to develop different skills.

- **Support ongoing work in relation to initial training, continuing professional development (CPD) and development of professional standards, and extend this work across the UK**

Work to professionalise the careers workforce in England is already being taken forward through implementation of the recommendations in 'Towards a Strong Careers Profession', the report of the Careers Profession Task Force in England. A UK-wide Careers Professions Alliance, comprising six professional associations was established in 2010. Work is now underway to develop and implement a UK-wide 'Register of careers professionals' and online 'Career Progression Framework'.

'Towards a Strong Careers Profession' includes a recommendation that initial training and CPD should include development of skills to use LMI and ICT.

## **6. Governments work with key stakeholders to review and evaluate the operation and efficiency of the career support market**

The career support market as it develops (particularly in England) is likely to meet the needs of some individuals better than others. A key issue for governments and providers will be to decide who the key target groups are and to ensure the delivery model used (be that face-to-face, web and/or telephone-based, or a blended model) is robust.

- **Use existing information about how individuals access and experience services to inform development of new provision**

Delivery organisations can use the information they hold to develop new web-based tools and more broadly to determine how they offer services. Governments can use it to inform national policy.

An extension of this approach would be to develop new provision in collaboration with users. Engaging users in co-design and co-production of provision can support development of innovative solutions that better meet user need.

- **Explore how progression in work can be measured**

Career guidance should aim to help people not simply to enter work, but to sustain employment and ultimately to move on to a better job. However, defining and measuring progression in work is complex, as is evaluating the contribution that career guidance makes to this. The UK Commission intends to carry out work to explore the various ways that progression in work might be measured both at national and at local level.

# Introduction

Extensive research and evaluation evidence demonstrates the benefits of effective career guidance – directly for individuals and also more widely for UK Plc. Good career guidance can raise aspirations, increase self-confidence and resilience and help people to make sound decisions about learning and work. In turn, employers gain better quality applicants and are able recruit people who can improve their business.

In order to realise these benefits, however, career guidance needs to be high quality. This report identifies the characteristics of effective career guidance, looks at how technologies, particularly new technologies, can transform delivery, and the role that government and other public bodies might play in securing greater quality and impact from public investment.

The UK Commission is not the only organisation working to bring about improvements in this area. In the last couple of years, governments across the UK have been focussing on how careers provision can be improved. The Scottish Government published a national framework for Careers Information Advice and Guidance<sup>1</sup> in March 2011. In England in November 2010, John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning announced the establishment of an all-age service for England<sup>2</sup>. The Welsh Government has recently published the findings of a review into careers services in Wales<sup>3</sup>. In January 2009 the Northern Ireland Government launched 'Preparing for Success'<sup>4</sup>, a joint departmental strategy and implementation plan for Careers Information Advice and Guidance.

This report is not an isolated study but the culmination of a number of pieces of supporting work including expert papers on a range of topics related to career guidance and technology. These are available on the UK Commission's website (details are attached at Annex 1). We also consulted widely by inviting responses to a consultation document and through a number of events. Taken together the expert papers, outcomes of events and wider consultation provide a robust evidence base for the conclusions drawn in this report.

The report is divided into three sections. The first focuses on what we know already about career guidance and the career support market; the second outlines some areas that need to be improved, and the third describes an effective career support market and makes suggestions about what actions are needed to bring this about.

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<sup>1</sup> A framework for service redesign and development improvement (2011) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/11110615/0>

<sup>2</sup> Speech given by John Hayes Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, 4 November (2010) <http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/speeches/john-hayes-icg-conference>

<sup>3</sup> 'Future ambitions: developing careers services in Wales' (2010) <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/researchandevaluation/evaluation/futureambitions/:jsessionid=4RYhNNHQLqV0hf8wyKW3vyLntPvBhyn0k9kV/k4K27BJZ2L9CCyq!1989468226?lang=en>

<sup>4</sup> 'Careers Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy' (2009) <http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/80-curriculum-and-assessment/116-careers-strategy.htm>

# 1 The Current Position

This section considers: issues concerning career choice and guidance, how technology can transform career guidance, how different types of organisation use technology and the career-related labour market information (LMI) available to inform career guidance.

## Career Choice and Guidance

The process of career choice is complex and highly individualised. It is too simplistic to characterise it as a matching process of 'placing a square peg in a square hole'. This assumes a rational model of human nature, where individuals engage in behaviour that has material benefit to themselves<sup>5</sup>. But not all individuals are able or willing to plan their careers in this way.

There has been a long and complex debate about the language used to describe the process of supporting people to make decisions about learning and work<sup>6</sup>. This report uses the term 'career guidance' which is defined by the OECD (2004) as:

*"Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers".<sup>7</sup>*

The term 'career guidance' is used because of its inclusive nature. It is important to note that this definition encompasses information, advice and guidance. Better use of technology in career guidance can support people of all ages, whether they need support to choose a college or university course, to find their first job, to return to employment after a short or long period of time, or to develop within a role and progress through their career.

## Using Technology

The internet is developing at a rapid rate and the stages of web development are not always easy to understand, or universally agreed upon. The following broad descriptions seek to capture the different stages:

- Web 1.0 - 'the mostly read only web'. Pages are generally static and users passively view information that was created for them.
- Web 2.0 - 'the read-write web'. A web 2.0 site allows users to interact and collaborate with each other and to create content. Examples include social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), blogs, wikis (e.g. Wikipedia) and video sharing sites, (e.g. You Tube).
- Web 3.0 – 'the portable personal web'. There is much less agreement about the characteristics of Web 3.0 but it is generally thought that as it develops this will provide a much more personalised web experience that would include intelligent searching and behavioural advertising. Examples include iGoogle, Netvibes, widgets and, drag and drop mash-ups.

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<sup>5</sup> UK Commission (2011), IER, 'Labour Market Information (LMI), Information Communications and Technologies (ICT) and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)' <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/lmi-ict-and-iaq.pdf> p.14

<sup>6</sup> Ibid p.8

<sup>7</sup> OECD (2004) 'Careers Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap' <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/45/34050171.pdf> p.19

Developing internet technologies – and the varied means of accessing them - mean that there is a multitude of different ways that they can be used to enhance career guidance. It can be useful to think about this as three over-arching categories<sup>8</sup>:

- **Delivering information** – by creating a ‘careers library’ online and providing information about jobs and courses linked to information from other sites, for example, from employers’ websites, including the use of pictures and videos.
- **Providing an automated interaction** – for example through diagnostics that help people to understand their skill sets and motivations, and through use of simulations and games that provide an interactive way for people to explore different working environments and job roles.
- **Providing a channel for communication and interaction** - this can be further classified into communication that is one-to-one (e.g. mentoring), many-to-one and one-to-many (e.g. blogs), and many-to-many (e.g. user forums).

In suggesting the benefits of integrating technology in career guidance, then, we are not just thinking about online information but also how technology can be used to deliver advice and guidance through person-to-person contact. Many individuals can - and are - accessing advice and guidance remotely through use of new technologies or more established ones, such as the telephone. New developments such as the recently announced partnership between Facebook and Skype will make this increasingly straightforward.

Integrating technology in career guidance can improve and broaden access as well as increasing the quality of provision. More specifically the benefits include:

- **Increasing and widening access to services.** Technology can increase access by providing a service that many people can access at the same time from different places. It can widen access by providing a service to people who may not be able to use a face to face service or may prefer to access support in other ways.
- **Enabling people to access services at a time and place that is suited to their needs.** People can access career guidance online at any time and communicate with experts, mentors and peers.
- **Supporting an iterative process.** Making career decisions is a complex process and technology can help people take this one step at a time. Ongoing interventions (e.g. via email etc.) can happen whenever this is most appropriate and convenient. This means individuals have the opportunity to build on previous interactions over a period of time.
- **Facilitating communication.** Use of technology can facilitate communication with a range of different people and organisations. Individuals have the option to communicate with qualified careers practitioners online but also with peers, mentors, employers, on a one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-one and many-to-many basis.

Another benefit of technology is the potential to provide a more cost-effective and productive service, and this is relevant and important at a time of severe budgetary restraint. There are potential cost benefits to be had through making better links between the existing range of provision – both publicly and privately funded. This includes the exploration of ‘click and brick’

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<sup>8</sup>This distinction is taken from UK Commission (2010), iCeGS ‘Careering Through the Web’:  
<http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/careering-through-the-web.pdf>

approaches – a common business model in successful service industries. Here effective links are forged between local services, and those available remotely, so that the most effective service package can be developed, particularly for those in greatest need. Third parties (such as carers/parents, mentors, volunteers and others) can also access expert advice to help support others. This approach can increase the service offer without increasing the cost. There is potential in exploring how this model could be applied to the delivery of career guidance and how it might work within a free market.

Although the potential to reduce costs is important, the focus in this report is on the wider range of benefits that technology can provide. However, technology does need to be used with care. A poorly designed website is not going to facilitate better information sharing and communication. Indeed it might have the opposite effect of making people less likely to look for support online, and possibly less likely to seek support at all.

Understanding the mindset of the user is crucial when developing websites and online services, both in relation to design and content<sup>9</sup>. A lot of work has been done in this area but too often websites are still designed in a way that is not engaging, for example, with detailed or dense pages of information that are difficult to read and so likely to be ignored. Automated tools can be effective in pointing people towards options that will best suit them, but tend to work best when they don't provide 'the answer'.

## **The Career Support Market**

Individuals seek career guidance from a number of sources: formal career guidance accessed through recognised private, public or voluntary/charity sector organisations and informal support provided by family, friends and colleagues. Both formal and informal career guidance are valuable.

A list of the delivery organisations consulted in the course of gathering evidence for this report is included at Annex 2. However, this is small subset of the diverse and growing range of provision available which, taken as a whole, might be described as a 'career support market'.

Organisations operating within the career support market have different business models, and use technology in a variety of ways to achieve different goals. One way of understanding how the career support market works is to analyse it in terms of who pays for services<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> UK Commission (2011) 'Career Guidance: Understanding the Behaviour of Individuals' examines this approach. <http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/career-guidance>

<sup>10</sup> The model was originally developed by Hughes, D. & Gray, S. (2004) A Market in Career Provision? Learning From Experiences on the East Coast of America. CeGS Occasional Paper. Derby: Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby. iCeGS built on this further in the report 'Enhancing Choice? The role of technology in the Careers Support Market', UKCES (2010) <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/enhancing-choice-the-role-of-technology-in-the-career-support-market.pdf> p.13

- **Government Pays:** The 'government pays' model remains the mechanism through which the majority of career guidance is funded in the UK and many individuals find this provision to be valuable. Publicly funded provision currently includes Next Step in England, Careers Service Northern Ireland, Skills Development Scotland and Careers Wales<sup>11</sup>. There is some evidence of good use of technology but also some areas where tight top down targets may stifle innovation.
- **Charitable Body Pays:** Where career support is funded by the 'charitable body pays' model, the services that are offered tend to be more discrete or developmental. Two examples of organisations set up by charitable funding (although funding sources have diversified since set up) are Horseshmouth<sup>12</sup> and iCould<sup>13</sup>. Those operating under this funding model seem effective in using technology in innovative ways and in developing new products and services.
- **Individual Pays:** The limited research available suggests that this funding model is currently confined largely to a higher skilled/higher-income market segment. The share of the market is small but there are examples of individuals or partnerships providing a range of careers support services including CV writing, job search support, interview techniques and career exploration. Examples include The Careers Group<sup>14</sup> and Inspiring Futures<sup>15</sup>. The range of provision is diverse but providers operating this model generally seem to use technology effectively as a marketing tool.
- **Opportunity Provider Pays:** In contrast, the 'opportunity providers pay' (employers or learning providers) segment is a much larger and more mainstream aspect of the career support market. Many 'opportunity providers pay' sites offer substantial resources that go beyond helping people to navigate recruitment services and many organisations seem to have been highly effective in grasping new technologies and identifying their potential for career guidance. Examples of this model include Wikijob<sup>16</sup>, Monster<sup>17</sup> and Graduate Prospects<sup>18</sup>.
- **Embedded Career Support:** This is where career guidance is offered as an embedded part of a broader experience, e.g. education or employment. This approach is particularly strong in higher education but is also provided by trade unions, professional bodies and employers. Examples include the University of Manchester Careers Service<sup>19</sup> and careers support offered through membership of a professional organisation such as the Royal Society of Chemistry<sup>20</sup>. Research suggests that providers using this model tend to be innovative in using technology.

<sup>11</sup> <https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk>, <http://myworldofwork.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>, <https://www.careersserviceni.com/Cultures/en-GB/Homepage.htm>, <http://www.careerswales.com/>

<sup>12</sup> [www.horseshmouth.co.uk](http://www.horseshmouth.co.uk)

<sup>13</sup> <http://icould.com/>

<sup>14</sup> [www.careers.lon.ac.uk](http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk) - offers 'individual pays' services as part of its wider offer.

<sup>15</sup> [www.inspiringfutures.org.uk/](http://www.inspiringfutures.org.uk/) - offers 'individual pays' services to parents alongside its offer to schools.

<sup>16</sup> [www.wikijob.co.uk/](http://www.wikijob.co.uk/)

<sup>17</sup> [www.monster.co.uk](http://www.monster.co.uk)

<sup>18</sup> [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

<sup>19</sup> [www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/studentlife/studentsupport/careersservice/](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/studentlife/studentsupport/careersservice/)

<sup>20</sup> [www.rsc.org/gateway/subject/careers](http://www.rsc.org/gateway/subject/careers)

The career support market is operating within a changing political landscape where reductions in public funding mean that publicly funded organisations are starting to consider what they will and won't be able to deliver going forward and many are considering partnerships with other types of organisations. There is a varied picture across the UK. In England, alliances are emerging between public, private and third sectors, (primarily, though not exclusively, in the Welfare to Work system). In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales<sup>21</sup> there has been more of a focus on developing partnerships between organisations in the third and public sectors.

Some good examples of a partnership between the public sector and a not-for-profit charity is between Skills Development Scotland and iCould. The partnership has enabled Skills Development Scotland to provide access to YouTube style videos, developed by iCould, on the publicly funded website 'My World of Work'. Another example of partnership working between the public and non-for-profit sectors is between the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Horseshmouth, (a mentoring network). BIS have provided access to a number of Enterprise and Business mentors through the Horseshmouth website, recognising that the technology used by Horseshmouth can widen access to the specialist and expert advice that BIS funds. There are now many other new and emerging video and online services entering the career support market.

Organisations, then, already see the potential in looking at funding and partnership models in other sectors with a view to finding alternative ways of funding parts of the career support market in the future. There are models in other sectors that are perhaps worth exploring including the relationship between employers and free schools and academies and whether a similar model could work for delivery of career guidance; careers organisations operating as wholly-owned subsidiaries in further or higher education; social enterprises; mutuals; social impact bonds; and co-funded alliances<sup>22</sup>.

## **Career-related LMI**

In a dynamic labour market with new opportunities in emerging employment sectors it is essential that up to date, robust, accurate information is available to support individuals to make good decisions about jobs and learning, both in respect to currently available opportunities and what opportunities may, and may not, be available in the future. The provision of career-related LMI therefore underpins the models outlined above and careers companies are considering how technology can be used to present this to best effect.

LMI is multi-faceted and includes both demand and supply side data. It includes both numerical data in relation to, for example, reductions or increases in the number of jobs available in particular sectors over time and more qualitative information or intelligence including about how the labour market functions and about progression routes in different sectors. Considering LMI can support people to develop skills in areas where there are likely to be jobs and to challenge stereo-types about the nature of different jobs and career progression routes.

Responses to our consultation reinforced the view that individuals are best served by a range of different types of information. In general individuals find 'intelligence' more immediately accessible

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<sup>21</sup> UK Commission (2011), Warwick Institute for Employment Research (IER), 'Integrating New Technologies Into Careers Practice: Extending the Knowledge Base' <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/integrating-new-technologies-into-careers-practice.pdf>. This report identifies some emerging partnership structures across the UK and suggests models from other sectors that it may be useful to explore.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p 12-13.

than hard data, for example, job forecasts, but both types of information are useful to inform decision making. It is essential, however, whatever the format and type of information, that it is accurate, objective, unbiased and up to date.

There is a wide range of LMI available and much of this is publicly funded. This includes national surveys about employment and skills, vacancy data, information about pay and the wide range of sectoral information provided by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). Annex 3 provides an overview of some of the sources of LMI and information about skills provision that are available.

## 2 Areas for Development

The last section outlined the shape of the career support market and some of the ways in which technology can, and indeed already is, transforming the way career guidance is delivered. This section identifies areas where changes need to be made in order to maximise the potential of technology.

### Career-related LMI

There is a wide range of publicly funded sources of national and regional LMI but the outcomes of the national surveys, for example, are not always in a format that individuals find easy to access. This is not unexpected given most sources were created for economic/workforce development purposes rather than to inform individuals. The breadth of LMI available on different sites is helpful but is not always easy to navigate and it can be difficult for people to make decisions about which information is most relevant for them.

There is a range of ways that this could be addressed which are not mutually exclusive. One solution is that career practitioners support individuals to navigate the LMI available. Another is that a data portal, such as O\*NET<sup>23</sup> in the United States is established so that an agreed level of career-related data is available across the full range of occupations. A third is for LMI to be produced in more accessible formats so that developers can then use it to develop new products.

Developers are an important group to consider because they have the expertise to create websites, applications and tools for individuals to use. In order to find out more about how developers work and what format they need information to be in, the UK Commission held a 'Hack Day'<sup>24</sup>. The Hack Day highlighted the following issues for developers who want to use data that is publicly available:

- Many developers work with open source applications, and so file formats which require a specific application to open can be a barrier to access.
- Requirements to request permission to access data, even when permission is freely granted, are a barrier to developers wanting to use this data, particularly when permission can only be given during office hours.
- Many organisations are concerned that they do not release data that breaches the Data Protection Act and so 'err on the side of caution' and do not make a full range of data available.
- Large data sets are often edited down so that individuals can use information effectively. However, raw data that is not interpreted or edited is the most useful to developers.
- A lack of standardisation and use of different definitions and terms between government departments and between national surveys makes it difficult for developers to incorporate data from different sources.

Government is already taking steps to increase the information that is available in the public domain and in ways that developers can use. This includes the data.gov.uk website which

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.onetonline.org/>

<sup>24</sup> During a Hack Day developers are asked to develop prototypes and products with available data. The purpose of this Hack Day was to find out whether data that could be useful for career guidance was available in a format that developers could easily use. The UK Commission held the Hack Day in January 2011.

currently contains over 6,900 datasets available from government departments, local authorities and other public bodies. Other developments include the re-development of the Office for National Statistics website to include a data explorer function, and cross-departmental work to match data sets<sup>25</sup>.

Careers practitioners have identified the importance of LMI that is relevant to the local area in which they are operating as this is frequently more immediately relevant than national level information. However, rich local LMI is difficult to provide.

## **Developing professionalism and practice**

Some careers practitioners understandably feel nervous that greater use of technology, particularly if this is introduced in the context of cost effectiveness, will undermine their role. However, evidence shows that the objectivity and authority of practitioners is respected and valued by users and so should be central to service delivery.

However, technology offers a paradigm shift in the way that services are delivered: the essential role of career practitioners is not necessarily one that is always executed in a face to face environment. As we see from the previous chapter, technology brings new ways for one to one support to be provided.

The responses to the consultation carried out by the UK Commission to underpin this work suggest three primary roles for practitioners in relation to online provision. The first is to support individuals to access and interpret information. This involves supporting individuals to develop the skills needed to make robust judgements about information and wider services available online. The second, related, role is to act as an advocate and encourage people to use online services and to realise the benefits from increased self-sufficiency. A third role is to contribute to online provision through providing content for websites and providing advice and guidance online. One example of where this is already happening is on Horsesmouth, where a number of mentors are qualified careers practitioners.

Evidence suggests that the skill levels and attitudes of practitioners are varied. There are some examples of excellent practice that could be shared and built on, there are some practitioners who see the benefits of using technology but who do not have the skills or confidence to be able to do this effectively, and there are other practitioners who are not convinced of the relevance of technology in delivering career guidance and who do not see this as a long term policy direction.

The importance of professionalising the careers workforce is already widely recognised and there is existing work that can and should be built on. The Careers Profession Taskforce in England (2010) was given a remit to recommend improvements to the recruitment, retention and development of careers professionals. The report of the Taskforce<sup>26</sup> makes a series of recommendations, including that initial training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) should include a focus on LMI and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The UK Careers Profession Alliance is building upon and extending this work further.

However, successfully integrating technology is wider than just improving the skills of practitioners. In addition to the right skills practitioners also need access to the right infrastructure. This includes

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<sup>25</sup> UK Commission (2011), GHK, 'The Use of LMI in Online Career Direction and Learning' <http://www.ukces.org.uk/commenting/the-use-of-lmi-in-online-career-direction-and-learning>

<sup>26</sup> DfE (2011) 'Towards a Strong Career Profession' <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DFE-00550-2010>

the right hardware and software being made available and organisational restrictions on particular sites reviewed. The culture of an organisation is also important here: practitioners with excellent ICT skills may not have the opportunity to fully utilise these in an organisation that does not view technology as integral to delivery.

There is also potential in not just looking at how technology can enhance services for clients but also how technology can help identify, build and develop the skills of careers practitioners. So, technology can be used not only to transform services for individuals, but also to increase the organisational effectiveness, and therefore impact, of career guidance organisations<sup>27</sup>.

The ideal is for organisations to be in a position where ICT integration is high and the competence of the workforce is also high<sup>28</sup>. In this scenario the use of technology would be integral to every aspect of service delivery and fully owned by a workforce that was enthusiastic about the approach and confident in its own skills levels. Organisations in this position would be viewed as market leaders and 'trendsetters'. This is an approach that encourages innovation and creativity by accepting the risks associated with trying new approaches.

### **Needs and requirements of individuals**

Individuals increasingly use the internet to access information, communicate with friends and family and widen social and professional circles. There is increasing emphasis on providing better information for people to make decisions which drive the development of public services from an individual perspective rather than by central government. Linked to this is the concept of 'co-production' where individuals are seen as assets, barriers between professionals and recipients are broken down and professionals are seen as facilitators rather than just delivery agents or information providers.

As demonstrated in this report and in the expert papers supporting it, the increasing use of technology in career guidance can bring a paradigm shift in the way that individuals access services, encouraging individuals to become more self-sufficient. There are benefits to individuals taking a more active approach to their careers and by 'owning' and actively navigating their career journey rather than being the passive recipients of information and other support regardless of whether they wish it or not.

However, a concern frequently highlighted is that increased use of technology will further exclude people who are already disadvantaged and so most in need of localised, tailored support. Whilst the numbers of people who use the internet on a regular basis continues to increase, there are still 9.2 million adults across the UK who have never used the internet<sup>29</sup>.

Some of these people have not used the internet because they don't know how to, some because they don't want to and some because they have found it inaccessible. The views of disabled people need to be considered here. Technology can potentially support access for some disabled people to careers advice that they may not previously have had. However, websites need to be designed in a way that supports access and does not create barriers. This includes bobby testing,

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<sup>27</sup> One model for how to do this is the MATURE project which is a European Research and Development project <http://mature-ip.eu/overview>. IER are a delivery partner in this project.

<sup>28</sup> UK Commission (2011), IER, 'Integrating New Technologies Into Careers Practice: Extending the Knowledge Base' <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/integrating-new-technologies-into-careers-practice.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> ONS figures for 2010 <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/iahi0810.pdf>

compatibility with voice recognition software, simple accessibility features (like options to change text size and colour) and opportunities to feed back to propose continual improvement<sup>30</sup>.

Some people have access to the internet but do not have the skills to be able to search for and assess information effectively. The evidence base for this report, in line with other work in this area, found evidence that supports this<sup>31</sup>: Issues include:

- Individuals do not always search for information in a sophisticated way, frequently using search engines but less frequently using online social networks.
- When using search engines individuals frequently type in natural language questions rather than key-word searches.
- Individuals do not always progress much further than the front page of a website if the information they are seeking is not immediately available.
- Individuals who are well used to using the internet to search for information do not always have the skills to be able to accurately assess the information that they find.
- Many searches do not help individuals to find the most useful websites and/or may not generate information that is 'fit for purpose'.

The skills base required, however, is wider than just basic digital literacy skills. Current thinking about career choices emphasises the need for individuals to have sufficient skills and understanding to 'weigh up' options and opportunities on an ongoing basis. This requires a set of skills that includes the ability to search for information (digital literacy skills), the capacity to judge the relevance and accuracy of information, advice or guidance they find or receive (information literacy skills), and a wider set of skills that are usually referred to as 'career learning skills'<sup>32</sup>.

### **The role of government policy**

The internet is a notoriously difficult area for public policy. Developments happen at a rapid rate and generally outside of geographical borders which makes rigorous monitoring difficult if not impossible. However if career guidance is considered as a public as well as a private good and if the range of career guidance available is considered as a market in the way proposed in the previous section of this report, the possible roles for public policy in shaping this market become easier to articulate.

Previous work carried out suggests four potential roles for public policy<sup>33</sup>:

- Stimulating the market in order to build its capacity
- Regulating the market, and assuring the quality of services, both to protect the public interest and to build customer confidence
- Compensating for market failure
- Supporting the growth of an educated customer.

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<sup>30</sup> <http://www.onevoiceict.org/tools/tools/seven-steps>

<sup>31</sup> These findings are from a small scale study with individuals carried out by iCeGS and reported in the UK Commission report (2011) <http://www.ukces.org.uk/commenting/enhancing-choice-the-role-of-technology-in-the-career-support-market>

<sup>32</sup> Career learning skills are skills which equip an individual to pursue a career in a flexible and dynamic job market. They are frequently thought of as covering: self-awareness, development career exploration and career management.

<sup>33</sup> The four roles are outlined in OECD (2004), Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap, Hughes, D. & Gray, S (2004) A Market in Career Provision? Learning from Experiences on the East Coast of America'. CeGS Occasional Paper. Derby: Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby, Watts, A.G., Hughes, D. & Wood, M. (2005), A Market in Career? Evidence and Issues [http://www.derby.ac.uk/files/a\\_market\\_in\\_career2005.pdf](http://www.derby.ac.uk/files/a_market_in_career2005.pdf) and in UKCES (2010), iCeGS, 'Careering Through the Web'.

Within the four roles there is a range of activities that governments could carry out. On one end of the continuum is a minimal role for government to produce robust accurate LMI that is made public in an accessible format. The development of career support services is then left to the market with no further intervention from governments. The assumption is that private and third sector providers will use the available data and information to develop provision. The other end of the spectrum is where governments provide a comprehensive service designed to meet the full range of needs of people of all ages. The higher cost parts of this service would not be targeted towards particular groups (historically this has been young people and people with low skills) but open to all.

This presents the two most extreme positions on this spectrum and there are clearly risks associated with both. If governments simply provide LMI in an accessible format, an unbalanced pattern of un-regulated provision could develop which meets the needs of some people but not others and individuals who need career guidance the most might miss out. On the other end of the spectrum, a comprehensive service would be very expensive to provide and is perhaps not a realistic proposal at a time of spending reductions.

More useful approaches lie in the middle of these extremes where publicly funded provision is part of the wider career support market and governments play a facilitative role in bringing some coherence to this market. How this might be articulated is explored further in the final section of this report.

# 3 Proposals for Action

Technology has the potential to, and in many cases already is, transforming career guidance through providing information about jobs and courses, access to diagnostic tools to help people understand their skill set and motivations, and an interactive way to explore different working environments and job roles. Technology provides different ways to communicate and can support a 'person-to-person' service that has the potential to extend and widen access.

Evidence suggests that people in the UK are currently using a wide range of career support services offered by the public, private, voluntary and community sectors in addition to informal support from family, friends and colleagues. Access channels include face to face, telephone helplines and increasingly web based services. This 'career support market' is dynamic, which provides lots of choice, but it can be difficult to navigate.

This final section focuses on the position of a publicly funded careers service within a wider career support market and suggests proposals for action for governments, providers and other key stakeholders to consider.

The central proposition is that governments should develop and share a wider vision for the career support market, and develop effective market mechanisms to ensure it meets individual needs and policy goals.

## **The key features of an effective career support market**

Our research and consultation suggests that a public careers service, operating effectively within a wider career support market, would display the following features:

- Multi-channel access (web, telephone, person-to-person) that is well signposted and caters for individuals of all ages, both those entering work or learning and those seeking to change job and progress.
- Sufficient quality assurance to engender confidence in services without disproportionate bureaucracy.
- Optimal use of new technology to widen access to services, enrich the user (and advisor) experience and deliver best value for money.
- Best use of the latest assistive technologies to widen access for people with disabilities.
- Innovation and greater impact encouraged through a range of approaches that includes private/third sector partnerships.
- Careers practitioners who are confident in using technology providing the full range of career guidance to support individuals to become more self-sufficient.
- Technology being used not only to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services, but also for developing the competencies needed by career professionals.
- High quality LMI – information about job vacancies, employment trends, job roles, career structures, earnings, etc – available and accessible for advisors, individuals and businesses.
- Developers able to find and use data to develop new products and services where these fill a gap in the market.
- Individuals with digital literacy, information handling and career management skills making best use of online provision.
- Individuals as service users driving change to services and their needs being used to evaluate how the system is working.

## The role of government

Public-sector provision plays a very significant role in the career support market. Governments therefore need to consider the nature and key purposes of the service provision they fund and its relationship to other provision in the market. It is critical that the client/consumer is protected, in particular those most vulnerable in society and in low income categories where access to ICT may be limited.

Considering the role governments could best play has been a key issue throughout our research and consultation. Two main options became apparent through this process. The first is that governments could focus primarily, or solely, on that provision which they fund and/or can influence directly through contracting mechanisms. To a large extent this is the current situation.

The second envisages governments developing and sharing a wider vision for the career support market and working with potential customers and service deliverers to develop effective market mechanisms (ideally largely self-regulating) to ensure it meets individual needs and policy goals. The careers profession could provide self-regulation through 'registered' or 'chartered' membership to which policy makers can lend weight, as well as introducing regulatory support through the endorsement of 'kitemarking' for online and face-to-face services. There is also the option of introducing a 'licence to practice' arrangement; however, this would require some form of legislative change.

A key conclusion, and indeed main proposal of this report, is that governments should take this second option. The three key reasons for this are that:

- It would provide the stimulus to provide the clear branding required in a largely unregulated career support market and raise consumer awareness of kite-marked products and services.
- The particular - and where appropriate unique - contribution that publicly-funded provision can make would be more clearly defined, and appropriate links made with wider provision in the market which could complement and extend the public offer.
- Through liaison with appropriate bodies important customer feedback could be gained, including information about any market failure that was occurring and how it might be addressed, to help ensure that wider social and economic policy goals are met.

## Proposals for action

If governments choose to take this option and work with stakeholders and delivery organisations to develop market mechanisms, we believe there are a number of actions that can be taken to enhance the delivery of career guidance.

### 1. Governments to help broker new relationships between different parts of the sector

- **Broker relationships across the career support market to harness innovation and expertise and enhance the public offer**

Exploring how the expertise and innovation of the private and voluntary sectors can be harnessed, and joint working facilitated between different parts of the careers support market, can support enhancement and augmentation of publicly funded career guidance and reduce duplication and cost. There are existing models of practice that could be extended and built on and existing and emerging groupings of providers in the public, private and voluntary sectors that could be used as a starting point.

Communicating with the UK Careers Profession Alliance which brings together key professional bodies representing careers services and the UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum which aims to provide a collective voice for the careers sector will help connect governments to self-regulating bodies. These groups are not restricted to careers organisations in the public sector, and in addition there are also emerging groupings of providers in the voluntary and commercial sectors.

- **Use new relationships between different parts of the career support market to support a blended model of provision**

Joining up services in this way provides a model for providing a 'person to person' service that extends current face to face services to ensure that access to skilled career practitioners is made available to the widest possible audience at a time and place that suits the individual user. The 'person to person' service should be linked with web and telephone services to provide a multi-channel but *blended* offer.

This type of offer could be a combination of provision from different parts of the career support market and enable individuals to benefit from the objectivity of a qualified and competent career practitioner alongside different types of support including peer support, videos or blogs. This model of provision should harness the potential of technology but have different options available for those people who are not able or do not want to access provision on line. The model should make good use of assistive technologies to ensure that disabled people are not excluded.

- **Stimulate innovation through making data and information accessible and encouraging organisations to use this**

As an increasing number of data sets are made available, it is important that these are in an accessible format that developers, in conjunction with career guidance experts, can easily find and use. Making datasets easier to access has the potential to facilitate new and innovative ways of presenting information whilst increasing the consistency and robustness of the products developed and made available.

One relatively low cost way of directly stimulating innovation and drawing attention to available public data would be to run a government sponsored competition. This could be targeted and run in a number of different ways, for example, it could be aimed at small-scale developers and a financial reward offered to organisations that make the most innovative use of public information for career guidance purposes.

New partnerships and new sources of funding for careers service delivery have the potential added value of harnessing knowledge and experience from other sectors in order to further strengthen and innovate UK careers support services. Six examples of new working relationships between public, private and community sector organisations have been highlighted: academies and free schools; wholly-owned subsidiaries in further and higher education; social enterprises; mutuals; social impact bonds; and co-funded alliances<sup>34</sup>.

## **2. Governments work with key agencies and stakeholders to assure the quality of provision**

At present the career support market is complex and largely unregulated. The primary business model in the market is not one where individuals pay for services, so usual market disciplines do not operate, and the research has highlighted that other consumer-based 'quality assurance' or

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/integrating-new-technologies-into-careers-practice.pdf>

monitoring processes (equivalent to Trip Advisor), have not been established. The wealth of different services make the career support market difficult to navigate and the lack of regulation may put vulnerable people at risk from 'rogue traders'.

Quality assurance can be driven in different ways. Users can contribute their views about the quality of provision and this can be used to inform the decisions of other users in a 'bottom up' way, or governments (or funding organisations) can drive quality assurance from the centre in a 'top down' way. Options associated with each approach are worth exploring, including:

- **Encourage organisations and users to make better use of social networking and peer review sites**

There are a number of examples of sites where users can provide feedback directly about the service or product provided. Promoting peer review, alongside use of other quality assurance mechanisms, is a powerful and cost effective way of helping to quality assure careers services accessed by individuals. Research has highlighted the potential of social networking sites such as Digg, which allows users to highlight stories that are potentially of interest and then for other users to give the story high or low priority based on a voting system. This type of system is transparent, responsive, allows an important collectivisation of knowledge, and provides a filter for quality based on feedback from users of the site.

- **Continue to develop a national kitemark for careers provision**

Work to develop a national kitemark that recognises higher quality careers provision both online and offline. This work is being taken forward by Careers England and could be applied across the UK.

### **3. Governments work with key agencies and stakeholders to support individuals to make good use of the career support services**

Individuals need digital literacy, career learning and career management skills to make effective use of the career support market. Many people develop these skills at a young age but for people who do not, there is a role for governments and other agencies to provide support. This support could include:

- **Careers practitioners to inform and help individuals to become more self-sufficient**

Careers practitioners should support those who need it to safely navigate the career support market, evaluate the information presented to them and develop the skills needed to successfully manage their careers. This should be an integral part of the practitioner's role and their training should reflect this. Supporting people to become more self-sufficient is central. In this model people are not passive subjects who are provided with the right information, but active individuals who are supported to learn the skills they need to be able to take responsibility for their own career journey.

Individuals can, and ideally should, be well on the way to developing these skills by the time they leave statutory education and schools in England should consider this when fulfilling their new duty to secure 'access to impartial and independent' career guidance. If individuals develop these skills at school this could reduce pressure on the adult career guidance budget.

- **Explore further the ways in which people make decisions about their careers and use this to inform development of provision**

Successful career guidance has traditionally been considered to be a ‘matching process’ between the skills of individuals and the skills required for the jobs available in the labour market. The underpinning assumption here is that individuals make rational decisions based on information available to them. However, we know that people’s beliefs, motivations and values, amongst other factors, also influence the decisions they make.

Increasing use of technology, particularly Web 3.0 developments, provide the opportunity to better tailor the information provided online. Information could be tailored to meet people’s explicit preferences but also tailored based on people’s less explicit beliefs, motivations and values. Further work to explore the factors that shape behaviours and decisions around learning and work could support this.

#### **4. Governments work with key stakeholders to make LMI available and accessible**

There is a wealth of LMI available and our report highlights some of the major sources. There are numerical data for example, about how many jobs will be available in which sectors, and what skills are required for these jobs. There is also qualitative intelligence, for example about what type of work is involved in particular jobs or occupations, and about what it is like to work for a particular employer. Both types of information are useful in making decisions about learning and work but our research indicated that many people find qualitative intelligence more immediately accessible<sup>35</sup>.

There are many data sources available at a national level and much of this can be broken down to a regional level. This provides a robust source of data that should be used by career practitioners. However, our research indicated that many career practitioners do not feel they have sufficient LMI about their local labour market. There are a number of related issues here, which are complicated further because there are different views about what local LMI consists of. Sometimes data can be broken down to a local level but career practitioners may not know how to access it, or this type of data may not be the most relevant for particular clients. There are a number of actions that could be taken.

- **Explore options for how to use and share local LMI**

There are a range of options that could be explored including:

- Standardising vacancy data to bring together the main sources including Jobcentre Plus, private recruitment agencies and employers’ own websites. The advantage is that vacancies could be presented in a consistent way and the source indicated. Jobcentre Plus is taking work forward which should have a positive impact on this.
- Using local partnership structures to use and share local LMI employing a ‘collect once, use many times’ approach. There are different structures at a local level in England and the devolved administrations that could be used to drive this forward.

We know that some local areas are using, sharing and presenting information about their local labour market effectively. The UK Commission is carrying out work in 2011-12 to identify this good practice and draw out principles and success factors that could be used in other places. This will look particularly at how partners can work together to share information on a ‘collect once, use many times’ basis.

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<sup>35</sup> As mentioned earlier in the report, however, developers need data in a raw format to. So both data in a raw data and qualitative intelligence needs to be available.

## **5. Governments to support the professionalisation of the careers practitioner workforce**

The role of careers practitioners in providing support that individuals trust and understand to be objective and robust will continue to be vital in a developing career support market. However, technology has the potential to bring a paradigm shift in the way that services are delivered requiring practitioners to develop different skills.

There are actions that governments and organisations within the careers sector can take, and in some cases already are, to improve the skills of the workforce.

- **Support ongoing work in relation to initial training, continuing professional development (CPD) and development of professional standards, and extend this work across the UK**

Work to professionalise the careers workforce in England is already being taken forward through implementation of the recommendations in 'Towards a Strong Careers Profession', the report of the Careers Profession Task Force in England, and through increased professionalisation of the adult career guidance workforce. The recommendations in this report could be extended across the UK.

Recommendations include developing common professional standards and a common code of ethics for careers professionals. The Task Force also recommends that practitioners should achieve a level 6 (moving to a level 7 in subsequent years) before they are able to practise. Also of direct relevance is the recommendation that initial training and CPD should include development of skills to use LMI and ICT. Creation of professional standards for careers practitioners should include a similar focus and other countries in the UK may want to consider similar activities.

## **6. Governments work with key stakeholders to review and evaluate the operation and efficiency of the career support market**

The career support market as it develops is likely to meet the needs of some individuals better than others. A key issue for governments (at the policy level) and providers (at the business/operational level) will be to decide who the key target groups are and to ensure the delivery model used is robust and sustainable.

- **Use existing information about how individuals access and experience services to inform development of new provision**

Delivery organisations hold a wide range of information about the people who use their services. This information is often used for performance management purposes but tends to be less frequently used to inform the way that provision is developed. Delivery organisations can use the information they hold to develop new web-based tools and more broadly to determine how they offer services. Governments can also use this information to inform national policy and to ensure that services meet the needs of a wide range of people.

An extension of this approach would be to develop new provision in collaboration with users. Empowering users to become engaged in co-design and co-production of provision can support development of innovative solutions that better meets their needs.

- **Explore how progression in work can be measured**

Career guidance should aim to help people not just to enter work, but also to remain in employment and ultimately to move on to a better job. Supporting people to progress can not only reduce the risk of cycling between low paid work and benefits but can improve the way the labour market works by freeing up opportunities for entry. However, defining and measuring progression in work is complex, as is evaluating the contribution that career guidance makes to this. The UK Commission intends to carry out work to explore the various ways that progression in work might be measured both at national and at local level in 2011-12.

# Annex 1 – Expert Papers

In order to provide a rich evidence base for this project the UK Commission funded six expert papers. The expert papers explore a range of issues in relation to using new technologies to enhance career guidance.

## **Expert paper 1**

'Careering through the Web'. The potential of Web 2.0 and 3.0 technologies for career development and career support services' (iCeGS, June 2010)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/careering-through-the-web.pdf>

## **Expert paper 2**

'Labour Market Information (LMI), Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)'. The way forward?' (Warwick Institute for Employment Research, June 2010)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/lmi-ict-and-iag.pdf>

## **Expert paper 3**

'Enhancing choice? The role of technology in the career support market' (iCeGS, January 2011)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/enhancing-choice-the-role-of-technology-in-the-career-support-market.pdf>

## **Expert paper 4**

'The use of LMI in career direction and learning' (GHK, January 2011)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/the-use-of-lmi-in-online-career-direction-and-learning.pdf>

## **Expert paper 5**

'Integrating new technologies into careers practice: Extending the knowledge base' (IER, March 2011)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/assets/bispartners/ukces/docs/publications/integrating-new-technologies-into-careers-practice.pdf>

## **Expert paper 6**

'Career Guidance. Understanding the behaviour of individuals' (INON (summarised by UK Commission), July 2011)

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/career-guidance>

# Annex 2 – Contributing Career Guidance Organisations

Listed below are the organisations delivering career guidance who were involved in this work, whether through contributing to the work carried out to inform the expert papers, responding to the consultation or attending workshops.

This is a small subset of the delivery organisations currently operating in the career support market.

Amazing People	<a href="http://www.amazingpeople.co.uk/">http://www.amazingpeople.co.uk/</a>
Aspire	<a href="http://www.aspire-i.com/">http://www.aspire-i.com/</a>
Babcock International Group	<a href="http://www.babcock.co.uk/default.aspx">http://www.babcock.co.uk/default.aspx</a>
BestCourse4Me.com	<a href="http://www.bestcourse4me.com/">http://www.bestcourse4me.com/</a>
Career Dovetail	<a href="http://www.careerdovetail.co.uk/">http://www.careerdovetail.co.uk/</a>
Careers Wales	<a href="http://www.careerswales.com/server.php?show=nav.5334&amp;outputLang=">http://www.careerswales.com/server.php?show=nav.5334&amp;outputLang=</a>
Careersynergy	<a href="http://careersynergy.co.uk/Site/Career_Synergy.html">http://careersynergy.co.uk/Site/Career_Synergy.html</a>
CASCAiD	<a href="http://www.cascaid.co.uk/site/main9d5e.html">http://www.cascaid.co.uk/site/main9d5e.html</a>
Careers Service Northern Ireland	<a href="https://www.careersserviceni.com/Cultures/en-GB/Homepage.htm">https://www.careersserviceni.com/Cultures/en-GB/Homepage.htm</a>
Cogent	<a href="http://www.cogent-careers.com/">http://www.cogent-careers.com/</a>
Directgov	<a href="https://www2.cxdirect.com/home.htm">https://www2.cxdirect.com/home.htm</a>
Energy and Utility Skills	<a href="http://www.euskills.co.uk/careers/">http://www.euskills.co.uk/careers/</a>
Horsemouth	<a href="http://www.horsemouth.co.uk">http://www.horsemouth.co.uk</a>
iCould	<a href="http://icould.com/">http://icould.com/</a>
igen Ltd	<a href="http://www.igengroup.co.uk/">http://www.igengroup.co.uk/</a>
kerou	<a href="http://www.kerou-associates.com/careers.html">http://www.kerou-associates.com/careers.html</a>
LANTRA	<a href="http://www.lantra.co.uk/Careers/Careers-Home.aspx">http://www.lantra.co.uk/Careers/Careers-Home.aspx</a>
Lawcareers	<a href="http://www.lawcareers.net/">http://www.lawcareers.net/</a>
Monster	<a href="http://www.monster.co.uk/">http://www.monster.co.uk/</a>
Morrisby Foundation	<a href="http://www.morrisby.com/">http://www.morrisby.com/</a>
MyWorkSearch.co.uk	<a href="http://www.myworksearch.co.uk/">http://www.myworksearch.co.uk/</a>
Nottingham and Nottingham Futures	<a href="http://www.futuresnn.co.uk/">http://www.futuresnn.co.uk/</a>

Next Step	<a href="https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx">https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx</a>
Penna	<a href="http://www.penna.com/">http://www.penna.com/</a>
Periscope Projects Ltd	<a href="http://www.periscopeprojects.com/">http://www.periscopeprojects.com/</a>
Position Ignition	<a href="http://www.positionignition.com/">http://www.positionignition.com/</a>
Prospects	<a href="http://www.prospects.ac.uk/">http://www.prospects.ac.uk/</a>
Skillset	<a href="http://www.skillset.org/careers/">http://www.skillset.org/careers/</a>
Stuart Mitchell Group	<a href="http://www.stuartmitchellgroup.com/">http://www.stuartmitchellgroup.com/</a>
The b-live Foundation	<a href="http://www.b-live.com/">http://www.b-live.com/</a>
The Careers Group	<a href="http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/output/Page19.asp">http://www.careers.lon.ac.uk/output/Page19.asp</a>
Skills Development Scotland	<a href="http://myworldofwork.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk">http://myworldofwork.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk</a>
U-Explore	<a href="http://www.u-xplore.com/website/">http://www.u-xplore.com/website/</a>
University of Bradford	<a href="http://www.careers.brad.ac.uk/">http://www.careers.brad.ac.uk/</a>
University of Manchester	<a href="http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/">http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/</a>
University of Sheffield	<a href="http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers">http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/careers</a>
Wikijob	<a href="http://www.wikijob.co.uk/">http://www.wikijob.co.uk/</a>

# Annex 3 – Publicly funded LMI

As GHK highlight in the report 'The Use of LMI in Online Career Direction and Learning'<sup>36</sup>, there is a wide range of, quantitative and qualitative, LMI available at a national and regional level.

National sources of LMI include:

- The **Annual Business Inquiry** collected by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This provides information about number of businesses, total turnover, Gross Value Added, total employment at a point in time and the average over the year, total employment costs and net capital expenditure. This can be broken down to a regional level <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/abs/>.
- The **Labour Force Survey** collected by the ONS four times a year. The Labour Force Survey contains questions about both education/training and employment and is a rich source of information about what qualifications people have, whether they are currently studying and patterns of employment <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Source.asp?vlnk=358>.
- **Vacancy data provided by Jobcentre Plus (GB)** at a local authority level and refreshed on a monthly basis. This provides information on the number of vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus (which is a subset of the total number of vacancies) and the number of unfilled vacancies. Apart from providing vacancy information for individuals it also provides a useful picture of what types of vacancies are notified to Jobcentre Plus and which are most difficult to fill <http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk/>.
- **Average Weekly Earnings** from the Annual Survey of Households carried out by ONS collected on a monthly basis. The data can be broken down into detailed SIC code classifications and allows users to view the information over a ten year period <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=10>.
- **Working Futures** carried out by Warwick Institute of Employment Research and published by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. This is an employment and skills forecast which provides analysis of employment by sector and future trends in productivity and supply and demand over the next ten years. The most recent data is for 2007-17 and this is the third refresh <http://www.ukces.org.uk/tags/working-futures-2004-2014-sectoral-report>.
- **Employer Skills Surveys** carried out by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills for England and the devolved governments for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The surveys provide an overview of the employment and skills market in each sector of the economy, highlighting skills gaps and shortages as well as training practices and expenditure.

There are also sources of data that focus on education and training including:

- **Higher Education Statistics Agency** collects data from each higher education institution every year. This contains information about the popularity of particular courses and the destinations of learners after they have completed their degree. Information is available to individuals through the Unistats website (<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>).
- **Universities and Colleges Admissions Service** provides information about what higher education courses are available. Users can search data by region and for courses which lead to professional accreditation (<http://www.ucas.ac.uk/>).
- **Framework for Excellence** (England only) provides information about further education institutions and the courses they provide. Information about success rates and the views of

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.ukces.org.uk/commenting/the-use-of-lmi-in-online-career-direction-and-learning>. Please note that this report is primarily focussed on LMI available in England.

learners and employers is available on a website where people can search by institution and compare the performance of different institutions (<http://ffepublication.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/>).

The main publicly funded source of sector level information is provided by the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). The SSCs provide data in accordance with the Common LMI Framework<sup>37</sup> developed by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. This covers the main LMI outputs that SSCs are expected to produce and the requirements for SSCs in collecting, analysing and communicating LMI to employers.

The framework tasks all SSCs to:

- Collect and collate data from robust, recognised secondary data sources.
- Collect LMI covering the whole of their sector footprint across the UK – disaggregated by sub-sector as appropriate.
- Benchmark sector data against UK averages.
- Break down data to allow comparisons between the UK nations and regions where possible.
- Fill any key information gaps on their sector through primary research.
- Carry out primary qualitative research and consultation with employers in their sectors.

The relevance of the LMI collected by SSCs for career guidance is well recognised and every SSC provides some online career guidance. This includes data about job forecasts but also case studies about what it is like to do a particular job. This type of information adds richness to quantitative information.

The LMI that SSCs produce is already used in publicly funded national career guidance services. Two examples of this are the Next Step adult guidance website in England (<https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>) and the Industry Fact Sheets SSCs have produced for the Careers Service in Northern Ireland (<http://www.careersserviceni.com/NR/exeres/B6C67545-136B-4223-A9AE-A68D150C11F3.frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published>).

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<sup>37</sup> <http://www.ukces.org.uk/tags/labour-market-intelligence/lmi-information-to-intelligence>

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills is a social partnership, led by Commissioners from large and small employers, trade unions and the voluntary sector. Our mission is to raise skill levels to help drive enterprise, create more and better jobs and economic growth.

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