

Consultation on careers guidance for schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions

Consultation Response Form

The closing date is: 1 August 2012
Your comments must reach us by that date.



Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Reason for confidentiality:

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If you have a query relating to the policy content or consultation process you can contact the DfE National Helpline on: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact us'](#) page or by emailing: CareersGuidance.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

e-mail: consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk

Please choose one of the following options to best describe you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/> 11-18 School	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-16 School	<input type="checkbox"/> Academy
<input type="checkbox"/> Sixth Form College	<input type="checkbox"/> Further Education Institution	<input type="checkbox"/> School Representative Group
X <input type="checkbox"/> Sixth Form College Representative Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Further Education Institution Representative Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Careers Representative Group
<input type="checkbox"/> Careers Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Student
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Governor	<input type="checkbox"/> Employer
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Please Specify:

The Sixth Form Colleges' Forum (SFCF) represents 92 out of 94 official designated Sixth Form Colleges in England.

1 Should we extend the new duty on schools to secure independent, impartial careers guidance for their pupils, downwards to Year 8 (age 12-13), from September 2013?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

With increasing numbers of providers recruiting learners at age 14 rather than 16, it makes sense for the duty to be extended downwards to Year 8.

2 Should we extend the new duty to secure independent, impartial careers guidance, upwards to young people aged 16-18 in schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions, from September 2013?

Please Note: If the consultation supports the extension of the new duty to 16-18 in schools, sixth form colleges and further education institutions, the Government will consider extending to other provision including Work-Based Education and Training. However this is out of scope for this consultation.

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

In principle, we support the idea of extending the duty to secure independent, impartial careers guidance, upwards to young people aged 16-18 in schools, Sixth Form Colleges and further education institutions, from September 2013. The diversification of the 16-18 education market, changes to higher education funding and high levels of youth unemployment have increased the need for high quality, independent and impartial careers guidance.

However, the consultation document provides very little detail on what extending the duty would mean in practice for post-16 providers. If the plan was to extend the recently published statutory guidance for schools in its current form, the requirement for 'independent' careers advice to be 'external to the school/college' would be problematic for our members.

Sixth Form Colleges already provide high quality, independent and impartial careers guidance and they meet the responsibilities that have been set out in the guidance for schools. Recent data released by the Department for Education shows that Sixth Form Colleges have lower levels of Year 12 drop out and non progression between Year 12 and Year 13 than school and academy sixth forms and GFE colleges. Despite enrolling young people with lower levels of prior attainment and higher levels of disadvantage than other post-16 providers, we account for almost 14% of entrants to higher education.

The careers guidance provided by Sixth Form Colleges makes a significant contribution to this high level of progression and achievement. As most Sixth Form Colleges employ their careers staff directly, the requirement for all careers guidance to be provided externally would be extremely counter productive. In practice, it would mean that many Sixth Form Colleges would have to make their existing careers staff redundant and then either rehire them as individual consultants or commission another provider to deliver guidance services. This makes little sense.

The situation is particularly acute for Sixth Form Colleges as they receive less funding than other post-16 providers and significantly less funding than pre-16 providers. The reduction in funding for non-assessed enrichment activities in 2011 (from 114 hours per year to 30 hours) has already forced some Sixth Form Colleges to scale back their guidance activities. While most have managed to ring fence funding for careers guidance, any further changes – and in particular the requirement to buy in services – will almost certainly have a negative impact on the quality of advice offered to students.

In short, Sixth Form Colleges already provide high quality careers guidance and there is little in the statutory guidance for schools that our members do not already offer. While extending new duties to the Sixth Form College sector sits a little uneasily alongside the new freedoms and flexibilities that the sector has recently been afforded (the reclassification to the private sector was supposed to lead to a more ‘hands off’ approach from government), in practice, this would simply validate the services that SFCs already provide. As long as the extension was cost-neutral, and did not require SFCs to commission external providers to deliver careers guidance, it would be seen as a logical extension of the arrangements in place in schools from September 2012.

3 What issues, if any, would arise for your institution from the requirement to provide access to independent careers guidance?

Comments:

See above

4 Any other comments?

Comments:

