



Progress and Potential

A review benchmarked
against the OECD Career
Guidance Policy Review

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Careers Scotland

Progress and Potential

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Careers Scotland
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Careers

Preface

The aim of this report is to review the progress of Careers Scotland since its establishment in April 2002, and to benchmark this progress against the OECD¹ Career Guidance Policy Review – both its synthesis report and its UK Country Note². The OECD review, carried out in 2001-03, covered 14 countries; it was linked to further reviews conducted by the European Commission and the World Bank, so covering 37 countries in all³. Since, however, Careers Scotland was being established while the OECD review was taking place, it was considered premature for Scotland to be included in the UK part of the review.

Careers Scotland has involved the merging of over 80 previously separate organisations. Now that the restructuring is complete, and some new policy directions established, it has decided to commission an independent review of its progress in the international context provided by the OECD work. This report is the result.

The review has followed closely the methodology used by OECD. An adapted version of the OECD questionnaire was completed by Careers Scotland staff⁴, who also made available a collection of around a hundred policy and research documents. A one-week visit was then undertaken, in the course of which three careers centres

were visited and discussions took place with over 60 people, including Careers Scotland staff, partners and stakeholders, plus members of the Scottish Executive, of Scottish Enterprise, and of Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

The report differs from the Country Notes prepared for the OECD review, in the sense that it is concerned not with career guidance in Scotland as a whole, but with the activities of one particular guidance provider (albeit much the largest). One of the major issues which the report addresses is, however, the relationship of Careers Scotland with other guidance providers.

One of the major themes of the Scottish Executive's vision for 'Smart Successful Scotland' is global connections: 'We need to tell the world about Scotland and tell Scotland about the world'⁵.

This report is a contribution to that process.

¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004). *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*. Paris: OECD.

² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2002). *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies: United Kingdom Country Note*. Paris: OECD.

³ For the main findings from the three reviews, see Watts, A.G. & Sultana, R.G. (2004). Career guidance policies in 37 countries: contrasts and common themes. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance* (in press).

⁴ Brown, V. & Galashan, L. (2004). *Careers Scotland: Case Study Framed in Accordance with the OECD Career Guidance Policy Review: National Questionnaire Response*. Glasgow: Careers Scotland.

⁵ Scottish Executive (2001). *A Smart, Successful Scotland: Ambitions for the Enterprise Networks*, p.7. Edinburgh: Stationery Office.



Careers Scotland
Setting the Direction



1 Setting the Direction

Origins

1.1 Careers Scotland is probably the largest publicly-funded organisational structure in the world that is dedicated to career planning support. OECD suggested that 'the priority for policy makers in most OECD countries should be to create separate, and appropriate, occupational and organisational structures to deliver career guidance'⁶. In organisational terms, Careers Scotland represents the most substantial exemplar of the recommended approach.

1.2 Careers Scotland was formed in 2002 by integrating over 80 previously separate organisations, including 64 different legal entities. The Duffner Committee had recommended that publicly funded career guidance in Scotland should move towards a national service, with national marketing and a national brand⁷. Following a consultation process, which indicated acknowledgement of the confusion for clients offered by 'a cluttered landscape', the Scottish Executive decided to bring together not only the Careers Service Companies, but also Education Business Partnerships, Adult Guidance Networks and Lifelong Learning Partnerships⁸.

1.3 Partly because at the time there was resistance to setting up new quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations (QUANGOs), the Scottish Executive further decided to align the new organisation with the two Enterprise Networks: Scottish Enterprise; and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. This had two effects. First, it split Careers Scotland into two operational parts, with common branding. Second, it located Careers Scotland within an organisational structure focused primarily on economic development.

1.4 The geographical areas covered by the two Enterprise Networks are broadly similar in size, but Highlands and Islands is less developed economically and comprises only about 8% of the total population. Highlands and Islands Enterprise accordingly has a broader role which encompasses community as well as economic development. These and other differences have produced some divergence between the two parts of Careers Scotland in the ways in which they have developed: some of these will be noted in the course of this report. In addition to the common brand, however, care has been taken to ensure common

broad aims, plus common operational delivery in such areas as website development and marketing, and a common performance management system.

1.5 The fact that Careers Scotland is now located within organisational structures focused primarily on economic development represents the second stage of a substantial change for careers services in the country⁹. Traditionally, they were located in local authorities as part of the education service: this meant that they were uneven in size and quality, and often somewhat marginal within the structures of which they were part. In the mid-1990s they were restructured as independent Careers Service Companies, constituted as partnerships between the local authority and the Local Enterprise Company (LEC): this gave them greater freedom of manoeuvre, and encouraged them to develop stronger business practices. Since the LECs constitute the service-delivery arm of the Enterprise Networks (the 'core' provides strategic direction and support services), the arrangements adopted for Careers Scotland can be viewed as representing the completion of the process of moving these careers services from the education system into an economic-development setting.

⁶ OECD (2004), p.102.

⁷ Careers Service Review Committee (2000). *Report*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

⁸ Scottish Executive (2001). *Careers Scotland – the Way Forward*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

⁹ For a history of careers services in the UK, see Peck, D. (2004). *Careers Services: History, Policy and Practice in the United Kingdom*. London: Routledge.

1.6 The issue of the optimum location for career guidance services is open to debate. Traditionally, services in many countries have been designed primarily for young people and have been provided largely within the education system. The move towards all-age delivery, strongly supported in the OECD review, has however led to questions about whether this is adequate. Moreover, the OECD review pointed out that even for school students, there are benefits in school-based career education being supplemented by personal career guidance provided by an organisation closer to the labour market¹⁰. The progressive changes adopted in Scotland are in line with these arguments.

Policy context

1.7 The policy framework in which Careers Scotland is set is strongly integrated into that set for the Enterprise Networks, as executive non-departmental public bodies. In its first year, the Scottish Executive issued a 'letter of strategic guidance' addressed specifically to Careers Scotland. Subsequently, however, the goals and targets for Careers Scotland have formed part of the operational plans developed by the Enterprise Networks and approved by the Scottish Executive.

1.8 The main strategic direction from the Scottish Executive for the work of the Networks, and therefore for Careers Scotland, is presented in a document entitled *A Smart, Successful Scotland*¹¹. This indicates that while the Networks are expected to contribute to such other agendas as social justice and environmental sustainability, this is within an agenda focused primarily on economic development. It sets out three priorities: growing businesses; skills and learning; and global connections. In its later 'refreshed' form¹², Careers Scotland is mentioned under 'skills and learning', which covers four themes:

- improving the operation of the labour market;
- providing 'the best start for all our young people';
- developing people who are in work;
- narrowing the gap in unemployment and reducing economic inactivity.

In *Smart Successful Scotland*, Careers Scotland is referred to explicitly in relation to the first three of these, and implicitly in relation to the fourth.

1.9 Careers Scotland is accordingly expected to contribute to the achievement of the skills and learning targets set for the Enterprise Networks as a whole. In pursuit of this, Careers Scotland agrees with the Networks a set of performance targets for its own work. The Networks view Careers Scotland as their key interface with individuals, and also with schools. It represents a substantial part of their activities: in staffing terms, it constitutes between a third and a half of the organisational structure of Scottish Enterprise, and around a quarter of Highlands & Islands Enterprise. To date, the Networks have sustained and indeed slightly increased the level of budgetary contribution to Careers Scotland, as well as strengthening its internal operations and external visibility. While inevitably there have been tensions at times, in general they have provided a congruent and supportive environment for its work.

¹⁰ OECD (2004), p.42.

¹¹ Scottish Executive (2001). *A Smart, Successful Scotland: Ambitions for the Enterprise Networks*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

¹² Scottish Executive (2004). *A Smart, Successful Scotland: Strategic Directions to the Enterprise Networks and an Enterprise Strategy for Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

Aims

1.10 Although Careers Scotland's relationship with the Scottish Executive is conducted as part of the Enterprise Networks, it has established its own direct relationships with various parts of the Executive. A Stakeholder Survey conducted in the early months of Careers Scotland's existence expressed some concern about its lack of influence on relevant policy areas¹³. While there is still work to be done on improving its visibility in the policy arena, the situation in this area seems to have improved considerably. Careers Scotland is regularly consulted on relevant policy issues, and is represented on a number of relevant bodies. Its size and visibility mean that the career guidance sector is represented in arenas where it might not have been represented previously. Moreover, as part of the Enterprise Networks, it is able on occasion to achieve higher-level representation than it might be able to do in its own right. There remains, however, a risk that its existence may encourage the Scottish Executive to view career planning as an operational task that is now 'fixed' and requires little further policy attention. We will return to this issue in Section 4.

1.11 To clarify the role of Careers Scotland within the Enterprise Networks, steps have been taken to define the distinctive focus of its work. The organisation's strategic aim is 'to equip individuals with the skills to make well informed realistic career decisions throughout their working lives'¹⁴. Within the context of an all-age service, it would seem appropriate to add to this: '... and to provide the support they need to develop and utilise these self-management skills'. The underpinning rationale is that:

'Individuals with these skills are more likely to make effective and sustainable choices in education training and employment which suit both their needs and those of Scotland's modern workplace. Individuals with skills in career planning are, for example, less likely to be unemployed or underemployed for extended periods, or choose arbitrarily education and training programmes which they leave soon afterwards.'¹⁵

Thus the distinctive focus of Careers Scotland – as defined in various internal policy documents – is on career planning, linked to economic inclusion, enterprise and employability, and on making Scotland a career-resilient society¹⁶.

1.12 The effects of this focus are evident in at least two respects. First, the heterogeneous nature of the education-business links inherited from the partnerships that preceded Careers Scotland has been reduced by insisting that the links supported by Careers Scotland must have some relationship to career planning. Second, while Careers Scotland has played a very significant role in initiatives designed to address the needs of 'at risk' young people, including those not in education, employment or training (NEET), it has made it clear that its role is helping such young people in relation to their employability and career planning. It recognises that these issues are often linked to wider social and personal issues, and its 'key workers' provide front-line support in relation to such issues. But they are expected to link with other agencies for detailed attention to the personal and social issues, and to maintain their distinctive career/employability focus.

¹³ Rocket Science (2003). *Careers Scotland: 2003 Stakeholder Audit*, pp.16-18. Edinburgh: Rocket Science.

¹⁴ Careers Scotland (2004). *Career Planning Services: Our Approach*, p.2. Glasgow: Careers Scotland.

¹⁵ Careers Scotland (2004). *Community Guidance*, p.3. Glasgow: Careers Scotland.

¹⁶ The term, used in several Careers Scotland documents, comes from Waterman, R.H., Waterman, J.D. & Collard, B.A. (1994). Toward a career resilient workforce. *Harvard Business Review*, 72(4), 87-95.

International comparisons

1.13 The stance taken in relation to 'at risk' young people contrasts with the approach taken in England, where the Careers Service has been subsumed within a Connexions Service designed primarily to address the holistic needs of such young people and to reduce the size of the NEET group. In Scotland, on the other hand, the Beattie Committee recommended that careers services should have adequate resources to deal with 'at risk' young people, including identifying those who would benefit from the support of a 'key worker' or mentor, but it proposed stronger linking between careers services and other agencies dealing with such young people, rather than seeking to restructure them.¹⁷

1.14 The result has been a major divergence in the policies adopted by the two countries not only in relation to social inclusion but also in relation to career guidance services. England has pursued a policy of *horizontal integration*, establishing a Connexions Service which has merged career guidance with other personal and social services for young people, with separate guidance policies

and provision for adults; whereas Scotland has pursued a policy of *vertical integration*, merging career guidance services on an all-age basis.

1.15 Wales, too, has followed a policy of vertical integration, by establishing Careers Wales. In Wales, the level of integration is weaker than in Scotland: there remain seven separate careers companies operating under a common brand, with some co-ordination of cross-company activities and Wales-wide projects¹⁸. But in the context of the UK as a whole, the similarities between Scotland and Wales considerably outweigh the differences. It also seems likely that Northern Ireland will follow a vertical integration strategy.

1.16 The OECD review of the UK only covered England and Wales. It recognised that following devolution, there was growing divergence between the delivery models adopted within the different constituent countries of the UK. It suggested that this divergence should be seen in a positive light, offering opportunities to assess and test the relative virtues of these models.

1.17 It is notable, however, that many of the concerns identified in the UK Country Note related specifically to the Connexions Service in England. These included concerns that the introduction of Connexions would reduce and/or refocus career education and guidance in schools; that the undifferentiated use of the term Personal Adviser would make it harder for young people to discriminate between those qualified to offer career guidance and those not; that the specialised career guidance knowledge, qualifications and skills base of Connexions might not be maintained; and that the removal of the term 'careers' from the title both of Connexions and of those working within it might be unhelpful in relation to public recognition of career guidance. The report particularly noted the 'need to ensure that, particularly for young people who are at the threshold of lifelong learning, career guidance retains a strong and visible identity'¹⁹. The structures adopted in Scotland and Wales have enabled this identity to be sustained, and these problems to be avoided (though cf. paras.3.4-3.5).

¹⁷ Beattie Committee (1999). *Implementing Inclusiveness: Realising Potential*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

¹⁸ For a recent review of Careers Wales, see Moulson, R. & Prail, S. (2004). *Careers Wales Review – Final Report*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.

¹⁹ OECD (2002), p.23

1.18 The OECD synthesis report did not attempt to reach any definitive conclusions on the relative merits of age-specific and all-age models. It did however point out that all-age services have a number of organisational and resource-use advantages. In particular, they allow a diverse range of services to be provided throughout the lifespan within the one organisational framework. Potentially this allows them to be more cost-effective, avoiding unnecessary duplication of resources. The report cited Careers Wales as illustrating many of these advantages²⁰.

1.19 In addition to those in Scotland and Wales, examples given of all-age services were the Federal Employment Service in Germany and ADEM-OP in Luxembourg. Both of these, however, are public employment services, in which career guidance plays a relatively minor role. The only other country with a separate organisational structure to provide all-age career guidance is New Zealand (not covered in the OECD review), where Career Services – a government agency – is funded to provide information and advice services to all New Zealanders, guidance services to targeted individuals, and career education services to schools. It manages a website and helpline, and operates from 16 career centres spread throughout the country²¹.

1.20 In effect, therefore, Scotland, Wales and New Zealand could be regarded as the prime examples of the ‘separate organisational structures’ commended to policy-makers by the OECD review. Of these, Careers Scotland is much the largest: its approximate number of full-time equivalent staff in 2004 was 1,270, as compared with 160 in New Zealand; Careers Wales is somewhere between the two²². This potentially makes its development a matter of considerable international interest.

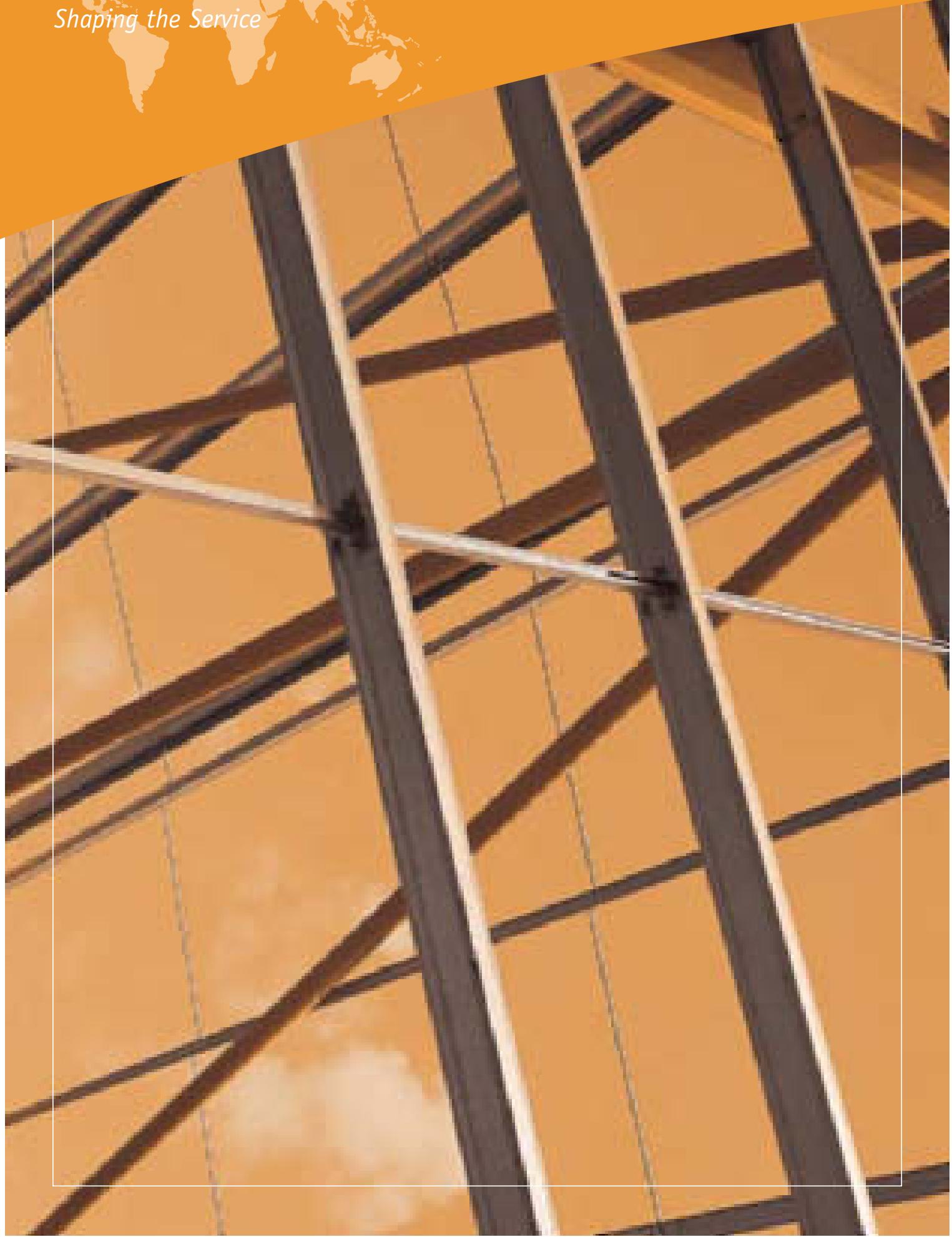
²⁰ OECD (2004), p.144.

²¹ See Oakes, L., von Dadelszen, J. & Barker, P. (2002). Career development in New Zealand. In Bezanson, L. & O'Reilly, E. (Eds.): *Making Waves, Volume 2: Connecting Career Development with Public Policy*, pp.146-153. Ottawa: Canadian Career Development Foundation. For up-to-date information, see annual report on www.careers.govt.nz

²² The number of full-time-equivalent Careers Advisers in Careers Wales was cited by Moulson & Prail (2004) as being 266.4, as compared with a Careers Scotland figure of 415 in the Scottish Enterprise area alone (see para.3.3 below).



Careers Scotland
Shaping the Service



2 Shaping the Service

Access

2.1 Several of the features of 'lifelong guidance systems' identified in the OECD review²³ are concerned with access to services:

- Transparency and ease of access over the lifespan, including a capacity to meet the needs of a diverse range of clients.
- Particular attention to key transition points over the lifespan.
- Flexibility and innovation in service delivery to reflect the differing needs and circumstances of diverse client groups.
- Access to individual guidance by appropriately qualified practitioners for those who need such help, at times when they need it.
- Assured access to service delivery that is independent of the interests of particular institutions or enterprises.

On all of these criteria, the models of service delivery being developed by Careers Scotland are comparable to the best practice identified in the OECD review. Five features are particularly worthy of attention: coherence; differentiation; channelling; segmentation and prioritisation; and marketing.

Coherence

2.2 Welding together a large number of different organisations, with different cultures and different practices, has been a major task. To help with this process, efforts have been made to develop a common framework for service delivery, within which a coherent range of different services and programmes can be located.

2.3 Particular use has been made of the Career Planning Continuum, adapted from work carried out at Nottingham Trent University²⁴. The original version was devised to represent the chronological stages which comprise rational career planning. It was designed for use within a careers interview, partly as a diagnostic device and partly as a tool for helping clients to reflect

on the process as well as the outcome of the interview, based on the notion that this would contribute to the development of their career planning skills for subsequent re-use.

2.4 The Continuum has now been used as the basis for a Career Planning Journey, based on the same nine stages but presented in simple language, through which individuals approaching Careers Scotland can be invited to indicate the stage they have reached in their career thinking. It is also used to distinguish the stages addressed by different staff roles. Extensive staff training has taken place in the nature of the model and its usage.

Differentiation

2.5 Alongside the Continuum, use has also been made of a model of differentiated service delivery developed at Florida State University (FSU). The original model²⁵ distinguishes three levels of service, related to individuals' readiness for career decision-making:

- Those who are initially judged to have a *high* level of readiness can be referred to *self-help* services: career resource rooms and web sites designed to help them to select, find, sequence and use resources with little or no help.
- Those judged to have a *moderate* level of readiness can be referred to brief *staff-assisted* services: some help with the use of resources, supplemented by group sessions.
- Those with a *low* level of readiness can be referred to *intensive* (individual case-managed) services: individual counselling and longer-term group counselling.

In the original model, estimates of the proportion of the population who need intensive services tend to fall between 10% and 50%, depending on the population, with the remainder being divided between those requiring self-help and brief staff-assisted services²⁶.

²³ OECD (2004), p.138.

²⁴ Allen, A., Hambly, L., Malkin, J. & Scott, F. (1997). *Perspectives on Career Planning*. Occasional Papers in Careers Guidance No.1. Stourbridge: Institute of Careers Guidance.

²⁵ For a detailed account, see Sampson, J.P., Reardon, R.C., Peterson, G.W. & Lenz, J.G. (2004). *Career Counseling and Services: a Cognitive Information Processing Approach*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

²⁶ Sampson, J.P., Palmer, M. & Watts, A.G. (1999). *Who Needs Guidance?* CeGS Occasional Paper. Derby: Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

2.6 The adoption of the FSU model is strongly in line with the statement in the OECD report that one of the key challenges to policy-makers is – alongside ‘ensuring ... wider use of self-help techniques’ – ‘ensuring that resource allocation decisions give the first priority to systems that develop career self-management skills and career information, and that delivery systems match levels of personal help, from brief to extensive, to personal needs and circumstances, rather than assuming that everybody needs intensive personal career guidance’²⁷. The FSU model is indeed mentioned in the OECD report as one of the means of meeting this challenge²⁸.

2.7 There are potential tensions between the FSU model and the Career Planning Continuum. At root, for example, the Continuum is designed for use within a careers interview, whereas the FSU model is concerned with moving services away from the centrality of the interview. As development and usage of the two models within Careers Scotland has evolved, including the joint focus on understanding career guidance need, some reconciliation has been achieved. For example, the Career Planning Journey is used both as a career planning delivery tool and as part of needs assessment (along with readiness for decision-making). It might be useful to engage with the originators of the two

models to see whether some integrative exposition of the models could be produced, to present in accessible form the theoretical base for the service²⁹.

2.8 With the help of Professor Jim Sampson, the FSU model (with the three levels relabelled as ‘self-help’, ‘assisted’ and ‘in-depth’) was piloted as the service-delivery model within 12 Careers Scotland centres and 25 secondary schools in 2003. Key features included:

- upgrading of resource centres;
- clearer signposting of resources;
- ‘meeter/greeter’ and ‘floorwalker’ roles to provide support to self-help, linked to opportunities for needs assessment;
- access to different levels of staffing for brief assistance and longer interventions.

The model adopted in Careers Scotland centres, where a greater variety of staffing support can be made available, had to be modified to some extent in the case of schools. Following a largely positive evaluation³⁰, the model is currently being implemented in Careers Scotland centres where the physical premises allow this, and also – as opportunities permit – in other locations. In addition, there is a

policy of upgrading the Careers Scotland centres, both to make them as accessible as possible and to enable the FSU model to be more fully used.

2.9 The aim of the service differentiation model, as defined in a staff training pack, is ‘to provide the highest-quality service with the greatest impact, using the least intensive resources’. A difficulty in implementing the model has been the lack of adequate needs-assessment tools. A range of possible tools has been piloted and introduced, but a wholly satisfactory tool-kit has not yet emerged. Since the quality of needs assessment lies at the heart of the model, devising such a tool-kit is a high priority.

2.10 As with any major change, some difficulties have also been experienced in implementing the model with staff. It requires very different ways of working and of engaging with clients, and there have been some anxieties about deskilling. Moreover, the model is easier to implement in spacious open-plan accommodation than in centres where space is more restricted and less flexible. Full implementation will take time. In general, however, staff appear to have welcomed the new model, the reduction or disappearance of waiting lists, and the more flexible team-based methods of working.

²⁷ OECD (2004), p.148.

²⁸ OECD (2004), p.80.

²⁹ The fact that there is some theoretical congruence between the two models should be helpful in this respect. For example, both incorporate in their theoretical underpinnings the DOTS model, which is also used as the basis for Careers Scotland’s Careers Box. For the origins of the DOTS model, see Law, B. & Watts, A.G. (1977). *Schools, Careers and Community*. London: Church Information Office.

³⁰ Cameron, B. & Govan, D. (2004). *Service Delivery Framework Model: Evaluation Report*. Glasgow: Careers Scotland (mimeo).

Channelling

2.11 A further potentially important feature of the service-delivery model is the access strategy (called the 'channel strategy' in the Scottish Enterprise area). The aim is that individuals should be able to access Careers Scotland services in a variety of ways, notably walk-in (Careers Scotland centres), phone-in (helpline) and log-in (website). These are complemented by 'look-in' (publications and careers fairs) and outreach services. This relates to the recommendation in the OECD review that policy-makers should engage with 'ensuring greater diversity in the types of services that are available and in the ways that they are delivered, including... a more integrated approach to the use of ICT'³¹.

2.12 In practice, however, there have been some constraints to the development of Careers Scotland's channelling. The website is less well developed than, for example, those developed by Careers Wales and by Career Services in New Zealand. In addition, the level of integration of helpline services has been more constrained than in these two countries. Career Services in New Zealand has its own helpline service covering all forms of career enquiries; Careers Wales manages the Learndirect helpline in Wales³². In Scotland, on the other hand, the Learndirect helpline – which operates across the UK and is the leading helpline

service identified in the OECD review³³ – is managed separately by the Scottish University for Industry. Close working links have been established with SUFI, including a 'memorandum of understanding' which covers cross-referral of customers, reciprocal use of databases, and exploring possibilities for collaboration in callcentre activities. Currently, Careers Scotland has a national number routed to its careers centres, and is also planning to pilot a callcentre approach in one region of the Scottish Enterprise area. But the operational separation of the Learndirect service may restrict the development of Careers Scotland's own helpline services, and the level of seamless cross-channel integration of services that can be achieved.

2.13 A further channel on which no policy has yet been developed is guidance by e-mail. E-mail enquiries are currently dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis. Elsewhere in the UK, Graduate Prospects has shown the potential of a more systematic approach, based on e-guidance management, routing and monitoring software.³⁴ It might be useful for Careers Scotland to explore the potential of such an approach for its own operations.

2.14 An important feature of channelling is that it extends access to services, and also can avoid some of the 'labelling'

problems which physical careers centres can experience. Accessible location and attractive premises can encourage people to use centres, but it may be difficult for the same centre to feel comfortable for, say, both an 'at risk' youngster and a redundant company director. Outreach approaches and guidance at a distance can avoid these difficulties, and enable effective contact to be made with a wide variety of customers.

Segmentation and prioritisation

2.15 A key issue for Careers Scotland is how to distribute its resources among its various potential target-groups. An impressive customer segmentation model has accordingly been developed by Careers Scotland in the Scottish Enterprise area, which defines the number of potential customers in each of a number of categories. The first level has three categories: future workforce; in work; and out of work. Each of these is then subdivided further: 'future workforce' into school, FE and HE; 'in work' into categories by size of employer and whether they are receiving training or not; and 'out of work' into 'want a job' and 'don't want a job'. In some cases, a further level of analysis is added: for example, school-leavers are broken down by destination; and those who 'don't want a job' into 'long-term sick', 'caring', and 'retired/other'.

³¹ OECD (2004), p.148.

³² See Watts, A.G. & Dent, G. (2002). 'Let your fingers do the walking': the use of telephone helplines in career information and guidance. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 30(1), 17-35.

³³ OECD (2004), pp.77-79.

³⁴ See Madahar, L. & Offer, M. (2004). *Managing E-Guidance Interventions within HE Careers Services: a New Approach to Providing Guidance at a Distance*. Manchester: Graduate Prospects.

2.16 Next, each of these categories is examined in terms of their priority level. For example, high-priority groups include school pupils, the 'NEET' group, and workers facing redundancy; medium-priority groups include FE students and employed people seeking career change; low-priority groups include independent-school pupils and HE students (on the grounds that they have services of their own), plus the 'don't want a job' group. This prioritisation is used to determine appropriate sought penetration rates for each of the categories.

2.17 Alongside this, each of the categories is also reviewed to see whether they are likely to need self-help, assisted or in-depth help. Somewhat confusingly, the definitions adopted for this stage of the model differ somewhat from those used in the differentiated service delivery model (see para.2.4 above). Thus the 'assisted' group is defined as including those requiring assistance with developing and implementing career plans, whereas the 'in-depth' group is confined to those requiring ongoing support and guidance. Instead of being used to classify interventions, the categories are defined –

for business planning purposes only – by total length of intervention: thus the 'self-help' group is viewed as each requiring an average of 20 minutes of staff time; while the 'assisted' group is viewed as requiring an average of 2 hours; and the 'in-depth' group as needing an average of 5 hours (increasing to 30 hours per annum for NEET clients). By working back from the other data, Careers Scotland has calculated that 77% of customers might be given 'self-help' services, 19% 'assisted' services, and 4% 'in-depth' services (on this definition).

2.18 While care will have to be taken to avoid confusion due to the different definition and usage of the terms used in the differentiated service delivery model, two features of this customer segmentation model are particularly worth noting. First, it provides a means of addressing Careers Scotland's attention to the whole population of the country. Second, it enables Careers Scotland to prioritise the groups to which it wants to direct its resources, and – by rotating the variables – to review the implications of doing so at different levels of intensity of service, and different levels of

penetration. It thereby enables Careers Scotland to regularly review not only the levels of service it wants to offer to different groups, but also the groups where it wants to be highly proactive (seeking close to 100% penetration), those where it wants to improve penetration but at more modest levels, and those where it is content to be purely reactive.

2.19 One of the merits of this model, and of the differentiated service delivery model which it supports, is that it has enabled Careers Scotland to focus its services according to perceived need, without using rigid 'rationing' devices like eligibility tests to do so. Whereas in England the current policy for adults is to restrict publicly-funded access to 'advice' to those with low-level qualifications³⁵, such restrictions have been avoided in Scotland. No-one is turned away. If individuals ask for a careers interview, they may be gently steered to explore other ways of working first; but if they continue to insist, in the end they will get one.

³⁵ Department for Education and Skills (2003). *Information, Advice and Guidance for Adults: the National Policy Framework and Action Plan*. London: DfES.

Marketing

2.20 In managing the relationship between supply and demand, marketing is of crucial importance. The OECD review noted that many services take care to limit their services for fear of being overrun³⁶. It argued, however, the importance of extending access to services. This is reinforced in the recent Resolution of the Council of the European Union on guidance, which recommends that: 'Such services need to be viewed as an active tool, and individuals should be positively encouraged to use them.'³⁷

2.21 During early 2003 a major marketing campaign was carried out, mainly to increase Careers Scotland's brand recognition. The result was that the percentage of the Scottish adult population who had heard of Careers Scotland, as indicated in an omnibus survey, rose from 37% to 72% between March 2002 and April 2003. The same survey also indicated that the proportion who said they would find advice or guidance about careers, training or other learning opportunities 'very useful' rose from 12% to 22% over the same period.³⁸

2.22 The experience of the UK Learndirect helpline service is that usage of services is very sensitive to marketing campaigns, especially on television³⁹. This suggests that if Careers Scotland is to encourage those living in Scotland to be career planners and to make effective use of its services to support them in this respect, marketing is critical. It is also, however, expensive, and may need to be customised for different audiences. For some audiences, for example, local radio can be very effective, and Careers Scotland is exploring possibilities in this area in support of its pilot regional callcentre (see para.2.12).

2.23 The approach to marketing taken by Careers Scotland has so far been fairly centralised. In the effort to establish consistency of branding, local offices have sometimes felt discouraged from undertaking their own marketing activities at local level. Yet the potential for such marketing is considerable. If the aim is for Careers Scotland to be 'consistent but agile', as one senior staff member put it, taking advantage of local marketing

opportunities is critical. Strong central publicity resources, plus encouragement to local offices to use these resources creatively, could be a valuable part of the marketing strategy.

2.24 In shaping Careers Scotland's service for the future, marketing has a crucial role to play. When the target-group of careers services was mainly the captive audience of students in schools and colleges, this was not an issue of any great importance. But the concept of an all-age service, universal but differentiated in nature, requires a strong and sensitive marketing strategy. The building blocks that have been laid in terms of coherence, differentiation, channelling, segmentation and prioritisation should now make it possible for such a strategy to be developed.

³⁶ OECD (2004), p.69.

³⁷ Resolution 9286/04 EDUC 109 SOC 234, 18 May 2004.

³⁸ Segal Quince Wicksteed (2003). *Evaluation of the All Age Guidance Projects*, p.50. Edinburgh: SQW.

³⁹ Watts & Dent (2002), p.24.



3 Improving Performance

Quality

3.1 The OECD review noted a number of the challenges to policy-makers which, in most OECD countries, had received minimal attention⁴⁰. Several of these were concerned with quality issues:

- Ensuring greater diversity in the types of services that are available and in the ways that they are delivered, including greater diversity in staffing structures...
- Working more closely with career guidance practitioners to shape the nature of initial and further education and training qualifications in support of the development of career self-management skills, better career information, and more diverse service delivery.
- Developing better quality assurance mechanisms and linking these to the funding of services.
- Improving the information base for public policy making, including gathering improved data on the financial and human resources devoted to career guidance, on client need and demand, on the characteristics of clients, on client satisfaction, and on the outcomes and cost-effectiveness of career guidance.

Careers Scotland has taken substantial steps to address each of these challenges.

Staffing structures

3.2 On staffing structures, the enhanced ‘critical mass’ provided by Careers Scotland has enabled it to develop a wider range of specialisms – for example, on ICT, human resource development, business development, marketing, and the like. At operational level, too, both parts of Careers Scotland have sought to develop greater diversity and flexibility in their staffing structures, but using different models.

3.3 In the Scottish Enterprise area, the staff include, at customer-service level, 415 Careers Advisers, 51 Enterprise in Education Advisers (responsible for supporting career-related curriculum work in schools), 210 Employability Advisers (responsible for helping individuals to find and apply for jobs, including help with curricula vitae), and 100 Key Workers (responsible for working intensively with ‘at risk’ young people). These are supported by various managerial and administrative roles.

⁴⁰ OECD (2004), p.148.

3.4 In the Highlands & Islands Enterprise area, the 124 full-time-equivalent operational staff are divided into three job categories: Careers Scotland Assistant, Careers Scotland Adviser, and Careers Scotland Senior Adviser. They are also divided into three strands: one broadly concerned with motivational activities (this covers all three job categories); one with reviewing career planning and identifying development action (these are all Careers Scotland Advisers); and one with intensive work with people experiencing difficulties in their career planning and development (these are all Careers Scotland Senior Advisers). The structure has been devised partly to fit into the broader occupational structure adopted in Highlands & Islands Enterprise, partly to enable people with professional backgrounds other than careers guidance – those from social work and teaching, for example – to be integrated into the structure, and partly to encourage more flexible multi-skilled roles (particularly important in rural areas where staffing is spread thin). The view is that the use of a generic job title will simplify the public's use of the services, and will not obstruct their recognition that employees with this generic title may also be specialists within a team.

3.5 The Highlands & Islands structure is potentially open to some of the risks noted by OECD in relation to the Connexions Service in England (see para.1.17 above): that the undifferentiated use of the term 'Adviser' will make it harder for customers to discriminate between those qualified to offer intensive career guidance and those not; and that it might erode the specialised career guidance knowledge, qualifications and skills base. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the latter risk in particular continues to be avoided.

3.6 The introduction of new staffing structures and systems has had some negative effects on staff morale. It is important that these difficulties be resolved as quickly and harmoniously as possible.

Initial training and continuous professional development

3.7 Despite the two different staffing structures, a common Qualifications Framework is being developed to cover Careers Scotland as a whole. A report commissioned from Blake Stevenson Ltd

notes that Careers Scotland 'is being challenged to cater for a range of new and different demands with a staff cohort, many of whom were not initially trained to address these issues⁴¹. These include all-age services, curriculum-related work, intensive work with 'at risk' young people, and a wider variety of organisational and developmental tasks. It recommends that Careers Scotland should set up a Vocational Qualifications Centre, linked to the Scottish Vocational Qualifications Framework, with the capacity to provide some staff development in-house as well as purchasing some from outside providers. This should be aligned to the Enterprise Networks of which Careers Scotland is part. A draft blueprint for a Careers Scotland Qualifications Framework has been drawn up based on a common core and a range of specialisms (Careers Advisers, Inclusion/Employability Advisers, Education and Enterprise, Customer Service/Client Handling, Business Development/Information Science, Marketing, and Management). Work on pursuing these recommendations is under way.

⁴¹ **Blake Stevenson Ltd (2003).** *Research to Inform the Qualifications Framework and Future Development of the VQ Centre of Careers Scotland*, p.6. Glasgow: Careers Scotland (mimeo).

3.8 The main initial training for Careers Advisers in Scotland has in recent years been provided mainly through the Qualification in Career Guidance, currently provided in three universities (Napier, Paisley, Strathclyde). The Blake Stevenson report on the Qualifications Framework noted that within these course centres 'there is recognition that the current course provision may not be fully meeting the needs of Careers Scotland and other customers for qualified personnel'; this mirrored the concerns of Careers Scotland senior managers that the courses did not offer the range of theory and practice that was needed⁴². Some progress has been made on this: Paisley, for example, has introduced a module on performance management and quality. But a stronger and more open dialogue between Careers Scotland and the course centres is needed.

3.9 Meanwhile, work has started within Careers Scotland on developing proposals for an undergraduate degree course in all-age career guidance. A plan is to be prepared which will scope the potential demand for such a degree and indicate how it might be provided. The Blake Stevenson report suggested that there might be common modules with, for example, community education, social work or school education. It is worth noting that in the OECD review, two countries were identified (Korea, Netherlands) with undergraduate courses in which career guidance was combined with human resource development, with specialist streams in the final year⁴³. This might be worth exploring as an alternative or additional alignment. Blake Stevenson suggested that the course might in addition be designed to open up a range of other career routes, e.g. enterprise, marketing and employer services, which might also be pursued through Careers Scotland. It would seem desirable, however, for such an undergraduate route to complement rather than replace postgraduate routes to entry, which make career guidance accessible to graduates in other subjects.

3.10 Both parts of Careers Scotland have personal review and development planning systems. In addition, a supervision and support system is being introduced, particularly for Key Workers and others working with the 'hardest to help' client group⁴⁴. It is based on peer support, separate from management supervision. It is designed to be relevant to the full range of jobs within Careers Scotland, though it is recognised that there are difficulties in extending it to all staff carrying a client caseload, given constraints of time and cost. Efforts are also being made, however, to introduce more widespread support for reflective practice. This includes action-based research, with a small number of staff being supported in carrying these out within Master's degree courses. Such measures are important if professional creativity is to be fostered.

⁴² Blake Stevenson Ltd (2003), pp.6-7, 49.

⁴³ OECD (2004), p.99. In addition, a combined HRD/career guidance course at Master's level was identified by the related World Bank review in Turkey.
See Akkök, F. & Watts, A.G. (2003). *Public Policies and Career Development: Country Report on Turkey*, p.35. Washington, DC: World Bank.

⁴⁴ See Moffett, J. & Allan, G. (2003). Facing realities: a support system for the guidance profession. *Careers Guidance Today*, 11(2), 18-21.

3.11 In developing Careers Scotland, a crucial element has been, and will continue to be, the creative tensions between the 'business modernisers', seeking to install efficient systems that make full use of modern business methods, and the 'professional guardians', seeking to ensure that high standards of professional career guidance practice are maintained. The tensions (which may operate within as well as between individuals) are evident, for instance, in the two different uses made of the terms used in the differentiated service delivery model (see Section 2). It is important that on this and other issues, agreement is reached, and that as new issues arise, the debate continues. Arguably, if either side 'wins' at the expense of the other, Careers Scotland will have lost.

Quality assurance and performance measurement

3.12 To support quality assurance within the organisation, a set of Careers Scotland Quality Standards has been developed. It comprises 15 standards, in four groups: 'engagement standards', 'contact standards', 'action/progress standards' and 'follow up and review standards'. Impact

measures are attached to each of the standards, based on the Kirkpatrick Model, in which such measures are divided into four levels: reaction; learning outcomes; transfer of learning to changed behaviour/attitude; and longer-term social/economic impact⁴⁵.

3.13 The issue of performance and impact measurement is one to which Careers Scotland has given a great deal of attention. Insight, a sophisticated customer record management system, has been introduced. It is also used for client tracking by some Connexions and careers companies in England and Wales, but in Careers Scotland its use has been extended to cover a wider variety of activities and purposes. In principle it makes it possible to track the range of interventions accessed by an individual over time (though, to conform to data-protection legislation, individual records are to be deleted if no service has been accessed for two years). Insight is complemented by PB Views, which enables a variety of reports based on the data to be produced for different audiences. Together, they provide powerful tools which should enable a great deal of

valuable data to be collected and reported. These include, for example, the level of penetration of 'customer segments' (cf. paras.2.15-2.16 above).

3.14 The performance measurement system provides extensive coverage of staff-supported and intensive interventions (see Section 2). It does not, however, provide much coverage of self-help services. The Insight system asks careers centres to record the number of individuals using the centre who have not accessed assisted services, but one centre visited did not even do that. On the other hand, another centre had introduced its own method to record simple biographical data on all users. There seems no reason why this should not be incorporated into the Insight system. If the self-help service provided by Careers Scotland, efforts need to be made to measure the extent and quality of its usage, as with the other parts of the service. There will of course be tighter limits to what can be done. But, for example, 'length of stay' data might be collected as well. This could be complemented by collection of web monitoring data on the ways in which the website is used ('hits' is a crude measure).

⁴⁵ Kirkpatrick, D. (1994). *Evaluating Training Programs*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

3.15 In addition to measuring throughput levels, the Insight system enables follow-up data to be collected which can contribute to the various levels of impact factors within the Kirkpatrick Model. For example, data can be collected on the extent to which NEET clients or school-leavers with additional support needs enter an education, training or employment opportunity, and sustain it for a period of time.

3.16 Other measures are being taken to collect impact data. On 'reaction', for example, a wide variety of customer satisfaction surveys are conducted. The performance measure that has been set is 85% customer satisfaction levels. It is important that this continues to be monitored as the differentiated service delivery model is rolled out. The evaluation of the all-age guidance projects, which spanned the establishment of Careers Scotland, found universally high satisfaction levels, but noted that the services provided had been based largely on traditional one-to-one interviews. It expressed concern that it might be difficult to maintain this level of satisfaction as the number of clients

grows and more flexible services are delivered⁴⁶. The challenge to Careers Scotland is to demonstrate that this is not the case.

3.17 On the other three levels of the Kirkpatrick Model, the data currently available is more limited. Some has been collected through evaluation studies. Thus, for example, an evaluation of the 'inclusiveness' projects with unemployed young people showed that 86% of clients progressing into positive outcomes sustained these outcomes for at least three months⁴⁷. An evaluation of the 'On Track' programme aimed at 'at risk' school pupils found that 87% had positive outcomes⁴⁸. Again, the evaluation of the all-age guidance projects found that substantial proportions of clients indicated that the career guidance interventions had influenced their career decisions and given them more confidence in making these decisions; it concluded that a high proportion (perhaps 70-90%) of the positive outcomes could not have been achieved without the projects⁴⁹. It would be helpful if the key data from such studies could be made more widely available, perhaps through a series of short

attractively-presented briefing documents. Commissioned research studies, like the one demonstrating linkages between career goals and academic attainment⁵⁰, could then be covered within the same series.

3.18 Careers Scotland has publicly declared its intention to give high priority to extending this impact data. Its Scottish Enterprise area report for 2004 states categorically that 'over the next year, we will focus on evidence of "making a difference"⁵¹'. The Insight system should be very helpful in this respect. Research studies may still however be needed to demonstrate causality. Close links should be developed with the new UK Career Guidance Research Forum, which is aiming to develop a more strategic approach to impact evaluation and other research in the career guidance field; and also with the new International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy, enabling Careers Scotland to contribute to and benefit from the growing international policy and research interest in this area.

⁴⁶ Segal Quince Wicksteed (2003). *Evaluation of the All Age Guidance Projects*, p.52. Edinburgh: SQW.

⁴⁷ Segal Quince Wicksteed (2003). *A National Evaluation of the Inclusiveness Projects*, p.57. Edinburgh: SQW.

⁴⁸ David Smart Consultants & Eddy Smart Consultants (2003). *Evaluation of the On Track Programme*, p.52. Published by authors.

⁴⁹ Segal Quince Wicksteed (2003). *Evaluation of the All Age Guidance Projects*, p.43. Edinburgh: SQW.

⁵⁰ Inter-Ed (2004). *Career Goals and Educational Attainment: What is the Link?* Glasgow: Careers Scotland.

⁵¹ Careers Scotland (2004). *Careers Scotland in 2004*, section 7. Glasgow: Careers Scotland.



Careers Scotland

Working With Other Career Guidance Providers



4 Working with Other Career Guidance Providers

Principles

4.1 In Sections 1-3, the benchmarks drawn from the OECD review have been applied only to Careers Scotland. On the remaining benchmarks, however, Careers Scotland is significantly dependent on other career guidance providers for their delivery. These include five of the features of 'lifelong guidance systems' identified by OECD⁵²:

- Processes to stimulate regular review and planning.
- Programmes to develop career-management skills.
- Opportunities to investigate and experience learning and work options before choosing them.
- Access to comprehensive and integrated educational, occupational and labour market information.
- Involvement of relevant stakeholders.

It also applies to one of the challenges to policy-makers identified by OECD⁵³:

- Developing stronger structures for strategic leadership.

4.2 Careers Scotland is very aware that its aim of equipping individuals with 'the skills to make well informed realistic career decisions through their working lives' (see para.1.11) cannot be delivered solely by its own services, but only by working in partnership with others. The fact that its structure sets some constraints on the extent to which it can grow may impose a helpful self-denying ordinance in this respect. It has accordingly given significant priority to establishing partnership agreements with the main other career guidance providers in Scotland. Each takes one or more of four forms:

- Boundary drawing: indicating to which provider particular clients with particular needs should be referred.
- Joint working: collaborating on tasks.
- Servicing: providing services to enhance delivery.
- Capacity building: improving the provider's own capacity to provide services.

The partnership agreement with Learndirect/SUfI has already been discussed (para.2.12). The other main ones will now be covered in turn, before addressing some cross-sectoral issues and the question of strategic leadership.

⁵² OECD (2004), p.138.

⁵³ OECD (2004), p.148.

Schools

4.3 Career guidance within schools in Scotland has traditionally been part of an integrated concept of guidance which has covered personal, social, curricular and vocational support delivered on a one-to-one basis and through a curriculum programme of personal and social education.⁵⁴ As part of the guidance team, many schools have had a careers co-ordinator, whose role has involved links to the careers service and possibly an overview of the careers education programme, but has rarely included career advice. Following the McCrone Report⁵⁵, the number of promoted posts in guidance has been reduced, and replaced by a more broadly-based pastoral-care structure. A National Framework for Career Education was published in 2001⁵⁶, which included targets for ages 5-18; but it has been largely overtaken by the Enterprise in Education programme, following the influential report *Determined to Succeed*.⁵⁷ This has provided significantly enhanced opportunities for career-related work, but with risks that some of the distinctive concerns of career education may not be adequately attended to within the broader framework. Most pupils have a period of work experience, usually in S3 or S4.

4.4 There is considerable variability between schools in the extent and quality of their career education and guidance programmes. The main model for quality assurance is the 'How Good Is Our School...?' self-evaluation model, but this covers 'curricular and vocational guidance' as part of 'enterprise in education', and although it refers to a range of career-related activities, it pays little attention to indicating what career education *per se* should comprise.⁵⁸

4.5 Careers Scotland's policy is, wherever possible, to form a partnership agreement at local level with each school and local authority. The main forms of agreement are servicing and capacity building. Schools look to Careers Scotland to provide services in the form of individual interviews, contributions to group sessions, career resources, and the like. These include attendance at parents' evenings (parents also have a separate section on the Careers Scotland website). In addition, Careers Scotland provides materials and training to build the capacity of schools to deliver career education programmes designed to

develop pupils' career management skills: the materials are free; the training is paid for. Particularly significant in this respect is the Career Box of career education resources for ages 3-18: these are widely used in secondary schools and are beginning to be used in primary schools too (the OECD review identified only three countries where career education began in primary school⁵⁹). Events utilising work simulations are organised. Careers Scotland also organises teacher placements in business and industry; and in nearly half of local authorities it administers pupil work-experience placements, though this is regarded as being outside the 'core offer' and is paid for separately. With the upgrading of Careers Scotland centres, there could be increased scope for arranging for groups of school pupils to visit the centres, as is done systematically in Germany – partly so that they are aware of it as a resource they can use later in their lives.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ For a useful historical account, see Semple, S. (2002). Career education in schools in Scotland. *Career Research and Development: the NICEC Journal*, 5, 21-25.

⁵⁵ Scottish Executive Education Department (2001). *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*. Edinburgh: SEED.

⁵⁶ Learning and Teaching Scotland (2001). *Career Education in Scotland – a National Framework*. Glasgow: LTS.

⁵⁷ Scottish Executive (2003). *Determined to Succeed: Enterprise in Education – Scottish Executive Response*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

⁵⁸ HM Inspectorate of Education (2004). *Quality Indicators in Enterprise in Education*. Edinburgh: HMIE.

⁵⁹ OECD (2004), p.44.

⁶⁰ OECD (2004), p.42.

4.6 Some schools have expressed concern about the application of Careers Scotland's differentiated service delivery model to services for pupils. The rationale is to encourage pupils to self-refer themselves as part of increasing ownership in career decision-making, supported by career education programmes and targeted early-intervention strategies. In the evaluation of the model's piloting in schools, a fair number of guidance staff and librarians indicated their concern that some pupils were not proactive enough and would require increased support from school staff.⁶¹ This concern has been reinforced by a Universities Scotland report: this recommended that 'careers services in schools should move away from self-referral models, which disadvantage pupils who are not "self-starters" or do not have clear career plans, and offer a more comprehensive service to all pupils from an earlier age'; it further recommended that Careers Scotland should support schools in providing such a comprehensive service.⁶²

4.7 Careers Scotland provides intensive help to pupils with additional support needs or at risk of exclusion: these include special early-intervention programmes like On-Track, Activate and WorkNet. There is however a danger that its differentiated model may miss some pupils who are undecided, or who have a declared career goal that is based on little reflection or reality testing. The old models of 'blanket interviewing' (which had been largely abandoned well before Careers Scotland was set up) were crude and inflexible, but they at least provided some form of 'quality assurance' in the decision-making process. The challenge to schools and Careers Scotland is to ensure that the same is the case with the more flexible models that are now being systemically adopted. Estimates given during the present review suggested that in most schools around 85-90% of pupils will still receive at least one interview from a Careers Scotland adviser during their schooling (though one head teacher gave a much lower figure). The new Insight model will enable this to be monitored, alongside accessing of other services.

Further education

4.8 The models of partnership adopted by Careers Scotland with colleges of further education are broadly similar to those adopted with schools, though at a lower level of resource. Traditionally some colleges have received much more support than others from careers services. Some colleges have Careers Advisers on their own staff, as part of their student services; some rely heavily on subject specialists to provide career education and guidance.⁶³ Efforts are now being made to make the distribution of Careers Scotland's resources across the colleges more equitable, and to broaden the range of its services and products.

⁶¹ Cameron & Govan (2004), pp.25, 27.

⁶² Bartley, U. (2004). *More School?: Factors Affecting Decisions to Apply to Higher Education Institutions amongst Under-Represented Young People*, p.6. Edinburgh: Universities Scotland.

⁶³ Scottish Funding Councils for Further and Higher Education (2004). *Learning to Work*, p.35. Edinburgh: SFCFHE.

4.9 A draft strategic partnership agreement is being discussed with the Association of Scottish Colleges and other relevant bodies. Partnership agreements are also increasingly being agreed with individual colleges. Further education would seem to be a sector that would merit more attention from Careers Scotland based on flexible partnership working, particularly since it includes not only many young people but also many adults seeking or undergoing career transitions.

Higher education

4.10 Higher education students are excluded from the Government's statutory duty to provide careers services for young people: most higher education institutions have substantial careers services of their own. Careers Scotland has accordingly drawn up a strategic partnership agreement with the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) to define boundaries for cross-referral and agree areas where materials and other resources might be exchanged or shared. Students and graduates from institutions that are members of AGCAS

can access careers services from their own institution or from other AGCAS institutions until at least one-year post-graduation. This group is accordingly defined by Careers Scotland as a group of low priority. The 2004 Stakeholder Survey indicated, however, that there is still some uncertainty about handover issues post-graduation.⁶⁴

JobcentrePlus

4.11 Since Jobcentre Plus is a UK-wide organisation, it has sought agreements with Careers Scotland as a whole. The need for closer links between the two organisations emerged as a strong theme in Careers Scotland's 2004 Stakeholder Audit.⁶⁵ A national 'working together' group has identified a number of areas for closer collaboration, especially in relation to access to vacancies and to career planning services, plus possibilities for co-location.

4.12 Careers Scotland's role in relation to vacancy handling has been a contested issue from its inception. The Duffner Committee recognised that there were different views on whether the vacancy handling role for 16/17-year-olds should

be retained or relinquished, but recommended that negotiations should take place with the relevant authorities to consider the potential for both this and the related benefits policing role to be transferred to the Employment Service.⁶⁶ The Scottish Executive in its response noted that this was the one recommendation which had split the Careers Service in almost equal numbers in terms of those who were for and against it, and that it had accordingly decided to delay action on it.⁶⁷ Currently an options appraisal has been commissioned by Careers Scotland. The principle of moving towards more coherence of provision (see para.1.12) would seem to argue in favour of transfer. This issue is linked to the much more broadly-based vacancy database on the Careers Scotland website, which should either be substantially developed or discontinued: at present the very limited number of jobs on this database risks discrediting Careers Scotland's service as a whole in the eyes of individuals who access it.

⁶⁴ Rocket Science (2004). *Careers Scotland: 2004 Stakeholder Audit*, pp.14-15. Edinburgh: Rocket Science.

⁶⁵ Rocket Science (2004), pp.4, 16, 24, 40.

⁶⁶ Careers Service Review Committee (2000), pp.34-36.

⁶⁷ Scottish Executive (2001), p.6.

4.13 On co-location, two main models have emerged: in some cases, Careers Scotland staff have been located at Jobcentre Plus offices; and in a few localities, council-managed one-stop shops have been established which have included staff from both organisations. In addition, some joint training has been developed for the staff of the two organisations to improve mutual awareness of what each other is doing, as a basis for more effective collaboration and cross-referral. Jobcentre Plus particularly refers clients to Careers Scotland for CV preparation and for career planning. There has also been collaboration to streamline processes involving both organisations – for example, on under-18 hardship benefits.

Voluntary and community sector

4.14 A major part of Careers Scotland's approach to developing all-age services has been its Community Guidance strategy.⁶⁸ This is closely linked to the Scottish Executive's focus on community-based learning, which is an important part of its lifelong learning strategy.⁶⁹ Careers

Scotland's strategy involves guidance capacity building within community agencies. The preferred aim is to establish Community Learning, Development and Guidance Strategy Groups; or, where this is not appropriate, a Community Guidance Action Plan. This process has now been completed: key themes that have emerged include improving access, quality, staff development and referral processes. The next stage includes evaluation and sharing of best practice. In the Highlands & Islands area, a particularly strong emphasis has been placed on community-based approaches, linked to the wider community-development remit of Highlands & Islands Enterprise (see para.1.4): extensive use is made of community-based learning centres. In the Scottish Enterprise area, a European Social Fund (ESF) project has made it possible for Careers Scotland to provide training in first-level guidance skills for front-line staff in community and voluntary groups who work primarily with individuals with basic skills difficulties. Community Scotland has agreed to provide further support for this work, should demand for training exceed the ESF targets.

4.15 Closely linked to the Community Guidance strategy is setting up branded Careers Scotland resource areas in public libraries. An ESF project has enabled progress to be made in the larger libraries, including some training for front-line staff. There is considerable scope for the principle of such branded centres to be extended to other parts of the Community Guidance strategy, linked to the model of differentiated service delivery (see Section 2).

⁶⁸ Careers Scotland (2004). *Community Guidance: a Partnership Approach – Linking Lifelong Learning and Lifelong Guidance*. Glasgow: Careers Scotland.

⁶⁹ Scottish Executive (2003). *Life through Learning through Life*, pp.40-42. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive.

Employers

4.16 A major potential growth area for Careers Scotland is career planning services for individuals in the workplace. Careers Scotland has extensive contacts with employers, but mainly as opportunity providers rather than as career guidance providers. Yet, as noted in the OECD review, many employed people look to their employer for career planning support, both on learning new skills and on career development within the organisation.⁷⁰ There are usually some constraints on the impartiality of such support: the organisation may want to focus individuals' attention on career progression within the organisation rather than elsewhere (this applies, indeed, to the Learning and Development Planning Process developed for Careers Scotland's own staff within Scottish Enterprise). But improving the extent and quality of such processes is an important part of building the national capacity for career planning support, linked to the emphasis on 'developing people in work' in the 'refreshed' version of *Smart, Successful Scotland* (see para.1.8 above). There is considerable potential synergy here with the Enterprise Networks' 'growing business' strategies.

4.17 An important part of Careers Scotland's existing service has been its involvement in Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE), which offers a range of career planning and employability services to people who have been made redundant. Local authorities and Jobcentre Plus are also involved in this initiative; the lead agency varies across localities. As an extension of this work, ESF funding has enabled Careers Scotland to provide redundancy and workforce development services to small and medium-sized enterprises which fall outside PACE's remit. There would seem to be scope for extending the workforce development aspect of such work, so that career planning becomes associated with developmental approaches rather than solely with crisis interventions. There may be possibilities for linking with Sector Skills Councils in this area.

4.18 An issue which may arise here is the relationship of Careers Scotland to private-sector provision. In general, the private sector in career guidance delivery is much smaller than in England, where the issue of fee-paying and of the role of private markets was identified by OECD as a significant policy issue⁷¹ – this is not currently the case in Scotland. In relation to services to employers, however, a market does operate, and there are a number of consultancy companies that offer services relating to outplacement and to human resource development. As a public body, Careers Scotland must not be seen to be undermining this market. This may impose some constraints on what it can do. One possibility might be to focus more on a quality-assurance role than on an extensive service-delivery role. The use being made of the Matrix standard in relation to employers and the private (as well as the public) sector in England may be worth exploring in this respect⁷² (see also para.4.21 below).

⁷⁰ OECD (2004), p.66.

⁷¹ OECD (2002), pp.18-21.

⁷² OECD (2004), p.133.

4.19 There is also scope for encouraging trade unions to use the Scottish Union Learning Fund to support the growth of learning representatives, which was identified in OECD's UK Country Note as a development of particular interest.⁷³ Progress in this area has not been as fast in Scotland as in England, but Careers Scotland is now establishing links with Scottish trade unions to foster it.

Cross-sectoral issues

4.20 Returning to the benchmarks outlined in para.4.1, it would seem that Careers Scotland's operational 'stake' in relation to most of them is fairly limited. If however these are important to the achievement of its goal, as outlined in para.1.11, then it has an interest in ensuring that the benchmarks are met across the career guidance system as a whole. It might seek to do this through policy influence and/or through operational support.

4.21 On processes to stimulate regular review and planning, the Scottish Executive's Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department has recently carried out a review of personal learning/development planning in Scotland at a national level. It has noted a series of relevant initiatives in schools, in colleges, in universities and in adult learning. This review could be extended to cover processes established by employers – including, for example, the extent to which such processes are fostered, or might be more strongly fostered in future, by the Investors in People quality mark (the OECD review notes that a similar scheme in the Netherlands includes encouragement for companies to use careers advisers to support their development review systems⁷⁴). More systematic co-ordination of these processes, perhaps with some quality assurance, could provide most individuals with regular opportunities to review their learning and their career progress and to

set plans for the future, along the lines of health check-ups. Few steps could be more important to the achievement of Careers Scotland's aims. Careers Scotland accordingly has an interest in the extent and quality of such processes, and could have a distinctive role to play in ensuring that they address longer-term career planning as well as short-term learning planning. The significance attached by Careers Wales to its e-portfolio⁷⁵ may be worth examining in this connection.

⁷³ OECD (2002), p.11.

⁷⁴ OECD (2004), p.67.

⁷⁵ See www.careerswales.com

4.22 On programmes to develop career management skills, Careers Scotland makes a significant contribution to career education programmes in schools and (to a lesser extent) colleges, particularly through the Career Box product. But the extent and quality of school/college programmes seems variable, and the quality-assurance mechanisms for them are weak. It might be interesting to explore the potential for Careers Scotland to develop or support a quality-assurance role in relation to schools and colleges⁷⁶, as Careers Wales has done with its All-Wales Quality Award. It might also wish to discuss with AGCAS the extent and quality of career management skills programmes in universities, and to maintain at least a watching brief on such activities. More broadly, there would be merit in exploring the possibilities for having career planning recognised as a core skill, so ensuring that it is given attention in the design of learning programmes. The arguments presented in OECD's work on human capital regarding the likely contribution of career management skills to economic growth⁷⁷ provide powerful support for such a case.

4.23 The quality assurance processes suggested above in relation to career-management skills programmes could also include attention to opportunities for individuals to experience learning and work options before choosing them. In some areas Careers Scotland provides administrative support for work experience programmes in schools. In principle, however, the requirement here is much wider. Careers Scotland could seek opportunities to identify and address such needs in its policy discussions.

4.24 On access to comprehensive and integrated educational, occupational and labour market information, Careers Scotland has so far confined its role mainly to quality assuring and signposting existing resources⁷⁸, and filling gaps. In particular, it has established a strong relationship with FutureSkills Scotland (also located within the Enterprise Networks) to improve the quality of labour market information and present it in forms which are useable by career guidance staff and by individuals in their career

planning. Its website is designed as a career planning resource rather than as an integrated career information system. In general, information on learning options in Scotland remains separate from that on occupations and labour market information, with no significant cross-pathing between them. Yet many of the most important questions in career planning lie across this interface. It might be useful for Careers Scotland, through the Scottish Executive, to open discussions with Learndirect, FutureSkills Scotland and other information providers about the potential for developing a more integrated system for Scotland. The National Career Information System in Australia might be a useful exemplar in this regard.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ This is suggested, for example, by Semple (2002), p.25.

⁷⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2002). Rethinking human capital. In *Education Policy Analysis*. Paris: OECD.

⁷⁸ See *Careers Scotland Information and Guidance Portfolio 2004-2005*, which lists recommended products that have been evaluated against objective criteria developed by experienced careers staff and independent consultants.

⁷⁹ OECD (2004), p.90.

4.25 On all of these issues, Careers Scotland might seek to be proactive in its policy-related work, perhaps extending this work to cover not only the Scottish Executive but also other policy influencing bodies. The issues are also potentially linked to the final benchmarks outlined in para.4.1, related to involvement of relevant stakeholders and developing stronger strategies for strategic leadership. These will accordingly be discussed here in more detail.

Strategic leadership

4.26 Strategic leadership is an issue to which the OECD review attached considerable attention. It noted that across such a diffuse field, strategic leadership and co-ordination needed to be carried out by government in co-operation with other stakeholders – including education and training providers, employers, trade unions, community agencies, students, parents, consumers, and career guidance practitioners. It suggested that mechanisms for involving

stakeholders could include permanent bodies for consultation and advice on which stakeholders were represented. In addition to broad tasks such as setting strategic directions, identifying gaps in services, and co-ordinating what different stakeholders did, such bodies could be given operational responsibility for tasks for which high levels of co-operation and collective ownership were needed. Examples included: the development of quality standards; and the development of new frameworks for career guidance training and qualifications.⁸⁰

4.27 The UK was mentioned by OECD as a strong exemplar in these respects, with its Guidance Council and its National Information Advice and Guidance Board.⁸¹ But the National IAG Board was confined to England, and there has been ambiguity about the extent to which the Guidance Council is an English or UK-wide body. Moreover, the Board has now been discontinued, and the Guidance Council significantly downsized. Meanwhile, the European Commission has issued a call for

proposals from member states that wish to develop national fora for lifelong guidance. A successful UK bid has been co-ordinated by the Guidance Council, with support from the relevant government departments in the four home countries, including Scotland. The resulting Career Guidance Policy Forum will be genuinely UK-wide. It is hoped that its existence over the next two years will enable a review to take place of the adequacy of the other existing mechanisms, leading to a coherent structure for the future both within and between the four countries.

⁸⁰ OECD (2004), pp.124-125.

⁸¹ OECD (2004), pp.125-126.

4.28 Within Careers Scotland, an important role is played at local level by Local Advisory Boards (LABs), which commonly include representatives of many of the other career guidance providers identified earlier in this section, together with other stakeholders. There are currently 22 LABs: 12 in the Scottish Enterprise area, and 10 in the Highlands & Islands Enterprise area. Their role is partly to advise Careers Scotland, partly to evaluate what it is doing, and partly to advocate on its behalf. One of their benefits has been to enable many key guidance providers and stakeholders at local level to get a holistic view of Careers Scotland's work 'from the inside'. Annual events have been organised to bring the LAB Chairs together within each of the two areas.

4.29 At national level, there is extensive stakeholder involvement on the Boards of the Enterprise Networks, but these cover the work of the Networks as a whole. The main formal Careers Scotland mechanism for involvement of stakeholders is the Ministerial Joint Supervisory Group set up by the Scottish Executive when Careers

Scotland was launched, to advise on its strategy and monitor its performance. As the Scottish Executive's confidence in the organisation has grown, the Group has ceased to be convened.

4.30 There are also questions about the future of the main existing mechanism in Scotland for co-ordination across the guidance sector as a whole: the Scottish Guidance Forum. This was established by the Scottish Executive in 1998 as the Scottish Guidance Group to provide a focal point for encouraging collaboration within the adult guidance sector and for involving it in policy processes. With the merging of many of the constituent organisations into Careers Scotland, the original rationale for its existence disappeared, and the Scottish Executive began to look to Careers Scotland rather than to the Forum as a vehicle for policy consultation.

4.31 A key issue now is whether the Scottish Guidance Forum should be discontinued, whether its role should be redefined, or whether it should be

replaced by some new cross-sectoral body. This is an issue of considerable significance both for Careers Scotland and for the career guidance sector as a whole. As noted above, Careers Scotland has been assiduous in establishing close collaborative relationships with all of the other major career guidance providers in Scotland. However, most of these relationships have been bilateral ones. It has declared as one of its aims to be the leading national advocate for the guidance and employability sector.⁸² This, along with the consultative status it has achieved with the Scottish Executive, effectively leaves strategic leadership for the sector in the hands of the Scottish Executive and Careers Scotland.

⁸² See e.g. *Strategic Partnership Agreement with AGCAS 2003-2005*, p.3.

4.32 Some issues, however, are in principle cross-sectoral ones. These include the ones related to personal learning/development planning and career information discussed in paras.4.21 and 4.24 above. They also include the issues related to quality standards and qualification frameworks that OECD suggested might be addressed by national fora (para.4.26). On both of these, there has been some interest in other sectors in the mechanisms developed by Careers Scotland for its own operations. Parts of the community sector, for example, have expressed interests in its quality standards (para.3.12), and parts of the FE sector in its qualifications framework (para.3.7). In addition, an increasing number of partners are beginning to use the Career Planning Continuum/Journey (paras.2.2-2.4) as a way of framing their own activities, so making it a potential tool for achieving coherence not only within Careers Scotland but also across other parts of the field. It seems unlikely, however, that these forms of 'expansion' will ever extend to cover the sector as a whole. If Careers Scotland has an interest in service quality,

professional competence and conceptual coherence across the entire sector, as arguably it should, then it may need to pursue a strategy which embraces more diverse models but seeks to maximise coherence between them. To do this, it will need a national cross-sectoral mechanism of some kind.

4.33 It seems likely that the Scottish Executive will leave the issue of whether there should be a National Forum in Scotland for Careers Scotland to determine. There are, in essence, three options:

- to view its current largely bilateral relationships with the various parts of the sector as being sufficient;
- to view the Scottish Guidance Forum or a successor body as a consultative mechanism through which Careers Scotland can consult the views of the sector as a whole, so enabling it to represent these views in the policy-making process;
- to seek a separate 'place at the policy table' for the Scottish Guidance Forum or a successor body.

The first option does not seem to provide sufficient opportunity to marshall the voice of the sector as a whole, to address cross-sectoral issues, or to give the sector sufficient 'ownership'. It is clear that the third option would need to be perceived to provide significant 'added value' before it would be acceptable to the Scottish Executive; it would also require separate resources. It is suggested that Careers Scotland should review the second and third options, in consultation with the Scottish Guidance Forum and Careers Scotland's various national partners. As part of these discussions, it should consider whether the forum should be confined to guidance providers, or should also seek representation from important stakeholder bodies like the Confederation of British Industry, the Scottish Trades Union Congress, and the Association of Directors of Education. It should also consider whether 'career planning' would be a more appropriate frame for the future forum than 'guidance'.



Careers Scotland

Summing Up and Looking Forward



5 Summing Up and Looking Forward

5.1 This review has reviewed the progress of Careers Scotland, benchmarking it against the OECD Career Guidance Policy Review.

5.2 The OECD review of the UK recognised that the UK has a number of very real strengths, particularly when compared to many other OECD countries. In particular⁸³:

- (a) The level of provision is high compared to many other countries, and it is well diversified across sectors.**
- (b) It is provided in a diverse range of ways, and impressive efforts have been made in recent years to make it more widely accessible: over the life span; in time; and in location.**
- (c) It is well embedded in both public policy and in national politics, and processes that involve relevant stakeholders exist to stimulate review and planning.**
- (d) There is a large, well trained and committed body of practitioners.**
- (e) Quality is taken very seriously.**
- (f) There is a well-organised set of training arrangements and of qualifications. These are available at several levels to reflect a diverse range of skills, and are available in several modes: face-to-face instruction; distance education; and through workplace assessment.**

(g) There is a readiness to use research and evaluation in policy making, and a well-developed infrastructure for this.

(h) The level of innovation is high.

Although Scotland was not covered in the UK review, the present review indicates that these strengths apply to Scotland too, as represented in the work of Careers Scotland.

5.3 The main concerns expressed in OECD's Country Note on the UK related specifically to England ([see para.1.17](#)). The only instance where these have any relevance to Scotland is in the case of the staffing structure operated in Highlands & Islands, where it has been noted that care needs to be taken to ensure that the undifferentiated use of the term 'Adviser' does not in future erode the specialised career guidance knowledge, qualifications and skills base ([para.3.5](#)).

⁸³ OECD (2002), p.23.

5.4 Five more general concerns are expressed in the UK Country Note:

- (a) The need for a more broad-based and more coherent qualification structure in the field of career education and guidance, focused less strongly towards services for young people provided primarily through personal interviews.**
- (b) The need for a more satisfactory way of distinguishing the public services provided free to all adults and the services for which they might be expected to pay, and on the role of private markets and private funding mechanisms.**
- (c) The importance of career guidance having a clear and readily identifiable 'product name' in the eyes of the public.**
- (d) The need for better information on the demand for career guidance and its relationship with supply.**
- (e) The need for a more strategic approach to research in the career guidance field.**

Of these, (a) is addressed in para.3.7, (b) is not currently relevant to Scotland (see para.4.18), (c) and (d) are addressed in para.2.21, and (e) is addressed in para.3.18.

5.5 More specifically, the review has benchmarked Careers Scotland against the ten features of 'lifelong guidance systems' identified in the synthesis report of the OECD review⁸⁴:

- (a) Transparency and ease of access over the lifespan, including a capacity to meet the needs of a diverse range of clients.**
- (b) Particular attention to key transition points over the lifespan.**
- (c) Flexibility and innovation in service delivery to reflect the differing needs and circumstances of diverse client groups.**
- (d) Processes to stimulate regular review and planning.**

(e) Access to individual guidance by appropriately qualified practitioners for those who need such help, at times when they need it.

(f) Programmes to develop career management skills.

(g) Opportunities to investigate and experience learning and work options before choosing them.

(h) Assured access to service delivery that is independent of the interests of particular institutions or enterprises.

(i) Access to comprehensive and integrated educational, occupational and labour market information.

(j) Involvement of relevant stakeholders.

Of these, (a)-(c), (e) and (h) have been addressed in Section 2, and the others in Section 4.

⁸⁴ OECD (2004), pp.26, 138.

5.6 Finally, the review has benchmarked Careers Scotland against the six challenges to policy-makers identified by OECD which it indicated that, in most OECD countries, had received minimal attention⁸⁵:

- (a) Ensuring that resource allocation decisions give the first priority to systems that develop career self-management skills and career information, and that delivery systems match levels of personal help, from brief to extensive, to personal needs and circumstances, rather than assuming that everybody needs intensive personal career guidance.
- (b) Ensuring greater diversity in the types of services that are available and in the ways that they are delivered, including greater diversity in staffing structures, wider use of self-help techniques, and a more integrated approach to the use of ICT.

(c) Working more closely with career guidance practitioners to shape the nature of initial and further education and training qualifications in support of the development of career self-management skills, better career information, and more diverse service delivery.

(d) Improving the information base for public policy making, including gathering improved data on the financial and human resources devoted to career guidance, on client need and demand, on the characteristics of clients, on client satisfaction, and on the outcomes and cost-effectiveness of career guidance.

(e) Developing better quality assurance mechanisms and linking these to the funding of services.

(f) Developing stronger structures for strategic leadership.

Of these, (a)-(e) have been addressed in Section 3, and (f) in Section 4.

5.7 In general, the review indicates that, in relation to these benchmarks, the practices being adopted by Careers Scotland are comparable to leading good practice across the world. Much work still remains to be done in fully implementing and embedding these models. But the building blocks are strong and robust. The progress that has been made in little over two years is impressive.

⁸⁵ OECD (2004), p.148.

5.8 A number of suggestions in relation to Careers Scotland's work have been made in the course of the report. These include:

- (a) **Amplifying the definition of the strategic aim of the organisation** (para.1.11).
- (b) **Developing an integrative exposition of the Career Planning Continuum/Journey and the differentiated service delivery model** (para.2.7).
- (c) **Completing work on developing a coherent kit of needs assessment tools** (para.2.9).
- (d) **Seeking to strengthen Careers Scotland's use of distance guidance** (paras.2.12-2.13).
- (e) **Avoiding the potential confusion that may be caused by the different ways in which the differentiated service delivery model is used in designing services and in business planning** (paras.2.17-2.18).
- (f) **Developing a clearer marketing strategy for the organisation, including flexibility for local marketing** (paras.2.23-2.24).
- (g) **Establishing a stronger dialogue with the QCG course centres regarding initial qualifications for Careers Advisers** (para.3.8).
- (h) **Assuring the continuation of healthy dialogue between those concerned with business modernisation and those concerned with professional standards** (para.3.11).
- (i) **Giving more attention in the performance management system to self-help services** (para.3.14).
- (j) **Using the performance management system to check that the differentiated service delivery model does not lead to a decline in customer satisfaction levels** (paras.3.16, 4.7).
- (k) **Developing close links with the new UK Career Guidance Research Forum, and with the new International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy** (para.3.18).
- (l) **Exploring the possibility of developing or supporting a quality assurance role in relation to career education and guidance programmes in schools and colleges** (paras.4.22-4.23).
- (m) **Encouraging groups of school pupils to visit Careers Scotland careers centres** (para.4.5).
- (n) **Giving more attention to work with the further education sector based on flexible partnership working** (para.4.9).
- (o) **Following the resolution of the issue of handling vacancies for early school-leavers, considering options for either substantially developing or discontinuing the vacancy database on the website** (para.4.12).
- (p) **Reviewing options for supporting the development of career planning services in the workplace** (paras.4.16-4.19).
- (q) **Being more proactive in seeking to influence whole-sector policies relating to personal learning/development planning, career management skills development, options tasting, and integrated career information systems, and to contribute to the implementation of such policies** (paras.1.10, 4.20-4.25).

5.9 A further issue, not raised in the earlier sections, is the relationship between the two parts of Careers Scotland. Although Careers Scotland presents itself to the public as a single organisation, it is in reality a part of two other organisations (the two Enterprise Networks). Its two parts have worked closely together, and have collaborated in a number of key areas (para.1.4). This has been largely managed through the close working relationships established between the directors and senior management of the two parts of Careers Scotland, aided by the fact that many of them come from a similar professional background. But as Careers Scotland continues to evolve, the continuation of such relationships cannot be taken for granted. Moreover, some of the areas in which there is diversity of practice might be utilised more effectively: for example, some of the practices adopted in the Highlands & Islands area could be of considerable interest to the more rural parts of the south of Scotland. Consideration should accordingly be given to establishing some more formal overarching collaborative mechanism between the two parts.

5.10 The main concerns expressed in the report, however, relate not to Careers Scotland's own work but to its relationships with other career guidance providers. In relation to some of the benchmarks, Careers Scotland is heavily dependent on the quality and extent of their provision. As noted in Section 4, Careers Scotland has been assiduous in developing good working relationships with each of them, at both national and local level. But the review has suggested that this may not be sufficient. In particular, it has proposed that consideration should be given to establishing a cross-sectoral body, either by redefining the role of the Scottish Guidance Forum or by replacing it with a new body. This body should address issues related to service quality, professional competence and conceptual coherence across the career guidance sector as a whole (paras.4.30-4.33).

5.11 Addressing these issues is important not only for Scotland itself but also in order to demonstrate to an international audience the benefits of the model it has adopted. As OECD suggested, and as the present review has reaffirmed, having a separate organisational structure to provide career guidance on a lifelong basis has many advantages. Its main possible disadvantage, however, is that it cannot provide all of the career guidance that is needed, and that its dominance may weaken provision elsewhere.⁸⁶ The challenge to Careers Scotland, working with its partners, is to ensure that, far from weakening such provision, its existence strengthens it.

5.12 Careers Scotland is already adopting practices that are comparable with best practice in the world. If the challenges identified in this report are addressed, it has the potential not only to achieve its ambition of 'becoming a world-leading public career planning service'⁸⁷ but also to make Scotland as a whole a genuine world leader in the career guidance field – with the economic and social benefits which, OECD indicates, this may induce.

⁸⁶ This was, for example, a criticism of the former vocational guidance system in Germany, where for many years the Federal Employment Service held a formal monopoly. See OECD (2002). *OECD Review of Career Guidance Policies: Germany Country Note*. Paris: OECD.

⁸⁷ Brown & Galashan (2004), p.10.



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