

**Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance - Positional Statement**

1. The **purpose** of this paper is to present the current position on Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG), to identify roles and individuals within the institution who are currently involved in this process, to clarify responsibilities of those concerned, and to promote best practice. The paper covers the IAG offered at pre-entry level, and the advice, guidance, and careers education given to current students.
2. **Background**
   1. The UK Quality Code for HE (chapter 8) refers to careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) as:

*‘An amalgam of processes, facilities and opportunities designed to enable individuals to prepare for, and make effective decisions about, their roles in present and future labour markets. It encompasses personal transferable skills, development and articulation, self-assessment and personal review, labour market information, career goal setting and decision-making, action-planning, and the communication and self-presentation skills necessary for career management’.*

Further definitions of CEIAG are offered in appendix 1*.*

2.2 Careers education, information and advice are seen as a key area to support student employability. The UW Student Employability Supporting Statement for the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy states that *‘We will build upon the existing relationship between the careers service and Institutes to deliver effective careers education across the curriculum. The careers service will continue to work with other university services providing information advice and guidance to ensure that the offering of high quality, seamless advice’.*

2.3 CEIAG can also support a student in their learning and employability choices before they embark on a university course. HELOA (Higher Education Liaison Officers Associations) offer a set of good practice guidelines covering areas such as general careers talks, HE conventions, and the use of student ambassadors in the delivery of information and advice. Its general principles state that *‘HELOA members should seek to provide potential applicants…with the best possible information, advice and guidance to assist them in making the most appropriate decisions for their future’* and that they should ensure that ‘*they do not provide information or advice that is inaccurate, incomplete or out of date.’*

2.4 Impartiality is identified as essential to the delivery of CEIAG, with the QAA Code of Practice suggesting that all such provision should be *‘fair and free from bias, should develop the ability to progress and refine career thoughts and values based on personal needs and circumstances …all users should be able to confirm that their experience of using CEIAG provision was free from institutional, political, professional or commercial bias’.*

2.5 CEIAG is offered at the institution by a number of teams across the University, as indicated below.

2.6 We recognise that advice and guidance services such as Connexions and Next Steps have recently experienced changes, and will be replaced by the new National Careers Service for adults, with schools and colleges taking on the responsibility for impartial information and advice for young people, and support where it is appropriate to do so.

1. **Current responsibilities for the delivery of CEIAG**

3.1 Definition of terms is offered in appendix 1.

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|  | **Information** | **Advice** | **Guidance** | **Careers Education** |
| Communications and Development Dept (including schools liaison staff, mentors, ambassadors) | / |  |  |  |
| Admissions Office staff | / | / |  |  |
| Programme advisers within Registry Services | / | / |  |  |
| Outreach worker (pre-entry) based in Communications and Development Dept | / | / | / |  |
| Careers Advisers | / | / | / | / |
| Lecturers/academic tutors | / | / |  | / |
| Course administrative staff | / | / |  |  |
| Employability support staff (placements etc.) | / | / |  |  |
| ILS staff | / |  |  | / |
| Students’ Union | / | / |  |  |
| International Office | / | / |  |  |

3.2 It is recognised that some staff, due to their particular skills and experiences, and at their own discretion, already engage in activities which go beyond their formal responsibilities.

1. **Current Students**
   1. Teams responsible for the development of employability and career management skills in current students include course teams, the Careers Service, employability support staff, and the Students’ Union. Further clarification of the respective roles is given in section 7 below.

**5 Pre-entry Students**

5.1 Teams responsible for the delivery of pre-entry information, advice and guidance include Communications and Development Dept, Registry Services, course teams and the Careers Service. Further clarification of these roles is offered in section 8 below.

**6 Principles**

6.1 It is suggested that the **following principles should be followed by all teams** in the delivery of CEIAG:

* all CEIAG should be student centred, i.e. in the best interests of the student
* staff should recognise the extent of the professional boundaries of their role in the delivery of CEIAG, and appropriate referrals should be made to other teams
* students should be made aware of the extent of the knowledge and limitations of the individuals and teams offering the CEIAG and why further referrals may be made
* opportunities for professional development, such as the NVQ Advice and Guidance, should to offered to staff.

**7. Respective roles of Careers Service, course teams and Students’ Union in the delivery of CEIAG to current students**

7.1 **Role of the Careers Service in delivery of CEIAG**

**The Careers Service will provide** individual and group information, advice and guidance to students, and will support course teams in their delivery of careers education and employability skills. They will liaise with local and national employers to promote full and part time job opportunities for students. This will include:

* + provision of information, advice and guidance to individual students. Information may be offered through the provision of electronic or paper based resources, advice through face to face, email or telephone contacts, and guidance is generally offered through booked appointments
  + delivery of focussed career and employability skills group activities outside the curriculum, e.g. through lunchtime sessions
  + delivery of careers and employability sessions within the curriculum, in association with course teams
  + provision of staff training and materials to support academic staff in their delivery of careers and employability sessions
  + support of course teams in the development and delivery of careers and employability events and initiatives. This could include Vantage weeks, careers fairs etc
  + development of student employability through careers information and events such as campaigns, web pages, and other forms of media
  + liaison with local and national employers to identify and promote vacancies and other opportunities for students
  + provision of labour market and graduate destination information to course teams and the institution as a whole
  + running the Worcester Award, with the support of course teams and other staff
  + promotion of part time Earn As You Learn opportunities which are not directly course related, and full time jobs to students and graduates
  + continually reviewing and developing the services provided, based on feedback from students and staff’.

7.2 Limitations of the Careers Service

The Careers Service will not be expected to:

* directly match and place students into jobs (except for Graduate Advantage internships)
* be responsible for the delivery of careers education within courses – although it will support academic staff in their delivery, and within resource restraints, deliver certain sessions directly within courses
* directly source course based work placements.

7.3 **Role of course teams in the delivery of CEIAG**

7.3.1 As stated in the Student Employability Supporting Statement for the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, **course teams are responsible for** developing their curricula to support student employability, and for embedding and delivering the Employable Worcester (post)Graduate learning outcomes.

7.3.2 In delivering the Employable Worcester (post)Graduate, course teams will enable students to assess their own personal skills and attributes in relation to future job markets, help them make plans to further develop and progress in their future directions, and promote themselves to future employers.

7.3.3 Thus careers education will be largely delivered through course teams, and the Academic Tutor role may also involve the provision of information and advice.

7.3.4 This will include:

* + embedding of Employable Worcester (post)Graduate learning outcomes to relevant modules and programmes. This can include delivery of learning activities across the core curriculum, in specific modules, or through additional activities such as Vantage weeks or other employability activities
  + developing the curricula to include either a mandatory work-based learning module or have learning from work as part of their programmes
* delivery of learning activities designed to help students reflect upon their strengths and weaknesses, make plans, and make future applications
* developing links with graduates, employers, voluntary agencies, and other graduate recruiters to inform the development of the curriculum
* helping students to take responsibility for their own choices, plan their pathway through academic life and forward into employment if appropriate, and to be able to articulate what they have achieved to others. This may be through activities within the curriculum or through academic tutoring
* encouraging students to contact the Careers Service for more specialised help advice and guidance.

7.4 Limitations of course teams

Course teams will not be expected to:

* offer careers related guidance – although they may give information and advice, and will create opportunities for students to reflect upon their strengths and weaknesses and make plans for the future.

7.5 **Role of Students’ Union in the delivery of CEIAG**

7.5.1 **The Students’ Union has a role** in enabling and encouraging students to develop personal and employability skills through volunteering, clubs and activities, community involvement and other extra-curricular activities.

7.5.2 This will involve:

* promotion and extension of volunteering opportunities
* encouraging involvement by running annual elections for Executive Officer positions and enabling the elected representatives’ support and training for sports clubs and student societies
* opportunities for paid and voluntary positions within the Students’ Union.

7.6 Limitations of role of Students’ Union

The Students’ Union will not be expected to:

* offer careers related guidance, although information and advice may be offered
* find voluntary opportunities directly related to course requirements.

**8 Respective roles of Communications and Development Dept, Admissions Office, course teams and Careers Service in providing CEIAG to prospective students**

8.1 Admissions Office will provide information and advice relating to course admissions requirements, through telephone, email, and face to face enquiries.

8.2 Course teams will provide information about course content, course costs, and employability support through printed and electronic materials, and direct enquiries or referrals from other teams such as Communications and Development Dept or Admissions Office.

8.3 Communications and Development Dept will co-ordinate the information offered through printed and electronic materials. They will respond to pre-entry information and advice enquiries, making referrals to Admissions Office, course teams, and the Careers Service as appropriate. They will also deliver information and advice to schools through general HE and careers talks, HE conventions and fairs, summer schools, and other outreach activities. They will co-ordinate and train student ambassadors working in schools and the community, and support external staff in their delivery of advice and guidance to prospective students.

8.4 The Careers Service will offer guidance to adult pre-entry enquiries as appropriate upon referral from Communications and Development Dept. They will also prove information about graduate destinations.

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**Appendix 1: Definitions of Careers education, information, advice and guidance**

**1 Careers education, information, advice and guidance:** ‘An amalgam of processes, facilities and opportunities designed to enable individuals to prepare for, and make effective decisions about, their roles in present and future labour markets. It encompasses personal transferable skills, development and articulation, self-assessment and personal review, labour market information, career goal setting and decision-making, action-planning, and the communication and self-presentation skills necessary for career management’. (QAA, 2010)

This can include any activities students undertake to make choices about which university course to take, how to develop their employability, and their options beyond university into their future life, and could be further broken down as below.

**2 Information** is likely to be offered by all staff involved in any student contact. This could include information about course content, appropriate graduate destination information, information about how to make career decisions, factors affecting future employability, or how to complete an application form, for example. Information could be offered through web or printed materials, telephone, email, or face to face contact. The information should always be accurate, up to date, and appropriate to client needs.

For example, in an information session, a client may ask how to get into teaching, qualifications required, course funding, completion of application forms etc. They may be given or encouraged to access printed or web information, and if information needs are not met, may be referred to the Careers Service or Admissions Office for post graduate courses.

**3 Advice** may be offered by a wide range of staff. It will be generally offered in association with information, and may well revolve around helping a student or client to access information appropriate to their needs. It may also at times involve professional opinion, and eliciting feedback from the client to establish more precisely their needs, and checking whether needs have been met. It should always be well informed, accurate, client centred, and appropriate to the needs and choices of the client. For example, a student interested in teaching may be encouraged to think about areas not previously considered, such as funding implications, or given feedback about what they could do to strengthen their application.

**4 Careers Guidance is** *‘A process - whether delivered individually, in groups, or via hard copy or electronic media - which aims to help individuals to a clearer understanding of their career development needs and potential, to an appreciation of the processes of career planning and decision-making, and to clarify and attain their career**objectives’* (QAA), which should be only be offered by a qualified careers counsellor or equivalent. A guidance session will encourage the client to identify steps forward, possibly barriers for progression, and how to overcome these. A guidance session with the student mentioned above may include discussions about whether teaching is an appropriate route for them, challenging about their ideas and preconceptions, and encouraging them to consider other options. Guidance will always be client centred and impartial, with clients taking responsibility for their own choices.

**5 Careers education:** *‘those formal processes that empower individuals to identify, develop and articulate the skills, qualifications, experiences, attributes and knowledge that will enable them to make an effective transition into their chosen futures, and manage their careers as lifelong learners, with a realistic and positive attitude’*. (AGCAS 2006).

This shares considerable ground with Personal Development Planning, in particular the concern with the personal development of the student and integration of the student’s academic and vocational self. Careers education gives students the skills and information to develop strategies to access appropriate information, understand how to make choices, understand themselves in relation to the labour market, and help them plan to move forward.

Through the Employable Worcester (post)Graduate a student may, for example, have undertaken a skills and learning styles audit, a project to investigate possible career paths, participated in and reflected upon a work placement, developed a CV and attended a mock interview, and considered their future plans with their academic tutor.

Careers education is delivered through course teams as part of the employability agenda, with professional support from the Careers Service, who can provide staff development, materials and resources, or deliver specific sessions if appropriate.

**References**

Higher Education Liaison Officers Association (2011) Good Practice Guidelines

<http://www.heloa.co.uk/resources/HELOA_Good_Practice_Guidelines.pdf>

Stanbury, S (2005) Careers Education Benchmark Statement, AGCAS

<http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/33-Careers-Education-Benchmark-Statement>

QAA (2010) UK Quality Code for Higher Education (chapter 8: Career education, information, advice and guidance)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Code-of-practice-section-8.aspx>