

Careers Education in Schools in Wales

A paper for the NICEC comparative study of careers education in schools in the UK and the Republic of Ireland

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Definition

"Careers education and guidance helps young people develop the knowledge and skills that will help them make best use of their capabilities in learning and work throughout life"

A Framework for Careers Education and Guidance for 11 to 19 year olds in Wales (ACCAC 2002)

Brief historical overview

Careers education and guidance in England and Wales followed very similar developments, as a consequence of centralised government policy until Wales started to prepare for a Welsh Assembly.

At the beginning of the 1970s education started to change in secondary schools from the two-tier system, where the destination of pupils depended on whether they passed or failed the 11+ exam, to the introduction of comprehensive education where pupils of all academic levels were educated at the same school. With the schools having to cater for pupils with a much wider range of academic ability, and the increased range of subjects available on the curriculum, there was a recognition that pupils would need some sort of advice or guidance. In some schools teachers were given the responsibility of this under the name of careers education, in others teachers were asked to teach careers lessons if they were a few lessons short on their timetable.

Individual local education authorities (LEAs) were responsible for the training of the teachers and curriculum development, and they appointed advisers to lead this work. Teachers were sent on courses to update their knowledge and skills, where they were introduced to works by Bill Law, Tony Watts and others and many careers programmes developed based on the 'DOTS' analysis. However, teachers still had to devise a careers programme suitable for their own school, and this would depend on the time allowed on the timetable and whether the headteacher gave careers education any status as a subject.

The Youth Employment Service was replaced by the Careers Service, established within each LEA, and partnerships started to develop between the careers companies and the schools. Pupils were now able to have a guidance interview with a careers officer in school and in school time.

In 1972, the raising of the school leaving age (RoSLA) led to an increase in vocational based lessons and activities as a

way of occupying pupils in their last year of compulsory schooling and this was how many careers teachers became involved in delivering careers work.

The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) was introduced in the early 1980s and this provided the policy and funding necessary to develop and enhance careers education and guidance in schools. It also led to the introduction of work experience and recording achievement.

In the early 1990s, when the National Curriculum was adopted, cross-curricular themes were introduced as a vehicle for including a variety of further topics in the already crowded curriculum. Personal and Social Education was also becoming more prominent and careers education was often delivered as a component of the PSE programme as well as a cross-curricular activity.

Preparation for devolution

As Wales prepared for devolution the Welsh Office started to set a Welsh agenda for the future. In 1995 it produced several publications:

- *People and Prosperity: An Agenda for Action In Wales.*

This set out an action plan for schools and others involved with learning and enterprise, established specific requirements for work experience for 14-16 and 16-19 year olds and described a framework of national targets for education and training.

- *A Bright Future: Getting the best for every pupil at school in Wales.*

This set out priorities for secondary schools across the whole curriculum. It set targets for several areas of the curriculum, including careers education and guidance.

- *A Bright Future: The Way Forward.*

The Secretary of State for Wales set out a comprehensive programme of action to raise standards in schools, including specific requirements for careers provision.

In 1996 the Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) produced: *Providing for Choice: Careers Education and Guidance in Schools*.

This booklet was produced as guidance for all those involved in developing, delivering and evaluating CEG programmes within the curriculum for 11 to 19 year olds. It outlined the aims and outcomes of CEG, and provided guidance on planning programmes, with some examples of effective CEG.

In 1997 the Education and Training Action Group was created to examine education and training, and to prepare advice and recommendations for the National Assembly of Wales at its inception in May 1998.

Part of its remit was to:

- focus education and training more purposefully and effectively to deliver the skills needed for the Welsh economy;
- help demotivated young people;
- strengthen careers education and careers information and guidance so that young people and adults are able to make informed decisions about careers, courses and qualifications.

Wales under the Welsh Assembly

In 1999 an Education and Training Plan for Wales (ETAP) was published with the following recommendations affecting CEG:

- a national all-age information, advice and guidance service, to be called Careers Wales, should be set up by April 2001, based initially on the role of the existing eight Careers Service companies, drawing together provision for the Careers Service, the Adult Guidance Initiative and Learning Direct;
- ACCAC should be commissioned to produce appropriate learning outcomes for careers education in secondary schools;
- regulations should be made, under the Education Act 1997, to ensure provision of careers education for all 16-19 year olds in schools or colleges of further education is mandatory in Wales;
- Careers Wales should be commissioned to develop an all-Wales award for schools and FE colleges for attaining a good quality provision of CEG;
- Careers Wales should be required to work with local Education Business Partnerships to establish a seamless approach to helping young people prepare for the world of work.

The school curriculum in Wales

	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
Statutory National Curriculum Subjects	Maths English Science Welsh Design and Technology Information Technology History Geography Modern Foreign Languages Art Music Physical Education	Maths English Science (double) or Science (single) Physical Education
Other statutory requirements	Religious Education Sex Education Careers Education and Guidance (Yr 9)	Religious Education Sex Education Careers Education and Guidance (and post 16)
Non-statutory elements	Personal and Social Education	Personal and Social Education Work Related Education

In 2000, ACCAC produced two learning frameworks which both had relevance to CEG:

The Personal and Social Education Framework for Key Stages 1 – 4 in Wales is a non-statutory element of the curriculum. The Vocational aspect, which appears in all four key stages, can be summarised as

- pupils can be encouraged to develop an insight into their potential and capabilities and into the changing demands of the world of work
- equipping pupils for educational and occupational choices and for decisions in the industrial and economic world

The Community aspect (Citizenship) is not statutory but is one of the ten aspects included in the PSE Framework.

The Work Related Education (WRE) Framework is a non-statutory element of the curriculum for pupils aged 14-19. This outlines areas in which work-related activities can be included within a school curriculum.

The two frameworks are currently under review and in *The Learning Country, A Paving Document* (2001), the National Assembly for Wales proposes to 'establish a clearer statutory framework for PSE and work related learning'.

The Progress File has been piloted in many schools across Wales for the last three years. A decision on the future of Progress File and whether it will be introduced universally in Wales is awaited imminently. This will be heavily dependent upon a parallel decision in England.

Statutory requirements

- Under Section 43 of the Education Act 1997, CEG is a statutory requirement in the school curriculum in Wales for Years 9-11.
- Under National Assembly of Wales regulations 2002, the 'Section 43' requirement has now been extended for all 16-19 year olds in schools and colleges in Wales, from 1st August 2001.

The Framework for Careers Education and Guidance for 11-19 year olds in Wales (ACCAC) is to be implemented from September 2002. Like the other two frameworks it is currently non-statutory and supplementary guidance is being produced.

Pupils and students in Wales will have careers education or vocational awareness in their curriculum from the age of 4 to the age of 19.

Organisation of careers education in schools

There is still a wide range of practice, depending on the organisation of particular schools. However most schools

organise the teaching of careers education through a combination of:

- a discrete careers lesson, regularly timetabled or on a carousel of modules, within the wider PSE programme
- an extension of a pastoral or tutorial programme
- extended provision, e.g. work experience, collapsing the timetable for a day, etc.

There is usually a senior manager with overall responsibility for PSE / CEG / pastoral work, who is the line manager for the careers co-ordinator. The careers co-ordinator is responsible for the management and delivery of CEG in school. In many schools the careers co-ordinator is also the work experience co-ordinator, the education/business links co-ordinator and/or the RoA/Progress File co-ordinator. In a number of schools there is a link governor for CEG.

Teachers involved in teaching careers education can range from:

- specialist careers teachers
- members of teams of PSE teachers
- form tutors.

Careers and work related education resources

There is a range of careers products produced in Wales with a number of them now available in English and Welsh. The recent production of a Welsh language version of the Real Game has been well received. Some of the resources offer the opportunity to accredit the career learning of students.

The Careers Library Initiative has been operated by careers service companies for some years and has helped to raise the standards of careers libraries in schools and colleges and to enhance the provision of careers information for pupils and students.

Inspection and quality assurance

The Welsh Inspectorate was the OHMCI, and is now Estyn. In 1998 Estyn published a *Framework for the Inspection of Schools*, which stated that:

"Estyn is required to evaluate the effectiveness of CEG as part of an overall school inspection and to report standards under the following two categories:

- Curriculum
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare."

Inspectors must evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the school's personal and educational guidance, and careers education and guidance. Evidence should include the school's policy and provision made for CEG, including partnership agreements, observation of lessons, including tutor periods and PSE and careers lessons. In the final report, however, it is unlikely that there will be more than a

few sentences on CEG. Since 1999 Estyn has also been required to inspect the Careers Wales companies, the providers of further education and training and the Youth Service.

The Careers Wales CEG Quality Award was launched in February 2002, following consultation and pilot work. Prior to this there had been four local quality awards operating in Wales. The all-Wales award is a high profile national development, which is exciting and innovative, and will reflect the importance of careers education and guidance for young people in Wales. It has been developed by Careers Wales, in collaboration with teachers and personnel involved in developing the ACCAC Frameworks for CEG, PSE and WRE. Good practice materials and resources are being developed to support the CEG Framework and the quality award.

The award will be available to any secondary schools, further education colleges, special schools and off-site units, who apply for and meet the high quality and effective careers education and guidance criteria required.

Careers teachers and their professional development

In Wales careers co-ordinators are almost always teachers of other subjects who have been appointed latterly as careers co-ordinators. It is a minority that have gained a qualification in careers work. However, a high percentage will attend locally arranged INSET.

In 1995 the careers companies in Wales were given funding under the Teachers & Lecturers Training Initiative (TTI) to provide training and support to teachers and lecturers involved in careers work. GEST funding for careers work was available through LEAs but only available to teachers in LEA schools.

Teachers seeking accreditation in careers work follow either the:

- Post-graduate Certificate / Diploma / MA in Professional Studies, via the University of Glamorgan or the
- Certificate / Diploma of Professional Studies (CEG), via Manchester Metropolitan University.

Developments are underway to ensure coherence between the content of the postgraduate qualification in Professional Development (Careers Education) at the University of Glamorgan with the Careers Wales Quality Award. This should facilitate teachers wishing to gain accreditation in careers work at the same time as working towards the quality award.

The Careers Service

Careers Wales was launched in April 2001. It provides a structure for central co-ordination of the developments in Wales, including careers education. It is a national all age information, advice and guidance service. The National Assembly programmes to be managed by Careers Wales are as follows:

- The Careers Service working in schools and colleges;
- Education Business Links - responsible for work experience, mentoring and enterprise;
- Information and advice for adults;
- Youth Gateway.

Key development areas

- Helping young people manage the transition from education to employment;
- Tackling disaffection;
- Active support for learning throughout life;
- The agenda set out in *The Learning Country*, including:
 - transforming the provision for 14-19 year olds;
 - ensuring that better services are developed for young people under the Extending Entitlement banner;
 - ensuring that high quality careers information, advice and guidance is accessible to all through the use of innovative and modern technologies.

Careers Wales continues to work with all young people in the 11 - 19 age range in schools and colleges. As part of its responsibilities it is expected to ensure the successful integration of its education-business link activities into careers and work-related education to provide a coherent and integrated programme.

Professional organisation

The National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers (NACGT) aims to meet the needs of its members in England and Wales through four main activities:

- Support for professional development
- Lobbying at a national level to raise standards in CEG
- Providing information and disseminating relevant initiatives
- Supporting members

There are regional representatives linked to Government Office areas, including one for Wales. The association is constantly trying to promote membership with the aim that there will be a member in every school.

The future

- Careers Wales On-Line is currently being developed. It will be an innovative interactive bilingual web portal site providing a lifelong learning passport for individuals. Pupils in school will open their own individual accounts to which they will have access throughout life to update continually, for example, their qualifications, key skills, personal careers action plans, CVs, etc.
- ELWa (Education and Learning in Wales) supports all post -16 education and training and its recent reforms aim to provide a coherent structure without unnecessary institutional barriers.
- Future Skills Wales. It is proposed to carry out a further Future Skills Wales survey in 2003 and the outcomes are likely to influence the labour market information used in careers education and guidance. The first Future Skills Wales survey was published in 1998.
- The development of the Welsh Baccalaureate will have implications for careers education and guidance.
- *The Implementation Plan for Entrepreneurship: Making it Happen* (2001) states that entrepreneurship should be embedded in the National Curriculum. The aim is to provide a range of opportunities across the key stages to help create an entrepreneurial culture amongst children and young people. Teachers, lecturers and careers advisers will receive training on the use of commissioned resource packs.
- *Extending Entitlement - supporting young people in Wales* was published by the National Assembly in 2000 with a view of making recommendations on how a comprehensive system of advice and support available to all young people in Wales, could be developed. One of the twelve key recommendations was that support for all young people in Wales should be structured around an entitlement for all young people to a range of services in the language of their choice, designed to promote their attainment and development as individuals. In every LEA there should be a young people's strategy, a comprehensive support network and clarity about the specialist contribution of each agency.

It is an exciting time to be involved in careers education and guidance in Wales. Its profile has never been higher and it is hoped that this paper has provided an overview and taste of the current situation and of the new and innovative developments in the field in Wales. The National Assembly for Wales has provided funding to support the NICEC conference for which this paper has been written, and hopefully any recommendations that emerge will help to further develop careers education best practice in schools and with other partners in Wales.

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