



An inquiry supported by:



The Workforce of the Future inquiry call for evidence

DEADLINE: 18th December 2020

The Skills Commission is inviting submissions to a public call for evidence as part of its ongoing inquiry, [the Workforce of the Future](#). Careers information, advice and guidance and how it can support transitions into sustainable employment has always been a challenging policy issue, interconnected with social justice issues and skills gaps in the labour market. However, the current crisis offers an opportunity to rethink our approach. Young people and marginalised groups are being hit hardest by the economic consequences of the pandemic, as the sectors of the economy that often recruit school and college leavers – i.e. construction, hospitality and retail – contract, and they compete with more experienced and skilled job seekers. This situation creates a new and urgent imperative for government, the FE and HE sectors, local partners and employers to intervene to support transitions into employment.

We would like to invite submissions from college and higher education provider leadership, careers services staff, independent careers professionals, local government, third sector organisations, businesses, sector/industry representative organisations, and any others who believe their experiences or perspective to be relevant. Your submissions will inform the recommendations we make to the government, providers of careers advice and guidance, and businesses, to ensure that young people and adults are well supported to have the best possible chance of transitioning into work.

This inquiry is chaired by Lord Jim Knight, Nicola Richards MP, and Dr Siobhan Neary. [The Skills Commission](#) is an independent body comprising leading figures from across the education sector, which meets to discuss important issues in skills, training and further education policy. Commission members include parliamentarians from all the main parties, and highly experienced practitioners from across the skills sector. More information on past research can be found on our website.

Instructions for submissions of evidence

Please use the questions below to frame your response to the call for evidence, but do not feel restricted by or compelled to answer every question. There are specific questions for businesses or business representative organisations in the final section. The Commission welcomes all types of evidence, from data, including analysis or internal studies your organisation has carried out, to personal or organisational views on these issues. Please express any requests for anonymity in your evidence submission. We will not publish submissions of evidence in full. Due to limits on the scope of this inquiry, we will not be examining careers advice and guidance in schools, or for young people under the age of 16.

The deadline for submission of evidence is 5pm on Friday 18th December. Evidence can be submitted to Megan Hector at megan.hector@policyconnect.org.uk. For more information about the Commission, please visit [the Policy Connect website](https://www.policyconnect.org.uk) or contact Megan Hector.

Respondent information:

1. What is your name and role?
2. Which institution or organisation are you submitting evidence on behalf of?
3. Do you give permission for the Commission to quote your submission?
4. Can we attribute the submission to the institution/organisation?
5. Can we attribute the submission to you personally?

General questions

- What do you think people need to receive from careers information, advice and guidance in the current circumstances to help them successfully transition into work?
 - What does really good careers advice and guidance consist of in the current circumstances?
 - What do organisations need in order to provide this?
- What do you consider to be the key challenges for you/your organisation, under normal circumstances **and** during the pandemic, of providing good careers advice and guidance? How would you solve these?
 - To what extent do you feel able to engage (further education or higher education) teaching staff in careers advice and guidance work?
 - How has your or your organisation's provision of careers advice and guidance changed due to the pandemic and its accompanying economic consequences?
 - Do you think careers advice and guidance is prioritised sufficiently at your organisation? If so/if not, how and why?
- To what extent are you able to incorporate local labour market information and the needs of local businesses into the careers advice and guidance you/your organisation provides? Are there any challenges associated with this?
- Is your/your organisation's careers advice and guidance tailored to the particular needs of disadvantaged groups? If so, how?
- Are there any examples of good practice of careers advice and guidance by your organisation that you would like to highlight?
- Do you believe there should be any changes to the status or function of careers professionals?
- As COVID has transformed many people's use of digital tools, are there previously inconceivable ways of designing and delivering careers services that may now be possible using digital technology?
- Are there any other key concerns or factors we should consider which are not covered in this call for evidence?

The role of government and publicly-funded organisations

- Is there any further support that you think the government should provide for your organisation which would better enable your organisation to provide good careers advice and guidance? If so, what might this be?
- Do you think any changes should be made to the government's strategy for careers advice and guidance? If so, what might these be?
 - What needs to be considered within an updated careers strategy to ensure that we have a genuinely all-age careers service, and to ensure that educational institutions are not necessarily the primary providers of this?
- How should we tackle the challenges faced by some adults in accessing quality career guidance, such as not knowing where to access it, how to access the services, or not falling into the eligibility criteria?
- Do you feel that the current system of monitoring the provision of careers advice and guidance in educational institutions is sufficient?
- How well do you think the government's Plan for Jobs will tackle the economic consequences of the pandemic, including rising unemployment?
- Do you engage with the Careers & Enterprise Company or the National Careers Service? If so, is there anything about how they function that you think could be improved?
- Do you believe that the National Careers Service priority groups (viewable [here](#)) fully reflect those who are most in need in the current situation? If not, how should they be changed?
- Is there anything more you think the government should be doing to tackle the economic and labour market consequences of the pandemic, including the particularly negative consequences for disadvantaged groups?

Specific questions for businesses and representative organisations

- Previous to the pandemic, did your organisation normally take on young people for placements, work experience, traineeships, apprenticeships or similar? If so/if not, why?
- Is there anything that prevents you or your organisation, under normal circumstances **and** during the pandemic, from participating in careers advice and guidance work such as careers fairs, mock interviews, offering work experience and traineeships/apprenticeships, or other collaborations with education institutions and/or careers organisations? What are the potential solutions to these barriers?
- How has the pandemic and its social and economic consequences affected your business, or those your organisation represents?
 - How does this impact on your organisation's ability and willingness to recruit new employees; to provide work experience, work placements or traineeships/apprenticeships; and to provide training for your existing employees?
 - Do you think the government has provided you/your organisation with sufficient support to respond to any negative consequences?
- What effect do you think the UK's departure from the EU has had or will have on your organisation's ability and willingness to recruit new employees; to provide work experience, work placements or apprenticeships; and to provide training for your existing employees?