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Promoting research and reflective practice in career development

NICEC STATEMENT

The Fellows of NICEC agreed the following statement in 2010.

'The National Institute for Career Education and Counselling (NICEC) was originally founded as a research institute in 1975. It now plays the role of a learned society for reflective practitioners in the broad field of career education, career guidance/counselling and career development. This includes individuals whose primary role relates to research, policy, consultancy, scholarship, service delivery or management. NICEC seeks to foster dialogue and innovation between these areas through events, networking, publications and projects.

NICEC is distinctive as a boundary-crossing network devoted to career education and counselling in education, in the workplace, and in the wider community. It seeks to integrate theory and practice in career development, stimulate intellectual diversity and encourage transdisciplinary dialogue. Through these activities, NICEC aims to develop research, inform policy and enhance service delivery.

Membership and fellowship are committed to serious thinking and innovation in career development work. Membership is open to all individuals and organisations connected with career education and counselling. Fellowship is an honour conferred by peer election and signals distinctive contribution to the field and commitment to the development of NICEC's work. Members and Fellows receive the NICEC journal and are invited to participate in all NICEC events.

NICEC does not operate as a professional association or commercial research institute, nor is it organisationally aligned with any specific institution. Although based in the UK, there is a strong international dimension to the work of NICEC and it seeks to support reflective practice in career education and counselling globally.'

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Phil McCash, Rosemary McLean, Stephen McNair, Robin Mellors-Bourne, Nicki Moore, Marian Morris, Rob Nathan, Siobhan Neary, Claire Nix, Emma Pollard, Peter Robertson, Janet Sheath, Michelle Stewart, Nalayini Thambar, David Winter, Julia Yates.

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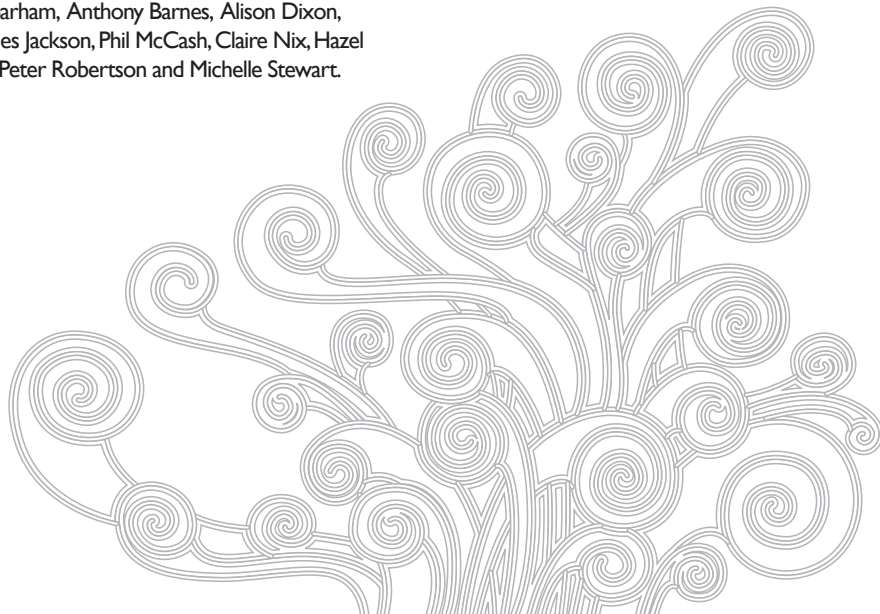### CO-EDITORS OF THE JOURNAL

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TITLE

The official title of the journal for citation purposes is *Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling* (Print *ISSN 2046-1348; online* ISSN 2059-4879). It is widely and informally referred to as 'the NICEC journal'. Its former title was *Career Research and Development: the NICEC Journal*, ISSN 1472-6564, published by CRAC, and the final edition under this title was issue 25. To avoid confusion we have retained the numbering of editions used under the previous title.

AIMS AND SCOPE

The NICEC journal publishes articles on the broad theme of career development in any context including:

- Career development in the workplace: private and public sector, small, medium and large organisations, private practitioners.
- Career development in education: schools, colleges, universities, adult education, public career services.
- Career development in the community: third age, voluntary, charity, social organisations, independent contexts, public career services.

It is designed to be read by individuals who are involved in career development-related work in a wide range of settings including information, advice, counselling, guidance, advocacy, coaching, mentoring, psychotherapy, education, teaching, training, scholarship, research, consultancy, human resources, management or policy. The journal has a national and international readership.

Contents

Overview of this issue

Welcome to the Journal of the National Institute of Career Education and Counselling. In this edition established academics, new writers and practitioner researchers bring us useful insights into career learning and the interplay between theory, practice and research. The UK government's recent career strategy placed renewed emphasis on career learning in schools in England making it a highly topical subject for consideration. However, career covers all stages of life and needs to be supported by a life-long engagement with learning, hence the articles extend beyond the school setting. Our authors reflect on programme design, review the development and implementation of career learning frameworks and tools, and explore external and internal contextual factors that influence the career learning process. Whilst different in focus and context, at the core of all the articles is the theme of client and participant career learning leading to progression in career development.

A particular landmark for NICEC is the publication of an article by **Laura Walker** which was awarded the Bill Law Student Memorial Award 2019. In this opening piece, Laura explores the implications for career guidance practice of late career decision making, where she characterises the learning as a process of discovering more of themselves – 'more of me'. The findings are set out using a visual which is unique to the author and very helpful for use by practitioners. The image of 'dancing with fear' is powerful, and reminiscent of Bill Law's use of imagery in his concern to help practitioners to apply the lessons learned through research to practice.

In the two articles that follow, **Lis McGuire** and **John Gough** write from different perspectives about the process of designing learning experiences. Liz explores adopting a collaborative approach between the provider and the user of services. Although the article focuses on addressing the needs of persons with mental health problems, her findings and reflections are equally relevant to programme design for other user groups. Similarly, John's reflections on a collaborative process in training careers leaders in England highlights

the importance of engaging the voice of the learner in enabling them to develop this role effectively in complex and demanding educational environments.

The next three articles focus on specific aspects of working directly with clients, and present new career learning tools and a career framework. These developments, rooted in practice, include a mix of 'what works' along with reflection on what was less successful, and insights into why that might be. First, **Katie Dallison** describes the development and implementation of Plan: Me. Piloted within higher education, this tool takes a holistic approach to career decision making, integrating goal setting, and allowing clients to map out a process of how they can move themselves forward independently. Second, we have an article by **Keren Coney and Ben Simkins** in which they consider the potential of using 'screencasting' technology to support students' C.V. writing. Third, **Lewis Clark and Carolyn Parry** review their creation of the INSPiRED teenager framework designed to support collaborative career-based learning between parents/carers and their teenage child.

The final two articles are concerned with the wider context within which career learning takes place. **Szilvia Schmitsek** explores the educational experiences of young people in England, Denmark and Hungary who had been at risk of dropping out, but later gained a qualification at a second chance provision. In contrast, **Nikki Storey** is concerned with the influences on the career beliefs of students in an ethnically diverse state school in London. Using an adapted short version of the 'Careers Beliefs Patterns Scale', Nikki examines the interlinked impacts of ethnicity and socio-economic status, and draws out recommendations for practitioners.

Lyn Barham & Michelle Stewart, Editors

Mid-life career reinvention: Dancing with fear and confidence

Laura Walker

Most of us will be living and working longer, but what if we want something very different for the later chapters of our working lives? Research suggests workers in late career face unique career and psychosocial issues but there is little empirical research to help individuals and the coach practitioners who work with them.

In this grounded theory study, three main features of late career reinvention coaching emerged and form the basis of a new practitioner model: discovering – journeying to be more of me; systemic readiness; and dancing with fear and confidence. Key implications for practitioners are highlighted.

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Research context

Longer working lives

Economists and psychologists are reporting that the '100 year life' is already upon us, bringing a whole range of challenges and opportunities resulting from longer working lives (Gratton & Scott, 2016). In the UK, 36% of the working population are over 50, 54% of workers aged 55 are planning to work beyond state pension age (CIPD, 2012) and 25% of those who have retired have gone on to 'unretire' (Platts, Corna, Worts & McDonough, 2017). Government and industry bodies argue that older workers are vital for the future of the economy and are critical to addressing a predicted 7.5 million skills gap, improving productivity and reducing costs (CIPD, 2012; BITC, 2016, 2017; DWP, 2017). However, whilst more and more people have a desire or a need to work into their 60s and 70s, employment seems not to be suitable for many people over 50 and some assert that real change is needed to address age bias and discrimination as well as retention, re-training and recruitment practices (BITC, 2017).

Most writers emphasise the opportunity of extended working lives for individuals and organisations but others are starting to debate potential inequality issues and whether working longer will accentuate cumulative advantage and disadvantage. Guy Standing explored the concept of 'The Precariat' in 2011 suggesting that older people are increasingly joining 'The Precariat', by taking low-level jobs to supplement dwindling pension incomes (Standing, 2011). A recent study into the lived experience of precarity further argues that 'many older workers, not just those in precarious jobs, feel a sense of ontological precarity influenced by the intersection between precarious jobs, welfare states and households' (Lain, Airey, Loretto, & Vickerstaff, 2018, p.1).

Late career / mid-life

Within the growing careers and public policy literature, 'late career' generally includes people who are at least 45 years old and not ready to retire. Many writers assert that this stage has some distinctive needs and challenges, arguing that individuals in late career place greater emphasis on creating work and family balance (Baltes, 1980; Barham, 2008), the desire for better work climate, autonomy and finding meaning (Wang, Olsen & Shulz, 2013; Erodogan, Bauer, Peiró & Truxillo, 2011; Brown, 2015).

Conversely, other researchers emphasise the diverse characteristics of older workers citing very 'different circumstances, needs and preoccupations' (Watts, McNair, Robey, Berry & Sterland, 2015, p.9). Furthermore, some do not consider it to be a discreet stage as the priorities, challenges and self-confidence of people aged 50 are affected by the accumulated choices, successes, and experiences earlier in their life (Feldman, 2002).

Life stage theorists have long argued that this age range is associated with changing psychological needs.

For example, Levinson's eight life-stages theory includes a 'mid-life transition' stage from age 40 to 45 and a 'questioning and modification' stage from age 50 to 55 (Levinson, 1978). It is also worth noting that since 1978 the average life expectancy in the UK has increased by almost eight years, so these age ranges may have shifted (ONS, 2019).

For this research, 'late career' is considered to be the point after which individuals themselves believe they are moving into the final chapter(s) of their working lives. In practice, there was an association with age in line with other studies, all were over 45 and considered themselves to be in mid-life.

Reinvention

Job change in late career is quite common with around half the workforce changing, particularly women. Importantly, the experience of changing work in later career is reported to be quite polarised with a more positive experience for those with higher qualifications, higher incomes, and in professional and managerial occupations (McNair, Owen, Flynn, Humphrey & Woodfield 2004; McNair, 2011).

For a significant career change or transition, writers use a variety of terms such as 're-imagining' (Burns, 2015), 're-inventing' (Ibarra, 2004), 're-crafting' (Mintzberg, 1987), 're-orienting' (Bridges, 2004), 're-framing' (Brown, 2015), or 'renewing' (Wang, Olsen & Shulz, 2013). They consistently argue for a psychological transition that goes beyond or alongside responses to external changes, and frequently reference Bridges' three-stage transition model (Bridges, 1980).

For this study, 'late career reinvention' was chosen as it succinctly describes the topic without being too prescriptive or familiar to participants.

Career coaching

Career coaching is a relatively new discipline and has only really been recognised for about twenty years. Whilst there is no common definition (Hazen & Steckler, 2014; Parker, 2017; Yates, 2014), Yates distinguishes career counselling from career coaching by suggesting that counselling 'infers a particular style of support that might help clients to resolve conflicts or understand patterns of behaviour', whereas career

coaching is 'seen as a practice that can benefit all, not just those who are struggling, and is a mechanism to help people who are doing well' (Yates, 2014, p.3).

Career theories do feature in many career coaching chapters but as Parker points out there is no empirical evidence linking recent theories such as 'boundaryless careers' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) with coaching outcomes. There is virtually nothing written specifically about late career reinvention coaching beyond mentions that mid-life can be a key stage for transition (Parker, 2017; Yates, 2014).

For the purpose of this research, it was not assumed that coaching during late career reinvention is necessarily career coaching, but rather might involve a variety of different approaches.

Grounded theory findings

A qualitative and inductive research strategy using grounded theory methodology (GTM) was chosen to reflect the absence of existing coaching research in this area, enable conceptualisation (of the most important features) and support theory building (to develop a framework for coaches). There were 14 participants - 7 were individuals (clients) who had reinvented their late career and 7 were coaches with extensive experience of coaching others through late career reinvention (with several hundred clients between them). All participants took part voluntarily, were in work, and part of an extended professional business network. Efforts were made to ensure a mix of gender but in practice there were more females than males (5:2 for both groups). Individual, semi-structured telephone interviews were used, and appropriate measures were taken to ensure participants knew what to expect and to provide confidentiality and anonymity. Data analysis involved the three levels of coding typical of GTM.

Overall

According to the participants, late career reinvention is a journey that takes time (between three and eight years), is non-linear, brings big questions as well as practical challenges, and is only recognised as reinvention in hindsight.

Three main features of coaching during late career reinvention:

- Discovering - journeying to become more of me
- Systemic readiness
- Dancing without fear

These features were common to both groups (clients and coaches) but with some differences in perspective or emphasis. In this section, key concepts that emerged from the data are shown as subheadings. The quotes are original data from the interviews.

Discovering – journeying to become more of me

As clients work on the issue that brought them to coaching, they are discovering as opposed to just exploring or deciding. The initial issue is rarely the full scope of the work. It is a multi-layered, non-linear process with people who are far from blank pages (at this stage of their career and their lives). Rather than hoping to become someone they are not, or deciding between different options, they are wanting to be more of themselves – 'more of me'. They may be interested in other reinvention stories, but this is more about validating their own journey than wanting to replicate others.

The coaching is in service of this 'dis-covering' by helping and stimulating clients to think holistically and differently about themselves, supporting fresh insights or perspectives and helping them go beyond their immediate symptoms.

> 'The journey was all an excuse just for me to be who I was meant to be.'

> 'The initial symptoms will show up in the context of the work, but they also tend to be asking questions across the spectrum of their lives.'

A compass metaphor symbolises the need to navigate multi-layered conversations covering four different aspects of self-discovery (four poles)

Figure 1: Discovering compass
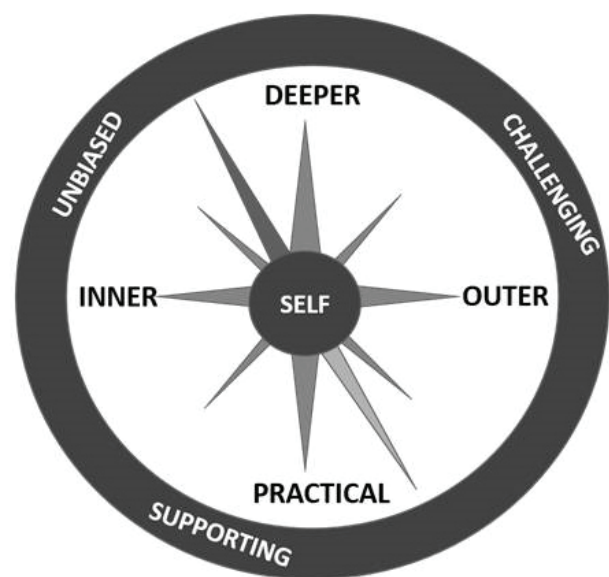
- 'Deeper self' - e.g. Who am I now? What is my purpose? What matters most?
- 'Practical self' - e.g. Am I financially ok to do this? What new skills will I need? How can I build my network or CV?
- 'Inner self' - e.g. What are my values? What is my body / unconscious telling me matters? Are my repeating patterns or beliefs getting in the way?
- 'Outer self' - e.g. Will others see me as odd? What can I learn from others? How do others see what I bring? What are the risks to my wider family?

The unique value of the coach relationship was reported to be as a companion who is an 'unbiased, challenging supporter'. During the journey, clients may have other companions such as partners, friends, or colleagues but they are not considered to be unbiased for a whole variety of reasons. The client seems to

be the prime navigator – they are the one journeying, are present for the whole journey and ultimately make the choices. The coach has a role in assisting the navigation prompting further discovery in appropriate ways or ensuring major aspects of the journeying process are not missed.

> 'It was about having someone who would approach it professionally, that I could trust, and know that it was my decision.'

> 'It's probably the only space where they give themselves permission to speak freely because their partners would probably have a fit as there might be a lot of money coming in – big holidays, big houses, big cars.'

Systemic readiness

'Systemic readiness' refers to aspects about the individual or their wider system that can affect their readiness, willingness, or ability to reinvent their late career. The data showed it was most relevant at the start and end and there was a sense of a boundary to cross. There can be a wide range of influences that can be present both in terms of risk and a felt sense of readiness – hence the notion of systemic as opposed to individual readiness or alignment.
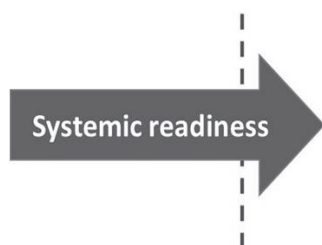
Figure 2: Systemic readiness and emotional boundary

Individuals seemed to feel its importance more emotionally and described the necessity to take a jump or a leap of faith. Coaches stressed the importance of paying attention to the whole system and addressing the risks to that system, potentially a more detached position.

'Sufficient dissatisfaction' was a precursor to readiness. For some, dissatisfaction grew gradually (a slow burn) but for others it was triggered by an event or circumstances. It also seemed to influence what people pay attention to. Clients initially found it

easier to know what they didn't want or what was missing as opposed to what they did want or need. Interestingly, no one suggested that they were satisfied after the reinvention – proud, liberated, lighter, looking toward the next change – but not satisfied. Coaches also described some clients who reappraised their dissatisfaction through coaching and deliberately chose their current path – so not to reinvent.

> 'I was doing too much and getting very, very dissatisfied.'

> 'They typically find it easier to answer a question like - what do you definitely not want from your next role?'

> 'I'd say about 30% go down a very different route. Some say things like 'I needed to pause and then choose from a more conscious place' as opposed to just following some kind of formula.'

A further consideration was whether their '*basic needs*' would continue to be met. Whilst these varied according to individual circumstances, the dominant need seemed to be financial security with both coaches and individuals referencing it extensively.

> 'I did have to do a lot of weighing up with my coach to do that - I was leaving 18 years of stability, pension, bonus and all that security.'

The views and expectations of others can also be powerful, especially those close to the client. This influence can be conscious or unconscious, visible or hidden. A key question was 'is everyone ready enough?' which serves as a reminder to pay attention to wider influences whilst also acknowledging different possibilities of 'enough'.

Dancing with fear and confidence

The third main feature that emerged was an interplay between fear and confidence that is both 'dynamic and changing'. The relationship is dynamic in that they can grow and decline at different paces and both can be a driver (affect) as well as a response (effect). It may be helpful to consider the metaphor of a dance between two partners – but where the leader of the dance can switch, the type of dance can change, and they can also dance individually while the other watches in the background.

'It's terrifying and exciting at the same time and I'm still thinking how the hell am I going to pay my gas bill?'

Initial fears included fear of being irrelevant, becoming my parents, being useless, or being stuck forever. Later fears might be fear of making the wrong decision, being in limbo, not being good enough, being vulnerable, uncertainty, changing, not changing, or not being able to pay my bills.

'Is it too late, am I too old, has the ship sailed? I haven't done anything that makes a real difference yet.'

'Later there can be the fear of will I be good enough, everyone else is already qualified - they've been doing it for years, will anybody want me?'

Confidence was also reported to be dynamic in nature - varying by individual and over time. There was a suggestion by some coaches that confidence might be more of an issue for women and where the change is forced, but this was beyond the scope of this study.

'There is a lot of confidence building - which I do get in all the coaching, but it is really common in a

redundancy situation – building self-esteem back up first of all before they can even think about being capable of something else.'

It was anticipated that emotions might be an important part of late career reinvention and this is consistent with the wider literature on transitions. The prevalence of fear and self-confidence, and indeed an interplay between them, was not expected until it emerged from the data.

One participant captured the experience in this metaphor:

'It's like being a hermit crab which needs to move into a larger shell. There's the part where you take a deep breath and emerge, you're really vulnerable, then you scuttle into the new shell and stretch out. It's about having to let go. Then you realise it doesn't stop - you know you can stay in the shell for a time but there will be a call to shift out of it again'.

Integrating the findings into a practitioner model

The three main features are clearly shown in figure 3. 'Discovering - journeying to be more of myself' is

Figure 3: 'The discovering model'
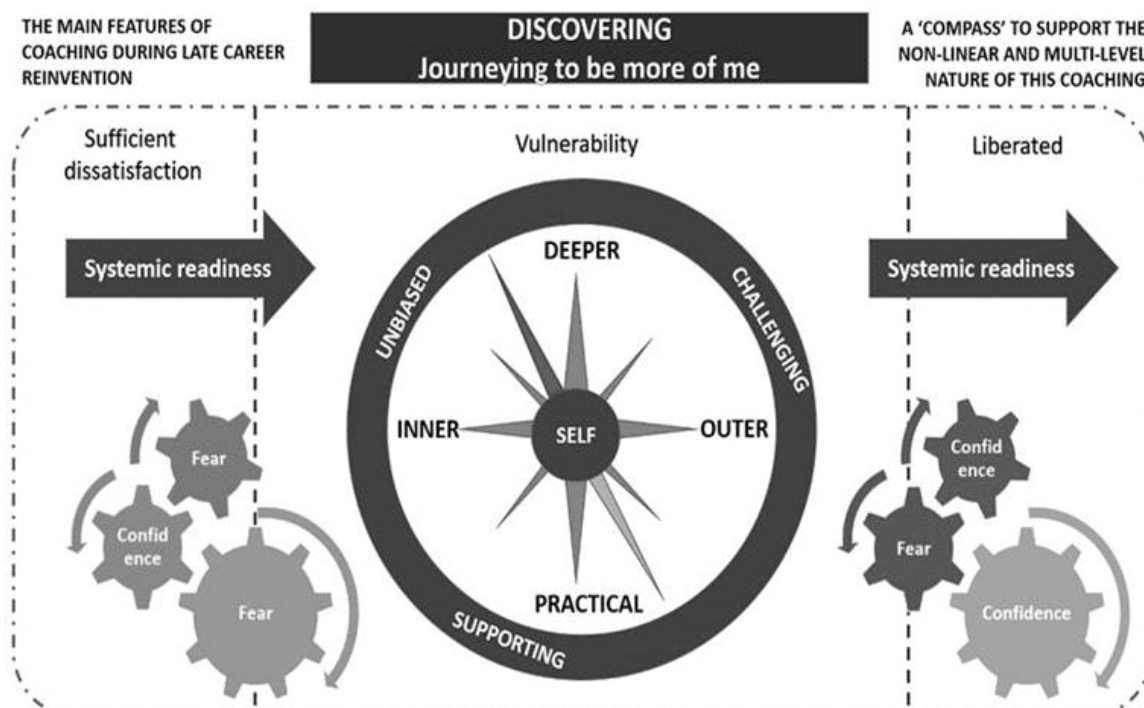
the over-arching theme. The compass illustrates the multi-layered conversations and the preferred coach role. 'Systemic readiness' particularly features at the start and end of coaching, with individuals considering a whole range of conscious and unconscious factors. 'Dancing with fear and confidence' is a feature throughout the whole journey. The different gears symbolise the changing types as well as their influence on the pace of reinvention (accelerating, decelerating, freezing). The emotional states across the top are an example of the internal psychological transition that can be involved.

Key practitioner implications

Four potential implications for practice are highlighted.

Discovering (as opposed to exploring or deciding)

Participants observed that coaching with the aim of discovering involves a different approach. 'Dis-covering' involves uncovering things that were previously not seen or understood, present but may not be presenting. There might be reasons (conscious or unconscious) as to why things were covered and coach participants emphasised the need to be respectful, aware of your own 'stuff', and alert to potential risks.

The concept of decision-making has been dominant in careers literature for a long time. In the context of this research, decision-making was not a key feature and both coach and client participants warned against focusing on one decision or solution too soon. Several coach participants suggested that coaching approaches which worked with the whole person and helped them to 'get out of their heads' were particularly useful and recommended developmental, existential, ontological or person-centred coaching approaches.

Unbiased, challenging supporter

Clients really valued this lack of bias and believed that most, if not all, of the other people around them were biased in some way. For many coaches, working with clients who are wanting to make a change can be inspirational and interesting both personally and professionally. Several coach participants acknowledged this interest may challenge the 'unbiased' aspect with a potential risk of encouraging reinvention. They addressed this risk through effective supervision.

Holding a 'challenging supporter' position when coaching may itself be tricky. In his work, de Haan described a 'playing field of coaching approaches' along two continua producing four quadrants (de Haan, 2008):

- Suggesting ---- Exploring
- Confronting ---- Supporting

This research suggests coaches may need to occupy or move between both ends of de Haan's confronting - supporting continuum in order to be a challenging supporter. Yates argues that whilst 'coaching practitioners would tend to resist the suggesting / confronting quadrant', challenging can be an important part of career coaching if done, for example, from a position of unconditional positive regard (Yates, 2014, p.1).

Navigating wide ranging conversations

The findings showed a wide variety of coaching topics and the compass could help to navigate these. For example, during contracting coaches could use it to be explicit about their approach and any associated boundaries. Alternatively, it could highlight aspects that may or may not have been discussed yet.

A future development of the compass could be to support coaches in their choice of approach for different types of conversation. For example, an 'inner-self' conversation may benefit from a values identification tool or a 'practical-self' conversation may involve signposting resources which might be helpful. Additionally, for an 'outer-self' conversation a system mapping exercise could assist them or for 'deeper-self' conversations, existential approaches may be appropriate.

Position and proximity to dancing with fear and confidence

A varied and dynamic interplay between fear and confidence emerged from this study quickly and consistently. According to participants, the coach needs to be able to clearly and respectfully reflect aspects of the dance (including possible patterns) back to the client by sharing what they notice in ways that provide fresh insight. Additionally, they advised considering how the fear (or confidence) could be

serving the client at any given point as opposed to deliberately or automatically trying to address it.

Both coaches and clients observed that there is relatively little written about mid-life career reinvention and that coaches could help signpost resources for clients who wanted to learn more or normalise their experience in a wider context.

Conclusion

With longer working lives, we can expect to see a growing number of people considering what they want from their later working lives. Not everyone will want a significant change, some might want to make smaller adjustments or to continue with their current route.

This study found that coaching for those considering late career reinvention:

- Is less about decision making and more about discovering
- Is very contextual and readiness is impacted by a wide range of factors
- Is highly affected by a dynamic between fear and confidence
- Involves navigating a wide range of conversations and topics

For practitioners, this context can bring challenges and opportunities. The work is likely to be broader and over a longer time frame than some other forms of career coaching or guidance. The model provided could support practice development particularly around contracting, reflection or supervision.

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Evaluating the helpfulness of a co-construction approach to career learning and development programme design

Lis McGuire

My research explored the helpfulness of co-constructing a career learning and development (CLD) programme with and for adults with mental health challenges. Following a literature review, I adopted a participatory action research strategy, aiming to position a client of the charity where my research was based as a partner in programme design. Emerging themes from semi-structured interviews offered insights into client requirements and concerns, enabling draft programme creation and refinement. In this context, co-construction facilitated delivery of a client-focused, theory-based CLD programme, offering a valuable practitioner learning opportunity, and a vehicle to challenge power relations and pursue emancipatory practice.

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Introduction

Today, the concept of 'career' is more inclusive than ever, deemed relevant to all, throughout life (Barnes, Bassot & Chant, 2011). While still encompassing paid roles on a linear trajectory, career now transcends once-restrictive definitions, embracing diverse interpretations and activities. As 'career' has evolved, becoming life-wide and life-long (Hooley, 2019), so now must career guidance, ensuring its accessibility to people of all ages and circumstances to support career development throughout lives (Andrews & Hooley, 2018; Bassot, 2017).

Relevant to all, career guidance is pivotal for clients whose access to opportunities and career development has been thwarted by circumstances beyond their control (Müller, 2014; Roberts, 1977).

Mental health challenges are one example of circumstances that can limit an individual's chances in career. Even if mental health challenges are overcome, 'social, environmental, and attitudinal barriers' (Crow, 2010, p.125) can remain, making it difficult for affected individuals to enter and sustain employment. Such barriers deny affected individuals equal access to opportunities, leading to unequal outcomes. Access to career guidance is therefore especially important for individuals facing additional barriers to learning and work (DBIS, 2012; Sultana, 2014).

My emerging awareness and interest in inequalities in career development inspired me to seek Qualification in Career Guidance (QCG) placements in community-based organisations supporting vulnerable, marginalised groups. A charity based in Kent, which I will refer to as BT, supporting adults with mental health challenges, was one such organisation.

Auditing BT's careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) provision for a QCG assignment offered insight into how CEIAG can form part of a multi-strand solution (Robertson, 2017) aimed at helping adults with mental health challenges rehabilitate and recover. The CEIAG audit revealed BT's existing work-based training and support programme was based around a themed curriculum model (Donoghue, 2008) and discrete, client-centred, one-to-one support (Rogers, 1965). It also identified a gap in provision: BT did not appear to offer a group-based CLD programme, sparking my curiosity about whether I could help create one.

Commitment to client-centred practice motivated my desire to involve BT's clients in programme planning, ensuring any emerging programme

addressed their real, not perceived needs (Gatsby Charitable Foundation, 2014). I was also curious about Freire's (2005) view that learner requirements and interests can inform career learning programmes. However, I remained uncertain about how helpful a co-construction approach might be. My research therefore sought to explore the helpfulness of working in partnership with clients to co-construct a CLD programme for delivery within their current context and also to challenge this client group's powerlessness by sponsoring collaborative development of career guidance support (Thomsen, 2017; Young, 1990).

Supporting these aims, my research questions were:

1) How might involving clients in CLD programme design impact its perceived usefulness and value?

2) How should the principles and outcomes of an effective CLD programme be delivered to support adults with mental health challenges?

3) What can existing CLD frameworks offer this group in this context?

This article will narrate the processes and outcomes of this research.

Understanding CLD

CLD is defined as a group and activity-focused learning experience (Barnes et al., 2011). A key principle is that development of career management skills and knowledge occurs through 'active, problem-based experiential learning' (Bassot, 2017, p.15). This principle is invaluable to adults whose mental health challenges have frustrated their opportunities to gain experience, limiting their self-efficacy and cultural capital (Bandura, 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

A second key principle, that learning occurs through collaboration (Barnes et al., 2011), is equally vital because, by reframing career learning from an autonomous activity to a social process, it refutes the neoliberal perception of career as the individual's responsibility alone. Engaging with others encourages sharing of knowledge, feelings, and experiences, enabling learners to move forward with positivity

and support (Westergaard, 2010). This principle of collaboration is highly relevant for those whose confidence and resilience has been undermined by ill-health and its impact on career.

In terms of desired outcomes, CLD aims to develop career resilience and career happiness (Henderson, 2000). This is helpfully depicted by Bassot, Barnes and Chant (2014) as two stable, balanced anchorage blocks upholding a metaphorical bridge that facilitates CLD's third target outcome: career growth. Building career resilience and career happiness is essential for those whose mental health challenges have denied career development and thwarted or interrupted career growth. But how can these outcomes be achieved?

The literature revealed that developing self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision learning, and transition learning skills (Law & Watts, 1977) can support adults with mental health challenges, and others, to strengthen career resilience, and to target and attain career happiness, thereby supporting career growth. It also highlighted CLD as a vehicle for career growth, providing purposeful learning opportunities (Hooley, Sultana & Thomsen, 2018) for developing knowledge and skills that facilitate next steps.

Career growth's sub-concepts, such as the Adlerian-inspired career narrative (Adler, 1956) and Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD), can also facilitate career growth. Savickas (2013) usefully describes how narrative approaches can help individuals create meaningful links between the past and the present to create future possibilities. Working in the ZPD with an experienced, empathic facilitator providing step-by-step support can help vulnerable individuals to achieve more than they could independently, with support gradually withdrawn to enable independent growth (Bassot, 2012).

A review of the literature clearly established CLD frameworks (e.g. CDI's 2018 Framework for careers, employability and enterprise education) as a vehicle to plan, deliver, evaluate, and evolve balanced, coherent career programmes. It also enabled me to theorise how CLD's principles and target outcomes could be delivered to support this client group, and see how available frameworks brought different qualities to support CLD programme planning and delivery,

with some appearing more suitable for this client group than others. Yet, it remained clear that planning a new programme without involving them could further disempower this vulnerable group. Client-centred practice advocates listening to clients' needs to inform service provision (Arulmani & Murthy, 2014). Therefore, I sought to involve clients in programme planning, ensuring CLD's principles and target outcomes, and proposed frameworks met their expressed needs and not their presumed needs (Westergaard, 2009). However, the literature did not reveal the practicalities or benefits of partnering with clients to design CLD programmes. Further research was needed to evaluate the helpfulness of a co-construction approach to CLD programme design.

Methodology

A constructivist perspective led me to adopt an interpretative ontology whereby I sought to understand clients' perceptions and priorities. Hence, selecting a qualitative methodology, I invited clients to tell their stories so I would be able to see the situation through their eyes (Biggam, 2015; Bryman, 1988).

Participatory action research (Costello, 2003) was chosen as an appropriate strategy to look, think, and act on a specific situation; namely BT's lack of a CLD programme. This was because it welcomes the involvement of individuals disempowered and marginalised by their situation (Sixsmith & Daniels, 2011). It also appeared to be a congruent approach for reframing potential perceptions of research from being the work of experts to a process that positioned clients as partners in the work, in this instance the CLD programme design (Denscombe, 2017; Greenwood & Levin, 1998).

I had adopted a convenience sampling strategy, inviting BT to select two research participants who were well enough, available, and willing to engage. Clients' availability and health challenges meant only one participant was found. The participant, Oscar (a pseudonym), was a 30 to 35-year-old client, whose mental health challenges had interrupted his school education and prevented him from working since. Having read the participant information, Oscar gave informed consent, and selected this pseudonym to protect his identity in published findings.

Data were collected via two semi-structured one-to-one interviews, a flexible technique chosen to embrace digression and optimise exploration of Oscar's experiences, viewpoints, and feelings (Denscombe, 2017). Insights gained through the first interview informed CLD programme design, while the second interview invited Oscar's feedback on the emerging programme draft. However, during the research, my positioning the client as partner was contested. Despite successfully developing a collaborative working partnership with the client in the first interview, positioning us as co-constructors in the work, this was quickly challenged. My follow-on meeting with BT's staff in the café where the client was working repositioned us respectively as management team guest and café staff. I felt incongruent and uncomfortable as a result. Happily, our rapport remained intact for the second interview, and our collaborative working partnership resumed.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed in complete, narrative format, with transcripts approved by Oscar before analysis. Thematic analysis followed an immersive approach and used West's proforma (Merrill & West, 2009) to identify themes and concepts. This process facilitated a thick description (Geertz, 1973) of Oscar's circumstances, concerns, and needs.

Findings

Analysis and interpretation of interview transcripts led me to identify several themes, while further scrutiny and synthesising of the thematic analysis with the literature review findings enabled me to produce a rationale for the proposed programme.

I now present a selection of amalgamated themes, drawing on Oscar's words where possible, and explain how they informed the programme draft. However, although the single case-study did not constrain interpretative research quality (Merrill & West, 2009), the findings cannot be considered to represent the whole population, specifically adults with mental health challenges, in this or other contexts.

The themes 'routine days' and 'a purpose' revealed previous and ongoing career learning experiences had positively impacted Oscar's health and well-being:

helping his 'mindset', encouraging him to use his 'brain more', and preparing him to move 'forward in… career', indicating career growth. Oscar described how BT's existing work-based training and support programme offered him 'routine'. This contrasted with his description of life before, when he would 'hardly go out' making it 'hard to know what day of the week it was'. His words informed my recommendation to offer the programme at regular, well-communicated times. Oscar also described how programme participation had given him a purpose, leading him to consider himself a 'useful person'. This seemed to confirm that CLD programmes can provide psychological and social benefits associated with work (Ray, 2012; Robertson, 2017). I recommended communicating these benefits to clients in programme introductions.

Three themes ('the experience of doing something'; working 'in a group'; 'small steps' with 'gentle' support) illuminated how principles of an effective CLD programme should be delivered to support adults with mental health challenges.

Oscar spoke positively about past and ongoing career learning that reflected CLD's principles (experiential and community-based learning) and which offered opportunities to work in the ZPD, a concept central to career growth (Bassot et al., 2014). The fact that Oscar's previous and current career learning reflected CLD's principles surprised me as, to my knowledge, they were not consciously based on CLD theory. My initial defined problem, based on my assumption that BT did not have a group-based CLD programme, was challenged.

In particular, the experience of doing something highlighted the value of experiential learning (Bassot, 2017). Oscar's opportunities to develop career resilience, career happiness, and career growth had been limited by being housebound for 15 years, leading to a self-identified experience deficit, low self-efficacy, and skills shortfall. Conversely, 'doing something each day' at BT represented 'a step forward', giving Oscar 'experience and skills to rely on'. Gaining experience and skills appeared to be building his belief in his capability, developing his career resilience, preparing him for career growth, and potential career happiness. I proposed the CLD programme be based on experiential learning, using creative activities where

appropriate. In interview two, Oscar confirmed creative learning activities as suitable for this context.

Four themes ('realising what you've got'; the 'sort of place… I want to work at or feel like I can work at'; decision learning; 'not dropping off a cliff') illuminated how outcomes of an effective CLD programme should be delivered to support adults with mental health challenges.

Oscar's inferred positive progress (including self-awareness) and themes which emerged from the analysis of the transcript revealed his experience of and on-going alignment with the DOTS model (which supports the achievement of career resilience, career happiness, and career growth). Acknowledging his skills and achievements seemed to be helping him build a positive self-concept (Barnes et al., 2011), vital for career resilience, and making him 'optimistic for the future' suggesting a greater sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986).

Oscar also inferred certain DOTS outcomes had not been achieved, including transition learning. The theme 'Not dropping off a cliff' revealed past programmes had ended without Oscar feeling 'prepared' or 'ready enough' to move on. He considered transition 'very difficult', and expressed his desire for additional learning, hoping it would assure him 'you're not dropping yourself off a cliff when something ends'. Oscar's ongoing need for transition learning, justifies creation of a CLD programme targeted at addressing these shortcomings.

My introduction of the DOTS model during the interviews as a possible framework for structuring CLD was driven by its easy-to-explain, easy-to-understand format. Despite my fear of overwhelming Oscar with detail, he responded enthusiastically towards the model, suggesting the programme should be structured around the four elements (self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision learning, transition learning). However, although Oscar assessed DOTS to be a useful framework, analysing his expressed needs as communicated through the interviews later led me conclude that delivering DOTS in a single-cycle approach would be inadequate. There may be a need to revisit and build on the DOTS elements over time.

Ultimately, I used the CDI Framework and Blueprint for Careers (LSIS, 2012), selecting target outcomes and activities that echoed Oscar's expressed needs. Both frameworks reflect the DOTS elements, and allowed the programme to incorporate reflective writing and discussion. To assure Oscar I had listened to and accommodated his needs, I mapped DOTS outcomes against selected learning outcomes in the proposed programme draft, and talked it through with him outcome-by-outcome, explaining how they aligned.

Conclusion

My research aimed to explore the value of working with clients of a mental health charity to co-construct a CLD programme for delivery within their current context. It also aimed to challenge this client group's powerlessness by sponsoring collaborative development of career guidance support. I now present conclusions to my research questions, and discuss how findings illuminate my aims.

From a practitioner perspective, the co-construction process enhanced my perception of the programme's usefulness and value. Collaborating with a client from my target community provided important insights about his situation and needs, informing purposeful selection of CLD frameworks, processes, and learning outcomes. Although I later selected an alternative framework to DOTS, albeit reflecting the same four elements, involving Oscar provided an understanding that informed my selection and offered a chance to seek Oscar's feedback on the emerging draft. The resulting programme outline was theoretically sound and client-focused, mirroring Oscar's needs better than one created without his input.

Co-construction also impacted the client's perception of the CLD programme. Oscar inferred he would find the emerging programme useful and valuable, as it accommodated his expressed needs and concerns. In this context, co-construction has proved a helpful approach to develop meaningful career guidance (Thomsen, 2017).

Rather than placing a client on the 'receiving end of orders' (Hooley, 2018) by proposing a practitioner-designed CLD programme, this research aimed to

situate Oscar as a partner in programme design. Oscar reflected that the process: 'made me think quite a bit about what I would want and what I think other people would want from a course like that', inferring he knew his input was valued. Although co-construction rarely resolves the power balance completely (Cullen, Bradford & Green, 2012) between those drafting CLD programmes and intended recipients, it did challenge this client group's powerlessness by sponsoring collaborative development of career guidance support.

The research revealed Oscar had experienced CLD's principles (experiential and collaborative learning) and target outcomes (DOTS supporting career resilience, career happiness, and career growth) through BT's vocational rehabilitation programme. This surprised me, as BT's programme is not called CLD or consciously based on CLD theory or frameworks. It appears CLD does not have to be termed 'CLD' or be knowingly based on CLD theory to deliver its principles and outcomes.

However, Oscar's narrative exposed his need for further CLD to strengthen his career management skills. A theory-based, user-focused CLD programme that consciously reflects CLD's principles and target outcomes could extend BT's good work. The findings suggest that to be most effective a BT CLD programme should take account of the following:

First, the programme should be centred around experiential learning. Oscar's story illustrated that experiential learning is memorable, addresses experience gaps, and builds skills, confidence, self-efficacy, and capital. As confirmed by Oscar, reflective writing and/or discussion should be incorporated, helping clients to transform experience into knowledge (Kolb 1984).

Second, this should be a group-based programme. Oscar's insights reveal how working with others appears to enhance a sense of belonging, reducing isolation, and offering opportunities for peer support, reassurance, and shared insights. Adopting this approach would also serve to enhance clients' support networks and develop social capital.

Third, the ZPD should be an integral programme feature. Oscar's stories highlighted benefits of working

in the ZPD, including making step-by-step progress and building independence as support is gradually withdrawn. A skilled, empathic facilitator can guide and support Oscar in his CLD.

Finally, CLD's target outcomes (career resilience, career happiness, career growth) should be delivered by offering learners opportunities to build self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision learning, and transition learning. Oscar requested at least two sessions on each DOTS outcome. He rated self-awareness as the most important outcome, enabling him to recognise his skills and build self-efficacy and optimism for the future. Reflective writing and discussion and narrative approaches can support achievement of this outcome, helping Oscar to build his self-concept and, in his words, 'realise' what he 'can do'.

Co-construction has offered a useful opportunity to verify the applicability of CLD's principles and outcomes to this client in this context. It has provided insights into how they should be applied and I again conclude co-construction has been a helpful approach.

Oscar's expressed need for further CLD in addition to the career learning he had already experienced appears to validate the usefulness of constructivist CLD frameworks, which position career development as an ongoing process not a single-cycle event. The draft programme therefore included learning outcomes from the CDI Framework and Blueprint for Careers. However, although existing frameworks provide a solid platform upon which to base a CLD programme for this group in this context, they should not be applied indiscriminately. Programme structure and outcomes must be selected with clients' needs front of mind. The frameworks and outcomes selected are congruent to Oscar's needs, and potentially to those of other adults with mental health challenges. Yet, one client's needs cannot be termed representative of every client (Knight, 2002). We need to check if the proposed programme's structure, content, and delivery methods are appropriate for other target clients.

Oscar and I agreed a logical next step would be the design and delivery of a 'pilot programme', inviting other clients to provide 'extra feedback' and 'help decide'. In July 2019, BT received provisional

confirmation of a grant award through the SELEP Community Grants programme. Now confirmed, this grant will facilitate pilot development, delivery, and evaluation, intended as the main focus of ongoing research. This work commenced in autumn 2019.

In summary, working with clients of a mental health charity to co-construct a CLD programme offered a powerful learning experience for me, as researcher and career practitioner, and my target client. It also delivered a theoretically sound, user-focused programme outline, a helpful foundation for BT, its clients, and me as practitioner in this context.

Involving and valuing clients' input during planning and construction of learning programmes can help practitioners learn about themselves and their communities of practice, challenge existing power structures and counter inequality (Dorling, 2011; Thompson, 2016).

Co-construction offers a useful opportunity to verify the applicability of CLD's principles and outcomes to the client group. It can provide insights into how they should be applied and offers practitioners a vehicle to design client-led, client-focused learning programmes, while promoting equal access in a move towards equal share and social justice for clients with mental health challenges, thus enhancing emancipatory practice.

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The training and development of careers leaders in England: Reflections on provision

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The Gatsby Benchmarks mark a new and constructive government-backed approach to improving the quality and consistency of careers guidance provision in schools and colleges in England. The new role of careers leader has also been established to encourage organisations to develop integrated provision, with a training programme commissioned by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) for this role.

As part of the course team for one of the commissioned training providers, I reflect on the early insights and lessons of these new developments, particularly the needs and concerns of the new careers leaders as they navigate demanding educational environments.

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Introduction: The advent of the Gatsby Benchmarks and the emergence of the careers leader role

The Gatsby Benchmarks arose out of the Gatsby report (2014), entitled 'Good Career Guidance'. This had been commissioned by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation in response to perceived weakness in the consistency and quality of careers guidance, especially in England. Such flaws have already been extensively researched and analysed, with the negative impact of Connexions on the professionalism and identity of practitioners noted especially by Colley et al. (2010), and Lewin and Colley (2010); and, indeed, the 'attempted murder' (Roberts, 2013, p.240) of careers

guidance by the Education Act (2011). Hughes (2013) also described the patchiness of provision in England in the wake of the Act.

It is worth noting here that, for the purposes of this article, 'careers guidance' is understood to be the full range of activity delivered under the eight Gatsby Benchmarks as used by the Department of Education and Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC), particularly in their guidance to schools and colleges. However, in the conclusion, I note the importance of engaging careers leaders with career development theories, and particularly systems-based models (Patton and McMahon, 2014) and terminology that reflect more contemporary thinking in the subject discipline.

To address the problems mentioned above, the eight benchmarks appear comprehensive in their coverage of careers guidance provision, ranging from encounters with employers and training providers, to careers in the curriculum, and the provision of personal guidance. Crucially, the first benchmark is concerned with integrated and stable provision, so that career development becomes a central part of students' learning. And still further, the benchmarks acquired structural force when they were incorporated into the statutory guidance for schools and colleges when these documents were updated and revised (DfE, 2018). Further strengthening of their importance to schools' and colleges' educational delivery can be found in the revised OFSTED inspection handbooks (2019). The documents make explicit reference to the evidence of careers guidance provision that the inspectors will be seeking. The often-raised concerns of professional bodies (such as the CDI) and practitioners about OFSTED's apparent lack of interest in careers appear to have been addressed.

Frameworks and standards of careers guidance provision in schools and colleges are of course nothing new. For example, Moon et al. (2004) reviewed the extent and impact of careers education and guidance (CEG) in schools and colleges in England; and identified the inconsistency of implementation, despite CEG frameworks and standards that were issued during the Connexions/Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) era. Interestingly, such standards, in terms of their content, have a strong similarity to those presented by the Gatsby Foundation (2014). What is different now is the DfE's insistence on measuring schools' and colleges' progress in implementing the eight benchmarks, allied to OFSTED's renewed concern about provision.

There is another new feature in the careers delivery landscape: that of careers leader. Moon et al. (2004) identified two challenges in delivering CEG services, particularly careers in the curriculum: the apparent lack of leadership and ownership of this area by schools' and colleges' leadership team; and the expertise (and capacity) of non-careers trained staff (i.e. teachers) when undertaking careers learning lessons. To ensure that the statutory guidance is implemented, the CEC helped to establish the new careers leader role, and went further by commissioning training provision to support this development. As Andrews and Hooley (2016) note, the role and its accompanying training have long been sought as a crucial means by which careers guidance provision in schools and colleges is consistently developed, led and managed. The CEC's commissioned courses began in mid to late 2018.

As part of the course team that develops and delivers one of the commissioned courses, I use this article to reflect on the process of training and developing a range of careers leaders within these new policy initiatives. The article identifies some of the early lessons in supporting such professionals in complex and demanding educational environments. Further, I locate the discussion in the wider context of training and developing careers guidance practitioners in the wake of rapid policy and workforce change (Gough, 2016). The self-reflexive approach of the latter, which also adopts some of the aspects of autoethnography (Chang, 2008; Goodson, Short and Turner, 2013), will be continued here.

Training provision (and investment)

The policy importance of the careers leader role is in part signified by the extent of the investment in training and support for development. In England, the latter is the first national-level funded support scheme for careers' workforce development since the bursaries for the Qualification in Career Guidance (QCG) disappeared in 2010. The other interesting aspect is that governments since 2010 have been clear about standards and statutory expectations, but have provided no real direction (or funding) for workforce provision and development. By contrast, the CEC is offering bursaries to 1300 careers leaders who have a choice of fourteen providers which include universities, educational sector based organisations such as Teach First, and organisations concerned with the training and development of careers practitioners. The courses offered can be based on units 21 to 23 of the OCR level 6 diploma in career guidance and development; or on Level 7 postgraduate awards. Delivery can vary from on-going training days or afternoons (or weekends), or block day residentials with comprehensive on-line learning resources. Alongside these commissioned courses sit the Careers hubs which operate locally and can also offer training and peer support. This variety of provision is perhaps consistent with previous policy direction, in that the choice of which accredited or non-accredited training course to take is a decision for each school or college. However, the extent of provision, and the available bursaries, indicate a level of investment that has been absent since 2010.

Initial reflections on training delivery and supporting careers leaders

In this section, I reflect on our experience of recruiting careers leaders, and then delivering the blended learning programme. In framing the reflections, I use Johns' (2013) model, since it encourages educators (and practitioners more widely) to identify and consider the impact of a range of contextual factors on planning and delivery.

Firstly, the course itself, and its development. Colleagues opted to draw on a successful blended learning model developed for related courses, involving residential workshops and comprehensive on-line learning resources. As importantly, the programme was validated as a Level 7 postgraduate award. The team believed that the level was consistent with the importance of the role, and its (intended) seniority within a school or college. This belief reflects well-established and wider debates about the correct level of qualification for careers guidance practice, e.g. in the Silver Review (DfE, 2010) which proposed a minimum Level 6. The Qualification in Career Development (QCD) – which has replaced the QCG – is offered by universities and incorporated into postgraduate programmes. There were further practical considerations that helped to develop the appeal of the programme, such as the residential component, where learners could attend for an intensive two days, rather than taking time away regularly from their institution. This pattern has also helped networks to form quickly between the participants.

Secondly, the range of roles occupied by the course participants is indicative of the ways in which schools and colleges have been tasked with organising the new position in organisationally-contingent ways. The roles have included: careers guidance practitioners whose 'main' role has been enhanced by that of careers leader; curriculum or subject leads whose 'day job' has also been augmented with the leader role (and with some financial inducement); members of the school or college leadership team; and specifically-appointed careers leaders (whose job may cover a related function, such as work experience, links with employers, and enterprise development). This variety presented an interesting challenge when compiling the course topics and materials.

Reflecting on this experience, I can see that the initial course materials drew on my experience of delivering the Level 6 units 21 to 23 at Coventry University. These units in part covered aspects of careers guidance practice, not just leadership; and so required learners to grapple with relevant career learning theories. Further, the benchmarks' coverage of main careers activities, e.g. personal guidance, also suggested the need for careers guidance theories. The question was: how much? particularly as some of the

participants may have covered these already (though not all careers guidance practitioners in schools have Level 6 and above qualifications).

This question was answered in large part by dialogue with the first cohort of learners. As a course team, we had allowed for a very interactive approach, with opportunities for discussion and the sharing of experiences. This pedagogy – or, more accurately, andragogy – is consistent with that adopted for adult learners, whose life experiences should form an important part of the learning process; and whose learning focus can often be on the application of learning to more immediate problems and issues (Merriam and Bierema, 2014). An apparent and immediate problem relayed by the participants was: what exactly is my role? Subsequent discussions showed varying levels of insights into the role, both in terms of its purpose, and where it sat, organisationally. A commonly shared expectation of the training programme was to help the leaders to develop a much clearer understanding of their position as careers leader.

Linked to the latter challenge was the experience of using the Compass tool to audit and evaluate the extent of provision against the benchmarks. Again, reactions varied in relation to its usefulness. Some had taken a very pragmatic approach, e.g. that despite its perceived limitations, such as its focus on quantitative measures, the tool offered a good enough framework to enable discussions with the leadership team about priorities. There was also much discussion about the rating scales, and how such ratings were arrived at. What I found surprising was the extent to which the participants felt they needed to complete the audit on their own, with little input from colleagues or managers. Again, encouraging the participants to reflect on this experience yielded some fresh insights, e.g. that the audit should not be just a 'tick box' exercise and that it should include input from internal and external stakeholders. There were some very interesting experiences where some participants had completed the audit two or three times, with increasing involvement from a range of stakeholders. These iterations reflected a process of continual review and, as crucially, in ways that reflected some leaders' growing confidence in the role.

One particularly strong aspect of learners' feedback has been their need, almost thirst, for networking, and to share experiences with other careers leaders. This need indicated a range of issues, too, particularly the consistency and strength of careers leader networks. Some were part of careers networks or hubs organised by Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs), helped by the pro-activity of some local Enterprise Co-ordinators (ECs), while others were much less involved. The patchiness of careers guidance provision, noted earlier in the article, is in part reflected in the varying strength levels of local networks. However, where the links were strong, participants shared some very interesting ideas and solutions that were appreciated by other members of the programme. One particularly notable feature was the ways in which some ECs drew together careers leaders from a range of schools and colleges to share their experience of the Compass tool. This process helped the leaders to standardise more accurately their institutions' progress against the benchmarks. One of the aims of our programme is to encourage learners in their development of supportive networks and communities of practice – the latter not just being a source of practical support, but also of role and identity development (Wenger, 1999). This professional value of sharing good practice, and supporting role identity, was a strong and regular feature of local, and well-established, information, advice and guidance networks (Gough, 2017). Our hope is the training programmes in England will enable the re-establishing of such IAG networks.

Entering the matrix: the status and organisational position of the careers leader

An additional contextual reflection concerns the status and position of careers leader in a school or college. Its place within an organisational structure bears the hallmarks of matrix management. Typically, the matrix manager is responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of projects or initiatives that cut across the organisation, and where the activities are 'shared endeavours…which are neither owned nor contained within a single department' (Roberts, 2013, p.61). This differs from more hierarchal, classically bureaucratic, vertical accountabilities, where senior managers work through middle managers who in turn directly manage departmental staff (Mullins and Christy, 2016). As indicated by the careers leaders on our programme, they have no formal authority over staff for the delivery of the Gatsby Benchmarks; instead, they need to work with colleagues, and exercise considerable negotiation and persuasion skills, particularly regarding the integration of careers learning into the more 'mainstream' curriculum. These skills are still needed even when organising activities that are recognised as being part of their jurisdiction, e.g. careers fairs, or encounters with employers, and education and training providers. In this way, the careers leader may liaise with quite a range of people internally (and indeed externally) in ways that teachers who are more 'contained' within curriculum areas do not. These networks, and the insights and knowledge they bring, increase the assets and skills of the careers leader. The continual challenge, however, of not managing anyone directly in relation to leading and managing careers guidance provision is that trust and influence can take time to develop.

An associated experience concerned the extent to which the careers leaders felt supported and empowered to pursue their roles. Most if not all of the participants relayed what seemed an honest sense of being supported by the leadership team. However, the extent of the support, and genuine access to organisational levers of power, seemed to vary. Some noted that the head teacher would meet briefly with the careers leader, and offer supportive words - particularly if the school or college's progress against the benchmarks was 'going well.' This was in contrast to others who had the support and interest of a member of the board of governors who had responsibility for careers guidance. Such interest resulted, in some cases, in termly reports to the governors about the progress towards the benchmarks. This structural lever was one example of how careers leaders can translate their assets into desired organisational outcomes (Alsop, 2005). Most of the participants expressed a sense of needing to find similar organisational levers in order to add some force to their matrix management approach. For example, they hoped that the changes to the OFSTED inspection would promote a genuine and consistent interest in careers guidance as a central part of their institutions' educational mission.

The role of career development theories

Whilst the workshops in particular were thus concerned with the 'being and doing' of careers leadership, the face to face delivery of our programme, and the on-line materials, explored career development theories and models of practice, e.g. in relation to personal guidance. The participants' feedback attested to their need to understand and explore relevant theories as a way of understanding the complexity of careers choice; and to better inform the development of a stable careers programme. An indicator of the latter is that some participants observed that their provision was a series of well-rated activities, e.g. careers fairs, or work experience, that didn't necessarily connect up into an overall programme with a clear vision. As a teaching team, we found that the learners were particularly engaged by Patton and McMahon's (2014) linkage of Systems Theory to career development. The concept was useful in showing how young people (in this case) lived as part of complex, inter-connected systems; and that a careers programme needed to acknowledge such complexity, rather than presuming that, for instance, information giving and receiving is an unproblematic process that should automatically develop aspirations and action. Andrews and Hooley (2018) are clear on this point: the importance to careers leadership of a critical understanding of career development theories. In addition, the theories also reminded the careers leaders that the education of young people more broadly emerges from multi-stranded socio-political, cultural and economic contexts.

A further point concerning a critical understanding of careers theories links to the becoming of a careers leader. Part of establishing a careers vision and plan is to develop a personal approach to enacting change (ibid.). On our programme, this featured in an exercise which also reflected my varied experience of leading and managing. The participants were invited to reflect on, and discuss some fundamental questions, such as, as a careers leader, what do I want? And why? And what assets have I got? Who else do I need to involve? Based on feedback, these questions helped the learners to formulate, and articulate, 'what they wanted.' These formulations were also supported by their developing appreciation of career development theories. This process helped to address a sense felt by some people of having the role foisted on them (with a small uplift in salary in some cases, according to our cohort) without much clear direction. In short, they realised that they had to provide vision and leadership.

Conclusions

The Gatsby Benchmarks, the Careers Leader role, and the CEC training programme, have been largely welcomed by the sector. The hope is that these developments will indeed help to address the issues of inconsistent provision and quality of careers guidance in schools and colleges in England. Our experience of working with new careers leaders on our training programme attests to their commitment to the role and, most importantly, to transforming the career prospects of young people. In doing so, the challenges they have faced include role definition; becoming a careers leader with a clear vision and rationale; organisational challenges, such as matrix management and resource constraints; and varying levels of internal and external support. As well as their concerns with the 'being and doing' of their role, they have also been keen to develop critical insights into career development theories. The balance and composition of our programme has evolved to address these concerns. We also seek continually to strike a balance between 'training' and encouraging learners to engage in career development theories, not least, those that underpin career learning skills.

Balanced against these positive developments and experiences, is the hope that governmental funding to support careers leadership continues in order to embed and consolidate the emerging gains and good practice. From my own practice, it is clear that the CEC are continually reviewing and redeveloping their guidance and tools, e.g. with the launch of a revised Compass tool for September 2019, and streamlining the process by which more schools and colleges are encouraged to nominate their careers leaders for training, e.g. by using the Careers hubs as co-ordinating contacts with training providers. We can only wait to see how the future funding settlement for schools and colleges enables the embedding of the benchmarks.

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Plan: Me – a practical tool for career decision making

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Due to the realities of modern career service provision within most universities, clients attend short (often one-off) career interventions. Hence, practitioners require simple, adaptable tools that are underpinned by career theory and can be explained easily, and empower clients to progress through their career journey independently. This paper explains a tool that has been developed from theory and through practice, and is now positioned to become the subject of further research and formal evaluation. This tool, referred to in the article as 'Plan: Me', takes a holistic approach to career decision making, integrating goal setting and allowing clients to map out a process of how they move themselves forward.

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The issue

To cope with the pressures on most university careers services today, students are encouraged to use online support and attend group workshops before accessing one-to-one support. When students do use the one-to-one support they are generally offered a short appointment, between 15-30 minutes. In many services they may then be referred for a longer session - if deemed necessary. However, referrals are made sparingly as practitioners have high workloads, especially at certain times of the year such as the autumn term. While clients generally self-select to attend a careers appointment, there is often confusion as to what can be achieved during the consultation. To unpick this confusion, support a client to explain their narrative, help them to define their choices, empower them to create actions to move forward and often check the tools (e.g. C.V., cover letters) they need to achieve these steps, is challenging. Much research is predicated on the idea that practitioners will be able to see their client for more than one session which, in the current tertiary environment, is seldom the case. Also, while many models for careers counselling exist, their complicated nature makes it difficult to integrate them within a limited time period.

In university careers consultations where career direction is discussed, one of the frequent overarching issues is 'how do I make a decision?' Often clients will present with a stream of thought, outlining areas of subjects/jobs/industries they are interested in. It is up to the practitioner to support them in unpicking their narrative and help to define better what they are choosing between. They have to build the client's confidence to a point where they feel they can make a decision without creating reliance on further support. Finding a way for the practitioner to do this, and enable the client to continue their career journey independently, has been the driver behind the creation of Plan: Me.

Plan: Me

The Plan: Me tool has been developed over ten years of practice with hundreds of students across many disciplines of study. The majority of students involved in the research were from six London Universities, while a separate group comprised around one hundred doctors at various stages of their training who had accessed one-to-one careers support through the London Deanery, British Medical Association or Health Education England, East of England.

In essence Plan: Me is the systematic development of a career pathway diagram constructed during a careers consultation to help the client visualise a

series of actions to progress their decision making. The practitioner runs the consultation as normal, supporting and guiding the client to help them tell their story and define what decisions they need to make. Clients are invited to share their own narrative surrounding their careers decision making process. For example:

- What job roles/industries have they explored so far?

- What have they cancelled out?

- What are they concerned about?

- Do they have any timelines such as application deadlines or exams, which they know of?

During this initial stages of the consultation the practitioner begins to draw a visual representation, capturing and clarifying elements identified by the client. This representation, referred to as a Plan-Me diagram, can be broken down into four stages. Often, as the intervention progresses and the client's understanding of Plan: Me model increases, they will take over the drawing from the practitioner.
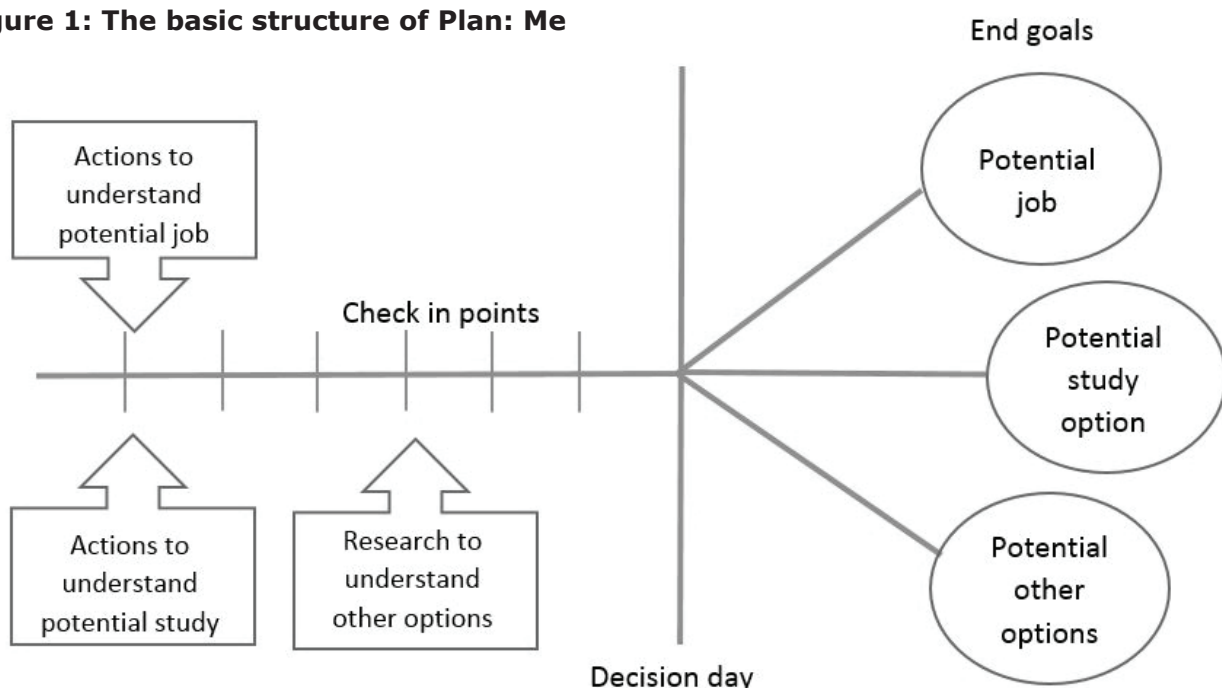
At stage one, goals (specific or general job titles, industries, companies, global destinations) are added as a series of circles on the right of the page. These are the elements that the client has to decide between. Empty circles may also be added if, during the process, clients discover other end goals of which they were unaware, or had not disclosed earlier.

During stage two the rest of the scaffolding of Plan: Me is drawn by linking all of the circles back to a common start point, and adding a timeline from this joining point back to the left-hand side of the page.

In stage three, the client is encouraged to focus on the individual goals represented in the circles, defining them further if required. By asking open questions around what the client needs to know about each goal to be able to make a decision, a first action can be created. This is added to the left-hand side of the timeline. Actions can also be extracted from the client's earlier narrative (e.g. they may know someone to talk to in that industry; they could express that they have never researched this area on-line) but actions must be attainable and specific, to encourage further research and build confidence. Simple statements such as 'applying for a job is not making a decision, it is part of the process' can be used to include in the plan a diversity of actions. Working through all of the goal circles, a picture will emerge allowing the client to visualise how to move forward in their decision making process.

Figure 1: The basic structure of Plan: Me

Theory behind Plan: Me

Snyder (1995) created Hope theory in a counselling context, supporting clients' development of confidence, building agency and developing the ability to problem solve. This resonates with many clients seeking careers support and has formed the theory underpinning Plan: Me.

Snyder and colleagues (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991, p.287) define hope as 'a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)'. Similarly, the main constructs of Snyder's Hope model (1995) are agency and planning. Hope Theory has been explored in a range of contexts such as understanding suicide (Grewal & Porter, 2007), possible treatment of sexual offenders (Moulden & Marshall, 2005) and human resource development (Luthans & Jensen, 2002). It has also been used as a lens to explore many elements of early adult development such as academic success (Snyder, Shorey, Cheavens, Pulvers, Adams & Wiklund, 2002) and problem solving and coping (Chang, 1998).

Snyder's model is grounded in the notion that individuals like to work towards a goal, giving them purpose. He defines this as agency thinking and argues that its development will moves a person towards creating a pathway to achieve the goal (pathway thinking). If developing a full pathway to achieve the goal is not possible, first steps should be identified and undertaken, building confidence in the client as they achieve the steps. Also, as the goal pursuit moves forward, should surprise or unplanned events (stressors) occur that challenge the pathway thinking of the client, agency and planning offer sufficient flexibility for individuals to reimagine their pathway and continue their journey towards the goal. These important concepts are evident in the construction of Plan: Me.

Likewise, the main constructs of Hope Theory - agency and planning - resonate with many widely used careers theories, particularly Egan's Skilled Helper model (2002). Egan outlines a three-stage model supporting the practitioner and client through a journey, exploring what is going on, what solutions make sense and finally how to get what is needed/wanted. Egan's model is solution focused, supporting the development of a plan (or creating pathway thinking as it is called in Hope theory) to move toward a goal (creating agency).

Applying Egan's three stages to Plan: Me, the goal in the circles can be equated what is wanted (the desired outcome) with the steps and check-in points being in line with solutions, actions and pathway creation. As with Snyder's Hope Model, creating one action for each goal at a time allows the client to develop their confidence by achieving smaller actions which, in turn, reinforces their agency to continue creating the pathway.

Fundamentally, what differentiates Plan: Me from Egan's model is the element of creating a visual representation of the process. The concept of using diagrams with clients is explored by Amundson (2003) who describes 'active engagement' in careers counselling as including elements such as visual imagery and physical activity. By committing thoughts to paper, many clients are able to clarify better what their goals are and construct a starting point on a pathway to achieve them. Moreover, having a physical map to take away from a careers session supports the psychological transition from viewing their career as abstract into a more tangible concept.

Elements of Plan: Me are also similar to the GROW model of coaching (Alexander, 2006; Whitmore, 2002). GROW looks at developing people through a four-step process. First, establishing a goal, secondly examining the current reality, thirdly exploring the options and finally establishing the way forward. GROW was developed for use with clients who were professionals with an assumption that they have a certain amount of experience to draw on in order to explore future options. When working with younger, less experienced clients, the ability to define all of the options to explore may be more limited. In contrast, Plan: Me offers additional flexibility by having goals that are undefined but still contain actions to define them. Importantly it allows for a more holistic overview of a client's life, exploring multiple goals at once in order to move towards a point where a decision can be made.

Plan: Me similarly draws on the concept of solution focused counselling (de Jong & Berg, 1996) which was adapted into solution focused careers counselling by

Miller (2004). Her three-stage model takes clients and practitioners through problem clarification and goal identification, then builds client self-helpfulness and finally, constructs a meaningful message. Miller's method requires the client to adopt a forward focus in their approach, putting emphasis on expectation and progress. This same focus in used in Plan: Me, although it differs in method. In Miller's model clients are invited to use scales to self-assess where they are on their journey, using a progression from 1 (being stuck and confused) to 10 (being clear about what they want to do). Much research supports this type of approach, however it is based on practitioners working with clients over a series of interventions. Often this is not possible in a university context, hence the inclusion of check-in points as an alternative means of independent self-assessment in the development of Plan: Me. Moreover, this approach reflects Snyder's Hope theory (1995) and supports clients in identifying goals and linking these to first actions. The process builds confidence through initial achievements and models a method clients can adopt for future action, letting the plan grow in an organic way and allowing for adaptations to counter negative discoveries or setbacks. Although Snyder described these as blockages, we found that if a client is able to view them as more information, the movement towards decision making and the building of their confidence is less likely to be derailed.

As mentioned, progressive outcomes continue to build confidence, encouraging the client to explore further, creating new actions to build their knowledge and progress towards a point when decisions can be made. In line with Skinner's early work on Operant conditioning (Skinner, 1948) this positive reinforcement builds confidence and helps a client to propose an action they may not have felt able to complete before, like attending a networking event, or approaching people via a networking site such as LinkedIn. Activities like this help to build social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and expand what Hodkinson & Sparkes (1997) identified as a client's 'horizon for action'; that is being able to envisage the possibilities – 'What we can see is limited by the position we stand in, and the horizons that are visible from that position' (Hodkinson, 2009, p.5). Hodkinson's theory of Careership explores career decision making and found that often, the greatest influence was not the person

supposedly making that decision but the interaction and unequal force of external factors such as the client's geographical location, educational providers and the labour market.

Crucially, through the actions of Plan: Me clients are encouraged to expand their horizons (e.g. by meeting different people outside their normal professional circle or undertaking work experience/shadowing experiences) although the value that individuals put on these experiences will differ depending on their disposition. It can be difficult to incorporate these elements into a short session, yet by applying Careership to Plan: Me practitioners may be able to challenge clients to push themselves towards actions which – although they may have a higher level of risk – could expand horizons for action.

Of relevance in today's unpredictable labour market, the progressive building of a careers pathway and confidence opens up the opportunity for clients to include planned happenstance as part of their decision making process. Krumboltz's theory of planned happenstance (Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999) actively discourages a linear approach to decision making and planning, identifying three elements that dominate our lives: external factors; chance events; and the unexpected. While practitioners know and accept this to be true, trying to integrate this concept into a career session is challenging. However, by not prescribing a full pathway within Plan: Me, clients are naturally more flexible and adaptable to all three of Krumboltz's factors. More recently within the list of attributes that will be required of future employees and industry leaders, the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs report (Centre for the New Economy and Society, 2018) identifies cognitive flexibility, complex problem solving and decision making among their top ten requirements. By introducing a tool to support clients in accepting their inability to plan everything but still enabling them to put concepts into a framework when making life decisions, practitioners are equipping their clients for the future.

Limitations

Like all practical tools, Plan: Me has not been designed to be used in isolation. While the basic elements of

Plan: Me (creating actions to move towards a goal) may be useful, the richness of experience provided by a professional practitioner is required for the tool to reach its optimal potential of building confidence and agency in clients.

Plan: Me was developed with a basic assumption that clients have a certain amount of agency to move towards a goal. However, implementation of Plan: Me could be problematic with clients who are not in a position to consider making a decision due to personal circumstances such as unstable emotional states, or dealing with other trauma. Plan: Me also assumes that the client comes from or is accepting of an individualistic goal-driven culture evident within western society. In today's global environment this is not always the case and different clients may prefer to align the Plan: Me model to more community-based values and principles.

Further research

Plan: Me has been developed over the past 10 years through discussions with fellow practitioners and the application of theory to develop practice. Feedback from clients and practitioners has been overwhelmingly positive and anecdotally, practitioners felt clients left the intervention with a clear action plan. Also, there seemed to be fewer repeat visits to the service with clients who did return often bringing with them an updated Plan: Me, showing new actions and revised goals. However there has been no formal evaluation of the Plan: Me process.

This lack of formal feedback opens up many potential research questions such as: how useful do clients find the tool? What type of students engage more/less? How could Plan: Me be adapted to work optimally with all student groups? Can it be used effectively in a group or workshop environment? Research focused on practitioners using the tool would also be interesting. For example, did they find it helpful and if so, with what clients? What did they change/adapt?

At the heart of Plan: Me is the concept of agency and the assumption that this is a quality possessed by students who self-refer to a careers consultation. Taking this assumption and incorporating it with Hodkinson's (2009) research on Careership, which

explores horizons of action, would also form an interesting topic. This could help researchers and practitioners explore how tools like Plan: Me relate to the realities experienced by adolescents when making career decisions.

In moving forward, a blended short course – Attributes and Aspirations - is being developed and will be piloted in the academic year 2019-2020 in which an online version of Plan: Me will form the basic building block of career planning. It is targeted at taught postgraduate medicine students at a London university, and will take students through the main stages of career development and implementation via four interactive online units, supplemented by four two-hour face-to-face group sessions, run by a careers consultant. The course evaluation plan will have elements that focus specifically on Plan: Me. Ethics approval will be sought to research further, with the focus and topic of the research being based on information gained from the initial evaluation.

To conclude, Plan: Me was developed largely based on the needs of a population of clients who were attending university and self-assessed that they required careers support. It has also been used with doctors in training who were struggling with decision making. The tool is underpinned by career theory, and found by clients and practitioners to be effective in supporting the career decision-making process. However, formal evaluative research to verify this and establish the usefulness of the tool on different populations is required.

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Enhancing CV feedback: Providing feedback to students and graduates using screencasting technology

Keren Coney & Ben Simkins

Literature suggests that using screencasting technology increases the quality of feedback. However, there appears to be an absence of published work on using screencasting to provide feedback to students/graduates on their CVs. This mixed methods study aims to address this gap in the literature, exploring perceptions of students/graduates who received CV feedback via screencasting. Evidence from a small quantitative survey (n=79) and a focus group (n=4) suggested that the participants found the feedback via screencasting was easy to understand and personalised. Objective measures of the participants' CVs suggested that the changes participants made following feedback had improved their CVs.

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Introduction

What is screencasting?

Screencasting is a type of instructional technology in the form of a software programme that is used to capture images from a computer screen to produce a video. Guided audio instruction can be recorded concurrently with the captured images. The screencast is then sent electronically to a student and accessed independently (Hoepner, Hemmerich & Stirling-Orth, 2016). Screencasting has been identified as a form of technology that can help to improve students' and graduates' perception of the feedback they receive (Marriot, 2012).

Context

It is expected that most students will be required to create a Curriculum Vitae (CV) during their time at university. Whilst some seek this help face-to-face, others, in particular graduates, ask for guidance via email. It can be challenging to suggest the major corrections that are sometimes required, whilst also providing encouragement to a student in their job searching. The use of screencasting software would allow a student/graduate to hear an audio recording of a careers professional whilst watching a 'video' of that professional highlighting changes or indicating certain parts of the CV or application form on the screen.

Feedback has been described as 'one of the most potent influences on student learning and achievement' (Jonsson, 2012, p.63). One challenge for careers professionals is not necessarily in how to provide effective feedback face-to-face, rather how to provide quality feedback remotely. For CVs remote feedback would typically be provided by attempting to describe changes via telephone or by using the review feature in a word processor to add comments into the document. But is there a more effective approach available? In the UK university sector, technology has been identified as being underutilised in supporting the development of student employability (Chatterton & Reebeck, 2015). In this report, 'screencasts' and 'video' were singled out as examples of 'potential for greater adoption' (Chatterton & Reebeck, 2015, p.20).

The use of screencasting could also benefit students living off campus, who may find it more difficult to access a face-to-face appointment. Additional benefits of adopting screencasting could include improving the service provided to students who have English as a second language (MucCullogh, 2010), students with dyslexia (Rotherham, 2009) and students with visual impairments (Lunt & Curran, 2010).

Literature review

A literature review using Library Search and further exploration using the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services journal, Phoenix, revealed no published research on the use of screencasting for feedback on CVs. This suggests that there is a significant gap in research and that currently there is no academic or professional literature specifically around screencasting feedback on CVs.

Script markers have reported that using screencasting encouraged them to focus on feedback useful for deep learning such as content, rather than surface learning such as spelling and punctuation (Vincelette, 2013). Likewise, screencasting has been associated with increased student understanding of feedback (West, 2016). Students have reported also that the ability to hear the feedback and simultaneously see where this feedback applied in their work led to a greater understanding than just written or audio feedback alone (Orlando, 2016). As well as aiding understanding, hearing the tone used in delivering the feedback was associated by students with a more personal feedback experience (Thompson & Lee, 2012). In particular, Vincelette and Bostic (2013) found that students made more effective revisions of their work when feedback was provided via screencasting.

The use of screencasting has been associated with feedback that has a high level of detail, leads to greater understanding and is of a more personal nature. However, this association comes predominately from the use of screencasting in an academic context. The aim of this study was to investigate if students and graduates perceived the same benefits when receiving feedback on their CVs.

Research questions

1. To what extent do students and graduates perceive screencasting to provide high quality feedback in the following areas:

   a. Depth: the level of detail and specificity of the feedback

   b. Clarity and understanding: knowing what the feedback means and how it should be implemented.

   c. Personalised: the extent to which the feedback was tailored and distinctive to them.

2. To what extent does screencasting have an impact on student and graduate action on the feedback?

Methodology

Quantitative data was collected from students/graduates from a university in the West Midlands through a questionnaire with additional qualitative data collected through free text boxes and a focus group. The rationale behind using this mixed methods approach was that it allows for the collection of richer data and has the potential to provide a more complete picture of the student experience of screencasting (Descombe, 2008).

Over a two-month period, screencasting was used to provide feedback in response to all requests for CV feedback received via email. In addition, all Year 1, 2 and finalists were contacted via email and invited to submit their CVs. This probability sampling approach was selected to reduce the risk of bias (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). All participants were encouraged to act upon the feedback and re-submit their updated CV. They were also invited to take part in a focus group.

Participant questionnaire

An anonymous questionnaire, using a five-point Likert scale, ('Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree' with a neutral mid-point) was used to record the level of student/graduate agreement with statements relating to the use of screencasting for receiving feedback. The questions reflected the research questions and so covered the following areas:

- **Clarity:** the feedback was clear and easy to understand.

- **Understanding:** it aided their understanding.
- **Depth:** they received feedback that was more detailed.
- **Tailored:** they perceived the feedback as being more personal.

Each question was followed by a free text box inviting additional qualitative data.

Re-submitted CVs

A CV marking rubric tool was created to score the CVs before and after feedback was provided by screencasting, and so measure the distance travelled (improvement) in terms of acting on the feedback. The construction of the rubric was informed by the 'Part-by-Part Development of a Rubric' process (Stevens & Levi, 2005, p.6-15). Initial evaluation of the rubric was conducted using the Metarubric evaluation checklist (Stevens & Levi, 2005, p.94). A Delphi method was used, involving the careers practitioners to gain consensus on the suitability of the CV rubric for assessing CVs and to calibrate it as a tool.

Using the CV rubric, the CVs from each participant who had resubmitted their CV for further feedback were given a score. There were four dimensions to the rubric: presentation, structure, linguistic quality and content. A CV could be awarded up to 5 'marks' in each section, leading to a maximum score of 20 marks. The researchers scored each resubmitted CV independently using the CV rubric. Scores that diverged were discussed and an overall score agreed. To show the 'distance travelled', the marks allocated by each researcher for each of the four dimensions for both CVs were added together and 'before' and 'after' scores compared. Using this measurement tool, it was possible to examine the improvement, or 'distance travelled' from the first CV submitted, to the second CV submitted by the same participant, after they had received screencasting feedback and acted upon this feedback.

For the focus group a semi-structured group interview approach was used. Examples of questions included 'What was your overall experience of receiving feedback on your CV via screen casting?' and 'Is there anything you would change about receiving your feedback using this format?' This interview was recorded and transcribed allowing the data to be analysed in relation to the research questions.

Results

A completed questionnaire was returned by 46 students/graduates, of whom 13 re-submitted their CVs and four attended a focus group. The focus group comprised one graduate and three undergraduates, two male and two female.

The response from students regarding screencasting was overwhelmingly positive, with all but one of the questionnaire participants stating that they liked screencasting as a form of providing feedback on their CVs. In the next section the findings are related back to the earlier research questions

Clarity

The topic of clarity of the screencasting feedback provided more mixed results from the questionnaire (approximately three-quarters believed the feedback was clear and easy to understand, whilst a minority disagreed). However in terms of clarity of the recording, comments made by several participants indicated a specific sound issue was experienced by some, but not all: 'Microphone was a bit crackly at times' and 'sound was good but a little bit fuzzy'. This issue was explored during the focus group, but these participants did not agree that there had been a sound problem, perhaps indicating that the issue could have arisen due to the quality of the sound equipment used by those who found the recording was unclear. This is a concern however, and further consideration should be given about this potential issue.

Understanding

All but three of the participants believed that screencasting had aided their understanding of the feedback given, several of whom noted that the combination of audio and visual feedback was particularly useful: 'all of the points were verbally explained and well evidenced, watching them work through it (the CV) also helped to understand any issues from a recruiter's perspective'.

Depth

When asked about the depth of the feedback provided using screencasting, almost all of the participants agreed that this had been to a greater extent than expected, with one stating: 'this was considerably more detailed than an email could ever be'. Focus group participants concurred that this format allowed for an increase in depth, with statements such as: 'it was very detailed, so it was easy to make changes'.

Tailored

Similarly, nearly all participants believed that this form of providing feedback was of a more personal nature than other forms. For example, one indicative response was: 'screencasting meant that I could actually see my own CV, and knew that the feedback being given was specific to me rather than just generic comments'. Interestingly, one focus group participant suggested that the tone of voice was key: 'I liked the tone it was delivered in and that's really useful when we're doing something that's quite important'.

Accessing the screencasting

A theme which emerged through the focus group discussions related to how the participants had accessed the feedback. One sub-theme was around the issue of the type of device used. Several participants noted that they had first accessed the feedback on their mobile phones, but when they understood the extent of the feedback, had then decided to use laptops. Some described how they used a 'split screen' approach on their laptop/PC, where they could view both the screencasting recording and their own CV at the same time. All described how they used the pause function on the screencast, so that they could edit their CV as they listened to the feedback. One described this: 'so I turned my laptop on, had my CV on one side and the screencasting on the other side, I pressed play and then just did all the alterations from there…and then I went back and just made sure I'd done everything'. This is not something that had been anticipated by the researchers, but demonstrates a practical way for a recipient to observe the feedback, whilst also making alterations to their CV.

CV rubric assessment

When the sum total scores of the four CV rubric dimensions (presentation, structure, linguistic quality

and content) were compared for the CVs submitted *after* feedback with the originally submitted CVs, it was found that the re-submitted CV sum total scores were higher in every dimension.

Figure 1: Participant changes in score for each dimension of the CV rubric
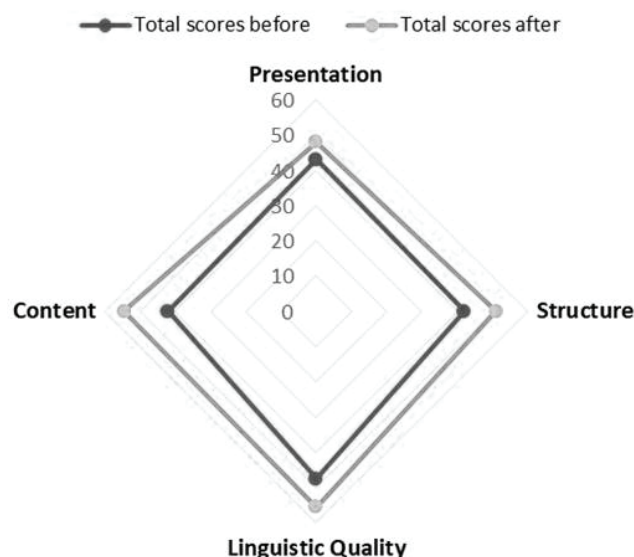
Figure 1 shows a detailed examination of the changes in score (between first and second versions of the CV) for each participant. As can be seen, there is noticeable variation in where the changes have occurred, in terms of the rubric's four dimensions. This is perhaps to be expected, as the participants are individuals who submitted very different CVs. Some first CVs were already of a high standard and required only small suggestions of changes to be made. Hence, these participants may not then have a high score in terms of the improvements made, or 'distance travelled'. Others needed more alterations and therefore, if these participants responded to the suggestions made via the screencasting, it was possible for these to receive a higher score.

The results (Figure 2) show that the second CVs of participants two and five had a negative change in score in one dimension (structure for participant two and presentation for participant five). This was due perhaps to a misunderstanding in the feedback provided; although to ascertain the reasons for this would require further research. However, overall, changes to the CV in response to feedback via screencasting resulted in a second CV which scored more highly on the rubric. This indicates that feedback

Figure 2: The change in total scores for each dimensions of the CV rubric before and after screencasting feedback
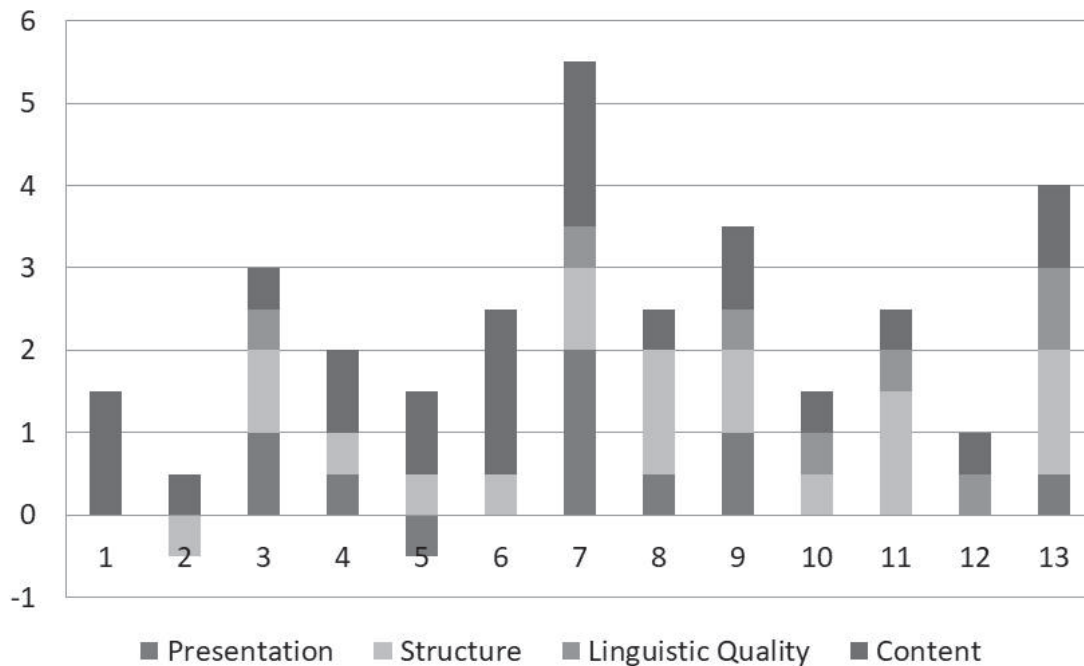
delivered via screencasting had a positive impact on the action taken by participants.

Discussion

The findings of this small study indicate that there are real benefits to using screencasting as a medium for providing remote feedback on students/graduates' CVs. Using the rubric to measure the extent to which the participants' CVs had improved enabled the researchers to demonstrate that receiving feedback via screencasting had resulted in action which led to positive changes in the participants' CVs. These positive changes were in some or all four dimensions on the CV rubric. While it is not possible to demonstrate that these positive changes are greater than would have occurred with other forms of remote feedback (e.g. written feedback only), they do demonstrate that screencasting presents an effective medium for providing this feedback.

Participants' views that the feedback via screencasting exceeded expectations regarding the level of detail, how personal it was in nature and how it aided understanding concur with the literature (Vincelette & Bostic, 2013; West, 2016; Orlando, 2016; Thomson,

2012). The theme of how the participants accessed the feedback was unexpected and demonstrated a practical way to go through the feedback and has been included in the 'Recommendations for Careers Practitioners' section as something which should be suggested to recipients.

Also of interest was the finding that the length of screencast recording appeared to be of less concern to students/graduates than the careers professionals had feared. This was due to the flexible way in which the recipients were accessing the feedback. Up to 20 minutes was thought to be an appropriate length dependent on the amount of feedback required.

Importantly, the study highlighted the value of including guidance on how to access the feedback in the email to the student/graduate which contained the link to the screencast. Suggestions also included guidance on how to watch the recording using a split screen so making it possible to pause the recording and make alterations at the time. Plus, how to rewind the recording and re-listen to it as required, and once alterations have been made, how to store the feedback file so it could be referred to when using the CV to apply for a different position.

Several participants also suggested it would be helpful to include a written summary of the feedback, perhaps in bullet points, in the email sent to the student/graduate, especially if the feedback was complex, with many different points covered.

To assess the rigour of the study the participant questionnaire and focus group explored how students/graduates felt about receiving feedback via screencasting and was evaluated using Kirkpatrick's model of evaluation (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). The model has four levels: reaction, learning, behaviour and results. Level one examined the extent to which the participants found the method of feedback favourable. Using the CV rubric to measure the extent of improvement in the participants' re-submitted CVs (exploring the learning that took place for the participants and investigating the degree to which the participants had applied what they had learned) extended the breadth of the study to levels two and three, and led into level 4, the results.

Limitations

The number of participants limited the scope of the study. Of 79 student/graduate participants, 46 responded to the questionnaire (a return rate of 58%); 13 of whom re-submitted their CVs for further feedback and which were measured for 'distance travelled' following the initial screencasting feedback. The focus group was similarly small with 4 participants (5% of the total participant cohort). Yet, the data was thought adequate to provide an impression of participants' opinions and of the impact of this new format of feedback, although participants were not part of a particular subject discipline or year group, so it cannot be assumed that these results would be replicated in other populations. Also the sample used in this study was self-selected and this may have skewed the data as it may not include the opinions of those who are less likely to use technology when participating in activities to develop their employability. However, the researchers consider this bias to be relatively insignificant, as being a user of technology is a requirement of many elements of university life (for example, students are expected to access course information and to submit assignments using technology). Finally, a methodological issue with this study is the lack of control group, however, the positive results indicate that a follow-up study which utilises a control group would be worthwhile.

Conclusions

The findings indicate that the overwhelming majority of the students/graduates involved in the study agreed that screencasting did indeed provide a form of feedback which was detailed, personal and led to a deep understanding. The use of a CV rubric demonstrated that a deeper level of impact had occurred, beyond simply enjoying this form of feedback: the participants had applied what they had learned, with positive results, in terms of quantifiable improvements made to their CVs.

Recommendations for careers professionals

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for careers professionals who are considering adopting screencasting as a method for providing remote feedback:

- There were strong indications that students and graduates like receiving feedback via screencasting, so the use of screencasting is recommended as a valuable method of providing remote feedback relating to CVs, covering letters and personal statements, where appropriate.

- For screencasting to operate effectively, arrangements should be made to obtain appropriate rooms so recordings can be carried out without risk of disturbance.

- To address concerns relating to the sound quality of the recording, it is advised that quality microphones with a facility to reduce sibilance and proven capacity to produce clear voice recording are used.

- For career professionals new to screencasting training in how to use the technology should be provided as this will have a positive impact on the quality of the recording and the time taken to produce each screencast.

- Whilst recording the screencast, it is advisable to make full advantage of the visual function of this technology in order to make the feedback as detailed and explicit as possible. For example, rather than just referring to a website, open the appropriate webpages during the recording and show the relevant sections using the cursor.

- In terms of the length of time the screencast recording should be, this study found that up to 20 minutes was an appropriate length depending on the amount of feedback required.

- It would be helpful to include a written summary of the feedback, perhaps in bullet points, in the email sent to the student/graduate, especially if the feedback was complex and covered many different points.

- Advice on how to access the feedback should be included in the email to the student/graduate which contains the link to the screencast. Guidance should also be made available on how to (i) watch the recording on a split screen so students/graduates can pause the recording and make alterations at the time, (ii) rewind the recording and re-listen to it as required and (iii) store the file so it could be referred to when using the CV to apply for a different position.

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An evaluation of the INSPiRED teenager framework

Lewis Clark & Carolyn Parry

Teenagers frequently struggle to make informed career choices and often turn to their parents or carers for help. In response to this, the INSPiRED Teenager framework was developed to encourage collaborative career-based learning between parents and carers and their teenage child. A mixed-methods approach was implemented to explore the effectiveness of the two programme delivery formats. The findings show evidence of improving teenagers' career confidence and career direction clarity and also parents/carers' understanding of the changing world of work, their ability to have informed conversations with their teenagers, and their confidence and clarity to help their teenager make informed career decisions.

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Introduction

At present, we find ourselves in the infancy of a Fourth Industrial Revolution. New jobs are being created and old jobs are being displaced as disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence and automation, bring unprecedented change to the labour market. A report published by the World Economic Forum (2016) has estimated that approximately 30% of existing jobs in the U.K. are at high risk of becoming automated in the next 20 years. As a consequence of the developing employment landscape, the concept of a job for life is changing. Individuals must now take responsibility for their own career management and continuously learn new skills as new career and training routes are created (ONS, 2019; Hawksworth & Berriman, 2018).

The evolving labour market is problematic for young adolescents in particular. They are more likely to be affected by disruptive technologies than older workers, with one report estimating that around 65% of children entering primary school today will end up with jobs that don't exist yet (World Economic Forum, 2016). Making future career decisions can therefore become challenging to young people and so many turn to their parents for career support. However, a survey of 1,600 parents across the U.K. revealed that approximately 37% had reservations about discussing career options with their child as they were scared of advising the wrong thing and that their understanding of the developing labour market may in fact hinder their child's future (EY, 2019).

Policy and research has emphasised the significant role of the parent/carer in teenage career decision-making, highlighting the impact of parental support on career preparation, development and aspirations (Perry, Liu & Pabian, 2010; Dietrich & Kracke, 2009; Young et al. 2006). Since the publication of the Department for Education's National Careers Strategy in 2018, schools and colleges have been required to use the eight benchmarks of good career guidance to improve their careers provision. Embedded within the benchmarks are several underpinning criteria that recognise the important role parents/carers play in the development of adolescents' careers education. In particular, parents need access to good quality careers information on their child's potential future study options and on the developing labour market.

There are many sources of high quality careers information, yet few frameworks have been developed to enable parents/carers to support teenagers with their career decisions in an informed way.

INSPiRED Origins

The overarching INSPiRED framework was designed to reflect the potential changes in the labour market. It

was first developed by the researchers in 2015 as the result of informal action research when working with young adults studying at a Welsh University. Repeated themes which occurred in client career guidance conversations were taken, researched, and developed into the INSPiRED framework, which was informed by sound pedagogy, proven theories and concepts.

The framework consists of eight segments:

Identity

Needs and Wants

Strengths, Talents and Skills

Passions and Interests

Impact and Contribution

Relationships

Environment

Direction and Goals

Underpinned by sound career guidance and coaching principles (Yates, 2014; Hambly and Bomford, 2019)), the approach uses a blended humanistic, person-centred constructivist and coaching approach to develop self-understanding and goal-oriented direction setting. Further, the approach sets out to strengthen the teenagers' confidence and clarity over their career direction while building key skills that are needed for the changing world of work. Reflection and learning are synthesized through a unique career and life planning tool which can be used to navigate career transitions during an individual's life.

The INSPiRED framework has been evaluated in different contexts, including with clients who have made multiple career changes (RE-INSPiRED Professional) and as an employee engagement tool (INSPiRED Team). In an education context, the framework was evaluated in 2016-17 as an INSPiRED Graduate pilot programme with a voluntary cohort of 20 BAME students at a university in the Midlands and on a course for which the graduate destination outcomes had been underperforming. The pilot had a high voluntary completion rate of 87.5% and led to noteworthy and significant self-reported increases in both clarity of career direction and career confidence.

INSPiRED Teenager Variant

The INSPiRED Teenager programme variant was developed in 2017 in response to the need to enable parents/carers to support teenagers with their careers in an informed way. The programme was designed to encourage teenagers to work with their parent/carer to understand their own talents and potential and combine them with a clear sense of purpose so they can thrive and experience well-being, happiness and success through meaningful contributions to themes they care about through learning and work. The programme used the UN Sustainable Development Goals in particular to help highlight potential career themes. This focus provided a rich source of stimulus and discussion and brought together all four constituent parties - parents/carers, teenagers, a career development specialist and employer representatives – by means of a structured coaching question-led approach with workbook exercises and big picture planning tool stimulating family group and plenary facilitated discussions.

The programme was delivered in two formats: as either an online tool with forum support or as a face-to-face workshop series. The online delivery consisted of a self-paced, easy to follow eight-part video series with a comprehensive eBook. This contained several exercises for teenagers to work through with the support of their parent or carer. Additional links to theories, books and video clips were also provided throughout the eight modules.

The face-to-face (FTF) format consisted of two three-hour workshops delivered over two weeks by a career professional. Teenagers again worked through the workbook with the support of their parent/carer with additional help from a career professional and Unilever employees. Participants also took part in related activities and discussions. Workbooks were provided at the start of each workshop for the teenagers to work through as the sessions progressed. Table 1 displays the content of each workbook.

The tasks were designed to provide a lens through which teenagers could make sense of the world of work. Also, the programme included an overview of how to interpret career information online, including LMI. The workbooks were designed to support these

Table 1: A breakdown of each workbook content

	Module	Workbook Tasks
Workshop 1	Identity	Your Natural Self (personality)
		Your Nurtured Self (values growing up)
		Your Experience (life timeline of significant emotional events)
	Needs & Wants	Work-Life Fit
		Values at Work
		Self-Care needs, Success and Happiness definitions
	Strengths, Talents & Skills	Identifying Strengths
		Disovering Talents
		Understanding Skills
	Passions & Interests	Exploring Passion & Grit (Dweck and Duckworth)
		Stimulating Curiosity
		Flow as a concept at Work
		Exploring Options
Workshop 2	Impact & Contribution	Finding your 'why'
		Creating your career purpose statement
	Relationships	Identifying your tribe
		Working in teams
	Environment	Thriving at work
	Direction & Goals	Deciding between options
		Vision board for goalsetting

objectives by enabling the teenagers to align their unique talents, skills and passions to a clear purpose.

In 2018-19, an evaluation of the two programme delivery formats was undertaken to see how effective they were at providing an easy to learn systematic approach to helping parents/carers enable their teenagers to make more informed career decisions.

Method

Following approval by a university ethics committee, an adaptation of Kirkpatrick's (2016) Evaluation Model was used to evaluate the framework. Typically,

measures are made on four levels: (1) reaction, (2) learning, (3) behaviour and (4) results. However, levels three and four of the model were omitted as these levels measure longitudinal data and consequently did not align with the evaluation timeframe.

Online Programme

The online programme was advertised on select council and social media websites. Seventy-two parents/carers registered their interest in participating, of whom the first fifty were invited to take part. Participants were provided access to the online programme and its resources over a four-week period. Retention of participants proved difficult with only

twenty-eight pairs engaging with the programme modules and none completing the programme. Although participants were invited to complete a post-programme survey and attend a focus group, which may have provided insight into the low levels of engagement, there was no response.

Face-To-Face Programme

The FTF programme was advertised in schools located in an economic cold spot across North West England. Sixty-eight parents/carers registered their interest in participating, however, the workshop venue only had the capacity and resources to host the first forty-five pairs.

Workshop 1 was delivered by a careers professional at the a local venue on a Wednesday evening from 4pm–7pm to twenty-nine participants. Retention of these participants was also difficult with just sixteen pairs attending workshop 2 the following week.

At the end of the second workshop each parent/carer-and-teenager pair were asked to complete a post-programme survey exploring their clarity of career direction and confidence. Fourteen pairs provided a response.

To further explore the views and experiences of those who completed the programme, a focus group was run. This was attended by four parent/carer-and-teenager pairs. The data was thematically analysed and the key themes extracted.

Key Findings and Discussion

Parents and Carers

Career support from parents has been shown to have a direct effect on teenagers' career confidence and preparation (Perry, Liu & Pabian, 2010). Nonetheless, many parents (and carers) feel ill-equipped to offer career support to their teenager as technological advancements continue to reshape the employment landscape. The FTF workshops set out to address this discrepancy by conceptualising to parents (and carers) how the labour market is expected to evolve during the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Data from the post-programme survey revealed that when asked on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being 'very little' and 10 being 'a lot') how much they thought new technologies such as automation and artificial intelligence will change the world of work in the next 10 years, 12 of the 14 (85%) parents/carers had recorded scores of 6 or above. Also, parents/carers spoke specifically about how, prior to the programme, they were unaware of the developing labour market and that it is vastly different to what they experienced when they were a teenager. Others mentioned how they now understood that their teenager may not have just one career, but many, as new jobs will be being created and old jobs displaced. For example:

> 'I think at the start of the course where they talked about how 68% of children starting school now will be in jobs that aren't even created yet made me aware that it is a fast-changing market and very different to what any of us have experienced.' (Parent)

> 'This [programme] really has provided a framework to adapt and work to because I don't see that my children will have one career, they will have many careers and it is enabling them to identify those transferable skills that they can use.' (Parent)

These finding indicate that participation in the programme had improved parents/carers' understanding of the developing labour market.

Parents/carers also found themselves having more informed conversations with their teenager about careers throughout the two workshops. A parent mentioned how the programme encouraged intergenerational conversations which they really valued, while a teenager was able to reflect on the conversations they had with their father about experiences of work:

> 'I have some idea of how to 'clear the fog' because a lot of [teenagers'] responses are 'I don't know' so as a parent you often feel like you don't know how to help. This [programme] has therefore been really useful in supporting these conversations and it is something we will go back to and develop.' (Parent)

'[The programme] allowed me to reflect on what I really did want out of work. I discussed with my dad about his experiences of work which was interesting.' (Teenager)

These findings were particularly encouraging as effective communication within the family has been shown to be crucial for laying a sound foundation for career decision-making (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto & Lindsay, 2018).

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that the framework provides parents/carers with an underpinning knowledge of the labour market and the ability to have informed conversations with their teenagers about careers. This was further highlighted in the post-programme survey as when asked how confident they were about helping their teenager make a good career choice (1 being 'not confident and 10 being 'very confident'), 11 of the 14 parents/carers (78%) scored themselves as 6 above.

It would be interesting for future evaluations of similar frameworks to explore the long-term implications and extent of these benefits beyond the programme itself.

Teenagers

Another key theme that emerged from the data was how many teenagers felt confident and clear about their future. To support teenagers in this development the programme introduced them to a range of career related tasks to provide a lens through which they could make sense of the world of work. When asked how useful they found the tasks on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being 'not useful' and 10 being 'very useful'), 11 of 13 (84%) teenagers gave a score of 6 or above. In particular, the teenagers enjoyed tasks that involved discovering their talents, reflecting on their needs and wants and understanding their life time-line. For example:

'I enjoyed the needs and wants task the most because this allowed me to reflect on what I really did want out of work. I hadn't realised I wanted a nice workplace environment, but I now understand why this is quite helpful.' (Teenager)

'I enjoyed the discovering talents task the most because it helped me figure out what I was good at and what my way of thinking was.' (Teenager)

After the workshop tasks had been completed, teenagers were asked via a post-programme survey how confident they were about making a good career choice; 11 of 14 (78%) scored themselves as 6 or above (1 being 'not confident' and 10 being 'very confident'). In the context of careers, this was especially important as research has demonstrated that the more confident an individual is in their abilities, the more psychologically ready they are to take on tasks such as changing careers (Higgins, 2001). Further, having career confidence is also an important predictor of successful adjustment when young adolescents transition from education to employment (Stringer, Kerpelman & Skorikov, 2012).

In addition to career confidence, teenagers were asked how clear they were about their future career direction; 9 of 14 (64%) scored themselves as 6 or above (1 being 'not clear' and 10 being 'very clear'). Teenagers mentioned specifically how they were clearer on a range of topics including their unique talents, skills and strengths. One teenager in particular talked about how he had a vague idea of what career he wanted to pursue beforehand, but the programme provided a clearer idea of what path to take in order to achieve it:

'Before I did the sessions, I had met with a careers adviser and had a vague idea of what I wanted to do, but the sessions we've had have given me a lot more clarity and I now have a more precise idea of what I want to do and where I want to go.' (Teenager)

Course leader perspectives

From a delivery perspective, the course leader felt the eight segments of the programme clearly helped parents and teenagers to understand the main considerations when making a career choice. She felt the INSPiRED Career and Life Planner tool with its eight questions (one for each of the segment) was particularly welcomed by participants as a way of maintaining a high-level course overview and provided a framework for more intergenerational conversations to take place. It was also clear to her that participants valued having both a careers professional and employers in the room which widened conversations beyond parental experience:

'I think it was good that staff were dotted around the room. They were not just bringing answers to any questions but their own personal information on how they have done the same thing and what they do in their current role. That helped because they referenced real situations' (Parent)

Having the voices of all four constituent parties (parents/carers, teenagers, employers and career professionals) contributed significantly in a social mobility context by supporting the visualisation of moving within or between levels within a society. The course leader discussed how this enabled and empowered teenagers to develop their confidence and take more control of their career decision-making by engaging them in more meaningful discussions, which clearly reflected who they were and what they wanted, rather than what their parent/carer wanted for them.

Parents/carers themselves also had insights into their own career journeys and decision-making, deepening their career understanding and gaining career learning themselves as a by-product of their own teenagers' learning. Although the educational background and salaries of participating parents/carers varied widely, crucially the use of the planner with its open questions which related to anyone's life ensured that material and content was accessible to all.

When reflecting on how the programme could be improved, the course leader recognised that some room logistics beyond her control, including internet access issues, meant that sessions started late and further valuable time was lost from the programme because some delegates couldn't access their pre-course activities. This left the careers professional under pressure to adapt content while ensuring the delegates received enough content.

These challenges may also have contributed to the difficulty of retaining participants. The online delivery had a 100% drop-out rate while the FTF delivery had a drop-out rate of 55% from workshop one to workshop two. However, research has exemplified the difficulty in retaining participant engagement with online courses which can derive from numerous reasons including lack of time, course difficulty, unrealistic expectations and lack of digital skills (Jordan, 2015; Onah, Sinclair & Boyatt, 2014).

Although research shows that attrition in online courses is extremely common, it was unexpected that the drop-out rate for the FTF delivery would be so high. While it was not possible to establish the precise reasons for this attrition and the extent to which they were programme related, one explanation could be that one of the main feeder schools ran an event at short notice for parents on the evening of the second workshop which could not have been predicted. Those who completed the FTF programme felt that participant attrition may have been due to work and travel related issues. For instance, one parent talked about how they had to leave work early to arrive on time which was not always possible for others. Another mentioned how they only had thirty minutes to get from school to the venue which could be difficult. Future deliveries of similar programmes should consider hosting workshops that involve both parents/carers and teenagers at a more convenient time for all participants to attend.

Overall, the FTF programme can make a positive contribution to this important field of work. It provides a framework for parents/carers and teenagers to work together in a career context with unique support from career professionals and employers. It also offers a distinctive Career and Life Planner tool that enables teenagers to remain in control of their careers beyond the programme delivery. Future research should investigate the long-term effects of the framework to explore whether it provides a lasting solution to address the problem of enabling parents and carers to support their teenager in an informed way.

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'A helping hand': The role of career guidance in finding the right career pathway for at-risk students in three European contexts

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This paper explores the educational experiences of young people who had been at risk of dropping out and gained a qualification at a second chance provision. It is based on comparative fieldwork in England, Denmark and Hungary with empirical data collected from observations; and 28 interviews with former students. By listening to the voices of students, the analysis focused on the relevance of different sources of support. The findings revealed that individual study pathways and intensified guidance effort led students to pursue their career in higher education and/or in the labour market.

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Introduction

My research investigated the positive experiences of former students in second chance provision in England, Denmark and Hungary. Evidence was derived from the narratives of former students who participated in the research and were at risk of dropping out or who had dropped out of secondary education. The reasons for being at risk of or having dropped out varied from disadvantaged backgrounds to exceptional talent.

I chose to research this topic to give a voice to students at risk. A total of 28 semi-structured, retrospective interviews were conducted with former students (aged 23-30) in the countries under consideration. Research participants were selected with the help of supportive professionals from each second chance school. In order to perceive a subjective dimension, I applied qualitative research methods. The fieldwork was carried out over the course of 14 months.

For the data analysis grounded theory was applied, which has three main stages: the continuing discovery of emerging themes which guides further data collection; the coding of data and creation of categories; and finally, the contextualisation of findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). For this qualitative analysis Nvivo software was used.

According to my findings, the relevance and importance of personal support with special regard to the creation of positive relationships (such as those between the teacher and the student, and the careers adviser/guidance counsellor/mentor and the student) emerged strongly from the analysis as motivating factors for attending education. Moreover, this personal support helped students prepare for future challenges with their career transitions and development. Not only were these themes common across the country contexts, but the availability of supportive professionals depended, in part, on the given country context. In addition, the research participants pointed out the important influence of the length of time spent in second chance provision (Denmark: 1-2 years, Hungary: 2-5 years, England: 1-2 years), which led them to continue their careers in further education and/or in the labour market.

Before Second Chance: Transition to secondary education

According to the interviews with research participants, the transition from initial education to secondary education was a significant milestone. The transition process from primary education to secondary was

significantly different in the three countries, which was an important factor because the literature (Borbely-Pecze, 2010; Cedefop, 2015; RESL.eu, 2015) strikingly suggests that schools' provision of information, advice and guidance is influential in the career progression of at-risk students. In England and Hungary, although career services were based within the institution, impartial guidance was not easily accessible to students in the phase of transition. For instance, in England some students, like Jessica (27, female, Eng) explained that they felt lost during the transition phase:

> 'I didn't like the transition from primary school to high school because of the unstable environment, I wasn't old enough to know what we are going through and things like that. I didn't like it and that caused a lot of problems for me in my early years of high school.'

On the other hand, in Denmark, students' transition from comprehensive (primary and lower secondary education) school to upper secondary education was generally supported by impartial guidance counsellors assigned by the Youth Guidance Centres. Danish participants also highlighted the positive role of guidance counselling. For instance, Sebastian (27, male, DK) pointed out the importance of guidance counsellors in the transition from primary to secondary education:

> '…you have to make like 3 wishes about wherever you want to go to school after elementary, and then if you have no clue at all, a vejleder [guidance counsellor] will come and help you decide.'

In contrast, research participants in England and Hungary reported that they identified the most suitable study pathway by consulting with friends and/ or family members, and only a handful of participants reported to have chosen a second chance provision because of the suggestion of a teacher and/or other professional. In the three countries under consideration, all participants claimed that it was their choice to attend second chance provision.

My data analysis showed that research participants in England and Hungary were more vulnerable to dropping out of either initial or secondary education than in Denmark. In practice, Danish research

participants reported that guidance counsellors were easily accessible in various institutional settings, which meant that they could rely on a professional when uncertainty occurred in their careers. As a Danish participant (27, male, DK) stated: 'There is always a helping hand you can cling on to'.

In the English and Hungarian cohorts, some research participants reported a lack of psychological support, mentoring and/or career guidance before the second chance provision they attended. They claimed the former could have been helpful with making their everyday lives easier, and helping them map out milestones related to the future career. In contrast, Danish students really appreciated the work of guidance counsellors at school: 'Our vejleder [guidance counsellor] has been so helpful. He found Support School for me 'cos I told him I was not ready for the gymnasium [traditional academic pathway].'

A European cross-country study also emphasised that the existence of different sources of support (e.g. psychologist, mentor and/or career counsellor) was essential for stopping at-risk students who have social and emotional issues dropping out (European Parliament, 2010).

The main characteristics of second chance provision

The three sites – namely (pseudonyms) Landing College (England), Helping School (Hungary) and Support School (Denmark) – chosen for this research represented different forms of second chance provision that were influenced by the given country's policy context. Hence, they played different roles in the education system. Details about the key features of the three types of provision follow.

In Denmark, the operation of the huge variety of youth schools is traditionally the local government's responsibility, specifically that of the Education and Childcare Department. The department has a duty to care for young people aged 14 to 25 who are deemed not ready for the transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary education, or who have dropped out. The youth schools always adapt to students' and to local needs by providing versatile full-time or part-time study programmes. Thus,

second chance provisions are part of the package of preventative and compensatory measures in the Danish policy context that support young people's return to learning, and help them take the exams and obtain the qualifications relevant to further studies or finding a job.

In contrast, in the Hungarian system for students who do not fit into mainstream education for many different reasons, there are only a few dedicated schools that provide support, with limited targeted funding from the government. One of these schools is the Helping School, which supports those who have left school early, aged 16 to 25. Unfortunately, the uncertainty surrounding its funding mechanisms have placed the sustainability of the institution in jeopardy. Helping School's main professional mission is person-centred teaching that helps youngsters obtain the skills and the secondary school leaving certificate (matriculation: equivalent to GCSE) necessary for getting the right career.

Finally, in England, Landing College is a further education college that offers different courses, second chance and bridging programmes, such as the Prince's Trust, Volunteering and Life Skills Programmes, as well as apprenticeship schemes. On these programmes, students aged 16 to 25 can improve their confidence and ability to decide on a career path. As part of their individual learning programme, students go on work placements to experience the world of work.

In summary, according to the findings, more structured professional support was available to Danish students that is specifically designed to prevent students dropping out of secondary education compared to the other two participating countries. However, it should be noted that both the Hungarian and the English second chance programmes provided alternatives to students who were mostly older than the majority of the Danish at-risk cohort, and typically have experienced more failures, including dropping out of the education system several times. One reason for the younger students in Denmark experiencing lower levels of failure that emerged from the interview analysis was the existence of a supported transition from initial to secondary education that was supported by guidance counsellors.

Students' experiences in second chance provision

Research participants were asked to describe the characteristics of second chance provision that were the most important for ensuring their educational success in re-entering education. Their responses can be grouped into three clusters: the role of teachers, guidance counselors/careers advisers/mentors, and the importance of career education; flexible pedagogical methods; and the role of peers. In this paper, the first cluster will now be discussed.

The role of teachers, career professionals and career education

According to a Cedefop survey, career guidance as a form of prevention and intervention is a measure explicitly specified in policy documents to combat early school leaving (ESL) in Denmark and England. In contrast, guidance is not considered a specific measure for addressing ESL in Hungary (Cedefop, 2015). The differences in the three countries' policy contexts in this regard are reflected in the research participants' interviews. For instance, Hungarian research participants did not specifically mention career guidance. In practice, the three educational institutions under consideration provided career guidance and created a learning environment that encouraged students to develop their aspirations, choose a pathway, and make decisions about their future careers. It should be acknowledged this is a shared aim although they have very different systems, policies, resources and structures in place.

The research participants from Denmark praised the work of career counsellors, calling them people 'to whom they can always turn to for advice'. They reported how the career counsellor monitors students' career choices during the school year by following all students' individual projects, which were associated with specific milestones and tasks. For instance, if a student's desired career was dentistry, they had to map every single stage of the route which led to obtaining the qualification as a dentist, including the first step, such as visiting a secondary

school and talking to people, then seeing the university, interviewing a dentist, and finally, presenting their findings to peers and making a final decision about the choice. This process enabled students to make an informed decision about their careers. In addition, the career counsellor met students both on an individual and group basis, sometimes also visiting group lessons and providing guidance lessons. For instance, one research participant from the Danish cohort, Karl-Georg (male, 28, DK), highlighted the essential role of career counselling in finding the right pathway in education after second chance provision. He also mentioned the importance of engaging with work-experience, in addition to his studies, which was also recommended by his career counsellor. Due to his success as a student teacher, teaching appeared to be his desired profession:

> 'I think that it's a very important position [career counselling] to have some kind of person who guides you with big decisions in your life, they offer you a vision, like, you won't be able to see that yourself.'
>
> (Karl-Georg, male, 28, DK)

The English cohort thought highly of their tutors, career advisers, counsellors and social workers, emphasising the complexity of support services provided at Landing College that helped them find the right pathway. In practice, the multi-faceted support system consisted of different teams. In addition to careers and a well-being clinic, these included counselling; financial; pastoral; nursery; and welfare. According to research participants, the student-friendly college staff, atmosphere and environment kept them on a positive track and helped move them into employment or higher education. Research participants greatly appreciated the value of the professionals' patience and their on-site availability. Additionally, they talked about the quality time they had received from these professionals. Finally, they appreciated the career counsellors' efforts to help students find the right pathway if they felt lost about a particular course, or the help they provided newcomers who did not know which course to start at college, or students who wanted to continue their studies at a different level, even if they wanted to enter employment. For instance, Christian (male, 28, Eng) mentioned in the interview that his volunteering

placement on the careers team supported his idea of studying shipping at university, which was completely unimaginable for him before joining the volunteering programme, even though it had been his biggest desire since childhood:

> 'Talking to careers people kind of made me think of uni, I didn't know anything about funding degree courses or stuff like that before, and that kind of put me onto thinking maybe this is something that I could do, and really from there it sort of helped me start my degree, and I recently graduated.
>
> (Christian, male, 28, Eng.)

The interviews with the Hungarian cohort highlighted the limited access to Hungarian career services and lifelong guidance, as the research participants had never had a chance to turn to a professionally trained career counsellor. Thus, finding the right pathway after Helping School was an outcome of a complex process supported by the helper-pair system, and all the staff, peers and career education classes. Basically, the last year before the final exam involved preparing for the next step. Research participants greatly appreciated conversations with their pair-teachers, which were recorded in the individual learning programme, and as part of the process they could also search for different opportunities on career-related websites. Additionally, the social worker who was responsible for the career education and guidance helped 'finalists' to get to know and interpret different admission procedures and fill in application forms. Research participants emphasised the important role of the helping-pair system in finding the right pathway after the leaving exam, as the pair-teacher knew the student's personality, achievements, changes and future plans. All students had the chance to choose their pair-teacher from the first year of their studies. For instance, Sarolta (female, 35, Hun) recalled the context of how she became an art historian, and how her pair-teacher facilitated this career choice:

> I could not have become an art historian without the inspiration and support I gained in Helping School. In the first year I chose Kata as my pair-teacher, and I must admit it was such a great decision. My first intention was to take a GCSE in French, but talking to Kata passionately about

art made me realise that a GCSE in Art History would be a bit more relevant. This decision could not have been taken without their support, which put me on the right track.

(Sarolta, female, 35, Hun)

The examples above underpin the significance and effectiveness of individualised career guidance and career education for at-risk students and early school leavers. It should be noted that career guidance in second chance provision included psychological counselling. Thus, it included advice and support, developing individual skills and competences, as well as information about career choices to prepare students for the challenges of adult life (Cedefop, 2015). Mitchell and Krumboltz (1996) have underlined the extended role of career practitioners, arguing that career and personal counselling should be integrated in order to support clients to deal with various issues that influence career development.

A Cedefop survey illustrates how education and career guidance are fundamental to helping motivate disadvantaged youth to stay in school and obtain qualifications for the labour market (Cedefop, 2015). Sultana (2012) similarly argues that career education has a positive impact on preventing ESL. For instance, in this research the case of the Danish Support School's everyday practice demonstrates how the career-related activities facilitate students to organise self, educational, and occupational information to help them make and implement career-related decisions. In Savickas's words, these activities support students to become 'agents', and later 'authors' of their own lives and careers (Savickas, 2005).

Mitchell and Krumboltz (1996) argue that many career-related decisions can be delayed or influenced, for instance, by family habitus. A number of research participants (n=5) who have demanding, high-achieving parents highlighted the importance of career counselling in convincing parents to let their child follow her/his career choice. As Eszter (35, female, Hun) recalled:

'I just recovered from anorexia, and the time had come to think about where to go after the leaving exam/baccalaureate. Mum really wanted me to study law, even though I was really into the arts. Luckily, my pair-teacher was on my side and helped mum understand that it would be a grave mistake for me to study law.'

The quotes from the research participants' narratives above highlight the importance of career education and career guidance in motivating students to face their strengths and weaknesses and to gather occupational information that helps them make career-related decisions. The extended role (range of service, frequency of meeting) of career counselling in second chance provision appears to be significant in terms of dealing with at-risk students' everyday problems and career-related issues.

The support staff's personalities and characteristics were also emphasised by research participants as making a positive impact on students' everyday lives. In the Danish cohort, Support School's '*helpful*' guidance counsellors were praised, especially by those with disadvantaged backgrounds.

In the Hungarian cohort, students talked about '*kind and helpful*' social workers. This supporting role was introduced in the Helping School nine years ago. The younger participants highlighted that the role of the social worker was essential, since she acted as an intermediary for careers advice, and for information about higher education, the labour market and the social security system. One of the participants, Zoltán (26, male, Hun) disclosed:

'I could not live with my alcoholic dad anymore, so I moved to a small flat, and I was only 18. Bea [social worker], who was kind and easy to trust, told me how to get registered with the new GP and stuff, and at the end of my studies she helped me find an IT course in adult education.'

However, the English cohort put greater emphasis on the importance of the multi-disciplinary team operating at Landing College rather than one particular role. The supportive professionals' generous, youth-friendly tolerant nature and helpfulness were evident from the participants' narratives, illustrating how these aptitudes helped build trust.

Conclusion

Overall, building a trusting and friendly relationship between participants, second chance teachers and career professionals helped participants acquire knowledge and create a more positive attitude towards education and the adult world. This supports other findings in the relevant literature. For example, research into vocational education and training also emphasised the important role of tutor-student relationships in knowledge acquisition, together with the social and affective dimension to learning for at-risk students (Nash, 2008).

To sum up, students' narratives provide an account of career pathways experienced by young people in their country's policy context, and reflected the positive effects of second chance provision. These effects contributed to managing research participants' lives and careers. The most influential factor that helped research participants define their future goals and careers was institutional support including career education and career guidance. Following their statements about second chance provision, it could be argued that the second chance years have positively influenced the research participants' careers and personal lives.

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Acknowledgements

Career beliefs, aspirations and after-school activities: The effects of socio-economic status and ethnicity

Nikki Storey

This study examines the career beliefs of students from an ethnically diverse state school in London using an adapted short version of the 'Careers Beliefs Patterns Scale' (Arulmani, Van Laar & Easton, 2003, p.199). Results suggest that ethnicity had a much lower impact than socio-economic status on students' career beliefs and aspirations, whilst religion and ethnicity had a substantial influence on participation in extra-curricular activities. Recommendations include working with parents to create programmes which support students from lower socio-economic status backgrounds and communicating with religious organisations regarding ways that employability skills can be developed within their youth programmes.

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Introduction

Studies show that factors such as socio-economic status (SES), ethnicity and gender have a greater impact on the career decision-making processes of young people than their personal aspirations and desires (Bassot, 2011). Moreover, career choices reflect an unequal access to economic, social and cultural capital, which are partially developed through access to opportunities such as extracurricular activities and relevant role models (Archer, 2002). As the careers adviser in an ethnically and socio-economically diverse girls' school in Hackney, London, I was interested in investigating how these factors impact on students' career beliefs.

Career Beliefs

Career beliefs – defined as 'culturally mediated beliefs held by a group about the meaning and purpose of work' (Arulmani, 2011, p.86) – play an important role in the way individuals approach their career development, as they can influence receptivity to learning new skills and developing interests, setting goals, making career decisions and taking action (Roll & Arthur, 2002). People act according to their beliefs, regardless of whether or not they are accurate. Self-defeating beliefs prevent people from taking advantage of opportunities, aligning with the suggestion that thoughts ultimately determine feelings and behaviour (Turner & Conkel Ziebell, 2011). An ability to seize opportunities is important for accessing the labour market, and therefore it is beneficial for young people to be supported in identifying their own negative career beliefs and developing more constructive ones.

Ethnicity and culture are relevant to career beliefs because they influence views on career possibilities. Racism, isolation, shifting social norms and expectations, and having few role models of the same ethnic background can be discouraging (Comas-Diaz & Greene, 1994). Issues affecting ethnic minority students' career paths include expected low academic performance and conflictual relationships with teachers, a limited range of occupations being designated as culturally acceptable, opportunity structures, and conforming to social context and norms (Bassot, 2012; Hardgrove, Rootham & McDowell, 2015). Additionally, research shows that the impact of heritage community endorsed career beliefs can persist even when a family has migrated to another country (Arulmani et al., 2003).

However, ethnicity alone does not explain the career-related choices of minority ethnic students, which are situated within a variety of other constraints, possibilities and concerns, many of which are experienced by students from other non-minority backgrounds (Reay, David & Ball, 2005). Assumptions about the social class and the educational inheritance of ethnic minority students are commonly oversimplified. The definition of 'ethnicity' used here includes religio-cultural practices, beliefs and norms, as these tend to be inextricably linked. Religio-cultural commitments and values can heavily influence the ability of young people to engage in experiential learning opportunities that help them to develop useful employability skills (Reid, 2016). Transferable skills are increasingly important and so it is crucial that young people are given opportunities to try a range of activities and develop their skill base. Studies indicate that participation in after-school clubs results in higher average grades, lower absenteeism, interpersonal competencies, higher aspirations, and improved attention and motivation (Singh & Mishra, 2014). The focus school in this study provides around one hundred hours a week of free after-school activities that students can attend after the end of the school day, such as homework support, sports activities and musical projects. Internal school records show that these activities are attended by students with and without pupil premium funding, special educational needs, and from a range of religio-cultural and ethnic backgrounds, though some activities may attract more students from one sub-group than others. Therefore, extra-curricular activities have been included to identify which groups engage most and whether this mediates or contributes to disparities in SES or ethnicity.

Adolescents have been shown to rank the support of their parents as a greater source of influence on their career expectations than that of teachers or peers (Metheny & McWhirter, 2013). Furthermore, young people's aspirations are most commonly influenced by home and school contexts, with students most likely to aspire to a job done by a family member, family friend or neighbour, or to a role relating to one of their extra-curricular interests (Archer, DeWitt & Wong, 2014). Students from lower SES backgrounds are less likely to attend extra-curricular activities so occupational awareness may remain limited to low-

paying job roles. SES is linked to financial, cultural and social resources (or 'capital') which can develop competencies that are vital for effective career and life management (Guichard, 2015). The changing demographic of Hackney and labour market shifts have resulted in students' SES playing a more prominent and complex role in career beliefs.

Belief patterns may be embedded in the minds of the community and transmitted through social learning, with younger generations being exposed to the failure experiences and resulting defeatist attitudes of important role models which then influence their levels of self-efficacy (Arulmani et al., 2003). Research shows that unemployment in inner-city areas reduces young people's access to role models who can demonstrate how their efforts helped them to meet career objectives (Turner & Conkel Ziebell, 2011).

These factors argue that this area of research is important because the career beliefs of young people influence the types of jobs that they qualify and apply for in the future. It also provides an improved understanding of the needs of the students with whom I work and supports the provision of anti-oppressive careers guidance, which promotes social justice and equity.

Context and methodology

The study focused on a school in Hackney, the sixth most ethnically diverse borough in London. Hackney is not only home to a higher percentage of individuals who identify as Muslim (14.1%) than is typical for London (12.4%), but also has higher numbers of lone-parents than the average for London (London Borough of Hackney Policy Team, 2017), and 21.6% workless households, compared to the London average of 12.8% (NOMIS, 2017). However, since 2011 the number of young, white, primarily creative professionals moving to the area has increased, creating a sense of affective displacement amongst some local young people who no longer feel that they 'fit in' (Butcher & Dickens, 2016).

The student sample was taken from an all-female state-funded school that provides education and pastoral support for around 1200 girls aged 11-18. The school has more than three times the national

average number of students whose first language is not English, and almost double the national average number of students who are eligible for pupil premium funding (Department for Education, 2017).

The over-arching aim for this study was to research the extent to which ethnicity and SES affect the career beliefs of young women. A variation of the Careers Beliefs Patterns Scale (CBPS) model was used to gauge the effects of ethnicity and SES on the positivity of students' career beliefs, their engagement in after-school activities, their future career aims and their access to role models. Based on the results of earlier studies, I formulated the following six hypotheses:

- Students from ethnic minority backgrounds hold less positive career beliefs than white students.

- Students from ethnic minority backgrounds, particularly from Muslim religio-cultural backgrounds, are less likely to be engaged extensively in after-school activities.

- Students from higher SES backgrounds regardless of ethnicity will have more positive career beliefs than students from lower SES backgrounds.

- Students from lower SES backgrounds are less likely to have role models who have talked to them about their career paths.

- Students from lower SES and ethnic minority backgrounds have lower career aspirations than their higher SES and white ethnic counterparts.

- Students from ethnic minority backgrounds have a more limited range of career aspirations than white students.

Following ethical clearance from the school and Canterbury Christ Church University, a letter of invitation was issued to the parents of 183 female year 9 students of whom 49 declined to participate and 2 were absent on the day. Using a variation of the CBPS short form, a self-completion paper questionnaire and a short series of questions relating to student demographics, access to career role models and participation in after-school activities was distributed to 134 students aged 13-14 years from a range of ethnic, SES and religious backgrounds.

Prior to conducting the research some of the vignettes were re-worded to increase resonance for our city-dwelling study participants. The vignettes all outlined scenarios and conclusions that one might draw from them, such as: 'Jessica keeps on failing in Mathematics and Science. Therefore, getting a job will be difficult for her'. Participants then responded with the extent to which they agreed or disagreed through a 5-point Likert scale, which allowed for analysis of broader attitudes. Six of the included vignettes examined the respondent's thoughts on engaging with further education to increase work skills and/or academic qualification (Proficiency). A further six highlighted the individual's sense of control over the trajectory of their life (Control and Self-Direction), and the remaining two assessed students' attitudes to overcoming barriers encountered during their career preparation (Persistence). Two more questions concerned role models (Lent, Ireland, Penn, Morris & Sappington, 2017), and the questionnaire ended with a series of questions on students' demographic background and extracurricular engagement.

The questionnaires enabled large amounts of data to be collected without exposing participants to peer pressure, while a 5-point Likert scale allowed for more complex responses than a yes/no tick box. The results were collated, coded and analysed to identify significant patterns using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software. Although the data were primarily quantitative, an interpretivist approach to the analysis was adopted because of the subjective and personal nature of career beliefs. To examine participant's aspirations, jobs listed by students were assigned an average general educational demand (GED) score from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles and linked to UK occupational information (David, 2013; National Academy of Sciences, 1991). To categorise and classify the level of skill involved in the types of occupations that interested students an occupation coding tool was used (ONS, 2016). The mean ranking for occupational status generated by the National Opinion Research (Smith & Son, 2014) was used to examine the status level of the students' aspirations. Students from different ethnic backgrounds were grouped in accordance with the Office for National Statistics primary principles, while SES was analysed using two measures: free school meals (FSM) and a pupil premium funding indicator (PPI).

Students' religious identities were identified by parents and student names were replaced with numerical references to ensure anonymity.

Findings and analysis

Statistical analysis revealed that that the responses of students from PPI backgrounds were significantly more negative than those from non-PPI backgrounds (p=0.013). These results were amplified when using the same test to compare the responses from FSM students with those of non-FSM students (p=0.009). These replicate findings from an earlier study by Arulmani et al. (2003) that found that students from higher SES backgrounds demonstrate more positive career beliefs than students from lower SES backgrounds.

Further analysis of the impact of SES within different ethnic groups revealed that PPI created a significant difference in career beliefs only among Asian ethnic minority students (Mann-Whitney U test, p=0.038). However, a significant relationship was also found between ethnicity and FSM status in the case of white students (p=0.021). This partly disproves the hypothesis that students from higher SES backgrounds, regardless of ethnicity, demonstrate more positive career beliefs than students from lower SES backgrounds, and reflects research by Abbas (2010) who noted that families of young South Asian women from lower-SES backgrounds held a narrower view of their lives in the UK due to within-community solidarity and wider societal discrimination. Further research may shed light on whether this relates to the number of generations that have been through UK societal cycles, or to the marginalisation of minority groups (Ball, Reay & David 2002).

The finding relating to white FSM students fits recent examination of lower-SES white individuals as a nationally under-achieving group, indicating a relationship between this and their negative career beliefs (Fisher, 2017). In addition to SES, social classes, defined as 'groups of people who share similar economic circumstances and associated lifestyles' (Warwick-Booth, 2013, p.54) may also play a role. For example, parents from higher social-class backgrounds socialise their children in ways that contribute to

educational success (Berrington, Roberts & Tammes, 2016). However, class was not part of this study so further research would be required to confirm these suggestions.

The findings revealed that students from minority ethnic groups are no less likely to hold negative career beliefs than their white counterparts (Mann-Whitney test, p=0.601). One explanation could be that increasingly positive career beliefs amongst ethnic minorities are due to changes in opportunity structures. Alternatively, it could also be that the students are too young to have developed an awareness of ethnicity-related barriers that could result in a shift towards negative career beliefs (Melvin & Galles, 2011).

Other notable findings relating to ethnicity included a demonstration of the influence of the cultural 'veil'. Amongst the white respondents, 45% did not consider themselves to belong to an ethnic group, almost 20% more than any other ethnic group. Similarly, responses from mixed ethnicity students could be explained by a sense of being situated in a society that categorises ethnicity as a dichotomy, and the resulting struggle to claim a self-defined identity (Warwick-Booth, 2013; Uy, 2016).

Scores for the Proficiency Beliefs scale suggest that regardless of SES or ethnicity, students understand the benefits of engaging in further education to increase their work-related skills or academic qualifications. Less positive were the scores given for the Control and Self-Direction Beliefs scale which suggest that they may not believe that it is within their control to progress on to further study and develop their skills. This belief has been shown to affect students' attitudes to learning, creating a dissonance between academic effort and future career rewards (Deardorff, Gonzalez & Sandler, 2003).

The results of the Persistence Beliefs scale should be utilised with caution due to the limited number of questions in this category. However, overall the responses support the findings from wider studies that young people in the UK, particularly young women, lack resilience, emphasising the need for interventions to support the development of positive emotions towards their academic lives (Wang, 2017).

A chi-square test identified a relationship between PPI and responses to the Role Models question (p=0.003). This indicates that students eligible for PPI do not believe that their role models have the cultural and social resources needed for effective career management (Guichard, 2015). Or alternatively, that young people from lower-SES backgrounds do not have access to a role model who holds the type of career role that they aspire to in the future (Archer *et al.*, 2014).

Consistent with wider research, an analysis of responses by ethnicity revealed that extracurricular attendance was highest amongst white students, and lowest amongst Asian students (chi-square test, p=0.012). Similarly, students from Muslim families were significantly (chi-square test, p=0.037) less likely to attend after school activities than those who came from a non-Muslim background. These findings could be due to a range of factors, including larger family sizes and a resulting need for young people to support at home, an emphasis on collectivism and spending time with family, or a misunderstanding of the potential benefits of engaging in after-school activities (Jiang & Peguero, 2016).

Further analysis also found that non-PPI students were more likely to participate in after-school activities than PPI students (chi-square test, p=0.000). This was somewhat unexpected, as the activities are provided free of charge. However, it corroborates previous studies which suggest that the participation of young people from higher-SES families in structured activities is due to parents taking what Covay and Carbonaro (2010, p.21) refer to as a 'concerted cultivation approach', while young people from lower-SES families have large amounts of unstructured free time.

Average GED scores revealed a significant relationship between SES and career aspirations (p=0.023). This may result from friends and family of young people from lower SES backgrounds holding a limited range of roles, making it difficult to visualise alternative career options (Hardgrove et al., 2015). In contrast, aspirations amongst middle-class children are thought to be higher than their working-class counterparts due to the internalisation of parental ambitions, and increased opportunity and resource to reach these ambitious goals (Schoon & Parsons, 2002).

These results suggest that divisions run along SES lines, reinforcing the notion of perpetuated poverty presented in previous studies and raising concerns about how best to tackle issues of social mobility. A clear benefit of increasing student engagement with extracurricular activities and the world of work is that this raises awareness of the range of occupations available. The idea that some roles are not for people from certain socio-economic backgrounds (Archer, 2002) has been connected to ethnicity too, although this study did not find a link between being from a minority ethnic background and having lower career aspirations (p=0.291). However, this could be because the students have not yet reached an age where they have started to perceive ethnicity-related barriers that could affect their participation in certain occupations. On the other hand, it could suggest that because of campaigns to raise aspirations students from ethnic minority backgrounds are considering jobs previously thought not to be available. It could also be that the increased focus on diversity has improved employer practices, and so students are aware of individuals from their ethnic background working in a wider range of roles.

Implications for practice

This study explored the influence of ethnicity and SES on career beliefs and whether they hold the same significance for different groups. It demonstrated that tools created outside of a Western cultural context can add value when used within a Western context.

In contrast with earlier studies, the results suggest that SES has a stronger influence on career beliefs, aspirations and extracurricular involvement than ethnicity, and may be a main dividing factor. It is difficult to know how to tackle this in student activities without making the delineations of wealth obvious and therefore uncomfortable for the individuals participating. However, enabling greater participation in after-school activities could begin by engaging parents in identifying and addressing barriers that prevent student involvement and finding ways around them.

Asian students were most likely to be Muslim and least likely to attend extracurricular activities, and yet had some of the highest aspirations and career

beliefs, contradicting previous studies. However, it may be beneficial still to explore how best careers practitioners and religious establishments can work together to support the development of students' employability skills.

It would be worthwhile to research to what extent students from inner-city communities feel that they control their futures, to identify ways of increasing their self-direction beliefs, and to generate interventions that help young people examine the outcomes of more adaptive career behaviours. Whilst it is unrealistic to expect equal aspirations and attainment in all young people and wrong to stigmatise those not wishing to pursue high-status roles, we should tailor career guidance to ensure that students whose career beliefs could limit their future options receive appropriate support.

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Call for papers

Open call for papers for the April 2020 issue:
Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling

The guest editors for the next issue (Fiona Christie, Eileen Cunningham and Kath Houston) all have dual identities as practitioners and researchers, which leads them to be most interested in receiving expressions of interest from authors of articles that use theory and research to critically inform career development policy and practice.

Articles that address decent work and uncertain labour market and public policy contexts are particularly welcome. This could relate to a wide range of contexts and topics. The following gives a rough guide.

Context(s) could include:

- Workplace settings (e.g. career coaching, L&D, HR, outplacement)

- Educational settings (e.g. higher education, schools, further education and skills)

- Informal settings (e.g. community-based)

- Career development work with young people in any context

- Career development work with adults in any context

- Any other relevant context

> Initial expressions of interest (title plus 100 word extract):
> **15th November 2019**
>
> Article submissions:
> **31st January 2020**
>
> With enquiries and expressions of interest, please contact Fiona Christie:
> f.christie@mmu.ac.uk

Topics(s) could include:

- Creative and critical perspectives about theory and/or practice

- Current labour market issues (e.g., uncertainty and precarity)

- Mobilities (eg. geographic, social)

- The organisation and management of career support services

- Emerging policy, corporate and/or governmental issues

- Global, international or non-UK-based work

- Social justice, critical pedagogical and/or emancipatory practices

- New tools, technologies and models

- Innovative case studies and other empirical work

- The training and education of careers workers

- Any other relevant topic

Forthcoming events | NICEC Calendar

At the Cutting Edge: Research into Practice

NICEC/CDI event: Thursday, 7th November 2019 Bristol

Developing new ways of conceptualising our work in supporting career transitions & social mobility

Twice each year NICEC and the Career Development Institute collaborate on a *Cutting Edge* event for practitioners. This session is a special one as it builds on NICEC's Bill Law Student Award recognising innovative and impactful research in our field, with each of our main contributors sharing their highly regarded research and its practical implications for practice.

In this session you'll be encouraged to reflect on the relevance and insights of the research for your own practice building on the core themes and concepts that are relevant to careers work wherever you practice. The session may also provide some inspiration and guidance for anyone who is considering doing some further study in the field of careers. It will be highly interactive and participative.

Book your place:
https://www.thecdi.net/Skills-Training-Events/NICEC-At-the-cutting-edge---Research-into-practice-/68360/book

Date and Time	Event	Place
Thursday 7 November 2019 9.30am-4pm	*Free CPD Event for NICEC and CDI Members:* NICEC/CDI – At the Cutting Edge: Research into Practice – Dr Cathy Brown, Laura Walker, Anne Delauzun	Bristol
Monday 18 November 2019 5pm-6.30pm	*Seminar* FE Careers Provision – Russell George, Anthony Barnes	Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London (Room 9)
Programme for 2020:		
Seminars (5-6.30pm) Wednesday 22 January 2020 Tuesday 31 March Thursday 2 July Monday 16 November	**Network meetings (2-5pm)** Wednesday 13 May 2020 Thursday 24 September 2020	**Venue for all events:** Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, Euston, London

Topics planned include:
- Inter-generational personal career theory - how one generation imposes their view of career on others
- Career development work within organisations – the contribution of learning and development practitioners
- Career coaching (outplacement)
- International perspectives e.g. the work of CEDEFOP

Costs
- Seminars and Network Meetings are included in membership fees for NICEC Fellows and members.
- Charges for non-members are £20 for seminars and £40 for network meetings.

Forthcoming events | CDI Calendar

CDI Training, Conference and Events Calendar 2019-20

For more information and booking, visit the CDI website: www.thecdi.net/Skills-Training-Events

Date	Time	Event	Place
Monday 28 October 2019 Tuesday 11 February 2020	9.30am-4pm	Advanced Career Guidance and Coaching Skills	Bristol Birmingham
Thursday 31 October 2019 Thursday 6 February 2020	12pm-4pm	Masterclass - LMI in career guidance practice: Use, misuse or lack of use?	London Manchester
Thursday 14 November 2019 Tuesday 10 March 2020	9.30am-4pm	Networking for careers professionals and their clients	Manchester London
Wednesday 20 November 2019	9.30am-4pm	Insights into Labour Market Information	London
2-3 December 2019		CDI National Conference Career 4.0 - Career Management 2025 *Held every two years, our national conference provides a unique opportunity to discuss critical aspects of our work; learn from expert speakers and workshop presenters; network; and have a bit of fun!* Conference Themes • The future of work • Resilience and well-being • Digital skills for careers professionals	Hilton Hotel, Gateshead
Webinars (free to CDI members):			
11 November 2019 & 11 March 2020	4-5pm GMT	Series 1: Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance – A series of 2 webinars to engage and support school-college Governors	Online
13 November 2019	4-5pm GMT	The Career Equation: A simple model to transform your career conversations with adults	Online
18 November 2019	4-5pm GMT	CDI Scotland: The brilliant brain…some implications for careers work	Online
22 November 2019	12.30-1.30pm GMT	CDI Scotland: The impact of trauma and adversity on the ability to learn	Online
13 January 2020 & 12 May 2020	4-5pm GMT 4-5pm BST	Series 2: Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance – A series of 2 webinars to engage and support school-college Governors	Online

ABOUT THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector. We have a growing membership of 4500 individual members and affiliate organisations and speak with one voice for a lively and diverse sector.

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We have a key role to play in influencing UK skills policy as it affects those with whom career development practitioners work and a clear purpose to improve and assure the quality and availability of career development services for all throughout the UK.

All CDI members subscribe to a Code of Ethics, which is supported by a strong disciplinary process, and subscribe to the principles of CPD.

Importantly the CDI is responsible for the UK Register of Career Development Professionals; the National Occupational Standards (NOS: CD); the first Career Progression Pathway for the sector; UK Career Development Awards; QCD and QCG/D qualifications; the CDI Academy; the Careers Framework and a UK-wide CPD programme.

Below are a few of our major achievements:

• A powerful brand supported by an evolving website **www.thecdi.net**; social media (Twitter and LinkedIn) presence; and quarterly magazine *Career Matters*;

• A schedule of CPD, skills training, webinars and conferences based on market analysis and members' training needs;

• A growing media and lobbying presence with the CDI recognised as the *expert voice* in the field; advising politicians, speaking at conferences and commenting on policy;

• The establishment of the UK Career Development Awards – ten sponsored awards including *Careers Adviser/Coach of the Year* and *Careers Leader of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Award*;

• Clear focus on professional identity and increasing the professionalism of the sector through our influence, ownership and development of the QCD and QCG/D and the CDI Academy including the new *CDI Certificate in Careers Leadership*.

ASSURING QUALITY

The CDI has a critical role to play in setting standards and articulating what quality looks like for the sector. Importantly we are an awarding body, managing the Qualification in Career Development (previously the QCG/D) and the UK Register for Career Development Professionals, which is pivotal to our ongoing quality agenda and is fast becoming recognised as the sector's equivalent to chartered status.

We are delighted to be working in partnership with NICEC on the Journal and the NICEC/CDI research-focused events which take place twice a year across the UK.

The Journal is made available to all CDI members via our website.

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