



LEADERSHIP AND CAREERS PROVISION: A NEW DAWN

DR DEIRDRE HUGHES OBE

ABOUT FETL

The Further Education Trust for Leadership's vision is of a further education sector that is valued and respected for:

- Innovating constantly to meet the needs of learners, communities and employers;
- Preparing for the long term as well as delivering in the short term; and
- Sharing fresh ideas generously and informing practice with knowledge.

Website: www.fetl.org.uk

Email: enquiries@fetl.org.uk

🐦 @FETforL

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE

Dr Deirdre Hughes, OBE specialises in lifelong guidance policies, research and practice at an international, national and regional level. She is a UK expert in lifelong guidance and careers education (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education, 2017 – present). Deirdre advised the Scottish Government on its national Careers Strategy (2020) and has recently worked with Careers Wales and the Welsh Government on a new 5-year vision and strategy for the national careers service in Wales. She is Chair of Skills Northern Ireland and Chair leading on a major review of the UK matrix quality standard for information, advice and guidance. She is prolific writer, researcher and policy adviser promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. Deirdre is Director of dmh associates and an Associate Fellow at the University of Warwick, Institute for Employment Research (IER). She is also Co-Editor of the British Journal for Guidance and Counselling: International Symposium Series.

CONTENTS

Foreword	5
Executive summary	7
Places and Spaces	8
Six Key Recommendations	8
Introduction	11
Context	12
Two Key Questions	15
Greater investment in careers support services	19
Leadership and Careers Provision	19
Looking Backwards	20
A New Dawn	25
Looking Forwards	27
Devolved Budgets	29
New Scenarios: Leadership Thought and Influence	30
Ideas For Action	33
Helping to Secure Good Jobs for People and Skills for Businesses	35
Use of Digital and Labour Market Intelligence and Information (LMI)	36
Leadership and the Careers Curriculum	40
National, Regional and Local Careers Strategies	41
Conclusion	45
Six Key Recommendations	46
Appendix 1	49
Leaders Interviewed	49
Contact	50

FOREWORD

Dame Ruth Silver

This is an excellent and timely report, written by Deirdre Hughes, a leading expert in the field with long-standing knowledge and experience of further education and careers support. The Further Education Trust for Leadership (FETL) is pleased to have supported it, and commends it to the FE and skills sector. It deserves to be widely read and discussed.

The topic, of course, is a critical one, as well as an under-researched one. It is almost a cliché to say that we are living through profoundly uncertain, not to say turbulent, times. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing volatilities in education and the workplace, while highlighting the enormous complexity and fundamental unpredictability of the world of work that both young people and adults will have to negotiate in the decades to come. It has also underscored the need for people to adapt to these changing conditions throughout life, developing core skills such as resilience and the capacity to continue learning. This report, which considers the role of leaders in creating career pathways, is therefore much needed and very welcome.

The report usefully scans ahead to this emerging complexity, highlighting its fast-changing nature and the enormous pressure this will inevitably place on learners, staff and leaders alike. It provides a sense of the challenges we face, while reviewing some past disappointments in policy in this area, highlighting

the need for a 'new dawn' in careers support, at national, regional and local levels. It offers numerous interesting, in some cases eye-opening, comparisons and contrasts, demonstrating where we might do better, learn more or work in a more thoughtful, connected and inclusive way.

There is a significant leadership challenge in all of this. Leaders need to understand the nature of the changes taking place in their communities and reflect intelligently and farsightedly on how these changes will impact on the career needs and aspirations of learners. They also need to ensure careers provision is flexible and dynamic enough to react to changing circumstances and priorities, while supporting students in developing the skills and capabilities they need to exploit new opportunities. As the author makes clear, the need to improve careers provision for young people and adults in England is urgent. She calls for collective action to realise the potential personal and economic benefits of inclusive, locally based careers support.

The discussion in the report is informed a literature review of leadership and careers provision and in-depth interviews with senior managers from further education and careers in England. This is important. As with all FETL reports, the starting point is the ideas, concerns and reflections of sector staff and leaders. These make clear that there is much more to do to deliver careers support for all adults and young people that is fit for purpose in the context of our fast-changing education and work contexts. This effort will be critical in ensuring careers provision plays a full role in the social and economic recovery of our communities.

Dame Ruth Silver is President of the Further Education Trust for Leadership

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FETL commissioned this 'think piece' to stimulate ideas and discussion on how leaders can best create career pathways to success for young people and adults during volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) times. The content builds upon recent announcements in the Comprehensive Spending Review (Treasury, 2020), a literature review of leadership and careers provision, and 13 in-depth interviews with senior managers from further education (FE) and careers sectors in England.

There is an urgent call for national, regional and local leadership designed to take action on improving careers provision for young people and adults across England. Job roles and labour markets are changing rapidly. Job security has been abruptly and cruelly diminished for many, without warning. Staying healthy, paying the bills and managing to 'put bread on the table' are priorities for many individuals and families. At the core of the need for action are the issues of identity, trust, dignity, livelihood and sense of belonging and fulfilment. Mental health and wellbeing is often associated with one's job status and income level. This will require new skills and mindsets focused on opportunities, career adaptability and resilience.

Places and Spaces

When it comes to providing hope and opportunity, there are two simple questions:

- Where can young people and adults go to for trustworthy careers information, advice and guidance/ coaching in England? (*Places*)
- What type of high-quality blended careers support can be made available in local communities, both online and offline? (*Spaces*)

This paper argues for more collective action, and local places and spaces for inclusive careers support. This is crucial in supporting individuals' education, economic and wellbeing outcomes. If ever there was a moment in time to take stock and improve the life chances of individuals surely now is the time.

A new leadership and leadership movement can bring about positive change and prosperity to individuals' career progression and their livelihoods. It is a 'no-brainer' to ramp up inclusive careers support across England, with FE colleges and partners at the forefront.

Six Key Recommendations

For government policy-makers, leaders, professional bodies, trade unions and practitioners:

1. Inclusive careers support services and leadership should be prioritised and clearly framed within national, regional and local economic and social recovery plans.
2. The future development of England's National Careers Service, Work coach programme (DWP) and Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) policies should be co-owned and assisted by a cross-departmental taskforce/ advisory body with a clear governance structure.

3. A new lifetime skills and careers advice and guidance service should be hosted within colleges (where appropriate and subject to resourcing) situated in the context of a strong partnership approach with national and local careers and employability providers.
4. The 2012–2020 careers experiment in England should be formally reviewed. The 'knowledge hexagon' of education, businesses, training providers, trade unions, careers and employability professionals should be strengthened as a condition for jobs, skills and growth 2021–2031.
5. Time, energy and resource must be invested in more and better careers information, advice and guidance from well-trained and qualified professionals.
6. A highly visible and well-resourced careers support campaign is needed to address skills mismatch, skills gaps and promote career adaptability and resilience in a post-Covid era.

INTRODUCTION

This FETL-commissioned paper is designed to stimulate ideas and discussion on how leaders can best create career pathways to success for young people and adults during volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) times. The content builds upon recent announcements in the Comprehensive Spending Review (Treasury, 2020),¹ a literature review of leadership and careers provision, and 13 in-depth interviews with senior managers from further education (FE) and careers sectors in England – see Appendix 1.

There is an urgent call for national, regional and local leadership designed to take action on improving careers provision for young people and adults. 'Career' is a complex and contentious term, particularly in a Covid-19 context.² Job roles and labour markets are changing rapidly. Job security has been abruptly and cruelly diminished for many, without warning. Staying healthy, paying the bills and managing to 'put bread in the table' are priorities for many individuals and families. This will require new skills and mindsets focused on opportunities, career adaptability and resilience. This paper argues for more collective action, and local places and spaces for inclusive careers support. This is crucial in supporting individuals' education, economic and well-being outcomes. If ever there was a moment in time to take stock and improve the life chances of individuals surely now is the time.

1 *Spending Review 2020*. London: HM Treasury. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2020-documents/spending-review-2020>

2 This can be described as 'a sequence of life and work experiences over time – everyone has a career of some sort'. Hughes' adaptation of original works by M. Arthur, D. Hall and B. Lawrence (eds). 1989. *Handbook of career theory*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Context

Societies everywhere are undergoing a deep transformation. The Covid-19 pandemic, Industry 4.0 disruption (nesta, 2020),³ climate change (CCC, 2020),⁴ and an ageing workforce (Schuller, 2019)⁵ have become realities impacting on the social and economic fabric of our UK society. These and other key factors are being acutely felt in many local households and communities. For example, ONS (2020)⁶ data in the final quarter of 2019 showed that there were more than 5 million self-employed people in the UK, up from 3.2 million in 2000, with self-employed people representing 15.3% of employment. Twenty per cent of self-employed people are aged 16 to 34 years (990,000) in comparison with 37% of young people who work as employees. The data showed that younger self-employed people tend to have less savings and are therefore less financially resilient; only 50% of self-employed 16–34-year olds report having enough savings to cover a 50% drop in income over three months. In November 2020, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported "decreases in the number of part-time workers (down 158,000 on the quarter to 8.11 million) and self-employed people (down 174,000 to 4.53 million, with a record 99,000 decrease for women).⁷ By Spring 2021, a tsunami of unemployment is expected:

Unemployment is forecast to rise to 2.6 million by the spring... We cannot protect all jobs.

(Rishi Sunak, Chancellor of the Exchequer, November 2020)

3 Mulgan, G. 2017. How can the fourth industrial revolution be made good? <https://www.nesta.org.uk/blog/how-can-the-fourth-industrial-revolution-be-made-good/>

4 Climate Change Committee. 2020. <https://www.theccc.org.uk/>

5 Schuller, T. 2019. *Leadership, learning and demographics: The changing shape of the lifecourse and its implications for education*. FETL. <http://fetl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/FETL-Leadership-Learning-and-Demographics-AW-WEB.pdf>

6 Office for National Statistics. 2020. Coronavirus and self-employment in the UK. [https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/coronavirusandselfemploymentintheuk/2020-04-24#:~:text=By%20the%20fourth%20quarter%20\(Oct,up%20from%2012%25%20in%202000.](https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/coronavirusandselfemploymentintheuk/2020-04-24#:~:text=By%20the%20fourth%20quarter%20(Oct,up%20from%2012%25%20in%202000.)

7 ONS (November 2020 Figure 3 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/employmentintheuk/november2020>

There is a slowing of the labour market whereby vacancies have fallen and increasing numbers of individuals are being displaced from sectors and occupations. Many workers have been furloughed, many left not knowing if their jobs will still exist in the next 3–6 months. Young people, the lowest-paid and females (more than males) are likely to be disproportionately adversely affected by the crisis. Evidence shows prolonged periods out of work will have lasting negative impacts on their wellbeing, health, incomes and future employment. There are deep-rooted inequalities such as an erosion of Level 2 and below education and training provision in England. Digital poverty and the North/ South divide are major concerns. For example, the Lloyds' Consumer Digital Index 2020⁸ found that 9 million people in the UK are 'digitally excluded', with no or limited access to the internet. Forty per cent are based in northern England, in the cities and regions hit hardest by the wave of local Tier 3 lockdowns.

The Bank of England (August 2020),⁹ looking back on previous recessions (Chart A), shows that unemployment tends to remain elevated for a period following a recession.

8 Lloyds Bank. 2020. UK Consumer Digital Index 2020 – Key Findings. <https://www.lloydsbank.com/banking-with-us/whats-happening/consumer-digital-index/key-findings.html>

9 Bank of England. 2020. How persistent will the impact of Covid-19 on unemployment be? <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/bank-overground/2020/how-persistent-will-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-unemployment-be>

Chart A: Unemployment has tended to remain elevated for a period following recessions (a)

The unemployment rate and the Monetary Policy Committee's August Monetary Policy Report projection (b) (c)



Sources: ONS and Bank calculations.

- (a) Recessions are defined as at least two consecutive quarters of negative GDP growth
- (b) Per cent of the 16+ economically active population
- (c) The fan depicts the probability of various outcomes for Labour Force Survey (LFS) unemployment, conditioned on the assumptions set out in the August 2020 Monetary Policy Report (MPR) and based on LFS data to May 2020/ For further details, see footnotes to Charts 1.1 and 1.2 of the August 2020 MPR

In September 2020, the Prime Minister announced a new Lifetime Skills Guarantee¹⁰ to give adults the chance to take free college courses valued by employers. The recent Comprehensive Spending Review (November 2020) sets out a series of support packages for young people and adults:

This Spending Review will ensure hundreds of thousands of jobs are supported and protected in the acute phase of this crisis and beyond with a multi-billion package of investment to ensure that no one is left without hope or opportunity¹¹

10 Prime Minister's Office. September 2020. Major expansion of post-18 education and training to level up and prepare workers for post-COVID economy. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-expansion-of-post-18-education-and-training-to-level-up-and-prepare-workers-for-post-covid-economy>

11 Spending Review 2020. London: HM Treasury. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2020-documents/spending-review-2020>

Two Key Questions

When it comes to providing hope and opportunity, there are two simple questions:

- Where can young people and adults go to for trustworthy careers information, advice and guidance/ coaching in England? (*Places*)
- What type of high-quality blended careers support can be made available in local communities, both online and offline? (*Spaces*)

Places need to be highly visible and attractive to individuals. *Spaces* need context, facilitation and careful embedding into cultural environments so that people can then make them into places that they can shape for themselves. People need to be able to pick themselves up knowing what opportunities are out there for their livelihood, mental health and wellbeing. Providing careers support and opportunities for people to continue learning and training throughout life will be critical to the nation's economic recovery. Encouraging and supporting lifelong learning will be an important component in this process. It is anticipated in the long-awaited FE White Paper (forthcoming)¹² that the seeds of an updated careers strategy for England (2021-2026) will be planted.

The UK College of the Future Commission (November, 2020) suggests:

A new lifetime skills and careers advice and guidance service would be hosted within colleges, where appropriate – and where holistic services already exist, will build strong links to complement this, ensuring a coherent and

12 Belgutay, J. 2020. Williamson: White Paper will be 'exciting and bold'. *TES*, 21 October. <https://www.tes.com/news/gavin-williamson-fe-colleges-skills-white-paper-will-be-exciting-and-bold> See also: Whieldon, F. 2020. FE White Paper pushed back to 2021, ESFA director suggests. *FE Week*, 11 December. https://feweek.co.uk/2020/11/26/fe-white-paper-pushed-back-to-2021-esfa-director-suggests/?mc_cid=872aeb2ad5&mc_eid=46ceba823a

*connected community service. This must also include quality information and guidance about available student finance.*¹³

The National Audit Office (NAO, 2020)¹⁴ notes that despite the financial pressures colleges face, in August 2019 more than four in five colleges were graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted. However, the findings show that financial constraints have meant that colleges have had to narrow their curriculum and to reduce the broader support they offer to students – including across careers advice, employability activities and mental health services (p. 8, para 14). Despite this, some colleges have found ways of shaping their local careers provision for both young people and adults. A few selected examples include:

- a 'Careers Advance' Academy (Birmingham Met College)
- a Strategic Learning Partnership approach (Lewisham College)
- a local 'careers offer' city-wide strategy (Derby College and Exeter College)
- a local partnership careers hub (Newcastle College, Harlow College)
- a local enterprise partnership (LEP) labour market intelligence data approach (Activate Learning, Oxford)

13 Independent Commission on the College of the Future. 2020. *The English college of the future*, p. 43. November. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c8847f58dfc8c45fa705366/t/5fb641cefa02c43a33403fc6/1605779919957/ICCF+England.pdf>

14 National Audit Office. 2020. Financial sustainability of colleges in England. <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Financial-sustainability-of-colleges-in-England.pdf>

Ofsted requirements for career education and guidance in FE colleges (Ofsted, March 2020)^{15,16} states: 'Inspectors will consider the provider's quality of education and/or training and the effectiveness of leadership and management. They will assess whether safeguarding arrangements are effective and if learners benefit from good-quality careers advice and guidance' (p. 29). This also includes a review of how well high-quality impartial careers guidance enables learners to make progress and move on to a higher level of qualification, employment, further training or independent living when they are ready to do so. This is challenging but essential work.

15 Ofsted. 2020. Further education and skills inspection handbook. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/873169/Further_education_and_skills_handbook_Mar2020.pdf

16 Section 41 of the Technical and Further Education Act 2017 requires that Ofsted "comment[s]" on careers guidance provided to students in FE colleges, sixth-form colleges and designated institutions. The Act defines students for this purpose as those aged 16 to 18 and those up to the age of 25 who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. While the statutory duty applies only to the inspection of the above institutions, inspectors will inspect and comment in similar fashion on careers advice on short and full inspections of all further education and skills providers as appropriate. If there are no 16- to 19-year olds or those with EHC plans, the inspection may not cover careers guidance.'

GREATER INVESTMENT IN CAREERS SUPPORT SERVICES

Throughout England, individuals will need to know where they can go to for independent and impartial careers information, advice and guidance/coaching on a lifelong basis. Careers guidance is needed now by people who may never have thought that they would have to suddenly change direction. It will also be essential to find ways to keep individuals' motivated, resilient, agile and aspirational in the new post-Covid landscape in 2021 and beyond. This raises some challenging 'wicked questions': Whose careers-support knowledge and experience is valued? How is careers support, as a social practice, imagined, constructed, and practiced? Whose interest does this serve?

Recently, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and other major international bodies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), CEDEFOP, UNESCO and the European Training Foundation have called on governments for greater investment in career guidance (CEDEFOP, 2019).¹⁷

Leadership and Careers Provision

Since 2012, a quasi-market, experimental approach has become the dominant discourse in England, in contrast to differing and complementary arrangements in Northern Ireland, Scotland

¹⁷ CEDEFOP. 2019. *Investing in career guidance*. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/2227>

and Wales (Hughes, 2013).¹⁸ Insofar as these developments have transformed the careers support landscape, they have also created significant challenges which require new forms of policy imagery and imagination for high-impact, inclusive and impartial careers support.

The National Careers Service in England (ESFA/DfE) does not work in schools but offers a telephone helpline service and national website that can be accessed by young people from age 13 upwards. It focuses its face-to-face delivery mainly on *adults in priority groups* and operates a *payment-by-results* (PBR) arrangement. In contrast, the Celtic nations' careers services are overseen by Departments for the Economy or joint Departmental responsibilities,¹⁹ are all-age, omni-channelled and deliver careers support in a wide range of education, training and employment settings from an early age.

Looking Backwards

The formation of an 'all-age' National Careers Service (ESFA/DfE, 2012), the introduction of a Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC, 2014), and the gradual expansion of JobCentre Plus (DWP, 2015) provided 'seeds of hope' for inclusive access to high-quality careers information, advice and guidance/ coaching services throughout England. These three separate but inter-related national organisations are enshrined in Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and statements of intent.

Keep (2012, p. 28)²⁰ noted that 'one of the most oft-repeated, but also most frequently ignored recommendations in the field of UK VET [vocational education and training] over the last 30 years has been the need for more and better careers information, advice and guidance'. In 2013, the AoC²¹ issued guidelines on partnership working and co-location of the National Careers Service working in colleges.

A National Careers Strategy (DfE, 2017)²² placed greater emphasis on schools and colleges to plan and deliver 'Good Career Guidance' using Gatsby benchmarks (Gatsby, 2014).²³ It also made a landmark decision to extend the policy focus into primary education, beginning with a pilot fund to innovate and explore new approaches and to see what existing schemes could be scaled up. This arrangement, supported by the CEC with £75m grant funding since its inception, is tasked by DfE to perform a strategic role and fund selected 'test and learn' programmes.

The Gatsby benchmarks (op. cit.) have helped to drive leadership engagement with a compelling narrative and set of high-quality principles for good practice. Funding of circa £432k from the CEC to the Association of Colleges (AoC) has enabled some FE institutions to strengthen the professional development of staff. Prior to 2012, the annual allocated budget from government for careers support services for young people alone was circa

18 Hughes, D. 2013. The changing UK careers landscape: Tidal waves, turbulence and transformation. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 41(3), 226–3239. (Special issue: Re-framing careers work.) Open Access. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03069885.2013.788131>

19 Department for Economy and the Department of Education joint ministerial responsibilities (N. Ireland); Department for Fair Work, Business and Skills (Scotland); Department for the Economy, Transport and North Wales led responsibility for Careers Wales.

20 Keep, E. 2012. *Youth transitions, the labour market and entry into employment: some reflections and questions*. SKOPE Research Paper No. 108. Cardiff: SKOPE. http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/4149/1/Youth%20Transitions,%20the%20Labour%20Market%20and%20Entry%20into%20employment_Ewart%20%20SKOPE%202012-paper.pdf

21 AoC. 2013. *Working together. Partnership working and co-location of the National Careers Service in FE Colleges: A practical guide for FE Colleges*. https://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/Working_Together_Partnership_Working_and_Co_location_of_the_National_Car%20%20%20.pdf

22 DfE. 2017. *Careers strategy: Making the most of everyone's skills and talents*. London: Department for Education. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>

23 Gatsby. 2014. *Good career guidance*. London: Gatsby. <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/gatsby-sir-john-holman-good-career-guidance-2014.pdf>

£203million.²⁴ The effect of the policy change was that schools still focus careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) mostly at key transition points, predominantly in Years 11 and 13. As a result, young people may have been directed into a single provider (including the school's sixth form – Key Stage 5) and are not given the freedom (or advice) to make informed choices.

Findings from interviews with college leaders suggest that despite these major national developments over the last eight years, the careers-support landscape for young people and adults in England has remained highly fragmented. There are a few exceptions where city-wide approaches and close-knit education partnerships are focusing on finding local solutions. But overall, this is a confused marketplace, with inequitable access to trustworthy and highly visible careers support – particularly for those who drop out of education pre- or post-16, and course-completers still searching for work.

While the ever-changing role and responsibilities of the state and markets unfold, local delivery of careers services is becoming more diffuse, especially for young people, parents, businesses, and adults. A broad sentiment of disappointment in progress made since *Careers Strategy 2017* was published²⁵ featured the following criticisms:

1. The government's lack of monitoring and reporting on the impact of the Baker Clause.²⁶

24 UK Careers Sector Strategic Forum. 2011. The Government's proposed new arrangements for careers education and guidance: What will they mean for employers? <https://careersalliance.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/briefing-note-8-employer-engagement.pdf>

25 DfE. 2017. *Careers strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents*. London: Department for Education. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>

26 Camden, B. 2020. Ofsted raps first school over Baker Clause. FE Week, 15 May. <https://feweek.co.uk/2020/05/15/school-slammed-by-ofsted-after-failing-baker-clause/>

2. The lack of funding for progression routes at Level 2 and below,²⁷ as well as SEN support services and ESOL provision for adults who are highly skilled, trained and qualified working in low-paid, poor-quality jobs.
3. The inconsistency in financial and practical local support from the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) to FE colleges.
4. The pressures on businesses pre- and post-pandemic means employers may be reluctant to support work-experience initiatives, including the requirements for 'T Levels'.
5. The National Careers Service priority groups have not changed since before the pandemic. Large swathes of adults who have been furloughed or made redundant under the age of 50 are currently ineligible to benefit fully from this service. The narrow restrictions of the current PBR²⁸ arrangement can hinder providers delivering careers support for those most in need. Also, many young people are missing out on 'local places to go to' for careers guidance from trained professionals.
6. The lack of joined-up approaches to labour market intelligence/ information (LMI). The marketplace is dominated by a few major companies selling LMI data separately via licence agreements to colleges, LEAs, Combined/ Local Authorities and careers service providers.
7. The inadequacies in purchasing power across the FE sector to expand their teams of professionally trained careers advisers and to secure access to independent careers professionals with no government ring-fenced funding made explicit.

27 DfE is now formally consulting on this issue: Have your say on post-16 Level 2 and below study. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/have-your-say-on-post-16-level-2-and-below-study>

28 The Payment By Results funding model - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877262/National_Careers_Service_Funding-Rules_1_April.pdf

It is therefore unsurprising to find college leaders in the English College of the Future (op.cit. see note 13) calling for a new lifetime skills and careers advice and careers guidance service.

A NEW DAWN

There is another hidden dimension yet to be fully explored between government, further education leaders, employers and careers professionals. This relates specifically to equality of opportunity. The Black Further Education Leaders Group (BFELG, 2020)²⁹ points out that only 16% of the FE workforce is from an ethnic minority group. Ethnic minority senior leadership has fallen from 13% in 2017 to circa 5% in 2020. For example, the Black Further Education Leadership Group argues young people and adults from the BAME community make least progress (aged 11–16) – in particular, learners from Black and Bangladeshi/Pakistani groups – and have least sustained destinations (post-16). Also, they are:

- less likely to go to high-tariff HEIs/ obtain good degrees;
- less likely to undertake apprenticeships, especially at Level 4 and above; less likely to have high earnings 1, 3, 5 and 10 years after graduating (op.cit.).

When we factor in this to Covid-19, displacement from employment in high-risk sectors such as hospitality, theatres, travel and tourism, leisure and retail, where jobs and opportunities have been ravaged, we should not disregard the particularly heavy impact on the BAME communities. This differential effect deepens existing inequalities. Early data from the United Nations

29 Black FE Leadership Group (BFELG). 2020. Addressing systemic racism in further education. *FE News*, 6 August. <https://www.fenews.co.uk/fevoices/52439-addressing-systemic-racism-in-further-education>

(2020)³⁰ indicates that the mortality rates from Covid-19 may be higher for men, but even so, the pandemic is having devastating social and economic consequences for women and girls. The UN proposes and recommends ways to put women's leadership and contributions at the heart of resilience and recovery (United Nations, 2020, op.cit) as discussed below.

Over recent years, the UK has experienced an unprecedented level of distrust in its institutions. According to Edelman's Annual Trust Barometer 2020,³¹ Britain's score for trust in its institutions stands at only 42%, one of the lowest scores on record. Factors contributing to the erosion of institutional trust include:

- political crises (e.g. Brexit), widely reported miscarriages of justice (including Grenfell Tower, Hillsborough and Windrush);
- media scandals (including phone hacking) as well as social and racial inequalities (highlighted by movements such as Black Lives Matter).

This culture of distrust is even more apparent among those in lower socioeconomic groups and particularly among those not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The 2020 Trust Index (Edelman's Annual Trust Barometer) found an 18% trust discrepancy between those of higher socioeconomic/ educational groups, compared with the mass population (those of lower educational and socioeconomic groups). Three-quarters of Britons fear losing their jobs: fears include the gig economy, automation and globalisation.

In essence, more individuals in our society from across a wide range of spectrums are being 'unsettled' and 'uprooted' from the normality of their so-far lived experiences and expectations of education and work. At the core are the issues of identity, trust,

30 United Nations. 2020. Put women and girls at the centre of efforts to recover from COVID-19. New York: UN. <https://www.un.org/en/un-coronavirus-communications-team/put-women-and-girls-centre-efforts-recover-covid-19>

31 Edelman Data & Intelligence. 2020. 2020 *Edelman Trust Barometer*. <https://www.edelman.com/trustbarometer>

dignity, livelihood and sense of belonging and fulfilment. Mental health and wellbeing is often associated with job status and income level.

Policy imagery through careers leadership networks can help focus more on achieving long-term stability in England's education and careers support systems design. Dame Ruth Silver (2020)³² makes a helpful distinction between leadership, on the one hand – the task-oriented activity of being a chief executive or a principal; and, on the other, leaderhood – something more, something that relates to a wider social context. The notion of 'leaderhood' supports the formation of conceptualising local, regional and national planning and action through grass-roots and top-down approaches to find answers to the 'wicked questions' posed earlier. A new dawn is on the horizon.

Looking Forwards

The English College of the Future report (November 2020)³³ focuses on people, productivity and place – themes not dissimilar to those issues that really matter to local businesses, universities, training providers, careers and employability services. This is a key strength in the paper as it provides common language for college leaders and local partnerships to define, identify and agree sustainable places and spaces that can offer hope and careers support to those most in need.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced details of a one-year spending review in November, 2020.³⁴ Publication of the Spending Review statement enables DfE to plan for 2021/22. Details of the total resource available and funding allocations, including devolved budgets to Combined and Local Authorities,

32 Silver, Dame R. 2020. Coronavirus: 'We look to our leaders for clarity'. *TES*, 24 March. <https://www.tes.com/news/coronavirus-we-look-our-leaders-clarity>

33 Independent Commission on the College of the Future. 2020. *The English college of the future*. November. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c8847f58dfc8c45fa705366/t/5fb641cefa02c43a33403fc6/1605779919957/ICCF+England.pdf>

34 *Spending Review 2020*. London: HM Treasury. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2020-documents/spending-review-2020>

should be ready in early Spring 2021. Overall, DfE will have a larger budget in 2021/22 than 2020/21 but much of the increase is earmarked for schools as part of a three-year deal agreed in September 2019. The DfE total managed departmental expenditure limit rises from £67.8 billion to £70.7 billion – a 4.2% or £2.9 billion increase (ibid)³⁵. Some relevant highlights in Section 7.3 include:

- £291 million for 16–19s to cover increased numbers due to demographic growth;
- £162 million to support the roll-out of T-Levels, with these funds focused on colleges and providers in Wave 2 and 3;
- £72 million for the second wave of Institutes of Technology (IoTs);
- £375 million for the National Skills Fund, which is less than the £500 million previously announced.

There are three main parts to the National Skills Fund in the 2021/22 financial year:

- £138 million for Level 3 courses as part of a new Lifetime Skills entitlement;
- £127 million to continue summer economic update programmes; and
- £110 million for higher technical education and training (including some capital funding) covering a new flexible loan entitlement.

The fund will be used to fund the programmes already announced by the Chancellor in July 2020, including the National Careers Service (an additional £32m) and expanding traineeships and sector-based work academies. There will be 'levelling up' funds, yet to be fully determined, and a Shared Prosperity Fund replacing European Social Funds (ESF) with a clear promise to spend some of the money on skills and a Restart programme to focus on the

35 Op.cit

longer-term unemployed with an allocated £3 billion budget via the Department for Work and Pensions.

The government's Kick Start initiative³⁶ and additional funding for traineeships offers some hope for new opportunities for young people. By 12 November 2020, more than 19,000 job placements for unemployed young people had been created under the £2bn Kickstart Scheme – with tens of thousands more expected in the months ahead. This landmark scheme, which runs until December 2021, gives 16–24-year olds a foothold in opportunities by creating high-quality, government-subsidised jobs for at least 6 months. Over 500 'gateways'³⁷ – organisations that act on behalf of employers offering 29 or fewer vacancies – have registered with DWP to help the smallest businesses to hire young people. Kickstart gateways will get £300 for each job placement to cover admin costs. Every job placement created gets £1,500 funding. But this will need close monitoring to ensure young people are not treated as a 'money maker' by unscrupulous employers and/or gateway practices.

Devolved Budgets

Devolved budgets in different geographical areas will enable local leaders to carve out their own individual approach and key strategic priorities, including career support policies. The added-value role of national agencies such as the CEC, National Careers Service and DWP will be scrutinised. Issues of curriculum design, education and business links, job opportunities and skills transfer, reskilling and upskilling, mental health and well-being are likely to dominate.

36 Sunak, Rishi. 2020. More than 19,000 jobs created by Kickstart scheme so far. *FE News*, 12 November. <https://www.fenews.co.uk/fevoices/50935-new-2bn-kickstart-scheme-to-create-hundreds-of-thousands-of-new-jobs-for-young-people>

37 DWP. 2020. What is a gateway? London: Department for Work and Pensions. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/kickstart-scheme-employer-resources/guidance-on-choosing-a-kickstart-gateway#what-is-a-gateway>

The Local Government Association (March, 2020)³⁸ budget submission to government highlighted 'a patchwork of centrally driven employment and skills provision (£10.5 billion 2016/17) uncoordinated, missing opportunities to engage people and businesses that most need support, making our skills gap larger and impacting productivity' (p.11). It proposed a Work Local model³⁹ as a ready solution to solve this problem, enabling groups of councils and combined authorities to work with central government and partners, including businesses and providers, to design a more efficient, agile and locally relevant offer that would bring together careers advice and guidance, employment, skills, apprenticeships and business support for young people, adults and employers. Six months on, in September 2020, its submission to Treasury⁴⁰ stated 'No other body understands local areas better than councils' (Exec Summary, para 3).

New Scenarios: Leadership Thought and Influence

With greater competition between and across agencies, innovative models of careers support in national, regional and local design and implementation are now urgently required. New structural formations of 'strategic policy influence' could be on the ascendency. This is not an attempt to occupy some high moral ground position, but instead it shines a spotlight on emerging leadership and careers provision formations. New imagination in the form of 'unsettling thoughts' or 'unfinished business' is for future 'scenario building' on the 'division' and possible 'diversion' of scarce public sector resources required (Clarke, 2004)⁴¹. A coming-together of leadership thought and

influence in this sphere could transform local communities and the national economic recovery.

For example, what would citizens stand to lose if there was no national careers service? Clearly, other UK government nations view this type of service as an essential conduit for lifelong learning with professionally trained advisers and coaches in place to provide impartial labour market intelligence/information (LMI) and inclusive careers support from an early age. Has the 2012–2020 careers experiment in England run its course? How can the 'knowledge hexagon' of education, businesses, training providers, trade unions and careers and employability professionals be strengthened as a condition for jobs, skills and growth 2021–2031? More fundamentally, looking ahead what balance is required in the design and delivery of high-quality careers provision online and offline for young people and adults across England?

The UK College of the Future (November 2020) recommends government should focus on:

Creating a statutory right to lifelong learning by making lifelong learning accessible and financially viable to all through offering equal loans and grants across further education and higher education so that everyone can access the training they need, no matter where they come from, their circumstance or their background. (p.14)

Covid-19 has forced government to take stock of its neoliberal values.⁴² Confidence in free markets is questioned as the most efficient allocation of scarce public sector resources. Instead, a renewed focus on lifelong learning and the creation of 'safety nets' within the Welfare State is a new direction of travel broadly welcomed and much needed.

38 LGA. 2020. LGA March 2020 Budget submission. London: LGA. <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA%202020%20Budget%20submission%20FINAL.pdf>

39 LGA. 2020. *Re-thinking local*. London: LGA. https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/3.70%20Rethinking%20local_%23councilscan_landscape_FINAL.pdf

40 LGA. 2020. Comprehensive Spending Review 2020: LGA submission. London: LGA. <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/re-thinking-public-finances>

41 Clarke, J. 2004. *Changing welfare changing states: New directions in social policy*. London: Sage.

42 Smith, N. 2020. Neoliberalism. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/neoliberalism>

IDEAS FOR ACTION

A major issue is where to focus 'leadership' and 'leaderhood' efforts in the recovery and reconstruction of careers support services across England. Several informants made the point that now is a *key moment in time for leadership* on these issues. Curative and preventative national, regional and local inclusive careers support should be targeted and tailored to individuals' and business needs. Inclusive strategies are vital to achieve both economic and social recovery. For example:

- *Targeting the unemployed to develop (unused) skill reserves*, supported ideally by well-trained and qualified careers and employability specialists. From a skill-mismatch perspective, a distinction can be made between (a) *individuals having difficulties entering the labour market*, because they lack generic or specific skills, those facing redundancy, and *unemployed people whose skills could potentially be upgraded to the specific skills demands of particular vacancies*. Rapid response services in careers support should be aimed at those most in need. For example, the National Careers Service set priority group of 1 : 1 careers guidance for those 50+ and at risk of redundancy needs to change. The offer needs to be extended to those below this age.
- *Targeting the skills of individuals and groups in education and training, to be able to match their future skills better to (future/ unpredictable) labour market needs*. This includes the creation of new specific learning paths (both online and offline), campaigns stimulating people to

choose educational paths in sectors with shortages, and structural improvement in education to labour market transitions, that is, a highly visible and well-resourced careers-support campaign can help to address this challenge – something currently missing from national and regional media campaigns to date.

- *Targeting existing employees*, to optimise their potential as well reduce the risk of them involuntarily leaving the labour market. Solutions may include the introduction of training and retraining programmes, funding for active participation in upgrading skills, training and qualifications, providing more ongoing careers dialogue and support for employees. New policies or measures on understanding poor work, salaries and working conditions are also highly relevant.

The digital world has expanded exponentially since March 2020 – those without digital skills are seriously marginalised. Many will not even be able to access or find out about opportunities. The DfE’s Essential Digital Skills framework and qualification may be a first step for college leaders to provide and facilitate digital access to careers provision and support from trained and qualified professionals and opportunities in the informal economy e.g. support network in LinkedIn and Facebook.

In Greece (and other EU countries) a system of training vouchers⁴³ provides flexible training for those unemployed.⁴⁴ The level of personal responsibility is high since the individual is free to choose his/her own course in cooperation with a counsellor/ guidance worker. This approach is aimed at the empowerment and upgrade of the skills of unemployed adults aged 29–64, through a combination of training, internship, counselling and certification. Through the matching between learners and companies, the goal is to generate new jobs after the programme’s lifetime.

Helping to Secure Good Jobs for People and Skills for Businesses

Decision-making ambiguity persists when it comes to making decisions about whom to help. Whilst wanting benefits for all, the European Commission traditionally targets particular types of workers: female, migrant, younger, older and low-skilled and, more recently, disabled. The Shared Prosperity Fund in England is likely to adopt a similar stance. By contrast, others insist on the need to create opportunities for a great majority of a country’s population. For example, ‘a generation of young job-seekers risked having their “dreams crushed” without a rebound in jobs growth in the private sector’ (Lagrade, WEF, November 2020)⁴⁵.

43 CEDEFOP. 2020. Training voucher programme for unemployed aged 29-64 in 8 cutting-edge sectors. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/matching-skills/all-instruments/training-voucher-programme-unemployed-aged-29-64-8-cutting-edge-sectors>

44 The evidence-base on the success (or otherwise) of training vouchers in England is largely mixed.

45 Parker, Ceri. 2020. ‘We’re seeing the other side of the river’ – top quotes on life after the pandemic. Geneva: World Economic Forum. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/11/we-re-seeing-the-other-side-of-the-river-top-wef-quotes-on-life-after-the-pandemic>

- Getting people back into work is important
- Accessing work is not just about possessing skills. Other policy domains beyond education and training are also important. For example, for those at the bottom of the labour market, good public transport and affordable childcare are key enablers in physically accessing work.
- Career adaptability and resilience models of success can provide inspiration to others facing tough decisions about their future livelihoods such as role models and mentors.
- Stimulating the demand side also becomes important in a future post-Covid landscape.

In South Africa, the Khetha Radio Programme operates as a multi-channelled careers service, supported by the Higher Education and Training Ministry, delivered in ten languages to 3 million listeners sharing careers information, advice and guidance, and labour market intelligence.⁴⁶

Use of Digital and Labour Market Intelligence and Information (LMI)

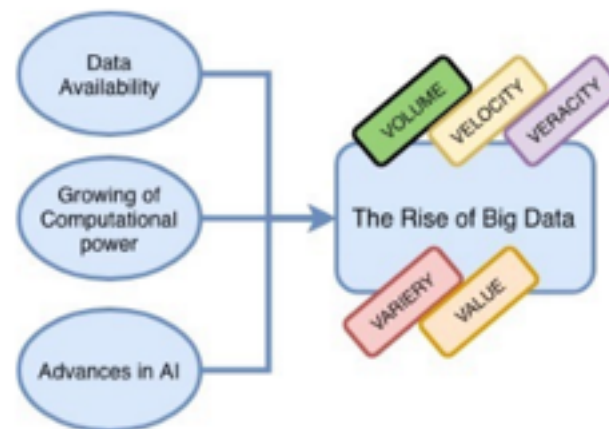
Digital development and Industry 4.0 are changing skills needs, occupations and roles within different industries. Furloughed employees, job uncertainty and job displacement means up to date labour market information is increasingly important. Crowdsourcing LMI is an underdeveloped option. The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines labour market information as:

Any information concerning the size and composition of the labour market or any part of the labour market, the way it or any part of it functions, its problems, the opportunities which may be available to it, and the employment-related intentions or aspirations of those who are part of it.

⁴⁶ See <https://www.careerhelp.org.za/content/career-development-services/khetha-radio-programmes>

A key question is how technology can be used most effectively to achieve improved outcomes in learning and work. Technology itself is unlikely to improve individuals' lifelong learning, but the associated pedagogy can. The rapid expansion of digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI), including the growth of open data and mobile devices such as smartphones, apps, tablets, gaming, wearables (e.g., smart watches) and chatbots brings different forms of LMI to support transitions and career learning and new methods of accessing online training opportunities or job-matching services.

Big data and the amount of labour market information (LMI) conveyed through specialised internet portals and services has grown exponentially (ETF, 2019).⁴⁷



Source: ETF 2019: Key elements driving the rise of big data (p.13).

This includes services for sharing curricula, data mining, machine learning, AI and the use of application programme interfaces (APIs). Streaming real-time data including job vacancies (using scraping techniques) has become more prevalent. But there are some problems associated with this. There are different and

⁴⁷ Mezzananza, Mario and Mercurio, Fabio. 2019. *Big data for labour market intelligence*. Brussels: European Training Foundation. <https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2019-06/Big%20data%20for%20LMI.pdf>

competing standard taxonomies, for example, ISCO/O*NET/SOC for occupations, ESCO for skills etc. This can make it challenging in streaming reliable data sources into local contexts.

In England, the government-funded 'LMI for All' initiative⁴⁸ provides free open access to LMI and courses data for colleges and other agencies to inform career decisions. Other privately owned companies offer 'paid-for licensed services' such as Adzuna, Emsi and Burning Glass, based on LMI trends past and present. Adzuna also supports the DWP 'Find a Job' portal. Some FE colleges report they cannot afford to invest in licensed arrangements or access LMI from local agencies who can afford this. The Nesta CareerTech Challenge (Nesta/DfE 2020)⁴⁹ through a national prize competition is exploring innovative ways to overcome these real challenges.

Digital poverty can also feed social exclusion, and without the means to access affordable devices and access support online, individuals can become trapped in a cycle of disadvantage and vulnerability. Overcoming this barrier requires new strategies for engagement in learning/re-learning and a strong focus on essential digital skills⁵⁰ development, as discussed earlier.

In Canada, the Labour Market Information Council undertook a series of in-depth discussions with young Canadians at the crossroads of high school and post-secondary education (PSE). The aim was to better understand the type of labour market information they needed about future job openings to support their decision to attend PSE, and to help them choose a programme and a career path.⁵¹

48 <https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/>

49 <https://careertechprize.challenges.org/finalists/>

50 Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQ) are mapped to national standards for basic digital literacy and are funded by the ESFA for adult learners. Designed to meet digital knowledge gaps within adults, these qualifications will provide vital skills to many.

51 Canadian Career Development Foundation. 2020. *Labour Market Council developments*. CCDF, May.

They found that students wanted forecasts of future job openings to help them identify job prospects in their ideal occupation and to understand the level of competition they may face when joining the labour market. When considering data about future job openings by occupation, location, industry and training, the students preferred more detailed information on occupations. Their next preference was for information about job openings filtered by location. The students expressed a preference for receiving data on the expected number of new jobs tailored to the timeframe in which they expected to graduate from PSE⁵².

In Scotland, Skills Development Scotland (SDS)⁵³ oversees the 'My World of Work' and 'My Kids Career' online LMI systems, situated within an all-age national careers service. Scotland has an inclusive national careers service delivered by SDS, which operates alongside services delivered by other key partners, including FE colleagues, local authorities and DWP. The organisation has careers advisers based in every government-funded secondary school in Scotland, including SEN schools. For those not in school, there are centres in every local authority area throughout Scotland, in addition to an online presence and a telephone helpline. No groups are excluded from access to the SDS careers service. This includes those in employment who are seeking to change or progress in their career. The service offers offline and online career support, including a national Contact Centre and an online career management skills environment.

52 LMI Insights. 2020. *In conversation with students: The job outlooks they want*, Issue 27 June. <https://lmic-cimt.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/LMI-Insight-Report-no-27.pdf>

53 <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/> and Skills Development Scotland. 2020. My Kids Career. Glasgow: SDS. <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/scotlands-careers-services/our-careers-service-in-schools/my-kids-career/>

Leadership and the Careers Curriculum

There is broad recognition that ministers and policy-makers have increased expectations of schools and colleges, often imparting a sense of urgency for improved learning outcomes. FE college leaders stated Skills Advisory Boards or panels, led by employers, are commonplace, designed to inform the intent, impact and implementation of college programmes and student destinations. This is not the case in England's school system. The English College of the Future report (op. cit.) recommends 'college-school partnerships to ensure developing joint plans on careers education and guidance to individuals from 14–19, as part of the much more holistic approach to careers information advice and guidance' (p.36). Leadership in careers provision within institutions needs to start with the senior leadership team, including governors. Might there be a place and space to address this within a vibrant Leadership Hub?⁵⁴

There is a compelling body of international evidence which highlights career-related learning (CRL) should begin early in primary schools (inter alia: McMahon 2020⁵⁵; Kashefpakdel, Rehill, and Hughes 2018 and 2019⁵⁶; the OCED and WEF 2019⁵⁷). Given that children and young people are influenced primarily by their parents and relatives, Covid-19 job displacement could have a long-lasting profound impact on their views of the world of work. The forthcoming FE White Paper (2021) could encourage college leaders and other educationalists to work collaboratively

54 For example, <https://leadershiphub.etfoundation.co.uk/>

55 Associate Professor Mary Mc Mahon on behalf of the Careers Industry Council for Australia – 20 October 2020 International Conference proceedings; *Evolving Education and Careers*'.

56 Kashefpakdel, E., Rehill, J., and Hughes, D. 2018. *What works? Career-related learning in primary schools*. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company. https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/1145_what_works_primary_v7_digital.pdf
See also: Kashefpakdel, E., Rehill, J., and Hughes, D. 2019. *Career-related learning in primary: The role of primary teachers and schools in preparing children for the future*. London: Education & Employers; Teach First. https://www.teachfirst.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-01/edemp_careerprimary-report_jan2019_v5_indv.pdf

57 Education and Employers. 2019. *The OECD in conjunction with Education and Employers launch new report at Davos*. London: Education and Employers. <https://www.educationandemployers.org/davos-2019-report/>

with 'tried and tested' CRL national and local providers such as Primary Futures.⁵⁸ There is an option of including 'mandatory career studies' for post-primary school and college students. This is the policy being effectively pursued in Ontario, Canada which has yielded some positive results.⁵⁹ Other high-performing education and employment systems in Austria, Australia, Finland and Germany also merit closer scrutiny.

Curriculum and new forms of blended and virtual learning bring opportunities for educationalists, businesses, community agencies to work across organisational boundaries. This provides exciting opportunities for educators, career development professionals and community agencies to co-create and co-develop more robust and coherent careers provision.

National, Regional and Local Careers Strategies

We should ensure that more young people and adults get to meet a wider variety of people doing a wide variety of different types of work. This is particularly important to the millions of young people who live in workless households (ONS, 2020)⁶⁰ to whom such experiences have especially high value and who are often least likely to have the required social and family networks. The pandemic has highlighted the essential role played by nurses, porters, refuse collectors, supermarket workers, carers and nursery staff. These groups of workers have always been underpaid and are often undervalued (Social Mobility Commission, 2020)⁶¹. Society is in the process of recalibrating the values attached to certain occupations.

58 See <https://primaryfutures.org/> which adopts state of the art technology to connect schools and colleges to volunteering employer and employees

59 Ontario Ministry of Education. 2020. *Grade 10 Career Studies: A Guide for Parents and Students*. <http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/career-studies-fact-sheet.html>

60 ONS. 2020. *People not in work*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/datasets/echildrenlivinginlongtermworklesshouseholdsandworklesshouseholdsbyageofchild>

61 Social Mobility Commission. 2020. *Changing Gears: Understanding Social Downward Mobility*, p.3. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/936038/SMC_Changing_gears_Downward_mobility_Main_Report.pdf

At this stage, much is unknown about government and DfE plans to update the 2015 national Careers Strategy. In contrast, the Scottish Government (February 2020)⁶² published a national strategy highlighting the role that career education, information, advice and guidance (CIAG) services can play in helping to address future skills demands and deliver inclusive growth. It states:

Funding and outcomes measures can sometimes act as a barrier to co-design, innovation and collaborative approaches. We are committed to overcoming barriers, building capacity and high quality CIAG resources within and across organisations and agencies in Scotland. The role of professionally trained and qualified career advisers delivering high quality, impartial career guidance is a cornerstone of Scotland's careers sector (Executive Summary).

In Wales, Careers Wales (the national careers service) is presenting a new vision and strategy 2021–2026 for approval by ministers. In Northern Ireland (OECD, 2020)⁶³ there is an urgent call to reduce skills imbalances as a result of Covid-19, including enhancement in the provision of career guidance and a strengthening of the responsiveness and flexibility of the tertiary education and VET systems.

In England, a key recommendation in the College of the Future report is for 'a national strategy for education and skills to support economic growth, industrial change and lifelong learning.' (p.8). Strong leadership and representation from employers, education, careers, employability and enterprise specialists is urgently needed to help guide England's national careers-support services in meeting the rapidly changing needs of young people, adults and employers.

62 Scottish Government. 2020. Scotland's careers strategy: moving forward. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-careers-strategy-moving-forward/pages/11/>

63 OECD–Northern Ireland collaboration on the OECD Skills Strategy project: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/1857c8af-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/1857c8af-en>

In this context, the future development of England's National Careers Service, DWP work coach programme and Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) policies should be co-owned and assisted by a cross-departmental taskforce/ advisory body, with DfE, ESFA, BEIS, DWP and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and representation from college/schools partnerships, industry, trade unions, the Association of Colleges, Local Government Association (LGA), Careers England and the Career Development Institute. For example, looking ahead is DfE the most appropriate policy place and space for a vibrant national careers-support system?

Regional and local careers strategies are gathering pace in parts of England. For example, in Derby, Bristol, London and Manchester, city-wide careers strategies have emerged. In more rural counties, such as Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, careers strategies that embrace online and offline careers support are well-established. In most towns, cities and rural communities there is an expectation the Shared Prosperity Fund will compensate for any ESF gaps in careers support when Britain leaves the EU. Regionally and locally many colleges and other careers providers rely on such funding. The level of detail going forward has yet to be fully understood.

There is significant scope for FE colleges and local partners to choose, in the first instance, a single major theme to focus on that would bring a long lasting and positive impact on local communities within the myriad of new initiatives. At a college–school level, greater use of metrics could reveal high points and focus areas for more inclusive careers provision (Hughes et al, 2020).⁶⁴

64 Hughes, D. et al. 2020. Championing careers Derby – technical report. <https://dmhassociates.org/championing-careers-derby-technical-report>

Chart B: College-School level metrics – Potential?

College and school level data published by the DfE can reveal high-points and focus areas for careers support, eg.

Informed Choice

- Some pathways face social bias
- Where schools have low uptake of such pathways, CEIAG could be part of the response plan

Stretching Choices

- Good CEIAG can encourage young people to choose more ambitious, but suitable courses
- This can be balanced against achievement rates to ensure choices are both achievable and stretching

Sustained Destinations

- Avoiding NEET outcomes is complex, but a good careers strategy is part of the solution

- Gender gap in STEM A-level uptake (% pts)
- Post-16 and Post-18 Apprenticeship uptake (% of cohort)
- Proportion of level 3 vocational students on T-levels (% of cohort)
- Proportion who are entered onto level 3 courses / STEM courses in 16-18 study (% of cohort; potentially adjusted by KS4 exam attainment)
- Proportion on level 3 courses who progress to level 4+ post-18 (% of cohort; potentially adjusted by KS5 exam attainment)
- Proportion who are entering level 2 or below provision and a gap analysis
- Post-16 and Post-18 NEET status (% of cohort)
- The Free School Meals FSM/non-FSM gap for NEET status (% pts)

- Such data requires context to be interpreted – can then drive KPIs or conversations on where to prioritise careers support?
- But public data at the school/college-level often has significant gaps (data suppression due to small sample sizes)
→ Could colleges and partners together collate uncensored data locally by college/school for internal use?
- Public data can still provide area-level benchmarking

Multi-agency working including digital blended careers support, co-location and one-stop shop approaches are becoming the 'new norm' in the current Covid-19 situation. FE colleges have risen to the challenge of extending their practice beyond classrooms and pastoral in-house support. There is significant scope for greater multi-agency working in 'pop-up one-stop centres' in local communities involving a range of professionals from education, mental health and wellbeing, careers and employability professionals.

In Finland, Ohjaamo One-Stop Guidance Centres⁶⁵ exist to deliver integrated youth guidance. The centres provide information, advice and guidance to young people in relation to any relevant service available to them. Co-locating different public services under one roof, involving users and stakeholders in designing services and creating new forms of 'public-private-people partnership', the One-Stop Guidance Centre model has a strong focus on collaboration between individuals and different agencies.

65 Kettunen, J. and Felt, T. One-stop guidance centers in Finland. In: Erik Hagaseth Haug, Tristram Hooley, Jaana Kettunen, and Rie Thomsen (eds). 2020. *Career and Career Guidance in the Nordic Countries*. Amsterdam: Sense/Brill, pp. 293–306 (Open Access). https://brill.com/search?f_0=author&q_0=Jaana+Kettunen

CONCLUSION

Everyone's day-to-day life continues to change and the future is increasingly unpredictable. Many individuals and families have been adversely affected. Covid-19 has a huge impact on education, the employment situation and everyone's short-and long-term prospects. The realities of this, and Brexit, are bearing down on individuals' health and wellbeing and will continue to be felt for years to come. These VUCA times are akin to a new unexpected Industrial Revolution – one that few people anticipated and few can ignore. A new dawn is on the horizon and these two important major questions for national, regional and local government policies and leaders demand specific attention and urgent solutions:

- **Where can young people and adults go to for trustworthy careers information, advice and guidance/coaching in England? (Places)**
- **What type of high-quality blended careers support can be made available in local communities, both online and offline? (Spaces)**

To earn trust, support and careers engagement from young people and adults, further education and partner organisations must show that they share core values. Being clear on organisational, partnerships and ethics will help cement a bond with people in local communities. No one organisation can claim sole ownership of careers provision.

FETL is commended in stimulating this conversation and debate. This takes both courage and commitment. In the past, ministers were seldom rewarded in England's political and promotion landscape for transforming careers provision. In the present, ministers know lifelong learning needs to be improved. In the future, ministers, local government, elected mayors, businesses and educationalists could reap the rewards of investment in careers provision. It is a 'no-brainer' to ramp up inclusive careers support across England, with FE colleges and partners at the forefront.

Six Key Recommendations

For government policy-makers, leaders, professional bodies, trade unions and practitioners:

1. Inclusive careers support services and leadership should be prioritised and clearly framed within national, regional and local economic and social recovery plans.
2. The future development of England's National Careers Service, Work coach programme (DWP) and Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) policies should be co-owned and assisted by a cross-departmental taskforce/ advisory body with a clear governance structure.
3. A new lifetime skills and careers advice and guidance service should be hosted within colleges (where appropriate and subject to resourcing) situated in the context of a strong partnership approach with national and local careers and employability providers.
4. The 2012–2020 careers experiment in England should be formally reviewed. The 'knowledge hexagon' between education, businesses, training providers, trade unions, careers and employability professionals should be strengthened as a condition for jobs, skills and growth 2021–2031.

5. Time, energy and resource must be invested in more and better careers information, advice and guidance from well-trained and qualified professionals.
6. A highly visible and well-resourced careers support campaign is needed to address skills mismatch, skills gaps and promote career adaptability and resilience in a post-Covid era.

APPENDIX 1

Leaders Interviewed

Suzie Branch-Haddow, Director of Employer Engagement,
Birmingham Metropolitan College

Sally Dicketts, Chief Executive, Activate Learning and
President of the Association of Colleges

Kieran Gordon, Chief Executive, Careers England

Helen Jefferson, Director of Student Services, Derby College

Professor Emeritus Ewart Keep, Chair in Education, Training
& Skills, Department for Education, Oxford University and
Commissioner for the Independent Commission on the College
of the Future

John Laramy, Principal and Chief Executive, Exeter College

Lynette Leith, Associate Principal, Newham Sixth Form
College, Nottingham

Kristi Lord, Deputy Chief Executive, Association of Colleges

Kate Martin, Vice-Principal, Derby College

Jenny North, Head of Careers and Employment, Birmingham
Metropolitan College

Joanne Phillips, Director of Business Planning and Finance,
Newcastle College

Asaf Sohail, Principal, Lewisham College

Karen Spencer MBE, Principal, Harlow College

Contact

Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE

8 Rose Duryard, Lower Argyll Road, Exeter, EX4 4PB

Telephone: 0044(0) 7533 545057

Email: deirdre.hughes3@btinternet.com.

Visit: <http://deirdrehughes.org/>

To cite this paper:

FETL (Further Education Trust for Leadership). 2021.

Leadership and careers provision: a new dawn. FETL.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License. To view a copy of the license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>



Published January 2021

The Further Education Trust for Leadership

Website: www.fetl.org.uk

Email: enquiries@fetl.org.uk

 [@FETforL](https://twitter.com/FETforL)