

Career learning for the 21st century

Careers blueprint supporting an all-age guidance strategy

Career Development Service



Acknowledgements

This publication arises from a study on career learning, information, advice and guidance (CLIAG) undertaken by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service in 2009/10. The project team would like to thank the following for their help and support in the work:

- Alameda Middle School, Bedfordshire
- New College Stamford, Lincolnshire
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Somerset Skills and Learning, Somerset County Council
- Boston College, Lincolnshire
- Franklin College, Grimsby.

We would also like to thank all those who attended the leadership event and workshops and shared their ideas, approaches and enthusiasm for the Blueprint approach.

Download

This guide is available to download in PDF format from the LSIS and CEGNET websites.

LSIS: www.lsis.org.uk CEGNET: www.cegnet.co.uk

Publisher

Published by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS).

© LSIS March 2010

Publication reference: LSIS231-1

Other publications in the Career learning for the 21st century series:

Published in 2009:

- Career learning for the 21st century: a leadership issue for the FE sector. Sources of evidence
- Career learning for the 21st century: effective practice in the FE sector
- Career learning for the 21st century: recommended resources for the FE sector
- Career learning for the 21st century: a toolkit to support co-ordination of careers learning for young people in further education
- Career learning for the 21st century: the career blueprint – a competence approach

Published in 2010:

- Career learning for the 21st century: Embedding CLIAG – a guide for leaders
- Career learning for the 21st century: Effective practice and partnership working
- Career learning for the 21st century: CPD series: Introduction to CLIAG
- Career learning for the 21st century: CPD series: Introduction to interviewing
- Career learning for the 21st century: CPD series: Introduction to values and ethics
- Career learning for the 21st century: CPD series: Introduction to group working
- Career learning for the 21st century: CPD series: Introduction to evaluating and measuring impact
- Career learning for the 21st century: CPD series: Introduction to reaching potential by raising aspirations
- Career learning for the 21st century: Mapping the blueprint against other frameworks
- Career learning for the 21st century: Quality awards for career learning, information, advice and guidance

Contents

Foreword	6
Introduction and overview	7
Introduction	7
Career Blueprint: An overview	7
The Career Blueprint trials	11
Case study 1: Alameda Middle School	13
Case study 2a: Boston College	15
Case study 2b: Boston College	17
Case study 3: Franklin College	19
Case study 4: New College Stamford	22
Case study 5a: Higher education	25
Case study 5b: Higher education	27
Case study 6: Somerset Skills and Learning	29
Reported findings	32
Conclusions	35
Blueprint: what next?	36
Further reading	37



Foreword

From 2008 to 2010, LSIS undertook a number of projects looking at career learning, information, advice and guidance (CLIAG) for young people and adults in the learning and skills sector.

This work involved discussions with a wide range of people from across a range of sectors. The results have been used to produce a series of reports for the sector and others with an interest in the topic. It became clear that CLIAG is a leadership issue and that leaders in the sector need to address how their organisation can deliver this support effectively to gain maximum benefits for young people and their organisation.

This publication examines a competence approach to career learning developed in Canada, Australia and now being implemented in Scotland, called the Careers Blueprint. The focus of this year's work has been the small-scale trialling of the Blueprint approach with learners from a range of age groups and settings.

We hope that you will find this report useful when reviewing and developing what you do and how you deliver CLIAG in your organisation. You may wish to consider whether the approaches you use are effective in helping young people develop the competences they need to enable them to effectively plan, manage and develop their careers throughout their lives. .

Ann Ruthven
Head of Learning and Learner Support

Introduction and overview

Introduction

In 2009, whilst researching and identifying examples of effective practice in the delivery of CLIAG, LSIS identified the Careers Blueprint as worthy of further investigation. This competence approach to career learning developed in Canada and Australia, and now being trialled in Scotland, had been on the horizon for a while and many professionals in CLIAG had taken an interest in it. As part of exploration process, LSIS produced a guide to the Careers Blueprint. *Career learning for the 21st century: the career blueprint – a competence approach*. The aim of this guide was to inform practitioners in the sector about the Blueprint framework of career development competencies, which can be used by learners of all ages to help them understand themselves, explore opportunities and manage their careers. The Careers Blueprint originated in Canada over 20 years ago and is kept up to date through initiatives and international partnerships involving agencies in the USA, Canada and Australia.

This publication reports on the work undertaken in 2009/10 to extend understanding of how the Careers Blueprint might work in the English context. The report documents the results of a small number of discrete trials in a number of different settings.

Careers work is no longer just about finding a quick fix solution to learners' needs at different career decision points. It is about equipping them for lifelong career well-being and happiness. Learners of all ages need to continue developing the career understanding and skills that will help them to succeed in learning and work throughout their lives and it was against this background that the Careers Blueprint was reviewed.

Who is this report for?

This report is written for leaders and staff in all learning organisations, including employers, who are interested in exploring the implementation of a career competence approach to help learners to manage their own careers. The trials in this report focus specifically on the Blueprint approach but the findings may well be of use when considering other competence-based approaches.

Career Blueprint: An overview

Rationale

The rationale for implementing a competence-based approach in Canada was as follows:

- Relatively few people currently have the skills of career and life management.
- Too many adults end up in jobs due to happenstance rather than informed choice.
- Making a single choice of career between 16 and 21 years of age, and expecting this to be for life is no longer an appropriate career choice paradigm.
- Inappropriate career choices cost society a great deal in terms of drop-out, unemployment and blighted lives, and apart from the enormous cost to individuals constitute a waste of human capital and reduce productivity and competitiveness.

A brief history of the Blueprint

The Blueprint approach originated from a set of developmental guidelines formulated in the USA, which mapped the competencies needed to enable people to manage their own careers. The *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs* stemmed from 10 years of research and development with thousands of career practitioners and educators across the United States in creating and refining the career development competency framework in the *National Career Development Guidelines*. The team at the National Life/Work Centre and other agencies in Canada contextualised the framework for a Canadian setting. The first step in creating the *Blueprint*, under the supervision of experts from across Canada, was to rewrite the US Guidelines with Canadian spelling, terminology, organisational and resources. The next was to pilot the draft *Blueprint* across Canada.

Two stages and four years of pilots, in diverse public and private sector agencies in all regions of Canada, convinced the Canadian partners that the US competency and performance indicator framework was as valid in Canada as in the USA.

In 2003, the Australian government identified the need for a unifying career development framework and endorsed the work to develop the Canadian *Blueprint* in their national context. Miles Morgan was commissioned to undertake the work and involved career practitioners and academics across the country to develop the new framework. In 2005, at 26 trial sites throughout Australia, public and private sector organisations, including schools, universities, training organisations and companies, worked with Miles Morgan staff to test the *Blueprint's* utility for creating effective career and transition programmes and products for both young people and adults.

The Blueprint Framework

The Blueprint is a framework of 11 career competencies for individuals, with indicators describing outcomes, arranged in three areas:

- Personal management
- Learning and work exploration
- Life/work building.

The approach offers a common language and structure for planning, developing and reviewing services, programmes and activities, and can be adapted to suit people of all ages. It includes incremental stages, intended to reflect the development of competence at different stages of life. The Blueprint approach also acknowledges that there are different ways in which we learn to become competent and apply that learning, and breaks down that process into:

- Acquisition – how we gain knowledge and become competent
- Application – how we experience the knowledge we have acquired
- Personalisation – integrating acquired and applied knowledge
- Actualisation – striving towards our full potential for ourselves and in the community.

Competencies by area and level and learning stage¹

Competencies	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
Area A: Personal management				
1. Build and maintain a positive self-image	1.1 Build a positive self-image while discovering its influence on self and others.	1.2 Build a positive self-image and understand its influence on one's life and work.	1.3 Develop abilities to maintain a positive self-image.	1.4 Improve on abilities to maintain a positive self-image.
2. Interact positively and effectively with others	2.1 Develop abilities for building positive relationships in one's life (I).	2.2 Develop abilities for building positive relationships in one's life (II).	2.3 Develop abilities for building positive relationships in one's life and work.	2.4 Improve abilities for building positive relationships in one's life and work.
3. Change and grow throughout one's life	3.1 Discover that change and growth are part of life.	3.2 Learn to respond to change and growth (I).	3.3 Learn to respond to change and growth.	3.4 Develop strategies for responding to life and work changes.
Area B: Learning and work exploration				
4. Participate in life-long learning supportive of life/work goals	4.1 Discover "lifelong learning" and its contributions to one's life and work.	4.2 Link lifelong learning to one's life/work scenarios, both present and future.	4.3 Link lifelong learning to one's career building process.	4.4 Participate in continuous learning supportive of life/work goals.
5. Locate and effectively use life/work information	5.1 Discover and understand life/work information.	5.2 Locate, understand and use life/work information.	5.3 Locate, interpret, evaluate and use life/work information (I).	5.4 Locate, interpret, evaluate and use life/work information (II).
6. Understand the relationship between work and society/economy	6.1 Discover how work contributes to individuals and the community.	6.2 Understand how work contributes to the community.	6.3 Understand how societal and economic needs influence the nature and structure of work (I).	6.4 Understand how societal and economic needs influence the nature and structure of work (II).

¹ This chart is taken from the Australian *Blueprint*.

Competencies	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
Area C: Life/work building				
7. Secure/create and maintain work	7.1 Explore effective work strategies.	7.2 Develop abilities to seek and obtain/create work.	7.3 Develop abilities to seek, obtain/create and maintain work.	7.4 Improve on abilities to seek, obtain/create and maintain work.
8. Make life/work enhancing decisions	8.1 Explore and improve decision making.	8.2 Link decision making to life/work building.	8.3 Engage in life/work decision making.	8.4 Incorporate adult life reality into life/work decision making.
9. Maintain balanced life and work roles	9.1 Explore and understand the interrelationship of life roles (I).	9.2 Explore and understand the interrelationship of life roles (II).	9.3 Link lifestyles and life stages to life/work building.	9.4 Incorporate the “balanced life/work” issue in life/work building.
10. Understand the changing nature of life/work roles	10.1 Discover the nature of life/work roles.	10.2 Explore non-traditional life/work scenarios.	10.3 Understand and learn to overcome stereotypes in life/work building (I).	10.4 Understand and learn to overcome stereotypes in life/work building (II).
11. Understand, engage in and manage one’s own life/work building process	11.1 Explore the underlying concepts of the life/work process.	11.2 Understand and experience the process of life/work building.	11.3 Recognize and take charge of one’s life/work building process.	11.4 Manage one’s life/work building process.

Intended use of the Blueprint

The reported benefits of developing and using the Blueprint approach in Canada and Australia have been trialled and researched. The Canadians have found that approaches based on the Blueprint enable individuals to take control of their own career development in a structured way. They gain confidence and self-reliance and connect with work that really suits them, by improving the match between talents and opportunities.

The Blueprint can also be used to support curriculum design and development, the review of career and tutorial programmes, the careers resources and materials made available to individuals and the nature of one-to-one and group interventions. It provides a common framework for assessing the effectiveness and impact of CLIAG-related interventions and can enable providers to measure progress in career learning in a different way.

The Blueprint supports lifelong career development and management, and in that way ensures greater consistency in provision, facilitates transitions between different phases of education and of life, prevents duplication and supports progression in career learning.

The Career Blueprint trials

Introduction

In 2009/10, LSIS received funding from the Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCSF), now the Department for Education (DfE), and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to conduct a small trial of the Blueprint in England.

The overall purpose of this trial phase was to explore the applicability of the Career Blueprint in England and to identify potential benefits and issues in adopting this approach. In line with the Australian trials of the Blueprint, particular attention was paid to the following aspects of the approach:

- Achieving Blueprint aims and objectives
- Usability
- Complexity of the approach
- Language
- Use with types of learners
- Likely uses and benefits
- Future development.

The sample

A small number of participant organisations were recruited on a voluntary basis to take part in this small pilot. Trial sites included a middle school with its feeder primary school; a sixth-form college with its network of secondary schools and FE colleges; a work-based learning provider; a large FE college; a university; and an adult and community learning service for a large rural county.

The trial process

The six trial site representatives were invited to a briefing to discuss the implementation of the Careers Blueprint and to formulate an action plan based on initial areas of interest. In addition to receiving a reference guide, those involved were signposted to the materials available on the Canadian and Australian Blueprint websites. Both of these websites contain a comprehensive set of useful CLIAG materials related to the implementation of the Blueprint approach.

Using the Canadian document, *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs: The Quick Reference Guide*, and the practical implementation guide available on the website www.blueprint4life.ca, participants in the trial indicated the approaches they wished to pilot. Initially these included reviewing the curriculum, developing learner portfolios and reviewing careers resources, although it was noted that the pilot organisations' original aims changed and were modified as the trials progressed.

Most of the trials were undertaken over a three-month period and involved senior managers, CLIAG staff and other key stakeholders in the implementation. Communication with the LSIS project team during the trial was by phone, email and face-to-face meetings. A debriefing workshop was held for all trial organisations at the end of the trial period to capture the main feedback and findings.

In addition, each trial organisation was given a structured framework for evaluation and wrote up their experiences as a short case study, highlighting the approach they took and realisation of any benefits.

The six case studies are documented below and highlight an interesting array of insights and findings in using the Career Blueprint approach.

Limitations of the trial

- This study looks only at the Canadian Blueprint approach, and other competency-based approaches were not examined.
- There were a small number of participant sites, and some types of organisation were not represented, therefore any findings were likely to be indicative only.
- The timeframes were short and this was likely to have an impact on what could be attempted and achieved within the timescales and the potential findings.
- The scale of these trials was limited and therefore the findings could not be compared directly to the trial evaluations reported elsewhere in Canada and Australia, although observations could be made with caveats.

Case study 1: Alameda Middle School

Context

Alameda is a purpose-built middle school for up to 600 pupils of all abilities from the ages of 9 to 13 years. It is the middle phase in Bedfordshire's three-tier system of lower, middle and upper schools. The intake of pupils comes mainly from three feeder lower schools and neighbouring villages. At the end of Year 8 pupils move on to the upper school.

As part of a pyramid of nine schools, Alameda works closely with the other schools in the Ampthill and Flitwick area. This not only enables pupils to make a smooth transition between schools, but also facilitates the sharing of good practice. Alameda is a well-equipped school that benefits from both primary trained staff and secondary trained subject specialists.

Involvement

The Alameda School was approached to gauge its interest in running one of the initial trials. The lead teacher undertaking this work was the personal, social and health education (PSHE) KS2 co-ordinator. The stated aims of this trial were to devise a Key Stage 2 Year 6 careers curriculum with the wider aim of keeping students motivated to learn, to understand the relevance of school and education, to find out what type of learners they were and keep them motivated as lifelong learners.

What was the Blueprint used to do?

The overall and long-term aim was to develop a comprehensive career programme of study at Key Stage 2 within the school. The organisation had no current provision for these year groups and therefore anything developed as a result of the trial would be completely new. The aim of this initial trial was to initiate the career development process in Year 6 and build on the work to roll out to Year 5 and eventually Key Stage 1 learners.

Firstly, the school identified the likely competency areas relevant to the age of Year 6 learners in phase I, or the primary level, of the Blueprint framework. It was noted that in some cases phase II level competencies were also relevant to some learners.

Links were made between the competencies identified and the school and subject development plan to look for commonalities and opportunities to address shortcomings, such as increasing the school's involvement and links with the local community. It was envisaged that actions to address this would be to invite local members of the community in to talk about their jobs and careers, making reference to the key skills necessary for their roles. It was thought that this may also encourage children to think more about their local community. There was also a link with the PSHE curriculum in terms of looking after their environment.

How was the work done?

The school held an initial meeting with the LSIS trial co-ordinator. The lead teacher reviewed the Blueprint documents and shared the plans with the head teacher. Having explored the context and school priorities, they focused initially on eight of the 11 competencies from the framework. The rationale for covering only eight competency areas was based on immediate relevance and time constraints as the provision was based on six hours of teaching.

The school also considered how to embed the careers programme across the curriculum e.g. in the subject of history, looking at history of jobs and careers over time. The school tried to identify competencies with more dominant cross-curricular links, which could be developed later with the introduction of the new primary curriculum in 2011 as a consequence of the Rose report.² Draft lesson plans were drawn up, which would be trialled in the summer term. Additional activities included the exploration of the Blueprint websites to explore links with other parts of the curriculum and to identify resources.

The competency framework

The school reported that, at first, the Blueprint documentation was overwhelming. After working through the initial documents, however, it became clear how applicable the framework was to the development of a structured and organised approach to career development in the school.

Impact

The framework was described as inspiring and definitely worth pursuing. In particular, it was hoped that engaging the learners in careers at such a young age would make them realise the importance of lifelong learning and the skills required to lead healthy, confident and fulfilled lives. It was also envisaged that with thoughtful planning, learners would not become disengaged from education.

Improved effectiveness of the Blueprint and implementation

The school noted the need to make the language more learner and child-friendly.

Future

Once the lessons plans are in place, the school intends to identify assessment opportunities and potential outcomes to enable them to benchmark the learners' current career learning and development against the Blueprint framework. The school looks at the learner outcomes as being changes in attitudes and behaviours, and very much as resulting from a whole-school approach.

The Blueprint-based lessons are planned to be delivered in the summer term and the school will collect feedback from staff involved and a sample of learners. The Blueprint approach and findings will be shared with the school's learning pyramid (partnership group), which includes staff from the three feeder schools.

2 This is the report of the Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum which the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families invited Sir Jim Rose to undertake in January 2008, which was published in April 2009.

Case study 2a: Boston College

Context

Boston College is a medium-sized further education college situated in the market town of Boston in south-east Lincolnshire. Boston College is one of the three most geographically isolated colleges in England and its catchment area involves deprived wards in both Boston and Skegness. The area served is geographically large, rural and sparsely populated. The college offers learning programmes from entry level to higher education, and prides itself on its reputation and on meeting the needs of its community. In recent years, the college has achieved many awards including Matrix Excellence in 2008; Most successful Aimhigher delivery partner in 2009; Career Mark IV in 2009; 2007/08 Ofsted overall grading as Good with some areas Outstanding; Boston Business Awards 2009 Best Contribution to the Community; Training Quality Standard 2009; QAA IQER Summative Review for Higher Education 2009 Good, with areas of outstanding practice. CLIAG is delivered through a variety of methods, including one-to-one interviews, group sessions, over the telephone, via email etc. The college has an open-door policy through which it aims to assist each client regardless of ability and prior background, either internally or by referral. Their client group is varied, with skill ability level ranging from entry level to HE, and from a diverse range of backgrounds. The college is able to support clients with a range of topics from education, employment, financial assistance, disability and health to counselling.

Involvement

The student services manager at Boston College is a career learning champion for LSIS and both she and the trial co-ordinator attended a workshop in 2008/09 on 'Careers in the 21st Century' where they were initially introduced to the Blueprint and developing career competencies for young people in further education. Boston College looked at two distinct objectives when trialling the Blueprint and these are presented separately.

What was the Blueprint used to do?

The first objective for the trial was to review an existing programme. The college's current careers education programme was based on the DfES *Careers Education & Guidance (CEG) Framework for England* published in 2003.

How was the work done?

The Blueprint competencies at Level III were chosen as the relevant competencies and indicators for post-16 students. All 11 competencies and their indicators were cross-referenced in detail with the learning outcomes from the college's existing level 3 CEG programme. At the end of the process, the trial team reviewed the Blueprint competency and indicator list to see which of these indicators had not been addressed or addressed only partially by their CEG programme. These gaps were outlined and documented, then discussed with the senior team before a final report with recommendations was produced.

The competency framework

The college trial team concluded that the Blueprint competencies and indicators were more comprehensive than the existing CEG framework and took into account that learners need to become lifelong career planners. The Blueprint helped to identify gaps within their current careers programme and highlighted the need to make changes.

Impact

The Blueprint highlighted a number of topics which, although not specifically in the college CEG programme, were covered to some degree through the *Every Child Matters* agenda, the qualification programme that students are studying, learner voice strategy and the role of newly appointed equality and diversity manager. Many of the gaps identified were also covered in the new careers framework published by the DCSF in January 2010, *Careers Education Framework 7–19*, and which the college will be using in the future.

Improved effectiveness of the Blueprint and implementation

It was noted that evidence for some of the Blueprint indicators may be difficult to obtain, particularly those relating to lifelong learning that cover the life/work building process.

Future

Blueprint has helped to identify areas for improvement and may be used in conjunction with new 7–19 framework to develop improved CEG learning outcomes for their post-16 learners.

Case study 2b: Boston College

Context

As above, in case study 2a.

Involvement

The student services manager at Boston College is a career learning champion for LSIS and both she and the trial co-ordinator attended a workshop in 2008/09 on 'Careers in the 21st Century' where they were initially introduced to the Blueprint and developing career competencies for young people in further education. Boston College looked at two distinct objectives when trialling the Blueprint and these are presented separately.

What was the Blueprint used to do?

The Blueprint framework was used for an in-depth evaluation of a career learning products and resources.

How was the work done?

On a practical level, the co-ordinator used the *Blueprint Quick Reference Guide*, which broke each competency down into various stages, and the resources review table for recording and evaluation purposes. Both of these Blueprint resources were available from the Canadian Blueprint website.

The co-ordinator looked at the Blueprint competencies at level III for young people. The focus was particularly on identifying which competencies the resources covered, to pick out the resources that would be most useful for learners and to find out how the resources differed. The co-ordinator also used the framework to identify any gaps in resource provision. For example, the college used the structure of the Blueprint to look at the following competencies to evaluate the resources:

- **Competency area 2: Interact positively and effectively with others**
The resources were looked at to see if they enabled the learner to discover the skills and knowledge required when working in various roles with others, and if they covered the helping skills such as giving information, problem solving, communication etc.
- **Competency area 3: Change and grow throughout one's life**
This competency was not covered by the resources reviewed which looked at mental and physical health. It was noted that there were other websites and literature which would facilitate this, but none of the resources evaluated contained the option of exploring this area.
- **Competency area 8: Make life/work enhancing decisions**
This competency was used to evaluate if the resources gave information to the individual relating to costs for education (i.e., tuition fees, accommodation) and the steps required for further progression and to explore alternatives to make a well-informed decision.

The competency framework

The trial co-ordinator at college felt the framework was useful to identify gaps and raise awareness of how the resources could be used to help learners.

Impact

The co-ordinator reported learning much more about the main resources they use due to the in-depth nature of the competency evaluation process. It was felt that the resources did promote positive self-image and that the college has a range of materials to cover different learners for different areas, i.e. future prospects, labour market information etc.

Improved effectiveness of the Blueprint and implementation

The feedback was that the wording was often quite lengthy and points were broken down too much, which seemed repetitive and difficult to work with initially, but once a pattern had been established, it worked well.

Future

It was felt that the Blueprint would definitely be a good guide to use if working to a budget when choosing new resources or updating resources. Using the Blueprint as part of an evaluation process was recommended as a useful aid to choosing resources and a comprehensive way of identifying any gaps to ensure that all CLIAG areas were covered and all learners reached.

Case study 3: Franklin College

Context

Franklin College is a sixth-form college serving students in Grimsby and north-east Lincolnshire. There are 1,550 full-time 16 to 19-year-old students and 2,000 part-time adult students drawn from wide-ranging socio-economic backgrounds. Franklin College opened in 1990 with a mission to raise participation in learning and achievement post-16 in north-east Lincolnshire. It recognised that the widest guidance needs of learners should be systematically addressed before the age of 16 in order to make the difference and to ensure that learners have clear progression routes and support available to them. All teaching staff at Franklin are expected to undertake a personal tutoring role and they are supported by a well-trained and experienced team of specialist staff. There are dedicated staff for career guidance, welfare support and learning needs. The team is managed by senior tutors.

Involvement

As a keen proponent of sharing effective practice in the CLIAG area, the college deputy principal agreed to undertake a trial of the Blueprint with the overall aim of exploring its implementation from a number of perspectives. This was a wide-ranging trial and involved a number of staff members and different stakeholders within the local authority context. The team meet with an LSIS team in early January 2009 to scope and plan the trial activities.

What was the Blueprint used to do?

Franklin College identified three specific objectives:

- A. To determine the competencies of the following range of students/clients in relation to *Competency 8. Making life/work enhancing decisions*:
 - Students in two secondary schools making KS4 subject choices
 - Students identified as Aimhigher students making KS4 subject choices
 - Students on Level 2 courses aged 16–17 making choices for the next year
 - Students on Level 3 courses making choices about HE
 - Adult students entering skills for life programmes.
- B. To review an existing specific programme or curriculum using the current college guidance programme.
- C. To develop a comprehensive career development system as a way of reviewing the provision of integrated youth services in a local authority, especially as the move to Children's Trusts, which have a role as 'guardians' of the *Every Child Matters* agenda, meant that in their advice for commissioning of provision there needed to be demonstrable joined-up working with several professional areas. There was also a desire to recognise and value different professional disciplines but at the same time have a common language and framework for guidance.

How was the work done?

In undertaking the trials, the college took an open and exploratory approach and, in general, staff were very receptive to the challenge set. The challenge was to 'step into the unknown' and investigate how they could use the framework in their work settings.

With regard to objective A, individual team members formulated their own action plans, identified suitable learners and held one-to-one interviews structured on the framework. They reported back their findings, incorporating feedback from the learners.

With regard to objective B, a senior tutor (CLIAG and progression) at Franklin College met with the deputy principal to review the current college CLIAG programme with the Blueprint.

With regard to objective C, the Blueprint was introduced at an initial meeting with the head of integrated youth support services. At a follow-up meeting, the new directions of the integrated services were discussed and the requirement for a new strategy framework was tabled.

The competency framework

The college team offered a range of different observations on the competency framework stemming from their trials with a wide range of learners and a number of objectives for using the Blueprint. The summary feedback was as follows.

The Blueprint was effective in highlighting where learners could improve their decision-making skills. It was also seen to be a very good framework for structuring Aimhigher (widening participation) programmes as it highlighted the competencies for transition as well as the competences for managing on arrival and living independently. Generally the learners felt that developing these competencies would be of benefit to them. The competency approach could also filter into CV and personal statements for progression.

The college also noted that when learners were asked to examine competencies that they could relate to, and not against their 'age/phase', it was significant that the students aged 16 were agreeing only with competencies that were well below those expected for their 'age/phase'.

In their work with adult learners entering skills for life programmes, the adult learning manager at Franklin College investigated the use of the Blueprint with staff who worked with foundation learning tier learners. It was felt that there were very good links with the new development in foundation learning and that with careful planning of learning programmes, the literacy and numeracy elements could be woven together with the competencies. Older, more able, adult learners may see the benefit from a programme designed around the competencies to support them, as they manage a significant change period in their life, such as retirement.

In reviewing its existing careers programme, the college felt that the Blueprint competency framework matched closely with the published national careers standards, on which its materials, lessons and exercises were based, and as a result fitted well with the self-assessment framework of Blueprint.

In exploring the integrated youth services in a local authority, the authority staff and college staff recognised that the Blueprint offered such a framework, and that it could form the basis for the NEL strategy and an approach based on learner outcomes.

Impact

One positive outcome was that personal advisers found that some of the questions that arose from using the Blueprint approach helped their guidance practice and they have incorporated these new questions into subsequent guidance interviews. It was also noted that the language of guidance is not well developed and learners are poor at expressing themselves. It was felt that the Blueprint competences could assist with building the language for personal growth and development. In addition, the college noted that further refinement of their careers education resources was required so that the exercises undertaken by learners would enable them to signpost the Blueprint competencies in their work assignments and use the language.

The local authority is also hoping to develop a new integrated youth support service strategy, utilising the Blueprint competencies across the full range of services, supporting it to moving forward from 'a supply of provision' to an 'outcomes for young people' approach with shared language.

Improved effectiveness of the Blueprint and implementation

It was noted that staff training on the Blueprint was required to enable it to be used more effectively and for the college and other service providers this was a priority. It was also highlighted that when using the Blueprint to assess levels of competency a more in-depth questioning style was needed with learners to elicit evidence of the indicators.

Future

The college noted that, for them, the Blueprint has great potential and although much of what they have based their current careers learning work and resources on was in tune with the Blueprint approach, the trial has highlighted opportunities for further development, both for individual learners and in developing partnership working on a broader scale. They felt that that the link between the Blueprint should be explored more fully with the foundation learning planned for the 14–19 curriculum. They also proposed that employers should be looking to incorporate the Blueprint approach. They also noted the need for buy-in from all in the education and guidance services.

Case study 4: New College Stamford

Context

New College Stamford is a large and progressive further education college located at the southernmost tip of Lincolnshire. It provides a broad range of courses and qualifications to suit every learner. It has a comprehensive green strategy and is committed to reducing its impact on climate change. The college offers an impressive range of *beyond the classroom* activities that allow young people to develop both as learners and as well-rounded, confident young people who are able to contribute positively to the community in which they live and work. The Employment Finder Skills (EFS) programme runs at several satellite centres across Lincolnshire. The Blueprint trial was carried out at the Sleaford centre.

Involvement

The trial co-ordinator had a keen interest and professional qualifications in careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEAIG); was a careers co-ordinator in a secondary school in Sleaford for a number of years and was also very familiar with the Blueprint. Her participation in a League of the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers (LECT) IAG research trip to Alberta, Canada in 2007 enabled her to further explore the concept of the Blueprint and experience first-hand a learning environment that was built around the Blueprint concept. The research trip also enabled her to speak to learners directly about the benefits of this model. She has sustained her contacts in Alberta and met up with the group during a reciprocal trip in Lincolnshire during Easter 2009. The trial co-ordinator had previously developed a scheme of work for learners at New College Stamford and saw the Blueprint trial as an ideal opportunity to evaluate the programme. She worked with a CEIAG colleague from Lincolnshire County Council, who also had a keen interest in the Blueprint approach, to undertake the trial.

What did you use the Blueprint to do?

The Blueprint competencies were used for curriculum evaluation and development. A decision was made to use the Blueprint for this purpose because the EFS course was a relatively new programme. The course had been run on a number of cycles and had been evaluated; however, it was recognised that the Blueprint was a more thorough mechanism to further examine the quality of the programme.

How was the work done?

The trial participants decided to use section C of the *Quick Reference Guide* as a means to evaluate the provision. The original intention of the trial was to map all 11 competencies of the Blueprint to the EFS course scheme of work. However, due to time limitations (the trial coincided with a matrix assessment and the introduction of a new course within the college), a decision was made to map only Sections 1 and 2 of the Blueprint (competencies 1 to 6) to the scheme of work and to direct this at Level I. The team decided that Level I was the most appropriate for the ability level of the majority of the learners. The team cross-examined each of the topics in the scheme of work against the competencies and stages of the Blueprint and produced a mapping document.

The competency framework

During the trial exercise, the team were able to examine the competencies of the Blueprint in depth. In general, they liked the concept of the approach and felt the holistic life/work outlook had sufficient breadth across a number of areas that were key to transition.

It was also their belief that the application of the three main areas of the Blueprint could be relatively straightforward in England because the 2003 *11–19 National Framework for Careers Education in England* document sets out learning outcomes under three very similar headings, the main difference between the two being the broader, holistic focus of the Blueprint. It was envisaged that CEIAG practitioners should be able to relate well to the areas of the Blueprint.

The general structure of the Blueprint was found easy to understand and to navigate throughout; however, they believed the language needed to be addressed. A lot of the terms and phrases used were Canadian and would need to be adapted for use in England. They also found the learning levels to be quite advanced in comparison to literacy ability across the UK. Although they understood the Blueprint to be a ‘stage’ rather than ‘age’ framework, the general category for Level I is elementary school. They found some of the standards to be quite advanced for their learners, who were age 16 and older.

One major issue reported was that the competency indicators were not set to SMART criteria and needed to be more specific to measure learning outcomes; for example:

- *Competency 2 – Interact positively and effectively with others*
- *Level I – Develop abilities for building positive relationships in one’s life*
- *Phase B – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge*
- *Indicator 5 – Demonstrate a willingness to help others*

It was felt that the lack of SMART indicators was a potential barrier to the implementation of the Blueprint on the basis that teachers and practitioners tend to have little time for preparation and, although some may like the flexibility that the indicators provide, most would like more prescriptive guidance on what is required from each indicator and perhaps examples of how these could be evidenced.

The trial participants also felt that the fact that the 2003 *National Framework for Careers Education in England* document has recently been revised in light of CEIAG principles and that the new Career Learning framework is aimed at ages 7 to 19 may dissuade providers from considering the Blueprint, as it may be considered as duplication.

Application for particular client groups

The participants noted that the learners on the EFS programme could have a multitude of barriers to learning. They lack confidence and self-esteem, have poor communication skills and lack self-awareness about their norms and values. All of the aforementioned are fundamental to underpinning a young person to be work-ready and employable. Applying the Level I component of the blueprints could help to re-educate the core foundations of learning for these learners.

The progressive nature of the Blueprint could be of interest to the learners to self-assess themselves and to record their developments. An interesting activity may be to introduce a 'spiky profile' system to recognise particular strengths and weaknesses of each learner on each competency area.

Improved effectiveness of the Blueprint and implementation

Feedback was in three main areas:

- The Blueprint indicators (UK: learning outcomes) needed to be much more specific
- Provision of example materials and tools would help teachers and practitioners to plan lessons around the Blueprint
- A mapping process to the statutory guidance, relevant frameworks and awards would need to take place to encourage learning providers to incorporate the Blueprint.

Impact

The trial participants felt that the evaluation of the EFS scheme of work against the Blueprint had been a very worthwhile exercise. It enabled the team to highlight the gaps in current provision and provided them with reassurance on the quality of the programme.

Future

The team reported that they would continue to support the development of a Blueprint approach for England.

Case study 5a: Higher education

Context

Multi-site university with approximately 30,000 graduate and postgraduate students, offering 600 courses.

Involvement

The interest in using the Blueprint was to help students explore their reasons for attending a part-time higher education programme, assess their self-management and career management skills and explore their career plans. Work with students in the past had highlighted a tendency in some to believe that a postgraduate qualification would in itself develop new career opportunities.

What was the Blueprint used to do?

Students were asked to assess themselves against all levels of the framework. The whole range of Blueprint competencies was used.

How was the work done?

Firstly, students were asked to think through why they had come on the higher education course – what were their motivations, needs and wants. They discussed their reasons generally in the class with their peers, disclosing only what they wished others to know. Students were asked to build on this first exercise by thinking through what they wanted to achieve by undertaking their chosen course – for both their personal and career development. This led to a general discussion about the word ‘career’ and what it meant for them, their culture and that of others.

The group then had an input session on leadership effectiveness and leadership derailment research, highlighting the need for self-awareness; self-leadership; emotional intelligence; flexibility; openness to continuing professional development (CPD) and feedback from others; and influencing and networking skills.

Students were then asked to assess themselves against the Blueprint competencies and then discuss their results in pairs. A general class discussion followed, evaluating the use of the Blueprint as an educational tool.

The competency framework

All comments referred to the overall competency matrix and at all levels. Students found the Blueprint useful as it gave them a common language to discuss career development. Some students found the language of the Blueprint very difficult to work with individually due to its generality, and discussions followed on the subjective nature of some of the language used. Students found the Blueprint very useful in generating discussions about self, values, aspirations, personal and career stages and skills.

Impact

Students generally found it shocking that some of them rated themselves at Level I, which in some students prompted deep self-reflection and motivation to 'take control'. All agreed it was a useful tool to use alongside a programme of career and self-development.

Improved effectiveness of the Blueprint and implementation

It was felt that there should be a glossary of terms and some reference to the research when using it in this way.

Future

The organisation would use it again, although next time they would firstly discuss the meaning of the broad terms within the group. They would use it for sessions with undergraduate as well as postgraduate students.

Case study 5b: Higher education

Context

As above, in case study 5a.

Involvement

The institution had recognised the importance of students' career development and personal growth as well as developing academic qualifications and abilities, and had fairly recently introduced a number of new programmes to meet these requirements.

What did you use the Blueprint to do?

The organisation thought it would be interesting to compare their overall provision with the Blueprint competencies.

How was the work done?

Using checklists obtained from the www.blueprint4life.ca website, staff involved in teaching CLIAG and coaching examined their services and teaching programmes to evaluate the provision against all the competency areas and four levels of the Blueprint. The staff looked at the provision offered online, face-to-face, across the whole institution and within one school.

The competency framework

It was felt that the Blueprint is based philosophically on the western view of encouraging independence – self-determination and the wish to self-actualise. This could cause issues for use in a multicultural education establishment where students could be studying areas agreed by family or the wider community.

It was felt that the Blueprint could be used as a means of recording students' development whilst within education and within their careers. It could be used as a tool to bring together all the career development provision within the institution.

Impact

The staff found the exercise was extremely interesting in that it highlighted that their provision, online and face-to-face, tended to meet the Blueprint areas fully apart from *Competency 9*. With regard to this area, staff reported that elements of "Maintain balanced life and work roles," may be raised and discussed in career consultancy interviews, counselling and well-being sessions but it was not given any prominence in general career development sessions. Focusing on this particular area of competence led to a lot of discussion about British cultural and work acceptance of work/life balance. This debate was taken to a number of postgraduate groups for further discussion, which revealed a split between employers who did and did not accept work/life balance as a concept.

Consideration of *Competency 7. Secure or create and maintain work* highlighted that the organisation's provision of work experience with placements, work experience etc. was voluntary and, although the institution rates this activity highly, not all students view this provision as valuable. It raised the issue of work experience and whether it should remain voluntary.

Improved effectiveness of the Blueprint and implementation

Staff reported a need to give more consideration to more collective cultures and how and whether the competencies could be adapted.

Future

This tool could be considered to encourage students to self-assess their capabilities on entering an educational institution and monitoring their progress throughout their studies and experiences. It could also be used to develop student portfolios. In terms of next steps, the organisation's leadership is considering using the Blueprint across the organisation.

Case study 6: Somerset Skills and Learning

Context

Somerset Skills and Learning (SS&L) has a long history of running guidance courses known as *Return to Learn* for people with low-level qualifications or low confidence levels. The short, 30-hour courses have embedded IAG and literacy, with an introduction to numeracy. The courses were designed to attract learners who have a non-traditional learning background and who would not normally access learning in a college setting. The venues are all community based and the learners were recruited through partnership working and promoted by visiting community groups. The service has eight trained learning advisers who offer IAG and tutor the courses, making the link with an adviser an essential feature of the engagement activities.

Involvement

The Blueprint model offered an opportunity to use the competences activities in the planning and delivery of the *Return to Learn* courses and in the delivery of the *Skills for Jobs* programme (funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the European Social Fund (ESF), which SS&L delivers as *ucan if ican*).

What was the Blueprint used to do?

As the learners accessing the programmes were initially assessed for their literacy, numeracy and learning styles and were given extensive guidance before they accessed the programmes, the team felt that the Blueprint offered the opportunity to assess more formally the level of life experience, preparation for the workplace and skills for career management and progression within the workplace. These processes would enable the individual learning plans to be adjusted to produce SMART outcomes, which were personal to the learner and focused on individual skills development. The team had also been piloting a new format for an individual learning plan.

How was the work done?

Two learning advisers took part in the project. They were experienced advisers, qualified to level 4 IAG, level 4 teaching and level 3 literacy. They were both participants on the University of Derby MA guidance programme.

The programmes they chose to use the Blueprint resources in were:

- *Skills for Jobs* – ESF-funded preparation for work with a job as an outcome. Support is also offered as after care for 13 weeks.
- *Volunteering with Children and Young People* – a short, 30-hour course delivered in schools in conjunction with a primary school.

The competences they chose were *Area C: Career Building: Competencies 7, 8, 9 and 10*. This decision was based on the initial assessments of the learners for *Areas A and B* of the Blueprint. It was felt that the learners had a good deal of self-reflection experience and that they were operating at level 4. This was probably because they had already completed some programmes with SS&L where they were encouraged to look at life experience and what learning they had gained from positive and negative experiences. Learners referred from mental health sectors have also often done a lot of self-reflection work before they come into learning and SS&L found that they needed a ‘work’ focus rather than personal management support. SS&L also used some of the materials to trial with the groups with an aim to identifying gaps in their own resources.

They used a comprehensive initial assessment processes to establish what stage or phase level of the Blueprint competences to use. A decision was made to use the competences 7-11 at Level III. The Blueprint processes were used in group work and in one-to-one sessions for the *Skills for Jobs* sessions. The programme for the *Volunteering* course is based on learners understanding school structures, undertaking volunteering in a school setting, understanding how the new roles of school staff fit into structures and support the teaching and learning, equality and diversity issues and decision-making about future careers. It was felt that it was the relevancy of the competences that helped the advisers and learners to gain the most from the resources.

The competency framework

The advisers felt that the Blueprint materials were a useful tool to discuss issues and used them in sequence with their own materials. The materials were a useful mechanism to focus on career management. For example, the following feedback was from exploring gender stereotypes (*Competency 10.3*). A learner had experienced support from a male midwife whilst giving birth. She found it challenged her assumptions and her horizons were broadened as a result. When she came to do the exercise on ‘changing roles’ she contributed many positive comments from her experience, which helped promote discussion and challenge attitudes across the board with the learner group.

The adviser also used the issues of confidentiality to promote discussion and relate situations to work relationships.

Learner feedback

The learners all liked the booklets rather than ‘bits of paper’. They liked ‘completing the questionnaires’. The advisers introduced activities then gave them the exercises, gained feedback and got them to record their learning so that they could be formatively assessed.

“The booklets cover some very important and realistic issues. It is a good idea to consider lifestyles and stages in regard to choosing work experience.”

The learners also thought that children working at Level I might find it a bit daunting and they would need some help with the thought processes. They liked the idea of their own children starting the processes early on. They thought that perhaps if they had experienced this programme then they would have a clearer idea of what they wanted to do and be more confident to gain more training, if they knew the directions to go in.

“The papers were informative and, once I got over the size of the papers, I think they would work very well.”

Impact

Even though this was a limited trial, the two advisers have valued the opportunity to set the competences in place with their learner groups.

“The Blueprint covers what you would want from a career, how hard you are prepared to work/study for it and how much it will cost you to train/study. It challenges your own work values and the probability that you will not have a job for life and that there may be several career changes. I wish I had received this when I was at school.”

Quote from a learner

Future

Because the competencies so closely mirror the structures of its *Return to Learn* courses, SS&L would like to build on this short trial. The two advisers who used the materials have recognised the strength of the materials and the process of the Blueprint and they plan to share their findings with their larger team and use them with other groups. SS&L also reports that as it had concentrated on *Area C* in this trial, it would look for the opportunity to use *Areas A & B* of the Blueprint framework with a different learner group. This opportunity may present itself with the introduction of *Foundation Learning in Entry to Employment* for next year.

Other developments being considered by the manager were to use the team of advisers to further embed and deliver career management sessions into *Access to HE* courses, *NVQ Management* courses and to start some initial discussions with the county council for the graduate training programme. It was felt that these opportunities would be an excellent opportunity to build on the links they already have with the corporate training team and human resources departments.

Reported findings

We asked the trial sites to report on the following criteria and to share their experience of using the Blueprint. Evidence for these findings was collected from the completion of a structured report undertaken by each trial site and a verbal debrief post trial.

The trial sites reported the following:

Usability – including ease of use, fit with other provision etc

General usefulness in meeting stated trial objectives

The following uses of the Blueprint were reported and evidenced during the trials:

- A way of benchmarking and assessing individual learning and development
- Challenging staff to find new approaches to their work and to improve practice
- Generating discussion about self, values, aspirations, careers and skills
- Encouraging debate about work-life balance, stereotyping and the quality of working life
- Embedding career management sessions into existing courses, programmes and services
- Improving CVs, personal statements and development plans
- Providing a common framework to help individual organisations to work together for the benefit of the learner
- Evaluating existing resources and highlighting gaps in resource provision.

Ease of use

After some concerns with the amount of paperwork available to support the Blueprint implementation process, the trial sites reported finding it relatively easy to navigate their way around the materials and resources on the related websites. One site found the questionnaires for learners very useful in promoting discussion. Another site found the paperwork on the indicators too cumbersome and found it easier to work from the higher-level competency descriptions. It was reported that whilst the documentation associated with the Blueprint might have seemed daunting initially to participants, once it was looked at in detail, links to the curriculum and career activities became evident.

Fit with other provision and frameworks

It was reported that the Blueprint competencies could be interwoven with numeracy and literacy into programmes such as Foundation learning. It was also noted that the activities to support the development of the framework could be embedded into personal, social and health education (PSHE) and other curriculum subjects at primary school level. The similarity to other CEG frameworks and the new 7–19 framework was also noted.

Complexity of the approach

There was some evidence that the requirement to develop personalised outcomes to show evidence of the competency indicators was an issue for some providers and they identified a need for more guidance in this area. There were some concerns that the evidence relating to competencies focusing on life and career building may be difficult to collect because this requires a longer time frame than the 14–19 transition. There was also evidence that the first level of competency, often used with primary school level children in Canada and Australia, was too stretching for some learners in the sample.

Language and content

Language

Although all the trial sites and their learners were able to work effectively with the Canadian version of the Blueprint and gain from the experience, the language of the framework was often mentioned as an issue. Other feedback on the content and structure of the framework noted the lack of specific competency indicators and more guidance on expected outcomes or evidence. Some found parts of the framework difficult to work with because the wording was too general.

Content

One trial site indicated that the Blueprint competences could assist with building the language for personal growth and development for both advisors and learners. It was reported that these skills were not well-developed in their own advisors and the Blueprint helped frame questions when interviewing and offered a common language for discussion. Participants also commented that knowledge of LMI, qualification and progression routes are lacking in some advisors and it would therefore be a challenge to develop learners in these areas as required in the Blueprint.

Use with types of learners

In this trial, the Blueprint was considered for and used with a range of learners including postgraduate students, year 6 primary school learners, students at FE and sixth-form college and adults returning to learning on local authority courses.

Other outcomes from the trials

In addition to the effectiveness of the Blueprint in meeting the stated objectives of the trial sites, there was evidence of other outcomes, findings and expectations.

Engagement of learners

- In the school setting, it was anticipated that implementing the Blueprint, including an understanding of how lifelong learning helps reach career goals, may help prevent young learners from becoming disengaged from education later in their schooling.

- In adult learning, the Blueprint had the effect of stimulating useful activities for learners and promoting discussion on future provision of CLIAG.
- The Blueprint was found to be very useful in generating discussions amongst students about self, values, aspirations, personal and career stages and skills. It also raised questions whether all students understood the value and importance of interventions such as work experience in career planning, and had thought about issues such as work/life balance.
- It was felt that the areas of the Blueprint were particularly valuable in supporting transitions.
- The Level I part of the Blueprint, and the framework's progressive nature, could help to re-engage disaffected learners.
- Initial feedback from the trial sites indicates that learners may not have attained the competencies indicated in the Blueprint as appropriate for their age – and that some may feel quite shocked at how far behind they are in developing 'career competence'.

Unifying framework

- The Blueprint could be used as a tool and a point of reference to bring together all of the career development provision within an institution, including learners self-assessing competencies at the beginning of each programme and monitoring the acquisition of their career competencies.
- In one trial site, the Blueprint competencies were envisaged being used to develop a new integrated youth support service strategy based on 'an outcomes for young people' approach with a shared and common language, thus increasing involvement and active links with the local community.
- The Blueprint framework was useful to identify gaps in CLIAG resources available and raise awareness of how the resources could be used to help learners, particularly to establish priorities when working within a limited budget.

Other observations

- The Blueprint was felt to be based on a western view of encouraging independence and self-determination, which may conflict with other cultural beliefs.
- Staff will require training on the Blueprint and how it can support their work if it is to be used effectively.
- When the competencies and indicators in the Blueprint were compared to the DfES national CEG framework, a number of links were found between the Blueprint and other frameworks and agendas, including the *Every Child Matters* outcomes.

Conclusions

In summary, the initial trials of the Blueprint were very successful and informative. In previous work on the Blueprint in 2008/09, LSIS recommended that learning providers consider assimilating aspects of the Blueprint into their careers provision. All six trial sites had achieved this and were planning to do more in this area.

The trial sites' enthusiasm to follow up the work on the Blueprint was one of the most positive outcomes of the trial. In all cases the Blueprint had the effect of stimulating the development of useful activities for learners and promoting discussion on future provision of CLIAG.

In terms of practical issues, the feedback from the trial sites and from previous trials in other national settings was that to use the Blueprint more extensively in England, the framework language would benefit from being revised in terms of complexity and anglicisation. Most notably, the competency indicators are not written to SMART criteria and may need to be more specific to measure learning outcomes. It was also noted that the language of the Blueprint may be too complex and inaccessible to some learners; both Australia and Canada made changes, however, to suit the context and age of their learners. Some of the phrases used in the Canadian or Australian versions may indeed need to be adapted for use, should the framework be used in England.

Although the trials were limited in terms of time and resources, participants reported many advantages and benefits from using such a comprehensive and detailed approach to developing career competencies. Each trial site took a different aspect of the Blueprint and tailored the trials to their requirements and the needs of their own individual learners. The trials were necessarily limited in scope and timescales and there were some significant gaps in the coverage of competency areas, phases and types of learners. Further trials are needed to look in more detail at the implementation of the Blueprint in all areas but especially in schools, with employers and with learners with learning difficulties.

In conclusion, CLIAG is seen as a powerful driver of social mobility and a crucial factor in achieving government and sector policies and targets. There is a wide-ranging consensus on the need for high quality CLIAG to support 14–19 progression and the raising of the participation age. It is recognised that we need to build a career development culture in which individuals are helped to take responsibility for their own careers at all ages through an imaginative range of resources, materials and services. This small trial indicates a competency approach to developing career management skills could play a part in this vision, partly on the results of the study but also for the potential benefits envisaged in using the competency approach by the trial participants in this study. A competency framework covering the same ground as the Blueprint could be a highly effective tool in developing learners of all ages in this area.

Blueprint: what next?

This guide incorporates the feedback from six small-scale trials across a range of settings. Building on the outcomes of this study and feedback from practitioner workshops organised by LSIS in the first part of 2009 and 2010, considerable interest was expressed in developing a version of Blueprint for use in England.

To explore this further, LSIS will be undertaking an extended trial of the Blueprint in a range of organisations in 2010–11. With this in mind, the following recommended next steps have been drawn up for different stakeholders.

Learning providers

- Using this collection of case studies to get started, assimilate aspects of Blueprint into your careers provision to strengthen the benefits for learners.
- Consider ways of developing, recording and accrediting career competencies.
- Investigate ways of implementing Blueprint in partnership settings and particularly with employers.

Career education and guidance professional community

- Commission and carry out longer-term trials and research to investigate how Blueprint can be used most effectively to strengthen learners' career development.
- Consider how to develop more support for learning providers to introduce Blueprint into their provision, including developing a quick implementation guide for England and exploring new technology options.
- Explore with relevant government departments the potential for the further development of Blueprint in the UK and its use across all age groups.

Government

- Learning from the approach in other national settings, including Scotland, investigate and consider whether a similar process would benefit England.
- Explore the use of the Blueprint with employers as a way of developing career management skills and competencies in the workplace.
- A clear mapping process to the statutory guidance, relevant frameworks and awards would need to take place to encourage learning providers to incorporate the Blueprint along with some clear positioning about the role of the Blueprint.

Further reading

Australian Blueprint for Career Development (ABCD)

www.blueprint.edu.au

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development and the Appendices

www.blueprint.edu.au/resources/DL_Blueprint_Final.pdf?bcsi_scan_8691BB3BC7BCD5AE=0&bcsi_scan_filename=DL_Blueprint_Final.pdf

The professional development kit: Using the Blueprint with Young People

www.blueprint.edu.au/index.php/toolkit/using_the_blueprint_in_schools/

Blueprint for Life (Canada)

www.blueprint4life.ca/blueprint/home.cfm/lang/1

DCSF, 2007. *Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)*.

Nottingham: DCSF Publications.

DfES, 2003. *Careers Education and guidance in England – a national framework 11-19*.

Nottingham: DfES.

LSIS, 2009. *Career Learning for the 21st Century: the career blueprint – a competence approach*.

DCSF, 2009. *Quality Choice and Aspiration A strategy for young people's information, advice and guidance*.

Learning and Skills Improvement Service

Friars House, Manor House Drive

Coventry CV1 2TE

t 024 7662 7900

e enquiriescoventry@lsis.org.uk

www.lsis.org.uk

Learning and Skills Improvement Service

The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) aims to accelerate the drive for excellence in the learning and skills sector, building the sector's own capacity to design, commission and deliver improvement and strategic change. LSIS's vision is that every learner acquires the skills, knowledge and appetite for learning, living and working and every provider is valued by their community and employers for their contribution to sustainable social and economic priorities.

LSIS's *Strategic Ambitions* demonstrates how we will contribute to delivering core improvement principles and sets out our new ways of working to engage the sector in everything we do to make LSIS a truly sector-led organisation. You can find this document and other information about LSIS activities and services at www.lsis.org.uk

Disability equality policy

LSIS is committed to promoting equality for disabled people and we strive to ensure that our communication and learning materials can be made available in accessible formats. Please let us know if you consider yourself disabled and require reasonable adjustments made to support you.