



New Inquiry: The Workforce of the Future - ‘Learning to earning’ transitions and career development in a challenging labour market

Initial Ideas

Overview

Following the launch of [England’s Skills Puzzle](#), the Skills Commission is scoping out its next research project which will explore the issues identified in the last inquiry around careers guidance and support.

Nicola Richards MP and Lord Jim Knight will co-chair this inquiry which aims to conclude towards the end of 2020. It will offer policy recommendations to support transitions from learning to earning and career progression in a difficult labour market.



Inquiry chairs Nicola Richards MP, Lord Jim Knight and the cover of the Skills Commission’s ‘England’s Skills Puzzle’

Context

Careers information, advice and guidance and how it can support transitions into sustainable employment has always been a challenging policy issue, interconnected with social justice issues and skills gaps in the economy.

However, the current crisis offers an opportunity to rethink our approach and how we support young people to build their futures and adult progression through the jobs market.



Recent projections forecast gloomy economic weather ahead with the Office for Budgetary Responsibility predicting unemployment figures rising to around 2 million. Young people and marginalised groups are likely to be hit hardest as the sectors of the economy that often recruit school and college leavers – i.e. construction and hospitality – contract, and they compete with more experienced and skilled job seekers.

This situation creates a new and urgent imperative for government, the FE sector, local partners and employers to intervene to support transitions from education into employment. How we deliver careers guidance for learners in FE, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and for people in precarious forms of employment is a question of heightened importance.

Potential lines of Inquiry

1. Which groups of learners and workers (by skill level, demographic, geography, subject/sector area etc.) will face the greatest challenges in the labour market?
2. To what extent do we need to more closely align careers guidance in FE with pre-employment training programmes for learners who are soon to enter the labour market? Are stronger interventions needed to coach learners and broker employment opportunities?
3. What structures or resources are required to better coordinate activities around careers information and guidance for young people and adults? How can we ensure that the insights from labour market intelligence and local employer engagement influence FE provision, and careers guidance?
4. Which sectors of the economy that will be critical to future growth, already face skills gaps and how might we better support the pipeline into those industries?
5. Where can this Commission and the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Skills and Employment add the most value as we develop our next project?

Next steps and timeframe

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| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoping meeting with co-chairs and key stakeholders• Developing the terms of reference• Confirming inquiry partners• Assembling the steering group• Organising the evidence sessions |
| June | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch of project and first evidence sessions and roundtables |
| Winter 2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch of report and policy impact work |

Further information

For further information about engaging in this research as an inquiry partner please contact Simon Kelleher, Head of Education and Skills at Policy Connect via simon.kelleher@policyconnect.org.uk or via 02072028575.