
Strategic Plan for Chartered Status of Career Guidance for submission to the Department for Education and Skills

INTRODUCTION

With the emphasis by this Government on lifelong learning, raising educational standards, tackling social exclusion and increasing flexibility in educational structures and qualifications, the role of career guidance professionals has never been more important. There is little point in increasing diversity in education and learning without appropriate guidance so that individuals are enabled to identify the opportunities available, and decide on those most effective and appropriate for them. Longer life expectancy and inadequate pension funding also require people to consider new or different career paths into their late sixties and seventies. Career guidance professionals help clients to recognise and achieve their full potential. Career guidance supports increased retention and achievement in clients' chosen routes.

Commensurate with the raising of standards across the education and learning professional field is the need to recognise career guidance practitioners as a distinct qualified professional group, with a discrete body of professional knowledge about career guidance that has been developed throughout the world. The UK has been seen to be at the forefront of much of the development of professional knowledge available. The profession is not new – the Institute of Career Guidance, the oldest professional body for the career guidance sector, was founded as the Association of Juvenile Employment and Welfare Officers in 1923 – but has now developed and matured to the point where regulation is important to retain public confidence and further raise standards in the face of a wider proliferation of people delivering advice and guidance linked to learning and work. It is vital that the profession is able to guarantee the public the degree of professionalism they expect.

This strategic plan marks the first stage in this process by indicating how regulation would benefit the consumer of information, advice and guidance (IAG) services and to demonstrate that the profession is in a position to fulfill the criteria for chartered status. It will also show that it is aware of the further work that would have to be undertaken to prepare a business plan for submission to the Privy Council.

PART ONE – CAREER GUIDANCE

1.1 Definition

Career guidance is a process of interventions designed to empower individuals to make realistic and well-informed decisions about work and learning which are right for them.

Career guidance practitioners must maintain a unique set of skills, knowledge and personal qualities to enable them to support clients in making transitions throughout their lives.

The process has benefits to both individuals and to society.

1.2 Application

Career guidance is appropriate to individuals at all and any stages of their career.

- For those in school, decisions need to be made about subject choice. These decisions need to be based on a sound understanding by pupils of their aptitudes, attitudes and career preferences and to link these to long-term career opportunities. Pupils require an understanding of the needs of the global marketplace, the impact of technological change, and the pace of organisational restructuring in both the private and public employment sectors. Young people also need rounded experiences that include leisure activities and experience of working life through, for example, well planned work experience, and part-time jobs.

The government's desire to introduce a wider range of choices through Curriculum 2000 has already resulted in extra demand for impartial guidance from students in years 11 and 12, coupled with a need for enhanced support when making applications for places in Higher Education Institutions. This enhanced demand occurred at a time when schools were already lacking capacity to pick up the work that had been relinquished by the careers service following refocusing on those pupils perceived to have a greater need. ('The delivery of Careers Education and Guidance in Schools, NFER, September 2001'). UCAS subsequently noted and reported to the then Secretary of State for Education on the significant increase in drop-out and course change during the first 6 weeks of undergraduate programmes which they attributed to the reduction in career guidance for able young people. The proposals in the 14-19 Green Paper to introduce new vocational education and training choices and work based learning will require an even higher level of intervention from impartial, independent professionals with a sound knowledge of local labour markets and work opportunities.

- For those in further and higher education, or in work-based training, decisions need to be made about further studies, with a clear understanding of the career implications of their chosen studies or training programme
- For those in the labour market, decisions need to be made about career options, progression and skills development
- Specialist groups including offenders/ex-offenders and those with disabilities or learning difficulties require specialist help that understands legal and ethical considerations and recognises in an holistic way the additional issues to be faced by their clients

Professional intervention by career guidance practitioners enables their clients to develop

- Self awareness
- Awareness of opportunities in learning and work
- Decision making skills
- The ability to make effective transitions from one learning setting to another eg school to university, and from learning to work.

Whilst the focus of career guidance is invariably upon the needs of the individual, many employers recognise the corporate benefits which accrue from effective career management. For example, Career Coaches employed by the University for Lloyds TSB to support their employees in making their career decisions have been accredited using units from the National Occupational Standards in Guidance.

The Government's recognition comes through funding support and the growth of application through the Connexions service and the IAG for Adults Partnerships initiative in England, through Careers Wales, Careers Scotland and the Northern Ireland Careers Service.

1.3 Where Practised

Career Guidance is practised within a wide range of environments from schools to places of work.

The one to one interview is the primary tool of career guidance practitioners and establishes the confidential relationship between them and their clients and the level of support required. This may be added to by group work sessions, assessments or classroom inputs.

1.4 Its Role

Career guidance is essentially about empowering individuals to better manage their own lives as they relate to learning and work.

The focus of the professional activity of career guidance practitioners is upon their work with individual clients but the practice of career guidance has a wider effect upon, and value for, the broader society in terms of economic and social benefits.

This is an increasingly important effect given that it is estimated that individuals entering work can now anticipate an average six or seven career changes in their working lives. Individuals now have to manage a career progression which may encompass a number of jobs, education, further or higher education and training as well as possible periods of unemployment. It is no coincidence that major employers are now integrating career development professionals into the human resources function.

The benefits from a universal provision of high quality career guidance, aside from those felt by the client, include:

- Improvement in the efficiency of job search and reduction in unemployment
- Improvements in job retention and turnover
- More effective performance and participation in education and training
- Increased job satisfaction and performance, producing higher productivity
- Reduction in social exclusion and consequent gain in social development
- Public cost savings.

As the labour market becomes increasingly sophisticated and continues the shift away from low or semi skilled labour, so it will become ever more important that people are empowered to make the right choices and opportunities to maximise their potential and develop the skills that they will need to secure long-term employment, and which the nation needs to remain competitive in the global economy. This will ensure that the future market for effective guidance is assured and growing.

If guidance is inadequate or non-existent, it may have a harmful, and in some cases, disastrous effect on the lives and prospects of individuals, with consequent social and financial implications. UCAS has evidence of a marked increase in course drop-out or change during the first 6 weeks of degree courses during the period that Careers Service Companies in England diverted resources away from able young people to those most at risk of dropping out of the school system.

1.5 Role of the Professional

The role of the professional career guidance practitioner is to broker the relationship between the individual's knowledge, skills, aspirations and potential, and the world of work with its opportunities, constraints and uncertainties.

Their activities include informing, advising, counselling, assessing, enabling, advocating and providing feedback.

They are committed to an ethos of impartial, independent and client centred practice.

Practitioners must possess the knowledge, skills and personal qualities to intervene effectively in the client's career management processes. A skilled career guidance practitioner will have specific expertise in:

- Communication
- Negotiation
- Economic knowledge
- An understanding of the dynamics of the learning and labour markets
- The requirements and demands of occupations.

Career guidance practitioners will also have empathy with their clients, and possess the personal qualities necessary to relate to particular client groups.

1.6 Usage

The growth in the provision of career guidance, and the demand for it, has arisen with the rapid change in the labour market. There have been radical changes in the provision of career guidance in the UK through the introduction of all-age guidance services in Scotland and Wales, with increased funding, the review of the Careers Service in Northern Ireland, and the implementation of the Connexions Service for young people in England and the development of government-funded IAG for Adults Partnerships. The latter are funded by the Learning & Skills Councils in England, which has acknowledged the inextricable links between its remit to bring more people into learning, and the need for career guidance to ensure that individual's choices are sustainable in the long term.

Of particular note in all of the above developments is the improved access to career guidance by groups who are at a disadvantage in the labour market through disability, learning difficulties or social factors such as offending behaviour, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and homelessness. The Connexions Service is now funded to undertake additional work with such clients. This emphasis is reflected in initial training, and the QCG includes Learning Outcomes to ensure that students learn to

- Influence learning and opportunity providers, so that clients who are disadvantaged do not face the 'double whammy' of being shoe-horned into what is available, rather than what meets their special needs
- Advocate on behalf of clients with other agencies and individuals, so that clients who are disadvantaged are not passed from pillar to post
- Work effectively in their own organisation and within connected networks which include other statutory services as well as the voluntary sector
- Work with parents and carers to support young people.

Wilson & Mee (2001) found that 61% of adults in East Hertfordshire wanted guidance support on some aspect of education and training. A large scale survey carried out by MORI on behalf of the Guidance Council (2001) found an unmet demand for IAG reported by 28% of respondents.

1.7 Effectiveness

There is growing consensus regarding the importance of guidance as provided by qualified professionals in moves towards the creation of learning societies in Europe, both in facilitating access to learning and motivating potential learners (Bartlett, Rees and Watts 2000; European Commission, 2001).

There is a recent review of the economic benefits of guidance (Hughes, Bhosley, Bowes and Bysshe 2002) which recommends the need for a 'systemic review of discrete and integrated interventions'.

There is some published research that challenges the widely held view that people drop out from FE for personal reasons. The largest study of persistence and drop out (Martinez and Munday 1998) concludes that amongst the important contributing factors are whether students feel they have joined the most appropriate course, and whether they are satisfied with the support they get either in terms of moving to employment or to higher education.

The Harris Report (2000) and Watts 1997 emphasis the importance of guidance within HE and ongoing research into under-represented groups in HE indicates that a key issue is the lack of access to IAG (Clark 2002). The Harris Report noted that 60% of careers advisers in HE held a relevant professional qualification, and 10% were known to be studying for one.

The role of guidance in raising the low skills base in the UK is conceptualised by Humphries (2001) as including motivation and encouragement of adults to engage in learning; dissemination of LMI; and providing IAG support to smaller employers.

1.8 Career Guidance Training and Qualification

Professional training and qualification for career guidance practitioners working in statutory services dates from the late 1940s and was embodied in the Diploma in Career Guidance (DCG), introduced in the mid 1970s. In the 1990s the Diploma was developed to embrace a wider range of professionals including those working with adults and people working outside of statutory services. At the same time a new, work-based, route to qualification was developed, the S/NVQ in Guidance at levels 3 and 4, which was a generic qualification suitable for both para-professionals and professionals working in all parts of the career guidance sector. The S/NVQ was reviewed and replaced by a qualification at levels 2, 3 and 4 in Advice and Guidance from August 2001.

From September 2002 the DCG is being replaced by the Qualification in Careers Guidance (QCG). The QCG was piloted in 1999 at two universities, one in England and one in Scotland, followed by a second pilot year which included a further three English Universities. The pilot ended in January 2002 and has been evaluated. The evaluation shows that the main strength of the QCG is the blending of theory and practice at all stages and all levels of the course. The QCG is awarded by the Institute of Career Guidance.

The QCG is based on seven Units covering:

- Equal Opportunities, Values and Ethics
- Theoretical Basis of Guidance Practice
- Networking with Agencies and Communities
- Reflective Personal Development
- Guidance Intervention
- Designing and Planning Careers Education
- Information Management.

From September 2001 the QCG has been offered at 12 of the 13 universities that had previously offered the DCG, to be joined by the remaining university and up to two new course centres from September 2002.

A number of universities in the UK offer graduate and post-graduate level diplomas, masters degrees and PhDs in areas linked to career guidance, although none of these are nationally accredited. However, they are widely taken up by people for whom career guidance is part of another role, including careers teachers.

There are also specialist diplomas, for example the Advanced Diploma for Special Needs Careers Advisers, offered at Napier University, although students are required to have an initial qualification such as the DCG, QCG or S/NVQ Level 4 before progressing to specialist areas of study.

DfES requires careers advisers employed within the Connexions Service to hold either the DCG Parts I and II, the QCG, followed by the NVQ in Guidance level 4 plus 3 additional Units, or the NVQ level 4 in Guidance plus 3 additional Units. Practitioners working in IAG for Adults Partnerships have to be 'appropriately qualified' and in the main hold either the DCG Parts I and II or the NVQ level 4 in Guidance or Advice and Guidance. Practitioners operating at 'technician' level, ie providing information and advice, but not in-depth guidance, are employed with the NVQ level 3 in Guidance or Advice and Guidance.

Appropriate standards can only be maintained by practitioners through updating their knowledge and making a commitment to continuous professional development.

1.9 Structure of the Profession

Members of the Federation of Professional Associations in Guidance (FEDPAG), intend to survey and produce a report on the composition of the sector over the next 12 months. There is good information on the numbers of practitioners in statutory funded services, but FEDPAG will map the whole sector, including the growth areas in the private sector and industry, as well as Connexions, IAG for Adults Partnerships, Careers Scotland, Careers Wales, the Northern Ireland Careers Service and Northern Ireland Educational Guidance Service for Adults.

In 1999 there were 7,264 people delivering career guidance in non-management posts in the careers service in England, Scotland and Wales. Of these, 58.5% were fully qualified (DCG Parts I and II or S/NVQ Level 4 in Guidance). Three percent had a recognised adult guidance qualification. In addition, 74% of 1,295 managers were fully qualified as career guidance professionals.

The total individual membership of the organisations who are members of FEDPAG amounts to about 8,000 individual practitioners, plus a wide range of organisations with an interest in guidance. The ICG is the largest organisation with 3,242 members followed by the National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers which has a membership of 1,800 members, and the National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults and the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, both of which have about 1,000 members, most of whom are qualified to at least S/NVQ level 3 in Guidance or Advice and Guidance.

The Harris Report showed that about 60% of practitioners in HE hold relevant professional qualifications, and this continues to improve. All practitioners in statutorily funded services (careers service or Connexions) are required contractually to be professionally qualified. In IAG for Adults partnerships the emphasis has been on qualification at level 3 in the first instance, but many are now moving to level 4. In private practice it has been the norm for a 5 year period of supervised practice to be internally accredited, and there has not been widespread take up in this part of the sector of professional qualifications.

Some practitioners in private practice are occupational or educational psychologists, and are members of the British Psychological Society (BPS) as well as being associates of ICG.

There is a severe recruitment crisis in the sector as was demonstrated in a report published by ICG in 2001 which showed that 83% of English employers within careers/Connexions services and IAG partnerships reported an inability to fill some vacancies, citing a lack of qualified applicants as the main reason.

All employers had addressed the issue of unfilled vacancies by appointing unqualified staff and training them internally via the NVQ in Guidance. However this was seen by all respondents as an unsatisfactory solution to the problem which impacted on the quality of the service available to clients. All employers saw the recruitment of qualified staff as the optimum solution.

1.10 Register of Career Guidance Professionals

It remains the case that there is no statutory restriction on the use of the designation of career adviser, and the application of any such description does not of itself denote any professional training or qualification. In the context of a burgeoning field of personal development advice, it is all the more important that there is a standard of provision to which practitioners can aspire and which offers a guarantee to the public.

Clients have a right to expect that the career guidance practitioner is qualified for the role and has made every effort to attain and sustain a professionally acceptable level of competence. The profession has always believed that the protection of the public is essential to its own reputation. In the absence of external regulation, the Institute of Career Guidance determined to introduce a system of self-regulation through the establishment of a voluntary register which was launched in 1999 as the Register of Career Guidance Practitioners.

Acceptance onto the Register requires DCG Part 1, the QCG or the S/NVQ level 4 in Guidance or Advice and Guidance and a period of professional practice evidenced by completed continuous professional development, which might include DCG Part 11 (phased out from 2002), certification against individual occupational standards, completion of S/NVQ level 4 in Guidance or Advice and Guidance, or some other accredited training.

To qualify for the register, practitioners must also:

- Provide services directly to the public
- Have affirmed that they have personal programmes to keep themselves continually up to date on knowledge and skills relevant to their practice
- Have affirmed that they will work within the Institute's Code of Ethical Practice
- Offer to all clients, through their membership of the ICG, a means of complaint if a client is not satisfied with the quality of individual guidance received.

Transparency is ensured through the register being available to the public including an individual's criteria for acceptance and contact details, professional qualifications and client groups. It is supported by a formal complaints procedure which affords clients a means of redress in the case of malpractice and allows for removal from the register.

There are currently 200 registered members. During the pilot phase no registration fee is being charged.

Membership of the Register is actively promoted to existing members of the Institute.

An annual check is made on 5% of those on the register to ensure that they are complying with the criteria for registration.

PART TWO – THE CASE FOR CHARTERED STATUS

2.1 Protection of the Consumer

The overriding reason for seeking statutory regulation of the profession is to provide the public with greater confidence and to protect the interests of people who consult guidance counsellors.

With the emphasis by Government on continuous learning and development opportunities throughout working life, a greater range of options within the school curriculum and the drive for all individuals to continue in some form of personal development post-16, there is an unprecedented need for effective and widespread information, advice and guidance.

The drive for higher standards in education and training needs to be matched by consistently high standards in IAG. What may have been seen in the past as a service that was largely school based and often not given the status required is now highly professional with well-qualified experts providing IAG to all ages.

It is important that in the drive to increase access to IAG, especially for those people who have been excluded in the past, there is not a lowering of standards. Furthermore, with the creation of extra positions and categories of advisers under the Connexions scheme, the public should be able to identify the qualified professional and equally distinguish between them and others who may appear or claim to offer the same level of expertise and to fulfil the same role.

The establishment and maintenance of a system of regulation is essential for the provision of a high quality service. Regulation ensures high uniform standards of training and practice so that clients are clearly able to identify a registered practitioner who could practise under the professional title of “a chartered career guidance adviser” or some such title to be determined during the preparation process for chartered status.

Receiving a Royal Charter combines the discipline and flexibility of self regulation with the external supervision and endorsement of the Government through the Privy Council. A single register of practitioners backed by chartered status will ensure that the public who require guidance and those involved in referring people for guidance know who is fully qualified and accountable to a chartered body. With the regulatory underpinning of disciplinary procedures, the threat of removing a practitioner from the register can provide a significant deterrent to incompetent or unethical conduct.

Receiving a Charter would boost the status and recognition of the profession and create greater confidence and trust in it, leading to more widespread usage. This will make more people aware of the option of receiving IAG, give more people involved with possible clients (teachers, youth leaders, personal advisers, human resources managers) the trust and incentive to refer people for advice and therefore generally increase the profession’s contribution to the nation’s educational and productivity needs. Through further raising the profile and status of the profession, higher quality recruits are likely to be attracted to meet the rising demand for guidance services and help fulfil the Government’s agenda.

2.2 Wider Benefits of Chartered Status

The benefits of regulation underpinned by chartered status for the public would be to:

- Protect the interests of the public who consult career guidance practitioners
- Ensure uniform standards of training and practice for career guidance practitioners
- Reassure the public over who is, and who is not, appropriately qualified as a career guidance practitioner

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- Help accomplish several of the Government's targets including:
 - raising the numbers of young people who remain in education post-16
 - achieving the government's target of 50% people entering higher education
 - ensuring full advantage is taken of the new flexibility in the school curriculum
 - ensuring greater productivity through effective application of lifelong learning opportunities
 - tackling social exclusion and achieving full employment
 - Help to win consumers' confidence in IAG
 - Make a significant contribution towards improving people's educational and career choices and paths
 - Save costs to the education system by lowering drop-out rates resulting from inappropriate choices
 - Save costs to the welfare system by lowering the number of people leaving inappropriate jobs and through increasing the number who learn new skills which enable them to find suitable employment.

2.3 Issues Facing the Profession

The main issues facing the profession of career guidance at present are:

- Ensuring that qualifications are portable across the UK and meet the needs of the different structures in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as England. Although there is evidence that most QCG students progress to a first job close to the centre at which they train, there is substantial evidence of movement from one UK country to another.
- Ensuring that practitioners are skilled to work with clients of all ages – this is particularly true in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, where funded services are all-age, but many Connexions Services include Careers Service Companies which hold IAG for Adults Partnership contracts. In addition, many practitioners move from initial work with young people in the statutory sector, to work in universities or with adults in or out of work.
- Ensuring that the public are able to identify bona fide career guidance practitioners in private practice, where high fees are charged for services provided.
- Overcoming a sense amongst professionals that their professional base is not overtly recognised as discrete and specialised by government or the public – this is especially true in England since the introduction of the Connexions Service.
- A concern with the ethics of disclosing confidential information about clients to other agencies – this has been highlighted by the partnership nature of publicly-funded provision in all parts of the UK.
- The severe shortage of qualified practitioners – although the decline in registrations for the DCG/QCG, which amounted to 30% between 1998 and 2000, has now been reversed, nevertheless in a sector which is growing exponentially this represents a real concern that unqualified people will increasingly attempt, or be encouraged, to deliver what is a professional service requiring a high level of qualification.
- The plethora of unregulated training courses provided throughout the UK – whilst many of these are of high quality, nevertheless they do not necessarily have a fit with government agendas and in many cases do not equip the student to work as a career guidance practitioner. There needs to be a detailed mapping of such qualifications against the QCG or the VQ level 4 to show where they are equivalent, and where they leave gaps for people wishing to work as professional advisers.

Chartered Status will do much to address these issues.

The regulatory role of a chartered body enables it to set standards in terms of initial qualification, continuous professional development and professional conduct and ensure that they are adhered to by anyone who calls themselves a 'chartered career guidance practitioner' (or whatever title is adopted). The public will therefore be clear about who is a bone fide practitioner, and also about their training and qualifications.

Adherence to a code of ethics will be a mandatory requirement for all chartered practitioners, and will help to avoid tension between employer requirements for information to be shared amongst a wide range of partners in, for example, the Connexions Service, and practitioner concerns about confidentiality.

The issue of perception affects recruitment, as evidenced by the ICG's 2001 report on the recruitment crisis in the profession. Chartered Status will give a professional status that will encourage interest in joining the profession.

2.4 Growth and Quality of the Profession

It is important that a stream of well qualified people come forward to work in the profession if future demand is to be satisfied. Having chartered status will help to attract the number and quality of candidates. It will ensure that courses meet the right standard of qualification, as the demand will be there from students to be eligible to join a register which has the backing of a Royal Charter.

Achieving chartered status will also encourage those involved in guidance at various levels to consider upgrading their skills so as to become eligible to join the register and achieve chartered status. This will serve to raise overall the quality of guidance provided. Without chartered status, there will be little incentive for people to seek higher qualifications when they may not be required for their current employment.

2.5 International Comparison

The UK is well out in front internationally in having a qualified profession. At the International Career Development Symposium held in Vancouver in March 2001, 16 countries sent delegates representing both policy makers and practitioners. It was evident that other countries viewed the UK as an exemplar in having a professional body, the ICG, that awarded initial qualification, had set up a register, and was developing a CPD programme. The Singapore government is currently working with the Institute of Career Guidance with a view to developing a 'career guidance profession' and support through a professional Institute.

In other countries there is a firm commitment to ensuring that practitioners achieve qualification – in Canada for example a full analysis of practitioner competence required for work with all client groups and in all work contexts has been carried out with a view to developing occupational standards similar to those in the UK.

In many countries career guidance is part of school provision, with teachers being given time and limited training to deliver this. However, this is seen as unsatisfactory as worldwide the issues of lifelong learning, social inclusion and workforce development are increasingly integrated with the provision of underpinning guidance on learning and work. In several countries career guidance is seen as an arm of occupational and/or educational psychology, with career counsellors having degree level qualifications in psychology. This has a fit with the focus of the professional qualification in the UK, the QCG, which includes many aspects of behavioural and learning theory, and the Institute is looking at ways in which members of the British Psychological Society who practice as career development specialists can enter full membership of the Institute.

PART THREE – PROGRESS TO DATE

3.1 Support from Practitioners

Pressure for chartered status has come from amongst those working in the sector. During 1994, Branch representatives of the ICG's Council sought the views of their local members in response to a consultation paper on chartered status. It is minuted that at the Council meeting held in June 1994 it was reported by Branch representatives that members were 'totally supportive' of such moves.

A special resolution was put to the membership of the Institute at its AGM held on 16 September 1995 that ICG Council be instructed to take steps in furtherance of the proposed presentation of a Petition for the grant to the Institute of a Royal Charter. The resolution was passed at that meeting.

Once DfES endorsement is confirmed the Institute will carry out a postal ballot of members to confirm support before the Petition is presented to the Privy Council. Other FEDPAG members will consult their members on support for chartered status.

3.2 Support from ICG

The initial moves towards statutory regulation have come from the ICG as the largest and oldest organisation in the profession. It fulfils the necessary criteria laid down by the Privy Council for chartered status, although on its own would have a relatively small membership compared with other chartered bodies. As outlined above, the Institute has established the only voluntary register in the sector and this is open to all members who qualify.

The ICG would like to see chartered status apply as widely as possible across the profession and is keen to work towards this end in conjunction with fellow members of FEDPAG. At the second stage, member organisations who wish to be involved in the process will need to explore the most appropriate structures and procedures to enable this to happen.

3.2 Support From Federation of Professional Associations in Guidance

FEDPAG was formed in 2001 to represent all organisations which have individual members providing guidance services. The member bodies are:

Association of Careers Advisers in Colleges of Higher Education	ACACHE
Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services	AGCAS
International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance	IAEVG
International Association of Career Management Professionals	IACMP
Institute of Career Guidance	ICG
National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers	NACGT
National Association of Educational Guidance for Adults	NAEGA
National Association of Managers of Student Services	NAMSS

Discussions are underway on the possibility of members of other organisations seeking affiliate membership of the ICG and these will continue as part of the process leading to the bid for a Royal Charter. This could potentially add some 5,000 members to the Register. It has already been agreed to pilot such an arrangement with two Federation members, the National Association of Managers of Student Services and the International Association of Career Management Professionals.

Should approval in principle for the profession to bid for chartered status be forthcoming from DfES, FEDPAG members will then decide the degree of their involvement in the further work that will be required. Discussions will also take place about the role of the Federation in relation to the Chartered Body, possibly as the administrator of the Register.

3.3 Working Party

A working party has been established to undertake all the work required to prepare a bid for a Royal Charter and to plan for any consequential organisational and regulatory changes that will be consequential to the new status. Membership of the working party includes elected Officers of the ICG and the Institute's Chief Executive, together with the Chief Executive of one of the largest employers of career guidance practitioners in England.

Its initial role is to prepare a strategic plan for submission to the Department and to the Privy Council. Subject to receiving a positive indication that further work should be undertaken, it will then be reformed as a Working Group as indicated below.

3.4 Way Forward

It is hoped that the strategic plan will be received by the Department and subsequently the Privy Council and that it will be suggested that the profession that it should continue with its work to prepare a full scale business plan which will constitute its bid to the Privy Council for a Royal Charter.

PART FOUR – ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

4.1 Working Group

The working party will be reformed and will constitute the Chartered Status Working Group.

This will include members of FEDPAG who wish to be involved with the process and lay members including those from the world of education, higher/further education, employer and trade union representatives and training providers.

It is envisaged that lay members will comprise between 35% and 50% of the total membership. It is also hoped to attract a lay chair.

The role of the Working Group will be to address the issues outlined below and to consult widely with all parties that have an interest in career guidance and then to produce a business plan and a formal petition to the Privy Council.

Issues to be Addressed:

- Determining work undertaken in the Group and outside
- Frequency of meetings
- Procedural points
- Use of legal and other professional help
- Relationship of Working Group to the Institute and other related organisations.

4.2 Consultation

Consultation will be held with a wide range of interested parties. It will be important to have the support of the education and training sectors as well as the world of business and public sector employers. The Working Group will value the advice and contributions of all organisations with an interest in career guidance and will invite views as well as actively seek dialogue or representations from those organisations most directly affected.

Invitations with an outline of the proposals will be issued to a wide range of relevant organisations and individuals who will be asked for their views. The Working Group will hold bilateral meetings with the most significant organisations and presentations for groups of others. Any organisation requesting a dialogue will be accommodated within reason.

To ensure that individual practitioners are aware of the proposals, member and non-member organisations will be urged to publicise the proposals through their own internal communication structures and outlets. Additionally, editorial coverage will be sought in specialist journals as well as more general consumer magazines and newspapers.

The proposals will also be made available on the web sites of participating organisations and the working party may set up its site with the opportunity for feedback and questions.

Issues to be addressed:

- To identify all organisations to be consulted
- To select those requiring most involvement
- Advertising of consultation
- Nature of consultation – written, meetings or presentations to Working Group
- Time given for responses
- Internal consultation.

4.3 Funding of Working Group and the Process

To date, the ICG has been funding this process and has allocated a budget for this. It is anticipated that this will meet the costs set out in the budget below, although contributions may be forthcoming from other organisations which wish to participate in the process. The Institute has a substantial, audited, reserve sufficient to ensure long term financial viability.

It is assumed that the Working Group will meet every three months and that the lay chair should receive an honorarium and members will receive travel expenses.

	Yr 1/2002	Yr 2/2003
Consultancy fees	£15,000	£20,000
Working Group Exps	£3,000	£4,000
Legal Fees	£0	£5,000
Publicity	£2,000	£3,000
Postage		
Photocopying		
Stationery		
Professional Costs	£0	£3,000
TOTAL	£20,000	£35,000

4.4 Eligibility for Registration

The emphasis will be on an inclusive approach and it is intended that registration will be based on a non-elitist tiered system. It is the intention to include all those who are of an adequate standard through qualification or practice, along with all those who are prepared to upgrade their skills where this is not the case. The Working Party will do everything possible to make people aware that they are invited to join, and to allow on to the register all those who meet the required standard. It is anticipated that those who are already on the ICG Register at the time of incorporation will become chartered. There will be a requirement for a 'grandfather clause' to formalise the way in which experienced but unqualified practitioners can become accredited without going through full initial training. For example, employers of career management consultants in private practice have a formal system of 5 years supervised and assessed practice.

Issues to be addressed:

- Who will be eligible for full membership?
- Different tiers of membership to cater for those who are part qualified
- Operation of grandfather provisions
- Criteria for partly qualified people to upgrade to meet full standards
- How current non-members will be contacted
- Ensuring register is up to date.

4.5 Education, Training and Professional Standards

There are existing clearly defined qualifications for career guidance which may be adopted as the initial entry requirement for the chartered body. Work is already underway to provide some measurement of continuous professional development so that benchmarks may be set.

Issues to be addressed:

- What will be the qualifying standard?
- How long will people have to reach it if not yet qualified?
- Assessment of those already practising
- Criteria and operation of grandfather clause
- Uniformity of standards
- Accessibility to training
- Accreditation of courses
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

4.5 Code of Ethics and Standards

An existing code of ethics and standards of ICG provides current standards for the Register. This will be reviewed as part of the submission process to ensure that it offers adequate protection to clients without imposing unreasonable burdens on members. The members of the Federation of Professional Associations in Guidance have carried out a mapping exercise covering the Codes of Practice of all member organisations, as a result of which there are now an agreed set of Common Ethical Principles adhered to by all member organisations.

Issues to be addressed:

- Contents of the Code

4.6 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

It is vital that that clients have an accessible and effective mechanism for making complaints against members. It is also important that the procedure for investigating and adjudicating on such complaints is transparent and fair to all parties. Disciplinary procedures should ensure that any action taken is an effective deterrent but provide redress and an appeals mechanism.

- Issues to be addressed:
- Complaints Procedure for the public
- Effective internal policing of regulations and code of practice
- Disciplinary procedures
- Investigatory powers
- Appeals procedure
- Independent element
- Sanctions

4.7 Public Accountability

An important part of the benefit to be gained from chartered status is the enhanced profile and status that the profession will have in the eyes of the public. This will only come with steps to ensure that all activity is transparent, that there is a clear accountability to the public, clients, members and all organisations that use guidance services or have an involvement with them.

Issues to be addressed:

- Transparency of operation of Institute
- Accessibility of register
- Transparency of complaints procedure
- Promotion of the profession
- Promotion of standards

4.8 Structure of Chartered Body

The Institute has already started to address the structure required to satisfy the requirements of the Privy Council. A consultation paper will be prepared which will recommend a structure which places professional conduct at the centre, supported by committees for Initial Training and Qualification, Continuous Professional Development and Research.

Issues to be addressed:

- Any revisions required to structure of Institute
- Procedural rules
- Sub-committees, membership and role.

4.9 Funding of Registration Body and Register

Enthusiasm by professionals for a register backed by a Royal Charter may be dimmed if the membership fees required to sustain the register and the organisation are considered excessive. It is important that in considering the process, the Working Group makes a realistic assessment of the funding required to operate the register and the organisation administering it, and is able to identify how this will be paid for. It will also need to set subscription fees.

Issues to be addressed:

- Cost of running chartered body and the register
- Registration/membership fee
- Income sources.

4.10 Communication

Aside from informing all organisations that have contact with career guidance services and professionals about the bid for chartered status, it is vital that the Institute's membership and those of allied organisations who may seek registration are kept informed of progress.

This will assist recruitment as well ensure that misinformation is not spread and there is widespread and full understanding of what chartered status involves and the impact it will have on professionals, clients and all others involved in the sector. The Institute already has the support of the DfES QCG Steering Group, which advises the Institute's Career Guidance Training Council on promoting career guidance.

Issues to be addressed:

- Promoting career guidance
- Publicity for register
- Publicity of intention to all those practising and not currently in membership
- Publicity to the public
- Publicity to all organisations with an interest and who need to be consulted
- Keeping members informed
- Seeking support for the submission
- Media.

4.11 Timeframe

Issues to be addressed:

- All work and consultations by the Working Group
- Preparation of business plan
- Production of a draft petition
- Consultation with Department on the plan
- Preparation of final petition
- Submission to Privy Council
- Establishment of any revised structures
- Launch of new chartered body.

APPENDICES

ICG Ethics and Standards Bye Law

FEDPAG Common Ethical Principles

ICG Disciplinary Procedures Bye Law

ICG Membership Bye Law

Application Form for acceptance onto the Register of Career Guidance Practitioners

Information Sheet on the Federation of Professional Associations in Guidance

QCG Update May 2002

Report into the Recruitment Crisis in the Career Guidance Sector (ICG, 2001)