

Improving the management and delivery of Careers Education and Guidance Evaluation of Investor in Careers



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INTRODUCTION

This report has been written by the Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) based at the University of Derby on the basis of research commissioned by Connexions Cornwall and Devon which was undertaken between March and August 2005 and provides a critical appraisal of the current operation and effectiveness of Investor in Careers (IiC).

The report indicates that the achievement of Investor in Careers requires a considerable effort from schools, colleges and other bodies participating, as well as appropriate support from relevant individuals and agencies. However, the research indicates that the great majority of participating organisations find the achievement of the Award to be beneficial and they would recommend its use to others.

The report will be of interest and value not only to those who are involved in developing careers education and guidance (CEG) on the ground, but also - following acknowledgment in both the 'End to End Review' and the 'Youth Matters' Green Paper of the role of quality awards in enhancing CEG - to policy makers as well.

Centre for Guidance Studies

The Centre for Guidance Studies is part of the University of Derby. The Centre aims to bridge the gap between guidance theory and practice. It supports and connects guidance practitioners, policy makers and researchers through research activities and learning opportunities, and by providing access to resources relating to guidance and lifelong learning.

This report is one of a series of recent pieces of research that the Centre has undertaken to inform policy and practice in relation to the development of CEG, enterprise education and work-based learning. These research studies include:

- A mapping exercise of the planning, management and delivery of Connexions work and CEG in schools and colleges in the Local Authority areas of Birmingham and Solihull for the local Connexions Partnership.
- A systematic review of recent research into the impact of CEG on transitions from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 on behalf of the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI Centre).
- A review of CEG offered by schools, colleges and work based learning providers in Stoke-on-Trent on behalf of the Stoke-on-Trent Collegiate Board.
- An assessment of the costs and benefits of services delivered by Connexions Lancashire to schools and colleges in the area on behalf of the local Connexions Partnership.
- A mapping exercise of CEG in schools and colleges in Staffordshire for Connexions Staffordshire and Staffordshire Local Education Authority.
- A review of literature on the use of information and communication technology in the context of CEG for the British Educational Communities and Technology Agency (Becta).

Further copies of this report are available from CeGS or can be downloaded - alongside other available research evidence - from the Centre's website at www.derby.ac.uk/cegs

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ISBN 0 901437 09 3

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The government has long recognised the importance of CEG and the impact it can have on young people's progression. Based on research evidence it asserted in 2002 that, 'young people who have received an effective careers education programme delivered through the curriculum, alongside impartial advice and guidance from external guidance specialists, make the best transitions at age 16 and are less likely to switch or drop out of courses in Year 12¹.

1.2 Section 43 of the Education Act 1997 introduced careers education as a statutory part of the school curriculum for years 9, 10, and 11 in secondary schools from September 1998. More recently the government has extended the statutory duty to the first two years of secondary schools, namely years 7 and 8. As a consequence since September 2004, all maintained schools in England have been required to provide a planned programme of careers education within the curriculum in years 7 to 11. In addition, there are statutory requirements for all maintained schools, including special schools and pupil referral units (PRUs), to provide access for pupils to up to date reference materials, and to careers/personal advisers in order that the Connexions service can fulfil its duty to provide career guidance to all pupils aged 13-19.

1.3 Although part of the statutory curriculum, careers education stands outside the national curriculum and there is at present no prescribed Programme of Study that schools/colleges must follow. As a consequence schools/colleges are free to design their careers education programme to meet the particular aspirations, interests and needs of their pupils as they see them and to decide the amount of teaching time to allocate to this aspect of the curriculum in each of the five designated years.

1.4 To support schools, colleges and work-based learning providers in England to develop effective programmes of CEG, the government in 2003 launched its non-statutory 'Framework for Careers Education and Guidance 11-19'². The Framework recommended learning outcomes³ and suggested content for careers education programmes for young people, provided advice on how young people can gain maximum benefits from guidance provided by different parties,

and gave advice on how to quality assure CEG programmes, and how to develop a process of continuous improvement.

1.5 The Framework points out that, 'quality standards aid self-evaluation - a process recommended by both Ofsted and ALI - support internal quality assurance systems'. Whilst indicating that there was 'no plan to introduce a national quality award', the Framework indicates that, 'organisations gaining local awards should be well placed when their careers provision is inspected', and recognises, 'for some the availability of a quality award provides an added incentive to address and develop (CEG) provision'⁴.

1.6 A range of research has been undertaken in the past into the quality and effectiveness of CEG programmes in schools and colleges⁵. For example:

- The National Audit Office's 2004⁶ survey of schools found, 'that the majority feel that they do not have the capacity to provide appropriate levels of careers education and guidance for young people', citing factors such as that, 'at around two-thirds of schools, careers education and guidance is delivered by staff without formal qualifications in the field', and, 'around a third of schools reported that staff are unable to identify and refer young people in need of specialist support'.
- The Working Group on 14-19 Reform⁷ (The Tomlinson Group) indicated that there is an urgent need to develop the 'information, advice and guidance (IAG) infrastructure' to ensure that personal review, planning and guidance forms part of 'core learning for all 14-19 programmes'.

1.7 CEG has been the subject of an 'End to End Review'⁸, which was published⁹ alongside the 'Youth Matters' Green Paper. The Review's key findings in regard to the current delivery of CEG were that:

- 'insufficient priority is given to CEG in many Connexions Partnerships, schools, colleges, and work-based learning providers, in Ofsted inspections and in policy-making';
- 'Connexions has made good progress with targeted services for young people in the "not in employment, education and training" group, or at

¹ DfES (2002) 14-19: Extending Opportunities and Raising Standards. London: HMSO

² Department for Education and Skills (2003) Careers Education and Guidance in England - A National Framework 11-19' DfES: 0163/2003. Sheffield: DfES

³ The Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) has developed guidance for schools and colleges concerning, 'new opportunities to accredit young people's learning through CEG and work-related learning programmes'. For further information see (www.qca.org.uk/14-19).

⁴ The benefits of taking-up local quality schemes have also been highlighted by Ofsted. 'Local quality award schemes promoted by careers service companies have provided a useful incentive for schools to gain accreditation and recognition for the quality of their CEG programmes'. Ofsted (1998) National Survey of Careers Education and Guidance in Schools - Secondary Schools. London: DfEE/Ofsted

⁵ Barnes A, Donoghue J, Sadler J (2003) Improving Careers Education - An analysis of recent research and inspection findings. (www.cegnet.co.uk)

⁶ National Audit Office (2004) Connexions Service Advice and Guidance for all Young People. Norwich: The Stationery Office

⁷ Working Group on 14-19 Reform (2004) 14-19 Curriculum and Qualification Reform. The Final Report of the Working Group on 14-19 Reform. London.

⁸ Some critics have emphasised the limitations implicit in the terms of reference of 'end to end reviews' - of which the CEG was one - highlighting that such reviews focus on the effectiveness of the 'delivery chain' and do not evaluate the underlying policy (though they can 'identify aspects of policy that inhibit or promote effective delivery'). In the case of CEG the review took as the default assumption that, 'there will be no increase in the budget for CEG in the future'.

⁹ Department for Education and Skills (2005) Report of the End to End Review of Careers Education and Guidance. Sheffield: DfES

risk of becoming part of it'; but that, 'Connexions Partnerships do not have the resources to deliver both targeted support and CEG'; and

- 'the significant flaws in the current arrangements for delivery of CEG mean that they are not sustainable'.

1.8 The Review concluded that, 'the greatest potential for improving CEG delivery lies in driving up the quality and relevance of careers education in schools'. Critics of this conclusion have pointed out that, the 'notion of looking solely at schools rather than at the partnership with Connexions as the means of improving CEG is not supported by any cogent arguments or evidence, and is contradicted by arguments and evidence cited within the review itself'¹⁰. They have also pointed out that the conclusions may have stemmed from the Review's, 'limited terms of reference'¹¹.

1.9 The Review recommended that, 'schools should be encouraged to adopt a "whole school" approach, incorporating CEG, student support, and progression issues, starting in year 7', and that, 'DfES should publish examples of good practice'. The Review also acknowledged the role of local quality awards for CEG. It indicated that, 'many of these have been successful in raising the profile of CEG work and increasing standards' (albeit in a minority of schools), and goes on to recommend that, 'local quality awards for schools should be encouraged'¹².

1.10 The IiC Award is a quality standard for the management of CEG in schools, Further Education (FE) colleges, training providers, and PRUs. It was developed originally in 1994 by Cornwall and Devon Careers, and in 1995 the former Careers Company began to offer licenses to other parts of the country to implement the Award. Connexions Cornwall and Devon owns the brand and copyright to IiC.

1.11 Alongside its use in Cornwall and Devon, the IiC Award is currently operated by IiC Licensees in 23 other areas across the country. Schools and colleges outside these areas are able to apply for accreditation. Currently 384 organisations in England¹³ (schools, FE colleges, primary schools, and work based learning providers) either hold the Award, or are working towards it¹⁴.

1.12 The Assessment Handbook for the Award indicates, 'it is based on the Investor in People model, and includes in its structure the key features of the quality assurance cycle'. This QA cycle is structured around the 'four key elements of IiC' (known by the acronym CODE), with the need to demonstrate 'Commitment, Organisation, Delivery and Evaluation' in the management of CEG programmes.

1.13 Each 'key element' is divided into a series of outcomes. In the case of schools there are twelve outcomes each containing criteria against which schools measure their performance. In the case of FE colleges and work-based learning providers there are fourteen outcomes.

1.14 The assessment process¹⁵ for IiC involves organisations demonstrating they meet the designated criteria by building a portfolio of evidence to satisfy the performance indicators for the standards¹⁶, receiving two visits from an independent external assessor (Interim and Final Assessments), and giving a short presentation to - and discussing their submission with - an independent panel. The IiC Award is held for three years after it is re-assessed.

1.15 As highlighted in the 'End to End Review', IiC is one of a number of quality awards available across the country. Key findings from recent research undertaken by David Andrews¹⁷, CEG Consultant, in regard to the current availability and uptake of these awards, included:

- that a total of 25 different quality awards are offered across England in 41¹⁸ of the 47 Connexions Partnership areas. The majority of the awards were developed in the period 1994-9, although a few have been developed subsequently;
- that 24 of these awards are offered by Connexions Partnerships, or in areas operating a sub-contracting model for the delivery of Connexions, by careers companies providing CEG services to Connexions¹⁹;
- most of the awards are only available in local areas. Two of the awards - Investor in Careers and Career Mark²⁰ - are available under license outside of the area/s which launched them;

¹⁰ Watts AG (2005) 'The Youth Green Paper and the End-to-End Review: A Critical Analysis'. Newscheck, September

¹¹ Watts AG (2005) Career Education and Guidance: Prospect and Potential. Careers Education and Guidance, October (National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers' Journal).

¹² Investor in Careers is noted as an example of a local quality award in the Review.

¹³ Additionally, one FE college in Wales holds the Award.

¹⁴ It is understood that there have been 80 first time assessments, 43 revalidations and 13 second revalidations for the Career Mark award since 1997.

¹⁵ Investor in Careers UK (2003) 'Investor in Careers Assessment Handbook'. Launceston: IiC UK

¹⁶ Further information about Investor in Careers, the assessment process, quality standards, and criteria for schools, colleges and other organisations is available on the Investor in Careers pages within Connexions Cornwall and Devon web-site (www.connexions-cd.org.uk)

¹⁷ Andrews D (2005) Quality Awards for CEG in England. A Survey of Current Availability and Uptake.

¹⁸ 26 of the 41 are organised on the 'direct delivery' model. In 25 of these the same award is offered across the partnership area. In the remaining area, covering two LEAs, one quality award is offered by one LEA and a different one - offered by an EBP - by the other.

¹⁹ The remaining six partnerships, all operating on a direct delivery model, do not offer quality awards. The reasons for them not doing so are explored in David Andrews' report.

²⁰ Career Mark was developed originally by the five former Careers Services in the East Midlands. It continues to be available there, and a variant has been produced for use within independent schools by ISCO.

- in areas that offer quality awards, the proportion of schools that have achieved the award is commonly somewhere between 20 and 30 per cent. In only three areas have more than 50 per cent of schools achieved the award.

1.15 The Green Paper 'Youth Matters'²¹ sets out (in paragraph 179) the government's desire, 'to explore how we might give further impetus to the quality and impartiality of CEG through the use of quality standards for the provision or commissioning of IAG through Children's Trusts, schools and standards', and within this indicates that, 'we will look at how we might build on existing standards for careers education and guidance....to provide standards against which Ofsted could inspect'.

Research Aim and Methodology

1.16 The aim of the research was to review the impact of both the process of seeking accreditation and the achievement of the IiC standard on the planning, management and delivery of CEG in schools, FE colleges, and other organisations, and to make recommendations. The project was undertaken in three inter-related stages:

Stage One - Preparation and Initial Review March-May

Tasks included:

- holding preliminary discussions with Connexions Cornwall and Devon regarding the research;
- briefing IiC Licensees and Assessors about the research and conducting focus group discussions;
- obtaining agreed contact information from IiC Licensees in respect of Sample A - organisations in their areas which had achieved, or were actively seeking, IiC accreditation, and Sample B - a matched sample of non-accredited organisations in their area; and
- designing questionnaires for both accredited and non-accredited organisations, including consulting with agreed parties concerning key question areas to be included.

Stage Two - Postal Surveys and Telephone Interviews May-July

Tasks included:

- sending a total of 719 postal questionnaires/letters to 379 organisations in Sample A and 340 organisations in Sample B, in both cases enclosing reply paid

SAEs. This work involved the research team making particular efforts to maximise the extent to which research could generate comparative data including monitoring responses, and sending reminder letters to non-respondents; and

- conducting 15 telephone interviews with stakeholders suggested by Connexions Cornwall and Devon, and those nominated by stakeholders themselves.

Stage Three - Summative Reporting July-September

Tasks included:

- creating a research database, and subsequently undertaking a multi-variate analysis of survey responses using specialist research software (SPSS);
- collating and analysing all qualitative and quantitative data from the research, reviewing the outcomes of desk research, and producing a draft research report; and
- presenting and reviewing the draft final research findings with Connexions Cornwall and Devon and providing agreed summary reports.

2. KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

2.1 As indicated, to devise the sample for the postal surveys, IiC Licensees were asked to provide details of organisations that are IiC accredited (or are in the process of seeking accreditation), and - drawing on the working knowledge of local organisations - a comparable sample of other organisations that have not achieved, or sought, IiC accreditation.

Accredited Survey

2.2 A total of 117 organisations (a 30.9 per cent response rate) responded to the postal survey which was conducted with the sample of organisations that CeGS understood from Licensees were actively seeking accreditation, were accredited, or had been re-accredited as IiC²². There was no evidence of a non-response bias in the survey.

2.3 In terms of these respondents, just over four in five (81.2 per cent) of the respondents were currently IiC accredited or were seeking accreditation, and a further eight respondents (6.8 per cent) indicated they had been accredited in the past²³, but were not at present. Research data is presented (where appropriate) under these three headings. In respect to those 'actively seeking' accreditation, these are organisations that are understood to have registered and commenced the process of accreditation.

²¹ DfES (2005) Youth Matters (Cm 6629). London: HMSO

²² The sample includes: 25 accredited organisations; 52 re-accredited organisations; 18 organisations which are currently seeking accreditation. It also includes 8 organisations that have been accredited in the past but not now and 14 that have never been accredited.

²³ The balance (12 per cent) of the sample indicated they had never been IiC accredited. A review of these responses indicated that this data had been provided by five separate IiC Licensees, indicating a problem in regard to the currency of local the IiC database in these areas. Relevant quantitative data from these 14 Sample A respondents were merged with data from Sample B, giving a total of 114 of 'non-accredited' respondents.

Non-Accredited Survey

2.4 A total of 100 organisations responded to the non-accredited sample (a 29.4 per cent response rate). The level of response here was particularly heartening granted that organisations had not taken-up the offer from their local Connexions, and/or their previous Careers Service provider, to seek iC accreditation.

2.5 In order to maximise the comparability of the 'accredited' and 'non-accredited' research groups, following initial mailings, the research team contacted additional organisations from within the non-accredited samples provided by iC Licensees to seek to 'balance-up' responses from accredited bodies, once received.

Overall Survey Responses

2.6 iC is available in variant forms to a wide range of organisations, including primary and secondary schools, FE colleges, work-based learning providers, and other organisations, and Licensees provided details of all these types of organisations in the samples provided.

2.7 In regard to respondent organisations, these are set out in detail in Figure One, under respective sub-headings: 11-16 schools (single sex); 11-16 schools (mixed); primary schools; PRUs; special schools; training (work-based learning) providers; 11-18 schools (single sex); 11-18 schools (mixed); sixth form colleges; FE colleges; and others. The largest groupings are 11-16 and 11-18 (mixed) schools, with relatively smaller numbers of other respondents, although there are significant numbers of special schools (mainly non-accredited), and some FE colleges (with a balance of accredited and non-accredited).

Figure One: Type of Organisation

	11-16 S		11-16 M		Primary		PRU		Special	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Never accredited	3	2.7	32	28.3	0	0.0	2	1.8	26	23.0
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	2	25.0	1	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Currently seeking/accredited	2	2.1	20	21.1	3	3.2	0	0.0	7	7.4
Total	5	2.3	54	25.0	4	1.9	2	0.9	33	15.3

	TP		11-18 S		11-18 M		6th Form		FEC		Other	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Never accredited	2	1.8	6	5.3	28	24.8	1	0.9	7	6.2	6	5.3
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	50.0	0	0.0	1	12.5	0	0.0
Currently seeking/accredited	0	0.0	9	9.5	36	37.9	5	5.3	8	8.4	5	5.3
Total	2	0.9	15	6.9	68	31.5	6	2.8	16	7.4	11	5.1

Missing = 1

Source: CeGS Survey of iC accredited and non-accredited organisations, 2005

2.8 Organisations were asked to assess the current status of CEG in their organisations on a one to five scale - very low to very high. Overall, (Figure Two) the highest status was attributed by organisations which were iC accredited, or were seeking accreditation, with over four in five (83 per cent) assessing the current status of CEG to be at the highest two levels (4/5).

2.9 By contrast, those who have not been accredited were less confident overall of the status of CEG, with just under half of respondents (49.1 per cent) assessing the current status²⁴ of CEG at comparable levels, and 10 per cent assessing it at the lowest levels (1/2).

Figure Two: Current Status of CEG

	Very High				Very Low						Not sure		Total	Mean
	5		4		3		2		1		No	%		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%				
Never accredited	14	12.5	41	36.6	45	40.2	6	5.4	4	3.6	2	1.8	112	3.50
Accredited in the past	1	12.5	3	37.5	1	12.5	3	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	3.25
Currently seeking/accredited	29	30.5	50	52.6	15	15.8	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	95	4.13
Total	44	20.5	94	43.7	61	28.4	10	4.7	4	1.9	2	0.9	215	

Source: CeGS Survey of iC accredited and non-accredited organisations, 2005

²⁴ It is important to note that these were the perceptions of respondents and may or may not reflect the views of others in their organisations and that perceived status should not be taken as a proxy for quality of provision.

2.10 In terms of quality of provision as demonstrated by external inspection evidence, the majority indicated that they had been inspected in the past, with a few being unsure. In terms of those who had been inspected (and/or who could provide some indication of the outcome in respect to CEG) - as with current status of CEG - the mean scores (Figure Three) for those seeking accreditation/accredited - as opposed to those accredited in the past (but not now), and those never accredited - are higher. Institutions with a quality award are more likely to receive positive feedback from external assessors on the quality of their CEG offer. This finding supports Ofsted's assessment of the generally positive impact of CEG quality awards. However, the findings also show clearly that a number of schools, and other bodies, have achieved Ofsted ratings of 'satisfactory', or above, without holding quality awards, which indicates that there are bound to be a range of factors in play in regard to securing adequate CEG provision.

Figure Three: Ofsted/ALI Assessment of CEG

	Excellent		Very good		Good		Satisfactory	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Never accredited	7	10.3	24	35.3	26	38.2	5	7.4
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	2	66.7	0	0.0	1	33.3
Currently seeking/accredited	15	21.0	36	50.7	16	22.5	2	2.8
Total	22	15.5	62	43.7	42	29.6	8	5.6

	Very poor		Not sure		Total	Mean
	No	%	No	%		
Never accredited	0	0.0	6	8.8	68	3.36
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.33
Currently seeking/accredited	1	1.4	1	1.4	71	3.89
Total	1	0.7	7	4.9	142	

Missing = 75

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited and non-accredited organisations, 2005

2.11 A critical area for the research was to assess the extent to which organisations which have achieved accreditation felt that the expected (or potential) benefits of IiC were achieved in practice. The findings in this respect are very encouraging, in that in the view of those organisations that have actually been accredited, including those who have been re-accredited, the actual benefits of achieving IiC broadly match the expected benefits (Figure Four). For example, 55 respondents indicated that they expected the introduction of IiC to improve the management of CEG within their organisation, and 53 respondents indicated it had done so.

Similarly, 56 organisations said that they hoped accreditation would provide additional information for inspections, and 65 indicated it had done so. In terms of CEG delivery, 60 organisations indicated that they expected IiC accreditation to improve CEG delivery, and 58 indicated it had done so.

Figure Four: Views on IiC Expected and Actual Benefits (Accredited & Reaccredited only)

	Expected Benefits					Total	Actual Benefits				
	Yes		No		Total		Yes		No		
	N	%	N	%			N	%	N	%	
Public recognition for CEG provision	57	87.7	8	12.3	65	59	85.5	10	14.5	69	
Improve the status of CEG within the organisation	64	95.5	3	4.5	67	67	90.5	7	9.5	74	
Improve the management of CEG within the organisation	55	84.6	10	15.4	65	53	74.6	18	25.4	71	
Provide additional information for inspections	56	86.2	9	13.8	65	65	90.3	7	9.7	72	
Improve CEG delivery for students	60	93.8	4	6.3	64	58	81.7	13	18.3	71	
Assess the current status of CEG provision	58	89.2	7	9.1	65	66	90.4	7	9.6	73	
Gain additional support to develop CEG	47	75.8	15	24.2	62	47	68.1	22	31.9	69	
Total	397	87.6	56	12.4	453	415	83.2	84	16.8	499	

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

2.12 The views of those who are seeking accreditation about the expected benefits of IiC were broadly similar (Figure Five) to those who have achieved accreditation, with the public recognition of CEG provision, assessing the current status of CEG provision, and improving the management and delivery of CEG being particularly emphasised.

Figure Five: Views on IiC Expected Benefits (Organisations seeking accreditation only)

	Expected Benefits				Total
	Yes		No		
	N	%	N	%	
Public recognition for CEG provision	16	100.0	0	0.0	16
Improve the status of CEG within the organisation	13	86.7	2	13.3	15
Improve the management of CEG within the organisation	14	93.3	1	6.7	15
Provide additional information for inspections	13	81.3	3	18.8	16
Improve CEG delivery for students	15	93.8	1	6.3	16
Assess the current status of CEG provision	16	94.1	1	5.9	17
Gain additional support to develop CEG	11	68.8	5	31.3	16
Total	98	88.3	13	11.7	111

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

2.13 In terms of views of the accreditation process, and its impact (Figure Six), almost all respondent organisations indicated that: the criteria for IiC accreditation are clear (91 out of 95 respondents); the process of reviewing CEG against IiC was straightforward; and the process of IiC highlighted areas for improvement (92 out of 95 respondents). There was slightly less agreement (although a clear majority) on issues such as the usefulness of the assessment report, and the extent to which the whole school benefited from the IiC process.

Figure Six: Impact of Accreditation

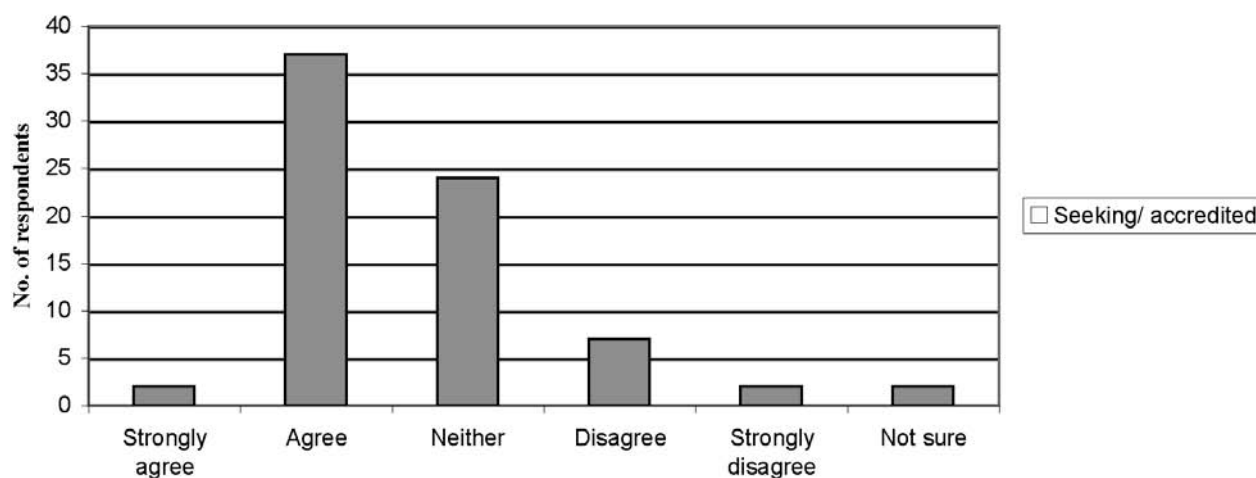
	Accredited in the past		Seeking/accredited	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Criteria for IiC are clear	5	3.80	92	3.95
Process of reviewing CEG against IiC highlighted improvement areas	4	4.25	92	4.21
Process of reviewing CEG against IiC was supported by Connexions	5	3.60	91	3.98
Process of reviewing CEG against IiC was straight forward	5	2.80	92	3.26
Accreditation process was fair	5	3.80	88	4.09
Assessment report was useful	5	3.80	88	4.16
Benefits outweigh the costs	5	3.40	88	3.77
IiC has benefitted the whole school	5	3.00	86	3.56

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

Accredited in the past - n=8; Seeking/Accredited - n=95.

2.14 Overall, (Figure Seven) the majority of those organisations which have achieved IiC accreditation or are currently seeking IiC accreditation indicated in their response to the survey that the benefits of achieving IiC accreditation outweigh the costs. This must be seen not just in terms of the registration fee, and accreditation costs, but also the wider 'opportunity costs' of staff time and other resources necessary to achieve accreditation.

Figure Seven: Extent to which benefits outweigh the costs



2.15 In terms of the perceived effect of IiC on CEG provision (Figure Eight), significant impact was noted by respondent organisations in areas such as: staff views and awareness of CEG (78 out of 95 respondents); staff participation in CEG delivery and training (79 out of 95 respondents); and evaluation of CEG provision (79 out of 95 respondents), as well as - as previously noted - on the management and delivery of CEG.

Figure Eight: Effects of IiC on CEG

	Accredited in the past		Seeking/accredited	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Improvements in public awareness of CEG	5	3.00	69	3.38
Improvements in its stakeholder participation in CEG	5	3.40	69	3.33
Improvements in staff awareness of CEG	5	3.60	78	3.85
Improvements in staff view of CEG	5	3.40	78	3.74
Improvements in staff participation in CEG delivery	5	3.80	78	3.44
Improvements in staff participation in CEG training	5	3.00	79	3.28
Improvements in planning and management of CEG	5	4.20	79	3.84
Improvements in preparation for inspection	5	4.20	76	4.04
Improvements in evaluation of CEG	5	4.20	79	4.13
Improvements in delivery of CEG	5	4.00	79	3.61

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005
Accredited in the past - n=8; Seeking/Accredited - n= 95.

2.16 As indicated in Figure Nine, IiC was reported to have had an impact on young people, for example in regard to improvements in their views of CEG, and their capacity to make both choices and transitions. The degree of perceived impact varied, and might prove problematic in terms of providing direct causal evidence. Follow-up case study, or related work, would be required to validate such attributions, but the overall picture (reflecting the majority of respondents' views on the impact on CEG delivery) is that there are directly attributable learning, and other outcomes, which have flowed from schools improving CEG provision through IiC accreditation.

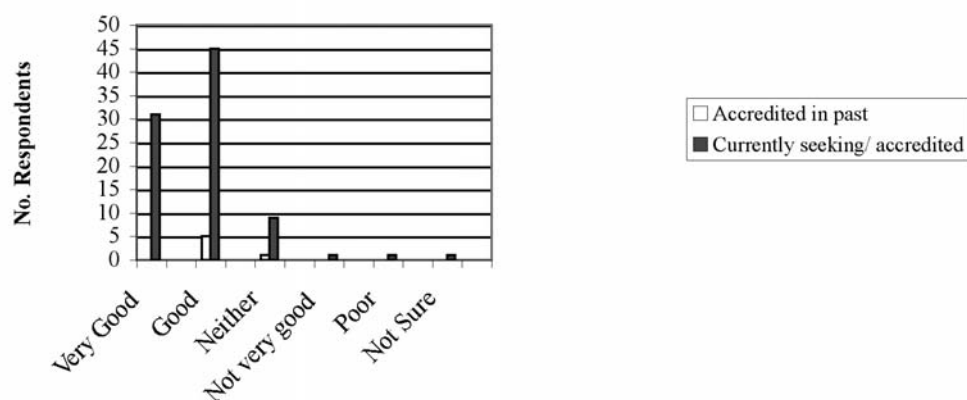
Figure Nine: Effects of IiC on young people

	Accredited in the past		Seeking/ accredited	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Improvements in young people's views of CEG	5	3.60	75	3.36
Improvements in young people's attendance rates	5	2.60	60	2.22
Improvements in young people's capacity to make choices	5	3.60	74	3.23
Improvements in young people's capacity to make transitions	5	3.60	74	3.26
Improvements in young people's confidence	5	3.60	70	3.20
Improvements in young people's motivation	5	3.60	68	3.07
Improvements in young people's exam results	6	3.20	60	2.47

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

2.17 A clear majority of organisations who have achieved, or which are seeking accreditation (Figure Ten), assessed the overall effectiveness of IiC as good or very good.

Figure Ten: Overall effectiveness

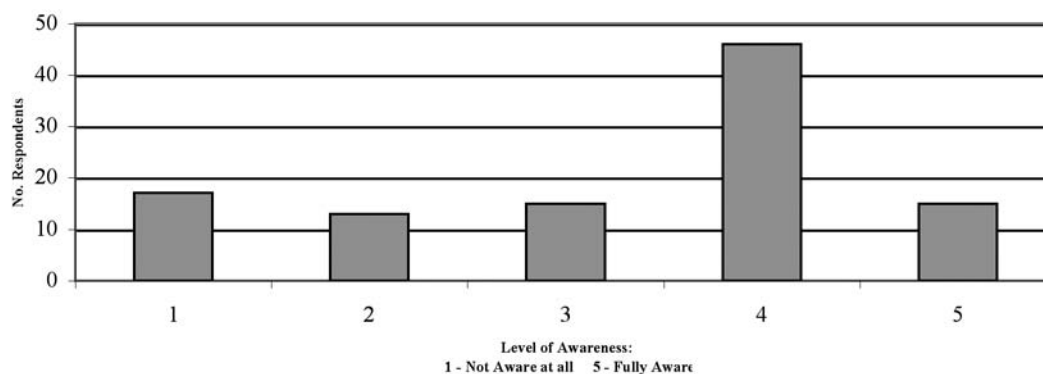


2.18 Over two thirds of organisations which responded²⁵ (67 per cent) said they would recommend IiC accreditation to others, and significantly over three-quarters of organisations which responded²⁶ (79 per cent) indicated that they are likely to seek re-accreditation.

Non-Accredited Sample

2.19 As indicated, 100 organisations in IiC Licensee areas which do not hold accreditation responded to the survey²⁷.

Figure Eleven: Awareness of Quality Awards



²⁵ 78 out of 95 respondents, with 15 saying they were 'not sure' and 2 indicating they would not recommend IiC.

²⁶ 62 out of 78 respondents, with the balance being 'not sure'.

²⁷ A breakdown in terms of their status compared with the accredited sample respondents is set out in Figure One.

2.20 The majority of these organisations (Figure Eleven) indicated that they have a high level of awareness of quality awards in CEG, although there was no opportunity in the research to test out the extent of their knowledge/understanding.

2.21 The survey group were asked subsequently for their views on the likely impact of IiC accreditation (Figure Twelve) in regard to the same areas as explored with the accredited group. The most significant potential impact indicated by respondents - as evidenced by them indicating the two highest levels of agreement (4/5) - were as follows: 74 respondents (79.6 per cent) indicated that they felt IiC would enable an assessment of the current state of CEG; 68 respondents (72.3 per cent) indicated they felt it would improve the status of CEG, with a similar number indicating that they felt it would provide additional information for inspections. There was slightly less agreement on the potential of accreditation to improve the management and delivery of CEG, with 58.5 per cent and 62.4 per cent respectively giving these the highest levels of agreement.

Figure Twelve: Views on IiC

	Strongly Agree					Strongly Disagree					Total	Mean
	5		4		3		2		1			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
IiC would lead to public recognition for CEG	21	22.8	47	51.1	17	18.5	7	7.6	0	0.0	92	3.89
IiC would improve the status of CEG	24	25.5	44	46.8	18	19.1	7	7.4	1	1.1	94	3.88
IiC would improve the management of CEG	18	19.1	37	39.4	25	26.6	13	13.8	1	1.1	94	3.62
IiC would provide additional information for inspections	19	20.0	49	51.6	20	21.1	7	7.4	0	0.0	95	3.84
IiC would improve CEG delivery	25	26.9	33	35.5	19	20.4	13	14.0	3	3.2	93	3.69
IiC would assess current state of CEG	25	26.9	49	52.7	15	16.1	3	3.2	1	1.1	93	4.01
IiC would gain support to develop CEG	16	17.4	47	51.1	21	22.8	6	6.5	2	2.2	92	3.75

Missing = 7

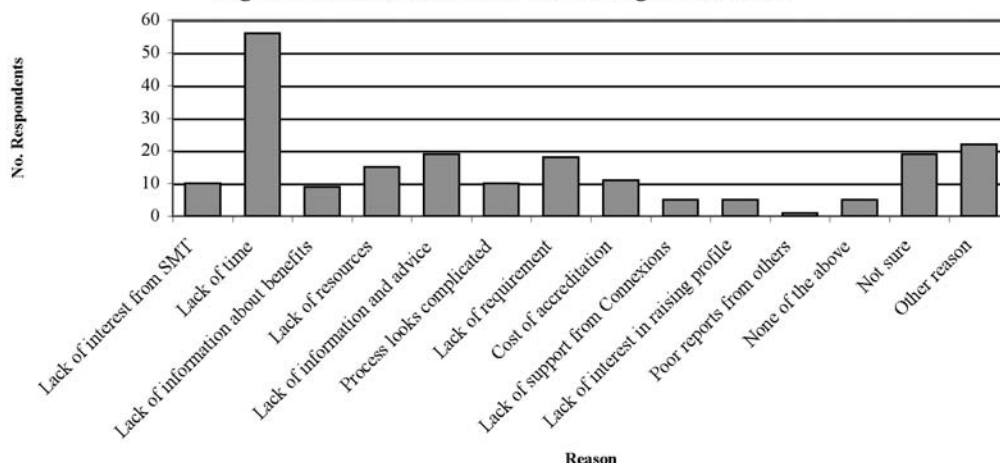
Source: CeGS Survey of IiC non - accredited organisations, 2005

2.22 The largest single reason given by the majority (56 per cent) of respondents for not pursuing IiC accreditation was 'lack of time'. It was not possible within the restricted scope of the research to test out whose time is required, and/or to further unpack the wider issues that are likely to be behind this assessment.

2.23 However, it is clear from the accredited survey that, as the most frequent instigator of the process is the person with operational responsibility for CEG, the lack of time being referred to probably relates to the Careers Co-ordinator, or person in charge of CEG. This potential finding is supported by evidence from a range of previous CEG surveys, which have highlighted the lack of time, and other resources (quoted by 15 per cent of respondents), available for such staff to fulfil their roles.

2.24 Significantly, there is limited evidence from the quantitative results (Figure Thirteen) that a 'lack of interest in raising CEG profile' (5 per cent), a 'lack of support from Connexions' (5 per cent), or a 'lack of interest from senior management' (10 per cent) are significant factors in respondent organisations' not seeking IiC accreditation. However, there is a need to explore more fully the issues of a perceived 'lack of information and advice' (19 per cent), and a 'lack of requirement to achieve a quality standard' (18 per cent).

Figure Thirteen: Reasons for not seeking accreditation



2.25 The level of latent interest in IiC amongst respondent organisations is significant (Figure Fourteen), in that less than one in five indicated they were not interested in pursuing IiC accreditation. In respect of this, only 5 respondents (5.2 per cent) indicated that they had no information about IiC and were not interested in accreditation, and a further 12 (12.5 per cent) indicating they have information, but are not interested.

2.26 Over *four in five* responding organisations indicated (Figure Fourteen) that - in principle at least - they are interested in IiC accreditation - 51 (53.1 per cent) having had information, and a more concerning 28 (29.2 per cent) indicating they have no (or possibly in some cases insufficient) information to proceed.

Figure Fourteen: Organisational position regarding IiC

	N	%
No information and not interested	5	5.2
No information but interested	28	29.2
Have information and interested	51	53.1
Have information but not interested	12	12.5
Total	96	100.0

Missing 4

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC non - accredited organisations, 2005

Commentary

2.27 A number of key issues/concerns were highlighted in the extensive written feedback provided with the surveys. Supportive/positive comments indicated by respondents, included the following:

- **Usefulness of IiC**

Investor in Careers was generally found to be useful by respondents, with typical comments including the following:

'Particularly useful to see where we were after our first accreditation - to develop our 3-year plan - and then seeing the progress made for the second accreditation. It encouraged evaluation to support CEG development'.

'CEG had a fairly high status, but had got lost as one of many initiatives - IiC made it more distinctive again'.

- **Desire to set and maintain standards**

There was a common interest demonstrated by a significant number of respondents with regard to the use of IiC in both determining what the appropriate standard for CEG management should be, and ensuring that this was then met.

Having established this way of working, there was evidence too of it setting a benchmark standard below which organisations would not wish to fall, and one that enabled them to gain (or maintain) a competitive position/edge. Typical comments included:

'On-going process of self-evaluation and improvement....As more schools in locality should gain award soon, we should not be seen to fall behind'.

'We have held the award since its inception. We value it as accreditation of our CEG and will continue to re-accredit as a matter of course'.

- **Link to Ofsted**

A number of respondents pointed to the way that IiC accreditation had supported and complemented the Ofsted inspection process. Typical comments included:

'Excellent evidence base for Ofsted.....Very good evaluative tool'.

'We had Ofsted a year after IiC accreditation. All major work was already completed and filed'.

'Key to establishing CEG as part of whole school development plan'.

- **Need for help**

It is clear that a number of schools would have welcomed more support in regard to seeking IiC accreditation, both in terms of professional and financial support. Typical comments included:

'In seeking accreditation it would be helpful to have financial support in order to put certain aspects of the evidence together. The financial support would be used to release staff from lessons in order to carry out meetings, collect evidence etc. Worthwhile as the accreditation is, the time required is large especially when teaching is also a priority'.

- **Overlap/duplication between standards**

Similarly although most organisations indicated in the quantitative responses that they felt IiC criteria are 'clear', some respondents expressed a concern about overlap and duplication between criteria, and expressed a desire for simplification, where this was possible. Typical comments included:

'We found the criteria too wordy and in cases not very clear about what evidence was the best to include. Also it is not clear where there is an overlap of evidence from one section to another, what to include where. It could be more user-friendly'.

'Some of the criteria overlap requiring duplication of paperwork or cross referencing - which is time consuming'.

- **Lack of contact**

Some concerns were expressed about a lack of contact²⁸ in some areas between IiC Licensees and organisations which may be interested in taking-up or building-on IiC accreditation.

In regard to the latter issue regarding Primary Schools, it is recognised that funding is an issue here, although there have been isolated examples (as recently in Plymouth) of LEAs providing specific support.

'Previous person who set up IiC has now left - not personally aware of present status of IiC at our school. Would like to achieve accreditation, but don't know who to contact to proceed'.

'I have heard nothing at all about Investor in Careers since we achieved the award in 2002. An update about re-awarding processes/ procedures would be welcome'.

'We sense a lack of commitment to Primary IiC. No-one contacts us re any aspect of re-accreditation'.

- **Length of Assessment Process**

There were some comments about the length of assessment process, and the necessity of the final presentation in front of the panel (e.g. 'It's a bridge too far').

'The 'end' process was rather lengthy - my interim and final evaluations were very close and then a final presentation as well - this might put people off. I think the two assessments would be sufficient'.

The general view gained during the research was that the presentation was seen as an opportunity 'to celebrate success', to 'involve young people', and 'to showcase particular activities of which schools and others were proud'.

4. KEY FINDINGS

4.1 The IiC quality standard for the management of careers education was initiated just over ten years ago in Cornwall and Devon, and is now the most widely used local quality award for CEG in England.

4.2 This research is the first external evaluation that has taken place of the impact and effectiveness of the IiC Award and has been largely conducted from the viewpoint of schools, colleges and other organisations, and from key stakeholders, especially IiC Licensees and Assessors. The views of the 'matched sample' of schools, colleges and other organisations from IiC Licenses that could - but have not chosen - to seek IiC accreditation has provided useful comparative data.

4.3 It is hoped that the research might encourage more institutions to explore the options open to them in respect of developing the quality of CEG provision. This might include looking at this not just on a single institution basis, but also in the context of 14-19 consortia, school improvement partnerships, or new groupings that may emerge within Children's Trusts.

4.4 The views of those organisations that have achieved IiC accreditation (including those actively seeking accreditation, or having been re-accredited) is generally very positive, including amongst sub-groups represented in the sample such as FE colleges, and primary schools. Overall, they indicated that the benefits of IiC outweighed costs, the general effectiveness of IiC was good or better, the actual benefits matched the expected benefits of taking part and they would recommend that others take-up the award.

4.5 The impact on young people, although harder to evidence, is noteworthy in regard to reported improvements in young people's views of CEG and arguably most importantly their capacity to make both choices and effective transitions.

²⁸ This issue is recognised by Cornwall and Devon Connexions. One possible solution is the creation of a specific web-site for Award holders to update them on developments.

4.6 The 'Youth Matters' Green Paper, which the Government has put out for consultation, has recognised the contribution that quality standards might make in providing further impetus to the quality and impartiality of CEG (and developing 'IAG' provision for young people).

4.7 However, this research indicates that a degree of caution should be adopted in this approach (particularly in the context of the New Relationship with Schools). In particular, there is a need to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and support exists both to encourage those already using self-assessment mechanisms to enhance CEG to continue to develop their work, and to identify those who do not, and take necessary corrective action. Furthermore, it is clear that the availability and use of quality standards (and their more rigorous inspection) is not in itself likely to be sufficient to tackle the long-standing difficulties related to CEG/IAG, which have been so effectively diagnosed in a range of recent research reports, including the Tomlinson Report and the 'End to End' review of CEG.

4.8 A number of consultees commented that IiC has found its 'natural home' amongst 'schools and other organisations that are already interested in CEG, and in many cases have successful programmes they want to improve'. Despite working with them on a regular basis (including agreeing Annual Partnership Agreements), IiC Licensees indicated that it has been harder to 'convert' schools and other bodies without a clear and existing interest in CEG and that this had most frequently occurred when a 'window of opportunity' had been created by the appointment of a new Headteacher/Principal and/or a new Careers Co-ordinator.

4.9 The survey of non-accredited schools and other organisations has shown that the lack of take-up may not necessarily reflect a lack of interest in the idea of taking-up IiC, or indeed in enhancing CEG, but more frequently a lack of internal resource and/or encouragement/incentive. The number of those organisations that indicated they might be interested in IiC, but indicated had 'no' information, was revealing, and could indicate the need for more pro-active marketing of both the existence and the benefits of accreditation.

4.10 Overall, it is noteworthy - as indicated in David Andrews' recent research on local CEG quality awards - that even where more integrated and systematic attempts have been made to encourage take-up of existing awards the maximum penetration rate is currently 50 per cent, and elsewhere more typically 20-30 per cent.

4.11 In light of this, and other factors, his research posed questions including: whether (and how) local quality awards could be developed further; whether it was sensible to continue with a 'free market' of 25 local quality awards, move to a more regulated market, or adopt a single, national award.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research team which undertook the project consisted of: Simon Bysshe (Senior Associate); Lindsey Bowes (Senior Researcher); and Hayley Reynolds (Research Assistant). Contract management was undertaken by Jo Hutchinson (Deputy Director - Research), and Deirdre Hughes (Director) was involved in advising on the project, focus group work with IiC Assessors and Licensees, and discussing research findings with Connexions Cornwall and Devon.

The Centre for Guidance Studies would like to thank all those who contributed to, and otherwise supported, the research including:

- Sue Eynon, Jenny Rudge, Shaun Newman and colleagues at Connexions Cornwall and Devon.
- IiC Licensees for their co-operation in providing necessary contact information for Sample A and B, and where appropriate for their further involvement in the research.
- IiC Assessors for their extensive input respectively in focus groups and through telephone interviews, and other colleagues who co-operated in being involved in semi-structured telephone interviews.
- David Andrews, CEG Consultant, for sharing the results of his review of CEG Quality Awards, which was part-funded by NACGT.
- Liz Reece for her helpful comments on early versions of the survey questionnaires and other feedback.
- All schools, colleges and other organisations which co-operated by responding so fully to the postal surveys.