Good career guidance helps inspire students towards further study and enables them to make informed decisions whenever choices are open to them. It helps them to understand enough about the world of work to know what skills they need to succeed. It is important for social mobility because it helps open students’ eyes to careers they may not have considered. Ofsted now includes career guidance specifically within the inspection framework.

“IF YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RANGE OF CAREERS OPEN TO PEOPLE WITH THE RIGHT QUALIFICATIONS, THEY WILL HAVE A CLEARER IDEA OF THE ROUTES TO BETTER JOBS”

“ONCE YOU FIND OUT WHAT A ‘SCIENTIST’ ACTUALLY DOES, OR DISCOVER ALL OF THE DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN BE A SCIENTIST, YOU MAY FIND IT EASIER TO IMAGINE YOURSELF INTO THAT ROLE”

Career guidance in the UK has been much criticised, but what would it look like were it good? Our team visited six countries (the Netherlands, Germany, Hong Kong, Finland, Canada and Ireland) where both career guidance and educational results are good. We also visited schools in England and studied the available literature on career guidance in English state schools. From all this input we made a judgement on what ‘good’ looks like in the form of eight benchmarks identifying different dimensions of good career guidance.
# A Stable Careers Programme

Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers.

# Learning from Career and Labour Market Information

Every student, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.

# Addressing the Needs of Each Student

Students have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student. A school’s careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

# Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers

All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.

# Encounters with Employers and Employees

Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.

# Experiences of Workplaces

Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

# Encounters with Further and Higher Education

All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

# Personal Guidance

Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser; who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all students but should be timed to meet their individual needs.
Good career guidance has a long-term impact on students and pupils. It is important for social mobility because it helps open young people’s eyes to careers they may have never considered. More effective career guidance can potentially lead to economic and social benefits for the individual pupil, for employers, for government and for the country as a whole. Benefits can also be seen in the shorter term when pupils are still at school. These benefits include better motivation of pupils once they have clear goals for future study and careers, leading to:

- higher self-esteem
- higher attainment
- reduced drop out rates

In addition to the longer term economic benefits, shorter term benefits accrue during pupils’ school careers, including better motivation and higher attainment.

But what about the costs of implementing good career guidance? We commissioned PwC to estimate the costs of implementing each benchmark and to estimate their economic benefits. We anticipate that schools will work towards all eight benchmarks simultaneously, but PwC estimated the cost of activities required to achieve each benchmark separately.

The cost of implementing all the benchmarks in a medium-sized school outside London is estimated at £53,637 in the first year, and £44,676 in subsequent years. This is equivalent to £54 per student from the second year onwards, and is less than one per cent of the school’s budget. PwC’s review suggests that economic and social outcomes are likely to arise from a sequence of links. This impact pathway is set out above.
## USEFUL ORGANISATIONS AND RESOURCES

There are many organisations and sources that provide advice, support and information in order to deliver good career guidance. Some examples are set out below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION</th>
<th>The Department for Education has produced statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff on providing careers guidance and inspiration.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE CAREERS AND ENTERPRISE COMPANY</td>
<td>The Careers and Enterprise Company works with schools, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and businesses to support the careers of young people. careersandenterprise.co.uk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE</td>
<td>The National Careers Service provides career advice for 13–19 year olds via phone and web.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPRENTICESHIPS</td>
<td>Apprenticeships are a route valued by government and employers, combining study with practical experience in the workplace. Search GOV.UK for the latest information and updates on apprenticeships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS</td>
<td>The UCAS website provides a range of career-related resources for students.ucas.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL GOVERNANCE ASSOCIATION</td>
<td>The National Governance Association, NGA, has guidance for school governors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAREERS ENGAGEMENT</td>
<td>A number of organisations have come together to produce Careers Engagement: A Good Practice Brief for Leaders of Schools and Colleges, from ASCL, NFER, ATL and 157 Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAREERS ENGLAND</td>
<td>Careers England provide a Quality in Careers Standard. <a href="http://www.careersengland.co.uk">www.careersengland.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE</td>
<td>A register of career guidance professionals is managed by the Career Development Institute (CDI).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATRIX QUALITY STANDARD</td>
<td>There are numerous commercial providers of services to schools. Many will have the Matrix quality standard for information, advice and guidance services. matrixstandard.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM AMBASSADORS AND STEMNET</td>
<td>STEM Ambassadors and STEMNET broker partnerships between schools and science-based employers. stemnet.org.uk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A more detailed, regularly updated list of organisations, resources and weblinks is available at goodcareerguidance.org.uk/support. You can email careerguidance@gatsby.org.uk with queries or suggestions.

For more information on NAHT and ASCL please visit naht.org.uk or ascl.org.uk.