



**Code of practice for the assurance of academic  
quality and standards in higher education**

**Section 8: Career education, information, advice and guidance -  
February 2010**

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## **Contents**

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Precepts and explanations</b>	<b>6</b>
General principles	6
Curriculum design	7
Students	8
Stakeholder relations	10
Staff	11
Monitoring, feedback, evaluation and improvement	12
<b>Appendix 1: the precepts</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix 2: glossary</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix 3: bibliography</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendix 4: key to acronyms</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix 5: membership of the advisory group for the <i>Code of practice, Section 8: Career education, information, advice and guidance</i></b>	<b>20</b>

## Foreword

1 This document is the second edition of a code of practice for career education, information, advice and guidance in United Kingdom (UK) higher education institutions. It is one of a suite of interrelated documents, which forms an overall *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice)* for the guidance of higher education institutions subscribing to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) and other bodies offering UK higher education.

2 The overall *Code of practice* and its 10 constituent sections were originally prepared by QAA between 1998 and 2001 in response to the reports of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education and its Scottish Committee (the *Dearing and Garrick Reports*). The *Code of practice* supports the national arrangements within the UK for quality assurance in higher education. It identifies a comprehensive series of system-wide principles (precepts) covering matters relating to the management of academic quality and standards in higher education. It provides an authoritative reference point for institutions as they consciously, actively and systematically assure the academic quality and standards of their programmes, awards and qualifications.

3 The *Code of practice* assumes that, taking into account principles and practices agreed UK-wide, each institution has its own systems for independent verification both of its quality and standards and of the effectiveness of its quality assurance systems. In developing the *Code of practice*, extensive advice has been sought from a range of knowledgeable practitioners.

4 The *Code of practice* does not incorporate statutory requirements relating to relevant legislation, for example the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995* (as amended). It assumes that institutions have an overriding obligation in all such cases to ensure that they meet the requirements of legislation. However, where a section of the *Code of practice* is related to legislative or similar obligations, efforts have been made to ensure compatibility with them.

5 Since 2001, a number of developments in UK higher education have encouraged QAA to begin a revision of individual sections of the *Code of practice*. In undertaking this task, QAA has also decided to review the structure of the sections and, in particular, to replace the original 'precepts and guidance' format with a 'precepts and explanation' approach, using the explanations to make clear why the precepts are considered important and reducing opportunities for a 'checklist' approach to the *Code of practice*. In doing so, QAA has sought to meet Recommendation 4 (part 4) of the Better Regulation Task Force in its report *Higher Education: Easing the Burden* (July 2002).<sup>1</sup> This revised section has also taken account of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*.<sup>2</sup>

6 Revised sections of the *Code of practice* are therefore now structured into a series of precepts and accompanying explanations. The precepts express key matters of principle that the higher education community has identified as important for the assurance of quality and academic standards. Individual institutions should be able to demonstrate they are addressing the matters tackled by the precepts effectively, through their own management and organisational processes, taking account of institutional needs, traditions, culture and decision making. The accompanying explanations show why the precepts are important.

7 The *Code of practice* is a statement of good practice that has been endorsed by the higher education community. As such, it is useful in QAA's audit and review processes to consider the extent to which an institution, in developing and implementing its own policies, has taken account of the *Code of practice* and its precepts.

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<sup>1</sup> *Higher Education: Easing the Burden*, available at: <http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/brc/publications/2002.html>.

<sup>2</sup> *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, available at: [ww2.dkit.ie/about\\_dkit/documents\\_and\\_policies/policies](http://ww2.dkit.ie/about_dkit/documents_and_policies/policies).

8 Institutions may find the explanations useful for developing their own policy and for allowing some flexibility of practice at subject level, depending on local needs. It is important to emphasise that the explanations do not form part of QAA's expectations of institutional practice when QAA teams are conducting audits and reviews.

9 Academic staff in departments and schools do not necessarily need to be familiar with the detail of all of the various sections of the *Code of practice*, although they might well be expected to be familiar with the institutional policies it informs and any parts which are particularly relevant to their own responsibilities.

10 To assist users, the precepts are listed, without the accompanying explanations, in Appendix 1 of this section of the *Code of practice*.

11 The first version of this section of the *Code of practice* was published in January 2001. The publication of this second version follows consultation with staff in institutions, who have helped to update the *Code of practice* to take account of institutions' practical experience of using the guidance contained in its predecessor.

## Introduction

12 The second edition of this section of the *Code of practice* provides a set of precepts, with accompanying guidance, on arrangements for the management of career education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). It is intended to help higher education institutions (HEIs) both to meet students' expectations in respect of their preparedness for their future career, and to produce graduates equipped to meet the fluctuating demands of the employment market of today and tomorrow. It does so by seeking to ensure that institutions have an approach for CEIAG that is adequately quality assured.

13 Section 8 of the *Code of practice* will complement other QAA developments including: the *Code of practice, Section 3: Disabled students; Section 7: Programme design, approval, monitoring and review; and Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*;<sup>3</sup> guidance produced by QAA in respect of programme specifications; and guidance published by QAA for institutional policy and practice on personal development planning.

14 CEIAG is provided within a wide range of institutions from large universities to specialist HEIs and further education colleges and this means that delivery arrangements vary. Most institutions have specialist careers services or units which provide a principle source of careers advice and guidance to students. This section of the *Code of practice* recognises, however, that these units are not the only source from which students will seek and receive advice; many staff who have contact with students will, at times, give careers advice and guidance throughout the student's time in higher education. These could include recruitment and admissions staff, personal tutors, teaching staff and staff employed by student representative bodies.

15 This section of the *Code of practice* stresses the importance of integration, coherence and internal collaboration as part of an institution-wide commitment to preparing students for their future

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<sup>3</sup> All sections of the *Code of practice* are available at:  
[www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice).

careers. This will be reflected in institutional strategies and will include links between CEIAG services and academic departments, personal tutors, admission tutors, placement tutors, student employment job shops, and other student support and welfare services, including those supported by student representative bodies.

16 Students pursue a wide range of subjects in higher education at different points in their life and take up an increasingly diverse range of post-study destinations. Consequently, the CEIAG needs of students are diverse and require staff with high-level skills in career advice and guidance, and an increasingly sophisticated knowledge and understanding of the graduate labour market. Linked to this, students in higher education are exposed to highly complex messages about their career development and benefit from CEIAG to help them analyse, evaluate and articulate their responses. In addition, CEIAG takes place within the formal and informal curriculum, and this demands high-level pedagogical skills and knowledge, including the ability to link this to career information resources and liaison activity with employers and other opportunity providers.

17 Students in higher education will benefit from clarity about how to access CEIAG. The expansion and diversification of higher education means that the commitment to equality of opportunity and to meeting the needs of students from different backgrounds is an important consideration in terms of accessibility. This consideration extends to the different modes of study used to engage students, including part-time and distance learning.

18 The expansion and diversification of higher education makes the provision of impartial career information, advice and guidance by institutions all the more important in assisting prospective students to think about their long-term goals and aspirations for their future. This includes students following programmes who may also be working and international students who represent a large community in UK higher education. The importance of clear information for students about the value of higher education



awards, and the career prospects, including professional recognition of qualifications, associated with studying a particular programme, has been highlighted by a number of reports and this applies to both prospective and registered students.

19 Both the nature of employment and the way in which the employment market functions are undergoing rapid change requires CEIAG provision to be forward-looking, responsive and innovative. Correspondingly, the range of opportunities taken up by graduates is broader; their career patterns are more varied and less predictable. This makes it more important than ever for students and graduates to take personal responsibility for managing their own career development throughout their lives. The skills that students need to develop to manage their careers include the ability to reflect and review, to plan and make decisions, to use information resources effectively, and to create and take opportunities. There is an important interrelationship between CEIAG and the development of employability and career management skills in preparing students to face the future.

20 The employability and destination of graduates is an established strategic interest for HEIs. As a consequence, some institutions have embedded their approach to CEIAG within existing policies and strategies in order to develop their students' career options and skills alongside other learning. In this way, CEIAG can be an integral aspect of many institutional strategies and some curriculum-embedded activities have developed out of this.

21 Institutions vary in their focus and orientation towards external relations, partnerships, and markets, and the increasing diversity here is reflected in the variety of their intake of learners, modes of study, and aspirations of their graduates. It is valuable, therefore, for providers of CEIAG to work in collaboration and partnership with external agencies and organisations locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, which are appropriate to, and supportive of, the institution's role and mission.

22 If CEIAG, as well as the employability aspects of course content, are to be relevant and up to date, they need to be informed by accurate information and the experience and perspective of employers. This is especially important in the context of rapidly changing employment markets. Systems and procedures will therefore need to be in place to ensure that these feedback loops operate effectively at the level of both CEIAG provision, including staff development and training, and of curriculum design and programme specification.

23 These are the key themes which are reflected in the precepts and explanations which make up this section of the *Code of practice*.

## **Precepts and explanations**

### **General principles**

**1**

**Institutions ensure that career education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) interests contribute to their approaches to strategic planning.**

A key motivation for participation in higher education is the opportunities it presents to students to fulfil their potential, including career aspirations. An institution-wide commitment to preparing students to identify and make choices in the immediate and long term to achieve sustainable careers can be demonstrated through a comprehensive strategic approach to CEIAG.

While the approach to provision of CEIAG may vary within institutions, the development and maintenance of a collective understanding of the institution's overarching approach to CEIAG will be assisted by clear and defined priorities and objectives that permeate all of its provision. Identifying a member of staff at a senior level with responsibility for CEIAG may be advantageous so that CEIAG interests are routinely represented in internal decision-making processes. The institution's approach may be expressed in documents such as: corporate plans and strategies for learning teaching and assessment; employability; widening participation; and research and enterprise. Representation of staff involved in CEIAG in associated decision-making forums enables realistic goal setting and monitoring of progress. Institutions might find it helpful to describe the nature of the links between CEIAG and other strategies.

**2**

**Institutions are responsible for ensuring that CEIAG is provided and have in place policies and procedures where their responsibilities are clearly defined and met.**

It is important that all students in higher education have access to CEIAG provision. To achieve this, being clear about who is

responsible for different aspects of delivery, including any partners involved in collaborative provision, within well defined policies and procedures will be helpful to institutions. For example, institutions may agree how CEIAG provision is to be organised and resourced within partner institutions via the use of partnership agreements, contracts or memoranda of understanding.

Where there are policies and statements, an explanation of the respective roles of staff involved in different aspects of CEIAG delivery will be beneficial. This may include staff that provide pre-entry information, advice and guidance; academic staff involved in teaching career education; and the roles and responsibilities of dedicated careers service and support staff.

In formulating CEIAG policies, institutions may wish to draw upon the expertise and knowledge of their dedicated careers staff. Additionally, they are likely to involve internal and external stakeholders who can contribute to the employability and development of students both within and outside the curriculum. This might include staff involved in volunteering and other personal development programmes taking place, for example, within the students' representative body or with employers providing internship opportunities. CEIAG policies may also provide a vehicle for clarifying how provision can be coordinated so that it is offered consistently and makes optimum use of resources and expertise.

So that all students can benefit from the institution's CEIAG provision, policies and procedures need to consider fully the diversity of the student body. Furthermore, where institutions have work-based learners enrolled on their programmes, they are responsible for ensuring the learners' career development needs are supported in collaboration with their employing organisations.

### 3

**CEIAG provision is guided by a commitment to impartiality and the needs of individual students.**

Client-centredness and impartiality are important principles in guidance work that are clearly embedded in professional codes of practice and quality frameworks. CEIAG provision provided by institutions will be guided by these principles, and recognise that students should have equitable access to CEIAG provision. This includes ensuring that steps are taken to provide additional support where appropriate. Where there may be factors that could be perceived as affecting impartiality, including the use of external agencies, students should be clearly informed at an early stage. Students should be made aware of all choices open to them. Impartial advice and support helps students to understand their aptitudes and preferences, and to reflect on their learning and, where appropriate and relevant, work experience, as well as challenging their ideas about education and work. Discussion of career ideas and the factors that have influenced career decisions inevitably involves the disclosure of personal information. These discussions need to be conducted in an environment where student needs for privacy are respected.

CEIAG provision is designed to meet students' individual needs. This includes deciding how best to ensure that CEIAG is made available at key points in the student experience and in ways that meet the diverse needs of a particular student population. This diversity of student needs in CEIAG provision is also a reflection of study options becoming broader and more complex and includes, for example, Foundation Degree students or those undertaking continuing professional development (CPD) courses or work-based learning.

CEIAG provision can be designed to take account of those acknowledged as disadvantaged in the labour market. In addition to those protected by equalities legislation, this may include, for example, students who have less established and/or direct contact with the labour market, and international students seeking advice on their status in the UK labour market.

Institutions are also responsible for ensuring that the institutional interests of those providing CEIAG are transparent to prospective students, existing students and graduates, and do not adversely affect the quality of CEIAG received. The staff providing CEIAG should strive to provide impartial, student-centred advice and guidance, but should also be prepared to advise students of any limitations and/or subjectivity in their provision and be able to refer them to other professional sources if necessary. This means ensuring that students wishing to change course, discontinue, or transfer to other institutions are signposted to clear and explicitly impartial and confidential personal guidance and advice, for example the institutional careers service.

## Curriculum design

4

**Where career education is embedded in the curriculum, awarding institutions ensure that intended learning outcomes:**

- **contribute to the aims and objectives of the programme**
- **clearly identify knowledge, understanding and skills**
- **are assessed appropriately.**

Career education can be taught via discrete modules (often with titles such as career education, career management, career development and employability) or embedded across a programme of study. Whichever method is chosen, programme designers need to consider defining learning outcomes that are cognate with the overall aims and objectives of the programme and link with research and scholarship appropriate to higher education.

Student engagement in CEIAG may be enhanced by ensuring that the learning outcomes for career education enable participants to develop and explore the ideas and beliefs of self and others. This can include linking career with work ethics, identity, culture, occupational knowledge, the individual in society, enterprise and

entrepreneurship, labour markets, vocation, the stated expectations of employers, life course perspectives and/or metacognitive approaches to learning. Examples of curriculum design can be found in the bibliography in Appendix 3.

Where appropriate, programme designers may wish to consider how staff and resources within the careers service, including career information and destination data, can be used to facilitate student learning in this field.

Assessment of curriculum-based career education can take a number of forms appropriate to developing and demonstrating intended learning outcomes, including a reflective journal, decision-making exercise, presentation, labour market analysis, poster, or occupational study. Longer-term evaluation may involve a mixture of quantitative and qualitative measures with a particular focus on the process of intellectual, ethical and cultural development.

### Students

5

**Institutions promote internal collaboration and understanding of individual responsibilities in order to encourage student engagement in CEIAG.**

Clarifying the respective responsibilities of programme staff and dedicated careers and employability staff will help to meet programme objectives and the needs of individual students in relation to CEIAG. Clarifying the responsibilities for different aspects of delivery of CEIAG may also extend to policies and statements of service covering staff who provide pre-entry information, advice and guidance; academic staff involved in teaching career education; and the role and responsibilities of dedicated careers service and support staff.

The responsibility for access to CEIAG opportunities and resources is institution wide, but the nature and limitations of this provision should be made clear and transparent to students. This will be

facilitated by clarifying and supporting the complementary roles of dedicated careers and employability staff, academic staff and others, such as communications/marketing and recruitment/admissions staff.

Providing clear links between subjects and career planning, for example by detailing the links in programme specifications, will encourage students to engage with CEIAG provision. Encouraging students to engage with CEIAG beyond their programme, for example through seeking information, advice and guidance or undertaking independent or guided research, and developing clear links between CEIAG and personal development planning, can strengthen students' engagement with CEIAG.

A variety of methods for capturing the broad range of student achievement are available. In line with relevant national initiatives, for example the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) and *Personal development planning: guidance for institutional policy and practice in higher education*,<sup>4</sup> encouraging students to record and reflect on relevant experiences underpins effective individual career development and learning.

## 6

**Institutions provide students with information about the extent and range of CEIAG services available to them before, during and after their time registered at the institution.**

So that students benefit from CEIAG, institutions need to ensure that the CEIAG on offer is fully accessible, relevant and promoted to the widest range of students. Both prospective and registered students will benefit from consistent information about the level of service and resources available within the institution. Consistency, impartiality, timeliness, accuracy and confidentiality are important principles that apply to CEIAG provision (see precept 3). These principles apply to all the stages that the student has contact with the institution, not only for the period of time that students are registered with the institution.

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<sup>4</sup> Available at: [www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressfiles/guidelines/pdp](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressfiles/guidelines/pdp).



Students who are fully informed about the CEIAG provision that is available to them are likely to get the most out of that provision. It is probable that a range of CEIAG will exist throughout the institution, across both academic and support services, and students benefit from being clearly informed about how to access and utilise these services.

To engage with the principle of consistency in the quality of CEIAG on offer, the different CEIAG providers across the institution need to ensure that the equivalent advice or information is offered in comparable circumstances. Providers of information also need to acknowledge that CEIAG is required to different extents and degrees during the whole of the student's time in higher education. For these reasons, the consistency and accessibility of CEIAG services will be a consideration for institutions. A clear delineation of responsibilities between providers will help this. In this way, students will be effectively sign-posted to the different providers of CEIAG as appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

## 7

**Institutions make it clear to prospective and current students how the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired during study are intended to be of use to them in the development of their future academic or career progression routes.**

There may be a range of career development opportunities available to students at, or in association with, the institution, including part-time employment opportunities; placements; volunteering; and wider extra-curricular activities. How these can contribute to students' knowledge, understanding and skills is important information that needs to be effectively communicated to students both at pre and post-entry stages. This information will help students to make informed decisions and establish clear expectations about opportunities for skills development in relation to employment and lifelong learning. Students are helped to identify the knowledge and skills they gain through formal learning and wider experience by the process of personal development planning. Independence and personal responsibility are important graduate attributes for effective

personal development, and career and academic progression. How these attributes are developed through the student experience is a key consideration for institutions.

Students, at all stages of their programmes, may wish to know about opportunities for progression through different academic and career paths once they have completed their studies. This information is most effectively communicated by embedding it in pre-entry information, advice and guidance, where provided, and making it available at all further stages of the student life cycle.

## Stakeholder relations

8

**Institutions promote and practise close collaboration between a range of external bodies and CEIAG providers to improve the academic and career development of students.**

The diversity of the UK higher education sector means that the range and nature of their work with external partners and markets will vary with the nature of their academic and student profile.

Developing and maintaining effective relationships with UK and international professional career bodies, for example Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS), Vitae, Higher Education Careers Services Unit (HECSU), Fedora and careers organisations in other countries, and building referral networks, enables practitioners to refer clients for further help and advice. Institutional guidance workers will keep up to date with the findings of relevant research organisations, including the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC) and the International Centre for Guidance Studies (ICeGS), and will seek to disseminate key findings and developments to other staff involved in providing CEIAG.

To ensure that students are kept informed of opportunities available to them to learn about career paths, institutions work with employers and other opportunity providers to publicise information

about their organisations and about their opportunities for learning in the workplace. Institutions work with a wide range of organisations representing employers of all sizes and interests to enhance the career prospects of students and promote the recruitment of high calibre graduates to the workforce.

These organisations may include, among others, the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR), Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE), Lifelong Learning Networks, the Federation of Small Businesses and chambers of commerce, and also a range of enterprise organisations.

The value of internships, work experience, voluntary work, employer mentoring and work-related learning (whether included in, or additional to, the curriculum) to the academic and career development of students is widely documented and espoused by employers. When clearly presented and promoted to students and employers, such activities can lead to an improved understanding and application by students and employers of the skills and knowledge students gain during their studies.

### 9

#### **CEIAG provision is responsive to and guided by developments and trends in the UK and global employment market.**

Students participating in and graduating with higher education awards are entering an increasingly global employment market that requires graduates to have an understanding and appreciation of the international comparability and recognition of their awards and their application in a global context.

Institutions can provide an effective exchange of information on employment markets and enhanced understanding between students, employers, other opportunity providers and staff delivering CEIAG. To this end they will need to access appropriate labour market information so that the curriculum can take account of regional, national and international markets, and of political, social and economic trends that will affect students' career opportunities

and professional recognition of qualifications in different countries. The employment market evolves rapidly and so do the needs and requirements of employers. Relationships with professional bodies and associations such as sector skills councils, governmental departments and agencies (for example RDAs) will help to ensure that developments in programme contents and student learning opportunities are current and relevant.

To inform and enhance CEIAG provision, information networks may include external resources such as alumni, who can, for example, provide insights into employer expectations, enterprise and entrepreneurship, work skills, career roles and prospects, as well as current and potential future developments in particular fields.

There are a number of other reference points and regulations that relate to career development opportunities for students, which institutions will be familiar with, including the AGCAS codes,<sup>5</sup> *Best practice in graduate recruitment*,<sup>6</sup> and *AGCAS Guidelines on Work Experience and the Minimum Wage*.<sup>7</sup>

## Staff

### 10

**Institutions ensure that all members of staff across the institution involved with providing CEIAG are appropriately supported and resourced to fulfil the CEIAG elements of their roles.**

CEIAG is provided by a wide range of staff at every stage of the student experience, from pre-entry to post-graduation. Often this takes place outside careers services, where staff from across the institution provide advice and guidance to students. It is important, therefore, that institutions identify instances where CEIAG will be

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<sup>5</sup> Available from: [www.agcas.org.uk](http://www.agcas.org.uk).

<sup>6</sup> Available at: [www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Best\\_practice\\_in\\_graduate\\_recruitment/p!elfif](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Best_practice_in_graduate_recruitment/p!elfif).

<sup>7</sup> Available at: [www.agcas.org.uk/pages/20](http://www.agcas.org.uk/pages/20).

delivered to students by staff other than dedicated CEIAG staff, for example by recruitment and admissions staff, academic teaching staff, administrators who have contact with students, personal tutors and research supervisors. Staff need to recognise and understand their particular involvement in CEIAG and should receive appropriate support to ensure that any advice or guidance they offer complements that provided by dedicated CEIAG staff. It is important to ensure that all CEIAG providers have clear, effective and appropriate mechanisms for liaising with, and referring students to, other internal or external expert/professional sources of information and assistance.

Appropriate expertise can be supported through continuing professional development, which may be offered through induction programmes, teaching and learning support courses, staff development programmes, and through networking systems such as discussion groups. Staff whose primary role is the delivery of CEIAG will need to be properly trained and up to date in the latest developments. In this respect, institutions will benefit from encouraging and supporting staff to obtain an appropriate professional qualification and to maintain their expertise through continuing professional development.

### **Monitoring, feedback, evaluation and improvement**

11

**Awarding institutions ensure that CEIAG provision forms part of the institution's quality assurance and enhancement processes.**

Consideration of CEIAG provision will be incorporated within the institutions quality assurance processes either as part of the curriculum-based provision or as part of its student support provision, or both, for example in programme design, validation, review and development. Quality assurance and enhancement processes can enable the institution to take account of relevant external benchmarks (such as AGCAS codes and frameworks), and national quality frameworks.

Programme designers may consider how the institutional career centre and/or wider developments in society at large might be linked to the formal curriculum in the process of programme design, validation, review and development. The institution may want to consider how it can ensure that its curriculum is informed by employers and the wider community, for example, including employer representatives in quality assurance processes or involving them in delivering and/or assessing the curriculum.

The process of quality assurance and enhancement may be used to contribute to and strengthen the principles identified in precepts 1 to 4. In order to foster a culture of quality enhancement, institutions may wish to reflect on the ways that they identify and disseminate good practice in CEIAG provision and improved graduate employability.

## 12

**Providers of CEIAG account formally and regularly for the quality and standards of their services with the objective of promoting continuous improvement.**

The provision of CEIAG is of necessity dynamic and in need of continuous updating if it is to meet the needs of the labour market and the aspirations of the students. Institutions are responsible for ensuring that CEIAG provision is reviewed regularly to promote continuous improvement. To this end, clear procedures which explain when and how this is to happen may be published, along with guidance on who will be involved and how feedback and participation by key stakeholders (such as students, employers, academic staff and, where appropriate, professional bodies) will contribute to the review process.

Any reviews undertaken by an awarding institution or by an external quality accreditation process will result in explicit action plans being published which identify responsibilities and a timeline against which progress is monitored. To enable services to continue to meet the changing needs of students and the labour market, the

outcomes of any review will need to be discussed at an institutional level. Institutions need clear mechanisms of responsibility so that the needs of CEIAG provision can be met in terms of resource allocation.

## 13

### **Awarding institutions use relevant data and information to inform its CEIAG provision.**

The data which are available to institutions (such as graduate destination data, longitudinal career studies, the National Student Survey and labour market trends) and evaluation data generated within the institution (such as diversity data and programme evaluations) can be valuable in informing the development of services. Where such management information contains information that would be useful to CEIAG providers, it should be available to inform planning of new activities or making changes in existing provision. The awarding institution may wish to ensure that diversity data and equality impact assessments are used to inform the development of its CEIAG provision, noting in particular the use of its services by students who may be disadvantaged in the labour market and responding appropriately to their specific support requirements (see the *Code of practice, Section 3: Disabled students*).

To ensure that provision of CEIAG services meets the needs of students, institutions may collect data centrally and/or through academic departments, on graduate destinations that extends beyond the first destination requirements of statistical agencies. For example, as career development is an ongoing process, there is a need for institutions to have access to qualitative information which recognises that graduates may take some time to embark on a career pathway. In addition, disciplinary areas may have differing needs in terms of their interactions with CEIAG providers, and institutions may wish to explore provision which is tailored to meet these needs.

## **Appendix 1: the precepts**

(Note: the precepts are printed here without explanatory text for ease of reference.)

### **General principles**

**1**

**Institutions ensure that career education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) interests contribute to their approaches to strategic planning.**

**2**

**Institutions are responsible for ensuring that CEIAG is provided and have in place policies and procedures where their responsibilities are clearly defined and met.**

**3**

**CEIAG provision is guided by a commitment to impartiality and the needs of individual students.**

### **Curriculum design**

**4**

**Where career education is embedded in the curriculum, awarding institutions ensure that intended learning outcomes:**

- **contribute to the aims and objectives of the programme**
- **clearly identify knowledge, understanding and skills**
- **are assessed appropriately.**



## **Students**

**5**

**Institutions promote internal collaboration and understanding of individual responsibilities in order to encourage student engagement in CEIAG.**

**6**

**Institutions provide students with information about the extent and range of CEIAG services available to them before, during and after their time registered at the institution.**

**7**

**Institutions make it clear to prospective and current students how the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired during study are intended to be of use to them in the development of their future academic or career progression routes.**

## **Stakeholder relations**

**8**

**Institutions promote and practise close collaboration between a range of external bodies and CEIAG providers to improve the academic and career development of students.**

**9**

**CEIAG provision is responsive to and guided by developments and trends in the UK and global employment market.**

## **Staff**

**10**

**Institutions ensure that all members of staff across the institution involved with providing CEIAG are appropriately supported and resourced to fulfil the CEIAG elements of their roles.**

## **Monitoring, feedback, evaluation and improvement**

**11**

**Awarding institutions ensure that CEIAG provision forms part of the institution's quality assurance and enhancement processes.**

**12**

**Providers of CEIAG account formally and regularly for the quality and standards of their services with the objective of promoting continuous improvement.**

**13**

**Awarding institutions use relevant data and information to inform its CEIAG provision.**

## **Appendix 2: glossary**

**Career advice:** A process, whether delivered individually, in groups or via printed or electronic resources, which helps individuals access and interpret specific information, and provides professional opinion, feedback and suggestions for action in relation to the implementation of career plans. The basis for, and the limitations of, any advice provided should always be made clear.

**Career education (also known as career management (skills) and most recently as career development learning):** A range of teaching and learning activities, associated with career contexts, preparation, development and planning. It can be taught through specific modules (generic, customised or bespoke), through cross-curricular integration or outside of the curriculum.

**Career education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG):** An amalgam of processes, facilities and opportunities designed to enable individuals to prepare for, and make effective decisions about, their roles in present and future labour markets. It encompasses personal transferable skills, development and articulation, self-assessment and personal review, labour market information, career goal setting and decision-making, action-planning, and the communication and self-presentation skills necessary for career management.

**Career information:** A coordinated provision of print, electronic and contact resources designed to enable users to develop a better understanding of occupations, of employment types, sectors and employing organisations, and of employment, further study and training opportunities.

**Career guidance:** A process - whether delivered individually, in groups, or via hard copy or electronic media - which aims to help individuals to a clearer understanding of their career development needs and potential, to an appreciation of the processes of career planning and decision-making, and to clarify and attain their career objectives.

**Dedicated career services, CEIAG provision, and dedicated CEIAG staff:** Specialist services, processes and professional staff employed by an HEI to provide impartial career education, information, advice and guidance. Such services hold professional membership of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) and are committed to continuous quality improvement.

**Employability:** A set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits the workforce, the community and the economy.

**Graduate destinations:** The situation or status, in respect of employment or other activity, of graduates at a certain time interval after leaving higher education study or research. Most commonly used in the context of 'First Destinations' data and statistics (Destinations of Leavers from Higher, or DLHE) which are collected by HEIs, and collated and published on a UK-wide basis by the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

**Impartiality:** CEIAG provision should be fair and free from bias. It should develop the ability to progress and refine career thoughts and values based on personal needs and circumstances. All users, including current students, potential students, employers and other opportunity providers, should be able to confirm that they have been treated fairly, and that their experience of using the CEIAG provision was free from institutional, political, professional or commercial bias.

**Opportunity providers:** Individuals and organisations providing students and graduates with opportunities for employment, work-related experience, further study, voluntary work and other structured opportunities for personal development.

**Statement of service:** A formal statement which both documents the CEIAG services to be provided, including the standards to be applied, and defines the client groups entitled to them (students, graduates, employers and other internal and external 'customers'). It may also include statements of the responsibilities of clients as well as their entitlements. These may also take the form of service level agreements (SLAs).

### **Appendix 3: bibliography**

Examples of career education can be found in the following publications.

AGCAS (2006) *Careers Education Benchmark Statement*, available at: [www.agcas.org.uk/agcas\\_resources/33-Careers-Education-Benchmark-Statement](http://www.agcas.org.uk/agcas_resources/33-Careers-Education-Benchmark-Statement)

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All weblinks accessed 13 January 2010.

## **Appendix 4: key to acronyms**

AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
AGR	Association of Graduate Recruiters
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CEIAG	Career education, information, advice and guidance
CPD	Continuing professional development
IAG	Information, advice and guidance
ICeGS	International Centre for Guidance Studies
CIHE	Council for Industry and Higher Education
HEI	Higher education institution
HECSU	Higher Education Careers Services Unit
NICEC	The National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling
RDA	Regional development agency
SLA	Service level agreement

**Appendix 5: membership of the advisory group  
for the Code of practice, Section 8: Career education,  
information, advice and guidance**

Simin Abrahams	Policy Adviser, Universities Scotland
Rosalind Foskett	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Worcester
David Gale	Assistant Director, QAA
Carl Gilleard	Chief Executive, Association of Graduate Recruiters
James Hutchinson	Chief Executive, University of Exeter Students' Guild
Mark Leach	Research and Policy Officer, NUS
Gerard Madill	formerly Policy Adviser, Universities Scotland
Phil McCash	Lecturer in Career Studies, University of Reading
Rose Mortenson	formerly Quality and Membership Manager, Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
Derfel Owen	Development Officer, QAA
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David Shacklady	Head of Careers & Employment, Buckinghamshire New University
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