The way
to work

Young people speak out on transitions to employment

WORKING

LEARNING

EXPERIENCE

SKILLS
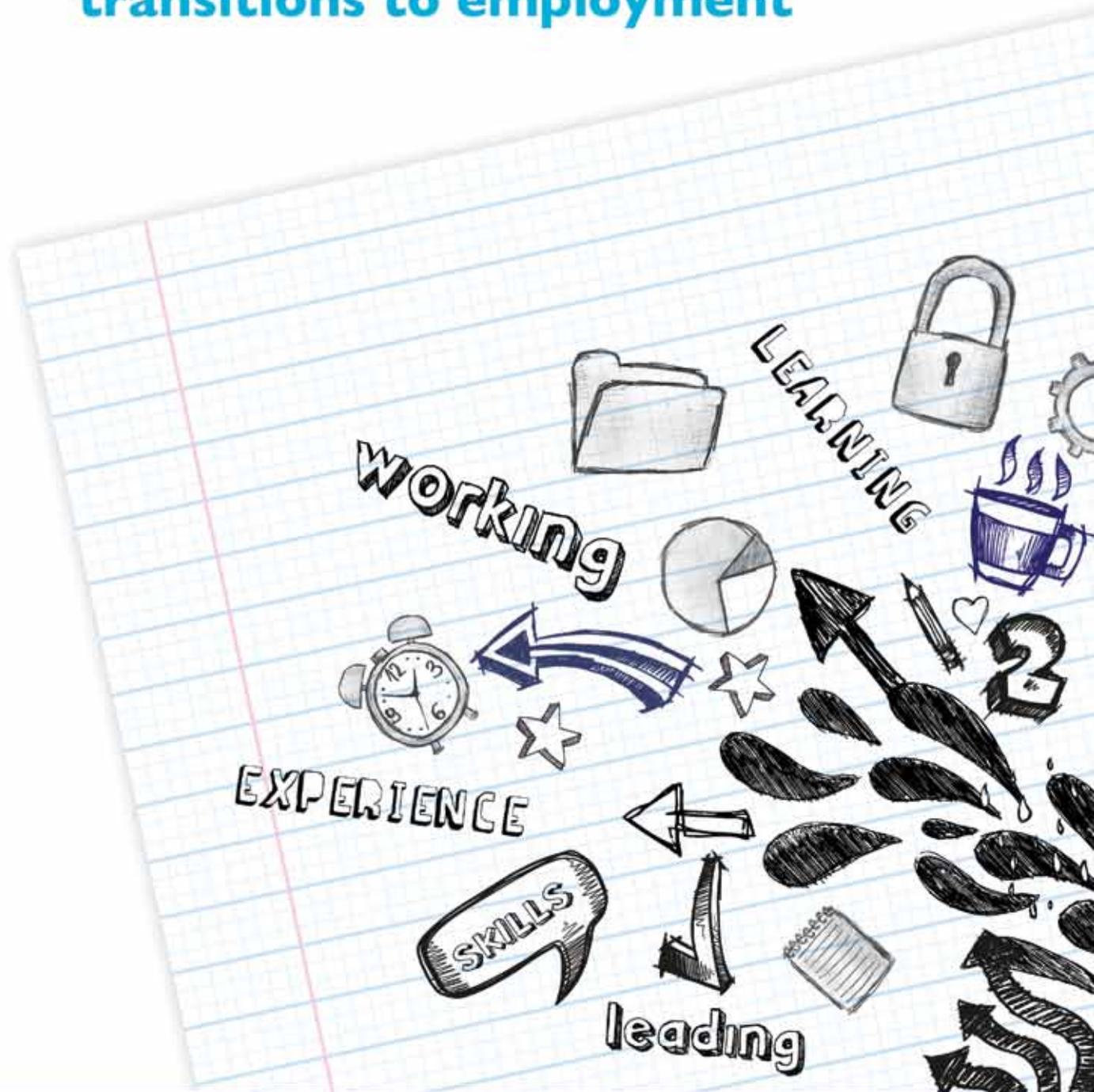
leading

Lauren Kahn with Mary Abdo, Sarah Hewes, Bethia McNeil and Will Norman

About The Youth of Today

The Youth of Today is a consortium of leading youth organisations working together to increase the quality, quantity and diversity of opportunities for young people as leaders of change in their communities. It has been created to help young people be leaders of change in an increasingly complex world.

Aimed at young people aged 13 to 19, it is funded and supported by Government and is managed by a range of leading organisations including the British Youth Council, Changemakers, the National Youth Agency, Prince's Trust, UK Youth Parliament and the Young Foundation.

the youth of today

www.theyouthoftoday.org

About the Young Foundation

The Young Foundation combines creativity and entrepreneurship to tackle major social needs. We work on many different levels to achieve positive social change – including advocacy, research, and policy influence as well as creating new organisations and running practical projects. The Young Foundation benefits from a long history of social research, innovation and practical action by the late Michael Young, once described as "the world's most successful social entrepreneur", who created more than 60 ventures which address social needs.

THE YOUNG Y FOUNDATION

www.youngfoundation.org

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Executive summary

The Youth of Today (formerly the National Body for Youth Leadership) is a consortium of leading youth organisations working together to increase the quality, quantity and diversity of opportunities for young people as leaders of change in their communities. Aimed at young people aged 13 to 19, it is led by the National Youth Agency, supported by the British Youth Council, Changemakers, The Prince's Trust, UK Youth Parliament and The Young Foundation and provides opportunities to take youth leadership to a new level, raising the quality of provision and quantity and reach of leadership opportunities available to young people.

The Youth of Today is dedicated to enabling and inspiring young people as agents of positive social change in an increasingly complex and challenging world. It starts from the belief that young people have an important contribution to make to their communities, the economy and society's institutions. However, some groups of young people face high levels of educational disengagement and underachievement, and unemployment, which means that too much potential talent, creativity and energy is going to waste. Many young people face acute difficulty in negotiating the transition to adulthood. Radical innovation is needed to ensure we harness this untapped potential. Above all, The Youth of Today consortium believes that solutions will best be achieved through opening up opportunities for young people to influence decisions that affect them, and engaging young people as partners rather than passive recipients of services.

This report looks at shifts in the labour market, the workplace, and transitions to work, highlighting the need for education and careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) that responds to the changing needs of young people and the economy. Against this backdrop, the report explores some of the complexities and challenges at play in existing education and IAG provision, highlighting the voices and perspectives of young people and a range of other stakeholders. Then, drawing from case studies of innovative practice that

is being developed and applied in formal and informal education settings across the UK, the report proposes a guidance framework for practitioners, educators and policy-makers, drawn from lessons from innovative practice, on how education and IAG can be developed and aligned to best support and empower young people in their school to work transitions.

This study is not intended to be an evaluation of services and provision relating to education and IAG. Rather, it aims to provide insight into the ways in which young people experience their education and employment transitions, including their experiences of services that are geared at supporting these transitions.

Furthermore, we acknowledge that there is much that is good about existing practice. By drawing on the experiences and insights of those 'inside' the system, this research is about helping that system to improve and innovate, become better able to address the widely differing needs of individuals, and adapt to new challenges brought about by the changing nature of the world and work.

Methodology and scope

The report draws on a large body of evidence, including an extensive literature review; interviews and focus groups with 32 young people from a range of backgrounds, as well as practitioners and educators, and academic and policy experts; and an online survey of nearly 500 young people aged 13 to 25 years. This report provides case studies of twelve UK-based programmes which exemplify innovative approaches to education and careers IAG provision. These case studies were selected to represent some of the scope and diversity in approaches that are being used in this area, and range from those in their pilot stages to the well-established. Our case studies exemplify work that is going on in formal and informal educational contexts, catering to the specific needs of different groups of young people. This research was developed with a team of young people who helped shape the research questions, conducted some of the

interviews and focus groups, co-designed and disseminated an online survey of young people, and helped inform the findings that are highlighted in this report.

Given the contextual specificity of employment policy and educational systems and curricula, the evidence we draw on was derived from, and recommendations presented for, the UK context.

Many of the views expressed within this report reflect those of disadvantaged young people who are experiencing particularly challenging school to work transitions. Similarly, many of the innovative approaches to education and IAG provision are being developed and applied with and for young people with complex needs, who are experiencing disadvantage, and/or who are particularly underserved by current systems. The findings and conclusions are presented with these groups of young people particularly in mind.

Key Messages

The world of work and transitions to adulthood and independence are in a state of flux. Globalisation and accompanying technological change have facilitated widespread economic restructuring, with a shift away from manufacturing toward service and knowledge-based economies. Labour markets, organisational forms and employment structures and patterns have shifted, requiring a new type of workforce with new types of skills to adapt to new technologies, new competitors, new economic realities and a rapid pace of change. In parallel to these trends, young people's transitions to adulthood are shifting; along with changing patterns of education, employment, marriage and childbearing, transitions have become increasingly complex, risky and uncertain. Young people are facing mounting uncertainty in their transitions from education to work in the context of on-going economic instability: the global economic crisis has highlighted the fragility of young people in the labour market. Young people negotiating their transitions to adulthood, independence and work are faced with unprecedented levels of choice and opportunity, but also far greater levels of uncertainty and risk.

Against this backdrop, more than ever before, young people need access to relevant and high quality education and careers IAG that reflects and responds to their changing and diverse needs, and those of the economy. Such provision should empower, and help to develop, the skills and competencies needed to negotiate the complexity and risk in young people's school-to-work transitions.

However, providing education and IAG that can respond flexibly to the changing and diverse needs of young people and the economy poses a complex challenge. Perspectives and accounts from a range of stakeholders, including employers, educators, practitioners and young people themselves, suggest that existing curricula, pedagogy and careers guidance are struggling to keep pace with changes in the economy and transitions to work, and lack the flexibility required to respond to the diverse and complex needs of all young people as they negotiate their transitions through education and employment. Consequently, as evidenced in their own accounts and views expressed during our consultations, young people often feel they are passive recipients rather than active negotiators of their learning and work pathways, and can feel disempowered in their school-to-work transitions.

Key issues and challenges relating to existing education and IAG provision raised during our consultations included:

1. *Overemphasis on qualifications and knowledge-based learning:* Emphasis on academic achievement is coming at the expense of developing employability skills. Evidence from our consultations as well as secondary sources suggests that the education system is not adequately equipping all young people with the skills needed in the workplace. Learning modules that focus on practical learning and employability skills are often disconnected from the broader curriculum and/or lack status in the educational environment. For young people, the gap between education and 'real life' can

lead to experiences of disillusionment and disempowered transitions.

2. *Fixed pedagogy and pathways:* Education and careers IAG are perceived to lack the flexibility to correspond with the increasing complexity of the labour market and youth transitions, and tend to be experienced by young people as overly rigid and prescriptive. Young people feel disempowered in a scenario where certain pathways are devalued and closed off. Many are presented with few opportunities outside of an academic, linear route, and streaming of students at an early age can curtail aspirations and close down future options.

3. *Engagement with young people's aspirations:* Many of the young people who participated in this study said that they felt demoralised and demotivated by their experiences of careers IAG, and saw existing provision as not being aligned with their aspirations and needs. Moreover, the perspectives of young people and practitioners alike suggested that more needs to be done to engage with young people on the level of personal development, and to raise aspirations amongst young people who lack direction. Evidence suggests that many young people are exposed to limited and limiting sources of influence in their family and community environments. Similarly, stereotyping relating to careers IAG, subject choice and work experience not only limits their options, but sometimes curtails aspirations at an early age.

4. *Persistent social inequalities:* The UK has seen a long-running decline in social mobility, with those in top jobs and professions being less socially representative over time. Despite the policies of successive governments, deep social inequalities remain. Education and IAG can do more to ensure that young people are able to make the most of opportunities and succeed. Many young people have to gain work-related skills and guidance through informal channels, often through their families and their networks,

rather than the opportunities offered by the education system. As such, it is often the very young people who have the opportunity to acquire such skills through informal means, as well as the confidence needed to put these skills into practice, who benefit the most - those young people with greater social capital. The system continues to represent opportunity for some, while not for others. Social inequalities persist, contributing to an increasing polarisation in the trajectories that transitions to adulthood take for different social groups of young people, with social mobility being constrained for many.

Key statistics from an online survey of nearly 500 young people

Young people lack confidence about their working futures:
- A third of young people (36%) surveyed were very confident about achieving their employment aspirations. But the majority of young people (58%) were only 'somewhat confident' about achieving their employment aspirations.
- Only half (54%) agreed that they had a better chance to succeed than their parents. More than one in ten (11%) felt that they have a worse chance of succeeding in their working lives than their parents.

Young people feel unprepared and under-supported in their school-to-work transitions:
- Only half of young people surveyed (51%) agreed that their education/ experience at school prepared them, or is preparing them, for the world of work.
- Almost one in three young people (28%) cited a lack of work experience as a key barrier to employment for them.
- Nearly half (42%) saw 'developing a good network of the right people in my field of interest' as most important in achieving their employment goals. But one in five (21%) cited a lack of contacts in their sector of interest as a key barrier to employment.

Rethinking school-to-work transitions: Lessons from innovative practice

Case studies

The lessons and recommendations presented in this report draw on case studies of twelve UK-based programmes which exemplify innovative approaches to education and careers IAG provision. Full case studies are provided in the final chapter of this report, which offer detailed analyses of approaches referred to within the body of the report. The case studies include:

- **Studio Schools:** Studio Schools embrace project-based learning to build important skills for life and to enable young people more effectively to make the transition to the workplace.
- **Enabling Enterprise:** An educational programme that prepares students for 'real life', by embedding enterprise and practical learning into secondary school subjects, complementing qualifications with skills, resilience and aspiration.
- **Giving Nation:** A Citizenship Foundation programme for 11 to 16-year-olds that aims to develop the culture of giving and the issues of citizenship in the UK through programmes in schools.
- **Young Enterprise:** A nationwide charity that builds valuable skills and enterprise capability through a range of enterprise programmes delivered within schools.
- **School for Social Entrepreneurs:** The SSE's school-based project aims to raise and widen career aspirations and build enterprise skills.
- **The Bulwell Academy:** An Academy school focused on developing young people's entrepreneurial and business skills.
- **Working Rite:** A work-based mentoring model that matches up young people to local tradespeople, offering meaningful work experience and a rite of passage into the world of work and adulthood.
- **Space Unlimited:** A consultancy business where teenagers are the advisors. The project taps into young people's innovative capacity to offer insight to clients and offers young people a valuable real-world opportunity to gain and build skills and confidence.

- **Ignite Leadership:** A personal leadership programme for teenage girls aiming to raise aspirations, work-readiness and confidence.
- **Rare Recruitment:** Connects exceptional graduates from diverse backgrounds with some of the UK's top businesses and organisations.
- **Brighter Futures London:** A self-advocacy group comprised of 15-21 year-old asylum seekers who are working to improve the lives of others in a similar situation in England, through campaigning around work, education and racism.
- **The Markfield Project:** A community centre promoting rights, independence, inclusion and choice for disabled people and their families.

Drawing on lessons from innovative practice that is being developed and applied in formal and informal learning contexts, and responding to the varying needs of different groups of young people, many of whom are facing particularly challenging transitions, the report proposes a model of systemic change, based on a framework of key learning from innovative practice. This is built around:

1. **New building blocks for 21st century learning:** Drawing on our analysis of innovative practice, the report proposes a number of foundational elements to incorporate into practice, enabling young people to develop employability skills, and navigate their transitions through education and employment in an empowered and autonomous manner. At the heart of the model is an approach that emphasises skills development through applied, practical learning, which can be realised by injecting enterprise into the curriculum. Within this approach, a set of more specific elements are key, including providing young people with opportunities for collaborative social interaction; experiences that situate learning in context; real ownership and responsibility; a safe environment in which to take risks and experience failure as well as success; and a space in which to reflect and assess the distance travelled.

2. **A long-term, joined up approach:** Wherein learning, skills development and careers IAG are understood as on-going, life-long and life-wide processes that are best designed and produced in partnership with young people.

3. **Flexible and non-prescriptive frameworks for learning and IAG:** Recommendations include the need for personalised, local applications of learning models and careers IAG, that are tailored to the needs and circumstances of the individual young person. Learning and development opportunities beyond formal schooling are important, particularly leadership and citizenship development. Mainstreaming non-formal learning opportunities and more partnership between formal and informal educational settings could potentially increase the range of opportunities available for young people to develop employability skills, and could help to share knowledge and practice. Efforts to challenge constraining practices including streaming and stereotyping, and opening up the meaning of success and promoting multiple pathways to work are also critical.

4. **Rethink roles, relationships and mindsets:** Creating a more collaborative and enterprising climate for learning can destabilise existing power relations and challenge existing roles. Attending to adults' behaviours, attitudes and mindsets is important in supporting young people to develop and apply employability skills, particularly in the areas of creativity and innovation.

The report concludes by advocating the need for an approach that empowers young people to take an active role in managing their own learning and school-to-work transitions, and sets out the value of a co-production agenda within the provision of education and IAG – whereby young people can apply their own skills, experience and insight into their own needs to determining the shape and form that provision takes.

Foreword

This research was developed with a team of young people (our 'Young Researchers') who helped shape the research questions, conducted some of the interviews and focus groups, co-designed and disseminated an online survey of young people, and helped inform the findings that are highlighted in this report. The foreword below was written by the team of Young Researchers, including: Chloe Bingham, Harry Foreman, Fahima Hussain, Ally Kanji, Kathryn Kilkelly, Madeleine Parsley, Gareth Shelton, and Rose Suman.

"It's safe to assume that most people want the best for themselves and their peers. Well, this applies to young people too. With education and employment-related issues currently at the centre of much attention and debate, it is a priority for us to ensure that we have the best possible chance to thrive in our future lives and careers; and – as a team of young researchers who have shaped and conducted this research into education-to-work transitions – we hope that our involvement in the development of this report will pave the way to making these transitions smoother not only for us, but also for the generations of young people to follow.

There is no doubt that we are living in challenging and unpredictable times: social, financial, and professional landscapes are in constant flux. By 2020, it is predicted that 9 out of 10 jobs will be in the service or knowledge sector. In this kind of competitive and customer-oriented world, soft skills, including confidence, motivation and resilience, are becoming just as important as more conventional academic achievements and qualifications.

However, amidst a culture of assessment and league tables which can hamper a passion for learning, young people often perceive a greater emphasis on exam results than the development of the interpersonal skills needed in the workplace. Those who were surveyed for this research seemed to be experiencing a sometimes counterproductive amount of pressure arising from narrow perceptions of

success and 'acceptable' career routes. Some young people complained of a lack of support and guidance, often arising from deep rooted social inequalities.

Entering the world of responsibility beyond education can be a daunting and difficult experience. This research shows that young people want more opportunities to engage with the world of work from an early age, to enhance our awareness of the full diversity of career choices available to us. We need work experience placements that correspond with our individual strengths and motivations, to help us differentiate ourselves from the pack and discover the paths we really want to follow. And we need an education system that ensures that everyone benefits from a reasonable degree of encouragement and equal access to opportunities, whatever their gender, race, social background or ability.

After all, young people actually want to achieve the best that they are able to; in school, in an extracurricular capacity, and through charitable activities. One of the most interesting findings of this research revealed that almost half of those surveyed said that they are motivated by the possibility of 'changing the world or giving back to society', while around a third said they want 'to help other people in a charity, non-governmental organisation or as a community or youth worker.' This would suggest that young people don't just want to better their own lives; they also possess a strong desire to contribute to and improve the lives of others.

This desire, and the voice of young people, should not be overlooked. This research speaks for young people: essential in helping members of the older generation to support us in finding our feet. Being Young Researchers has been a journey in itself; it has given us confidence and enabled us to develop strong communication and analytical skills. Moreover, we have had the opportunity to step outside of our usual spheres of experience, to collaborate with people whom we wouldn't ordinarily have met, and to gain an understanding of ways in which we might

explore, reflect upon and respond to the needs of the social structures that surround us. The sense of empowerment that has come from being part of this process has also inspired and motivated us to do more in other areas of our lives, showing us that it is possible to achieve results though a combination of dedication, passion and teamwork.

We hope this publication highlights some of the challenges in the existing education system. But perhaps more importantly, we also hope that it demonstrates how, through extracurricular initiatives and alternative ways of nurturing and valuing the full range and richness of human ability, we can create a more positive learning environment; one in which students are self-motivated and inspired to learn and develop. We consider it essential that you listen to, trust and take into account the views and voices of young people that are reflected in this report, in order to help us to capitalise on our potential and make the much-needed changes for the better."

Introduction

1. Introduction

This report is set against a contextual backdrop of change and challenge. Globalisation and accompanying technological progress have facilitated widespread economic restructuring, with a shift from manufacturing to service and knowledge-based economies. As an extensive analysis of the literature (presented in the next chapter) suggests, labour markets, organisational forms and employment structures and patterns have shifted alongside these developments, requiring a new type of workforce with new types of skills to adapt to new technologies, new competitors, new economic realities and a rapid pace of change.

In parallel with these trends, young people's transitions to adulthood are in a state of flux (see Chapter 2 for an overview of the evidence). Along with changing patterns of education, employment, marriage and childbearing, transitions have become increasingly complex and risky. Young people are facing mounting uncertainty in their labour market transitions in the context of on-going economic instability, and the global economic crisis has highlighted the fragility of young people in the labour market. Young people are negotiating their transitions to adulthood, independence and work faced with unprecedented levels of choice and opportunity but also far greater levels of uncertainty and risk.

Young people's responses to our online survey reflect a lack of confidence about their working futures. Only half of young people surveyed (54%) agreed that they have a better chance to succeed than their parents, and more than one in ten (11%) felt that they have a worse chance of succeeding than their parents. And, while a third of young people (36%) surveyed were 'very confident' about achieving their employment aspirations, the majority of young people felt only 'somewhat confident'.

Against this backdrop, and perhaps more than ever before, young people need access to relevant and high quality education and careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) that reflects and responds to their changing and diverse needs, and those of the economy, and which empowers, and helps to develop the skills and competencies needed to negotiate the complexity and risk in their school-to-work transitions.

However, as evidence presented in this report suggests, providing education and IAG that can respond flexibly to the changing and diverse needs of young people and the economy poses a complex challenge. Perspectives and accounts from a range of stakeholders, including employers, educators, practitioners and young people themselves, suggest that existing curricula, pedagogy and careers guidance are struggling to keep pace with changes in the economy and transitions to work, and lack the flexibility required to respond to the diverse and complex needs of all young people as they negotiate their transitions through education and work.

Many young people are leaving education lacking the skills and experience sought by employers: only half of the young people surveyed for this report (51%) felt that their education/experience at school prepared them, or is preparing them, for the world of work.

Young people's responses to our online survey reflect a lack of confidence about their working futures.

And, as evidenced in their own accounts and views expressed during our consultations, young people tend to feel they are passive recipients rather than active negotiators of their learning and work pathways, and can feel disempowered in their school-to-work transitions.

The system continues to represent opportunity for some, while not for others. Social inequalities persist, contributing to a polarisation in the trajectories that transitions to adulthood take for different social groups of young people, with social mobility being constrained for many.

Youth unemployment is now at a record high. According to Office for National Statistics figures, more than one in five 16 to 24-year olds (20.5%) are out of work after a rise of 66,000 to 965,000, the highest figure since comparable records began in 1992.[1] Educational underachievement is also an ongoing problem for a significant minority of young people: in 2009, the percentage of people aged 16-24 with no qualifications in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively was 11 per cent, 12.4 per cent, 9.2 per cent and 19.3 per cent.[2]

Youth unemployment is a great cost to individuals, the economy and society. The Prince's Trust has estimated that it amounts to £155 million a week, and that educational underachievement in the UK costs £22 billion for a generation.[3] This is a vast waste of potential: as the International Labour Organization (ILO) has argued, young people are "the foundations for the economies and societies of today and tomorrow. They bring energy, talent and creativity to economies and make important contributions as productive workers, entrepreneurs, consumers, agents

This report highlights the need to incorporate young people's insights and voices into debates and decision-making around education and employment.

of change and as members of civil society."[4] Change is needed now in order to release the potential and talent of a generation of young people.

This research suggests that a central factor contributing to young people's experiences of disempowerment in their school-to-work transitions is a lack of attention to the subjective experiences of young people themselves, who often lack opportunities to play an active role in shaping the systems and processes geared towards supporting them. Young people's voices are not heard enough in debates on education, training and the labour market, despite the need for young people's active involvement in the shaping of their transitions to work.[5]

This report highlights the need to incorporate young people's insights and voices into debates and decision-making around education and employment. It argues for a system that celebrates the diversity of young people's potential, learning styles and motivations by embracing flexible, non-prescriptive and personalised approaches. At the heart of this approach, learning and IAG are life-long and life-wide processes that are best designed and produced in partnership with young people: the report advocates the need for an approach that empowers young people to take an active role in managing their own learning and development, and proposes the value of a co-production agenda within the provision of education and IAG – whereby young people can apply their own skills, experience and insight to their own needs to determining the shape and form that provision takes.

Aims and methodology

This report looks at shifts in the labour market, the workplace, and transitions to work, highlighting the need for education and careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) that responds to the changing needs of young people and the economy. Against this backdrop, the report explores some of the complexities and challenges at play in existing education and IAG provision, highlighting the voices and perspectives of young people and a range of other stakeholders. Then, drawing from a range of case studies of innovative practice that is being developed and applied in formal and informal education settings across the UK, the report offers guidance for practitioners, educators and policy-makers on how education and IAG can be developed and aligned to best support and empower young people in their school to work transitions, through a model of systemic change.

This study is not intended to be an evaluation of services and provision relating to education and IAG. Rather, it aims to provide insight into the ways in which young people experience their education and employment transitions, including their experiences of services that are geared at supporting these transitions.

Furthermore, we acknowledge that there is much that is good about existing practice. By drawing on the experiences and insights of those 'inside' the system, this research is about helping that system to improve and innovate, become better able to address the widely differing needs of individuals, and adapt to new challenges brought about by the changing nature of the world and work. The report draws on a large body of evidence, derived from:

• An extensive literature review of existing work in this area;
• Interviews with young people, practitioners and educators, and academic and policy experts;
• Focus groups with a broad range of young people with diverse needs, many of whom are experiencing particularly challenging transitions (including young people involved in the Young Foundation's The Youth of Today Youth Leadership Team; young people with disabilities involved in **The Markfield Project***; unemployed graduates enrolled in Fastlaners,[6] an employability programme for graduates seeking employment; and The Prince's Trust Young Ambassadors,[7] who have gone through The Prince's Trust programmes which target unemployed young people, young people underachieving in education, young people leaving care, and young offenders and ex-offenders); and
• An online survey of nearly 500 young people aged 13 to 25 years (see Appendix A for full descriptive results)

This report draws heavily on lessons from innovative practice. In Chapter 6, we provide detailed case studies of twelve UK-based programmes (signified in **bold text** in the body report) which exemplify innovative approaches to education and careers IAG provision. These programmes were selected to represent some of the scope and diversity in approaches that are being used in this area. The programmes range from those in their pilot stages to the well-established, and exemplify work that is going on in both formal as well as informal educational contexts, and catering

for the specific needs of different groups of young people, particularly those experiencing challenging transitions (including young people with disabilities, young asylum seekers; minority

This research was developed with a team of young people who helped shape the research questions, conducted some of the interviews and focus groups...

ethnic groups and young women; young people at risk of disengagement from education and training; and young people living in resource-poor settings).

This research was developed with a team of young people who helped shape the research questions, conducted some of the interviews and focus groups, co-designed and disseminated an online survey of young people, and helped inform the findings that are highlighted in this report. The involvement of this group of Young Researchers has ensured that our findings are strongly linked to, and are reflective of, the lived experience of young people today.

Defining key terms and scope
Key terms
Transitions to adulthood: Young people experience numerous points of transition as they move from childhood dependence to adult independence. This transition process is not linear, nor along a continuum; rather, it is broken down into different but inter-connected strands or pathways to different forms of independence including: economic (from education to labour market), social (from child to partner/parent) and geographical independence (from living in the parental home to forming households and starting housing careers). Young people can 'become adult' along one strand while not another. For example, they may become economically independent through employment but still live in the parental home, or, alternatively, they may be geographically independent, living in an independent home, but still remaining in need

of parental or state support. As we discuss in greater depth in Chapter 2, transitions to adulthood, independence and work are changing – becoming more complex, uncertain and risky, and, consequently, are non-linear (often involving, for example, backtracking to dependent positions). While most transitions to adulthood now extend over a longer period, a significant minority of young adults still go through 'accelerated' transitions (living independently at a young age; taking on caring responsibilities; entering or trying to enter the labour market early; early parenthood) following a pathway that was not uncommon half a century ago. This course is now, however, severely disadvantaging, and this polarisation in transitions to adulthood is driving inequality.

Information, advice and guidance (IAG): The National Youth Agency (NYA) has defined 'information, advice and guidance' as an umbrella term covering "a range of activities and interventions that help young people to become more self-reliant and better able to manage their personal and career development, including learning."[8] The term 'information, advice and guidance' originally referred to services aimed at helping people make decisions about learning and careers. However, more recently it has come to refer additionally to services offering advice on broader issues such as personal relationships and health.[9]

There is a lack of consensus about what constitutes 'employability skills', and an associated lack of definitional clarity around the term.

While important issues in their own right, the term IAG as used in this report refers to support to help individuals develop the knowledge and skills needed to make successful choices and manage learning and career transitions.

Education and learning: As noted in the Edge report, Mind the Gap, "how we talk about education and learning matters."[10] The report notes that 'education' and 'learning' are not the same thing: "Learning is what learners do and education is what the system does to help learners learn."[11]

Employability skills: There is a lack of consensus about what constitutes 'employability skills', and an associated lack of definitional clarity around the term. Within this report, we understand 'employability' to refer to the transferable skills and competencies which a growing body of

"Learning is what learners do and education is what the system does to help learners learn."

evidence shows are commonly sought by employers and which are required to support the needs of a changing economy. Many of these skills are also the social-emotional skills and competencies that are increasingly seen as important for success in life more generally.[13] This research draws heavily on the UK Commission for Education and Skills framework for understanding employability, which sees this in terms of three dimensions: a positive approach; which supports three 'fundamental' employability skills (using language, numbers and IT effectively); which are exercised in the context of four personal employability skills (self-management; working together and communication; thinking and solving problems; and understanding the business). This model is elaborated in greater depth in Chapter 2.

Disadvantage: We define disadvantage among young people and communities in this context as having an unequal chance at career access or advancement due to life circumstance.

Scope of report
Given the contextual specificity of employment policy and educational systems and curricula, the evidence we draw on was derived from, and recommendations presented in, the UK context.

We recognise that young people are not an homogenous group. Consequently, we take into account differences in terms of transitions and pathways through education and employment, and acknowledge that the

needs of different groups of young people – such as university graduates versus those with no qualifications – will vary, and are shaped

This report was informed by the experiences and perspectives of a diverse group of young people…

by social characteristics such as age, class, ethnicity, gender and disability. This report was informed by the experiences and perspectives of a diverse group of young people, and our recommendations are geared towards creating a school-to-work system that can accommodate and respond to a variety of challenges, needs, learning styles and motivations.

Many of the views expressed within this report reflect those of disadvantaged young people who are experiencing particularly challenging school-to-work transitions. Similarly, many of the innovative approaches to education and IAG provision are being developed and applied with and for young people with complex needs, experiencing disadvantage, and/or who are particularly under-served by current systems. The findings and conclusions are presented with these groups of young people particularly in mind.

2 | Change and challenge: Transitions into the world of work

2. Change and challenge: Transitions into the world of work

This chapter presents an overview of shifts and trends in the labour market and workplace and in the nature of transitions to work. Drawing on evidence derived from an extensive literature review as well as consultations with experts, the chapter highlights the new skills and competencies that young people need to develop in order to successfully negotiate increasingly complex, unpredictable and risky transitions, and to meet the needs of a changing economy. Based on this evidence, the chapter argues that there is a growing need for relevant and high quality education and careers IAG that reflects and responds to the changing and diverse needs of all young people and the economy, and which helps them to develop the skills and competencies needed to better negotiate complexity and risk in their school-to-work transitions.

2.1 The changing world of work
Key shifts and trends in the labour market and workplace
Recent decades have seen a number of fundamental changes in the labour market, resulting in notable shifts in the workplace, employment patterns, and transitions into and through employment. Consequently, young people today will be entering a world of work that looks very different to that of previous generations. This chapter provides an overview of some of the key shifts and trends in the labour market and workplace, and then goes on to highlight the skills young people need to negotiate these successfully.

Industrial to information society: Manufacturing has shrunk, giving way to a greater emphasis on service industries, driven by a proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs), globalisation and the rise of a well-educated and demanding consumer base.[14] In this context, the UK economy is becoming ever more service-orientated and professionalised, and its comparative economic advantage increasingly will lie in knowledge-based services. There has been a dramatic growth in

knowledge or service related jobs: it is forecast that nine out of ten jobs will be in the service sector by 2020.[15]

National to global economy: Globalisation has played a key role in speeding up the creation of new markets, and increasing the scale of existing markets. A shift from a national economy to a world economy has driven the need for a highly skilled workforce to confront the challenge of global markets. As noted in the Leitch Review of Skills, skills have become "the key lever" for prosperity and fairness, and fulfil an increasingly pivotal role in the UK's ability to compete internationally.[16] The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) education and skills survey 2010 finds that employers expect a continued shift towards higher skilled jobs.[17] According to this survey, business demand for lower level skills is expected to decline, with employers predicting an increased demand for higher skills, and those in leadership and management. Of the 13.5 million jobs that will need to be filled by 2017, over half will be for managers, professionals and associate professional and technical occupations.[18] Alongside this, innovation is becoming central to achieving global competitiveness, driven by a constant need to adapt to new technologies, new competitors and new economic realities.

Connectivity and interdependence: Increasingly powerful and relatively cheap information and communication technologies have eliminated physical and geographic barriers associated with sharing information and ideas, and have expanded the possibilities of generating new knowledge. Real-time, global connectivity enabled by these technologies has resulted in greater interdependency and blurred organisation boundaries.

Hierarchy to flatter structures and autonomous teams: Workplace hierarchies, structured in terms of responsibility, qualifications and experience are being replaced by

flatter structures and autonomous teams. Increased connectivity means that teamwork is increasingly overtaking solo work as "a standard away of getting things done."[19]

Changing employment structures and patterns: Employment structures are changing – an array of new working arrangements are emerging alongside the standard, full-time working week. Flexible working, multiple job-holding (or 'portfolio working') and self-employment are becoming more common.[20] Analysis of Labour Force Survey data indicates that the overall number of part-time workers has risen to a record high: though there has been a steady increase in part-time work since 1984, the increase over the period of the recession has been greater.[21] This analysis also finds that the number of people in both part-time and temporary jobs because they are unable to find full-time or permanent work has increased sharply during the recession.[22] Analysis conducted by the Labour Market Division of the ONS indicates that self-employment in the UK has increased markedly in recent years, and since 2002 was growing faster than at any time since the late 1980s.[23]

While, in the past, choosing a career took place at the start of the working life, individuals now make regular changes of jobs and careers, building up 'portfolio careers' instead of having a 'job for life.'[24] It is estimated that current secondary school students will end up working in thirteen different jobs, in four different industries, and may be made redundant six times during the course of their working lives.[25] More broadly, there is a move towards smaller, leaner workforces that work 'smarter' rather than 'harder' and who are multi-skilled, flexible and able to multi-task.

De-routinisation and uncertainty: Technology research and business insight analysts Gartner note that de-routinisation will be a defining feature of the workplace, which is becoming far less predictable and certain. The workplace is increasingly an "anytime, any place phenomenon" for "a new breed of intensely mobile worker."[26] People now have tools that allow them to analyse information and make decisions wherever they are, engendering more autonomy but requiring a greater ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

From 'workplace' to 'my place': The workplace is becoming more and more virtual; in the future, many employees will have neither a company-provided physical office nor a desk, and their work increasingly will be accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In this work environment, the lines between personal, professional and social matters will dissolve and individuals will need to manage the complexity created by overlapping demands from the new world of work and the intrusion of non-work-related matters into working life.[27]

The rising importance of 'employability' skills

Given that the nature of people's jobs is increasingly likely to evolve and change during their working lives, there is a growing emphasis on transferable skills and core competencies which can be applied to new situations and circumstances, commonly termed 'employability skills.' These skills are a "core factor in business success in a competitive marketplace", and are thereby guiding employers' recruitment decisions, and are essential for getting on to the first rung of the job ladder.[28] While there is an on-going debate around the precise nature of these qualities,[29] our research highlighted a set of skills and competencies that are commonly understood as lying at the heart of employability.

Elsewhere, the Young Foundation has explored these competencies in reports such as *Grit: The skills for success and how they are grown,*[30] and these ideas are taken forward in *Taking the Lead: Youth leadership in theory and practice.*[31] The UK Commission for Education and Skills[32] has developed a useful framework for thinking about employability skills **(see Figure 1)**.

Within this framework, the foundation of employability is a positive approach (i.e. being ready to participate, make suggestions, accept new ideas and constructive criticism, and take responsibility for outcomes). This foundation

supports three 'fundamental' employability skills, including using numbers, language (speaking and listening as well as writing) and IT effectively. These fundamental employability skills are exercised in the context of four 'personal' employability skills:

Self-management: Includes punctuality and time management, dressing and behaving appropriately, overcoming challenges and asking for help when necessary.

Working together and communication: Includes co-operating, being assertive, persuading, being responsible to others, speaking clearly to individuals and groups and listening for a response. Few workers now operate autonomously or in isolation, and there is a growing emphasis on the ability to work as part of multi-disciplinary teams to drive innovation and productivity. In this context, the qualities needed for working together are becoming critical. In our online survey of young people, the most commonly cited response to what skills employers are looking for in employees included "the ability to work in a team, communicate well, and listen to others" (60%). In a globalised employment setting, foreign language competencies and cultural sensitivities are also becoming key communication needs.[34] Linked with the growing emphasis on team-based working, the concept of leadership is becoming central to the way employability is understood, with many of our interviews demonstrating the importance of being able to lead others and take initiative and responsibility for one's own actions, and to be led when appropriate.[35]

Thinking and solving problems: Including creativity, reflecting on and learning from one's own actions, prioritising, analysing situations, and developing solutions. Problem-solving and the creative application of knowledge are becoming central in the new economy. While qualifications remain important, the ability to pass examinations is no longer sufficient: "in an economy defined by the innovative application of knowledge, we must be able to do more than absorb and feedback information. Learners and

> "… in an economy defined by the innovative application of knowledge, we must be able to do more than absorb and feedback information. Learners and workers must draw on their entire spectrum of learning experiences and apply what they have learned in new and creative ways."

workers must draw on their entire spectrum of learning experiences and apply what they have learned in new and creative ways."[36]

Understanding the business: Including understanding how the individual job fits into the organisation as a whole; recognising the needs of stakeholders (customers and service users for example); judging risks, innovating, and contributing to the whole organisation.

More broadly, our consultations suggested that enterprise is growing more central to the way we think about employability: that we

Figure 1 Dimensions of employability[33]

Personal employability skills	Self management	Working together and communication	Creativity, enterprise and innovation	Understanding the business
Fundamental employability skills	Using numbers effectively		Using language effectively	Using IT effectively
Employability	A positive approach			
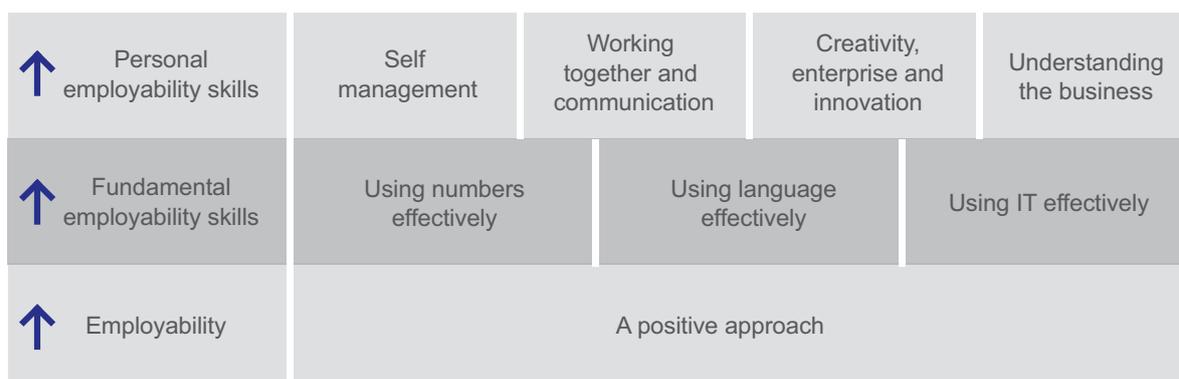
increasingly value the skills, attitudes and experiences needed to "make ideas happen."[37] Enterprising people will be at the heart of future global competitiveness: "To prepare for our global futures, we need calculated risk-takers, entrepreneurial mindsets, positive attitudes, resourceful, networked leaders."[38]

Linked with enterprise, our desk-based research and consultations revealed a set of inter-related capabilities, including the ability to manage risk and uncertainty, and the qualities of resilience and resourcefulness:

Managing risk and uncertainty: Available evidence indicates that the workplace is becoming less routine, less predictable and less certain. People now have tools that enable them to analyse information and make decisions wherever they are – any time, any place – which both engenders more autonomy but also requires greater adaptability and flexibility in the face of changing circumstances.[39] The ability to handle uncertainty and analyse, negotiate and take risks is becoming a crucial life skill more generally,[40] and is even coming to be seen as the "common sense" for the 21st century.[41]

Resilience and resourcefulness: Our consultations suggested that resilience and resourcefulness lie at the heart of 'being enterprising.' During our consultations, these were consistently held up as key qualities needed for creativity and innovation and, more widely, were seen as critical in helping people function as healthy adults. Resilience and resourcefulness involve, first, the ability to 'bounce back' from difficult experiences (along with the ability to view these as learning opportunities rather than failures) as well as to deal effectively with stress and uncertainty and, second, recognising the assets and resources available, and how to use them to generate a meaningful return – whether that be financial, social or personal.[42]

2.2 Shifts and trends in transitions to work

It is not only the world of work that has shifted; young people's transitions to adulthood and independence, including their transitions through education and employment, are also in flux.

Changing transitions

The transition to adulthood has changed. With increases in longevity, and changes in patterns of responsibility and dependence across the life course, it has been argued that the life course has become 'de-standardised.' In this context, experiences that were previously associated with different age groups, or 'life stages' such as childhood, adulthood and old age, are less predictable. Age is no longer a reliable marker of adult independence; definitions of what constitutes adulthood are becoming more fluid, and age markers and standard events are becoming less significant. A review of the literature suggests that transitions are increasingly:

Complex, unpredictable and uncertain: What used to be a set of predictable and linear transitions, which thus provided individual orientation and social integration, has become increasingly complex, fragmented, unpredictable and non-linear. It has been proposed that young people's transitions may now more accurately be depicted as 'yo-yos' going up and down, and back and forth.[43] Statuses associated with adulthood (secure jobs, long-term partnership, independent housing etc.) are also imbued with greater risk and insecurity. The risky nature of transitions means that many young people need to backtrack, and in doing so revert to a form of dependence (for example when losing a job or breaking up with a partner necessitates the return to the parental home and/or the need for financial support from parents). Against a backdrop of on-going economic instability, young people today are facing increasing uncertainty in their labour market transitions. The global economic crisis has affected young people disproportionately, and youth unemployment rates have proven to be more sensitive to economic shocks than those for adults.[44]

Blurred and interlinked: Transitions are also increasingly blurred, with transitions in different

life spheres becoming interlinked, between education and work, family, partnership and sexuality, life style and consumption, and citizenship. A few decades ago, these transitions were experienced as "more or less distinct but parallel status passages between youth and adulthood."[45] However, these have merged, leading to fragmented lives and transitions which individuals have to reconcile as they negotiate their identities.[46] In contrast to the typical worker of the industrial era, workers in the knowledge economy are experiencing a blurring of boundaries between work and learning, with lifelong learning becoming increasingly important.[47] There is no longer a clear crossing point between education and employment, with people typically spending longer in education and often having dual identities, such as simultaneously being a student and an employee, or an intern and/or a volunteer.[48]

Protracted and multiple: Given new patterns of participation in education and training, including higher rates of university attendance, and with the age both for marriage and having children getting later, most transitions to adulthood (when young adults remain in some sense dependent) extend over a longer period. Few young people are able to make early and direct transitions from school to employment, as was relatively common until the 1980s.[49] Employment transitions are becoming prolonged, and careers are better understood as comprising multiple transitions over time from one employer to another, through different roles within the same organisation, and periods in and out of paid employment.[50]

Diverging transitions
Transitions to adulthood have also diverged. While most young people now take longer over the transition to independent adulthood, this overall trend masks significant differences in pace, ordering and length of transition between different social groupings of young people. For a significant minority, the transition is accelerated and often chaotic and disordered. While 'accelerated' transitions (leaving home early; becoming carers; entering or trying to enter the labour market early; early parenthood

etc.) follow what was a relatively normal pattern half a century ago, and are continuations of longstanding class cultural practices, these can now be severely disadvantaging for young adults. The result is that inequality has become more sharply defined: disparities in income have increased among young people, and there is an increasing polarisation in education, work, health, family formation and civic participation.[51]

The concepts of 'slow track' versus 'fast track' transitions have been used to describe the polarised courses of transitions to adulthood:

Slow track transitions: Typically involve staying on in post-compulsory full-time education and delaying entry into full-time employment and family formation, often until 30 or even later. Slow track transitions tend to involve many semi-independent statuses, requiring different levels of parental support. Such transitions are problematic for those young people without middle class models of extended economic support from parents, reflected in the number of 'broken' or 'fractured' extended transitions which occur (e.g. cycling in and out of employment).[52]

Fast track transitions: Typically involve leaving education at or before minimum age (traditionally 16 years), and risking unemployment, or insecure and badly paid work. 'Failed' fast track transitions may result in young people being economically inactive (or classified as 'NEET' - not in education, employment or training). Fast track transitions are associated with early family formation – including teenage pregnancy – and a higher risk of involvement in problematic social behaviour, including offending, and abuse of drugs and alcohol. These tend to follow a working class pattern where young people are expected to be self-supporting. When young people are unable to do so – because of low wages, unemployment or teenage parenthood, this can be problematic. Many socially excluded young people fall within this group.[53]

2.3 Implications
The complex and unpredictable nature of transitions means that young people need to

be more creative, innovative and resilient in their everyday lives as well as at work. Young people are arguably faced with greater choice and opportunity than ever before, but are negotiating this in a context of increasing risk, insecurity and inequality: without adequate support, choice can be experienced in overwhelming rather than liberating terms. The transition to adulthood is particularly complex and difficult for disadvantaged young people, many of whom are experiencing complex barriers to learning and work, and compounded social exclusion.[54]

Against this backdrop, it has never been more critical for young people to have access to relevant and high quality education and careers IAG that reflects and responds to the changing and diverse needs of all young people, and the economy. Our changing world prioritises skills and competencies to negotiate complexity and risk in school-to-work transitions. It calls for

young people to be empowered in navigating their routes into adulthood and independence.

However, developing education and careers IAG provision and systems that can respond to the changing and diverse needs of all young people and the economy is no easy task. The next chapter explores some of the complexities and challenges inherent in existing education and IAG provision that emerged during our consultations with a range of stakeholders.
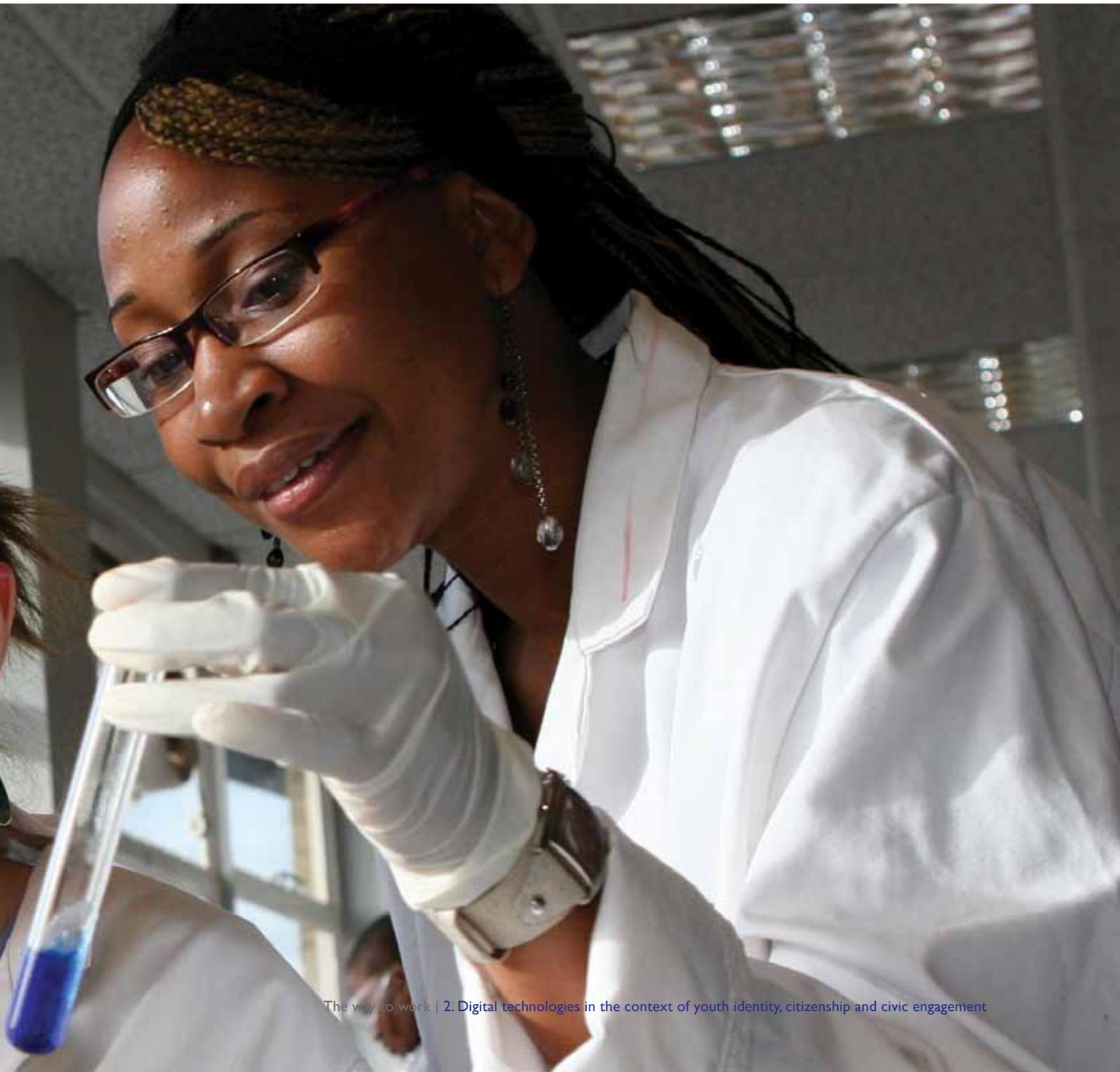
3 | Challenges in education and IAG provision: Insights from inside the system

3. Challenges in education and IAG provision: Insights from inside the system

This chapter explores young people's experiences of education and IAG, and highlights some of the key challenges and complexities inherent in existing provision. These include:

- Overemphasis on qualifications and knowledge-based learning
- Fixed pedagogy and pathways
- Engagement with young people's aspirations
- Persistent social inequalities

The chapter draws on a large body of primary research evidence, collected during consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, as well as a number of secondary sources. While covering a complex area of enquiry, our investigations were striking in that they revealed a great deal of consensus among a diverse group of stakeholders, including employers, educators, practitioners and young people themselves. Their perspectives and accounts suggested that existing curricula, pedagogy and careers guidance are struggling to keep pace with changes in the economy and transitions to work, and face challenges in adequately responding to the diverse and complex needs of young people as they negotiate their transitions through education and into work. Consequently, as evidenced in their own accounts and views expressed during our consultations, young people often feel they are passive recipients rather than active negotiators of their learning and work pathways, and can feel disempowered in their school-to-work transitions.

3.1 The skills gap: Over-emphasis on qualifications and knowledge-based learning

The changes in the economy and world of work have placed particular demands on policy and practice around education which, our consultations suggest, have not always kept pace.

In UK education policy, the emphasis has long been on achievement measured largely in terms of success in public examinations and tests.[55] A fundamental criterion used to assess schools' overall performance is student academic performance, with a crucial benchmark being the number of students achieving five A* to C grade GCSEs, including English and Mathematics. Despite the radical reforms proposed in the coalition government's 2010 schools White Paper, The Importance of Teaching, this focus on academic achievement and league tables as a benchmark for success remains in place.[56]

Even acknowledging a continual rise in grades over the last 20 years,[57] many school and college leavers, and even university graduates, are leaving the education system lacking many of the vital skills, attributes and competencies – such as a positive attitude, self-management skills, and team-working and problem solving ability – that are demanded by employers.

Research paints a complex picture. Overall, there appears to be widespread dissatisfaction across business with young people's levels of employability, although this varies according to education levels.

Moira McKerracher, Assistant Director of Strategy and Performance at the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES), notes that education plays a critical role in employer satisfaction: in UKCES research, 84% of employers were satisfied with graduates' preparedness for work, dropping to 74% for college leavers, and 66% for school leavers. Low employability skills are particularly an issue for employers recruiting young people with little or no work experience, or with few or no qualifications.[58]

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) education and skills survey 2010 shows widespread dissatisfaction across business with the levels of employability currently displayed amongst school and college leavers.[59] For

example, over half (57%) of employers are unhappy with young people's self-management (including responsibility and time management) skills, and more than a third (34%, 44% and 36% of employers respectively) are

"[Schools] just teach geography, maths, English; they just teach subjects. They don't really teach you how to survive in today's world. And that's the biggest gap in today's national curriculum."

dissatisfied with team working and problem solving skills shown by young people, and do not perceive young people to have a positive attitude to work. While employers are more satisfied with the skills of their graduate applicants and recruits than they are with school and college leavers, there is still scope for improvement. One in ten employers has concerns about the basic literacy and numeracy skills of graduates, and around a quarter are dissatisfied with graduates' problem-solving and self-management skills. A large proportion of employers express dissatisfaction with young people's business and customer awareness.[60] Additionally, a notable proportion of employers feel that young people have limited knowledge about their potential job,[61] and that too few have completed relevant work experience.[62]

It is not only employers who see gaps in the current education system: only half of the young people we surveyed (51%) expressed the view that their education/experience at school prepared them, or is preparing them, for the world of work.

The disconnect between the worlds of learning and work has been evident for some time, preceding the global economic crisis. However, this schism was historically less problematic in practice: the system anticipated a more standardised transition from education into the workplace, and young people gained most of their employability skills in entry-level positions. Since the onset of the economic downturn, a shrinking pool of jobs and increasing numbers becoming unemployed

has created unprecedented competition. It is no longer sufficient to expect to develop critical employability skills once in work, and to rely on educational history to open the door. While grades and qualifications are still important in getting a job interview, our consultations suggested that it is the ability to *demonstrate* employability skills, as discussed in Chapter 2, that is critical to ultimately getting the job. This point is underscored by the young people who participated in our online survey, where 'competition from other people looking for work' (62%) and 'not enough work experience' (28%) were the most frequently cited challenges facing young people in reaching their employment goals.

Despite the demand from employers for the transferable skills and competencies discussed in Chapter 2, education emphasises knowledge-based learning and qualifications, focussing on "what students know rather than *how* they use that knowledge."[63] There is an emphasis on content and core subject disciplines with much less focus on developing employability skills. The curriculum is heavily focussed on content that is taught in ways that do not facilitate transfer and application of knowledge to different contexts. The current approach offers young people few opportunities to learn in different contexts, particularly those 'beyond the classroom'. In particular, in our consultations, young people and adult practitioners alike highlighted the need for more practical learning opportunities and opportunities to gain experience of the workplace.

The need for greater focus on developing employability skills and competencies: Our desk-based research and consultations suggested that, with schools under pressure to meet academic targets, teachers are consequently obliged to focus on their subject area and ensure good understanding and grades,[64] and schools face constraints in the time they can dedicate to non-core subjects.[65] In this context, there is little incentive to focus on the 'softer' outcomes that are not being measured, with the effect being that there is not enough focus on the development of skills

and competencies needed to negotiate work and life more generally.[66] As one young person observed,

"[Schools] just teach geography, maths, English; they just teach subjects. They don't really teach you how to survive in today's world. And that's the biggest gap in today's national curriculum."[67]

Teaching that is centred on developing employability skills and competencies is constrained by pressure on schools to meet targets for pupil achievement, which "encourage teachers to play safe and deliver teaching close to the syllabus rather than experiment with new ideas and activities."[68]

Young people and professionals complained that learning and achievement in schools tends to be individualised, and the development of interpersonal skills – such as teamwork and communication, and the ability to get on with other people – can be "ignored."[69] As Tom Ravenscroft (Director, Enabling Enterprise) pointed out, "if two kids don't like each other, [teachers typically] sit them apart and get on with the lesson. And actually you never address the fact that in the workplace, people have to get on."[70] Skills and competencies in the area of creativity, innovation and enterprise can be stifled in a context where young people's experiences at schools are prescribed, and where they lack the freedom and ability to push boundaries, and take risks or make mistakes.[71] More widely, it has been argued that "the achievement agenda tends to discourage young people from risk-taking and encourage risk avoidance."[72]

Learning lacks context and relevance: The emphasis on exam results and an ensuing culture of 'teaching to the test' can limit teachers' ability to contextualise learning. Consultations with young people as well as practitioners suggested that there needs to be a closer link between what is being taught in school and how it is relevant to later life and the workplace. This can help to create more empowered learning experiences, where learning feels less "imposed"[73] and more actively negotiated by young people. These

factors would better incentivise learning. As one young person expressed it:

"What was missing in school was the lack of real-life connections. So you were studying biology, or you were studying chemistry, but you would never get to meet or see a doctor, there would never be that thing at the end of the tunnel that would drive you to do that work. You would never meet a business man in business studies. There is no incentive to go through it if you don't know what you're going to get at the end."[74]

In an Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) study, one in ten young people reported that the subjects they study are not relevant to them.[75] The number is much higher among young people classified as NEET[76] (31%), and working class teenagers are around twice as likely (13%) as middle class teenagers (7%) to say subjects are or were not relevant to their lives.

Learning modules that focus on practical learning and employability skills are disconnected from the broader curriculum and/ or lack status: The practitioners we spoke to complained that, where schools schedule in time to teach employability skills, it tends to happen on one-off days, followed by a return to traditional learning from a textbook. Consequently, there is a need to better connect this to young people's broader learning, and so that students can better see how the development of employability skills "joins up with everything else they do."[77]

Our research nevertheless revealed that there are certain parts of the curriculum where practical, experiential learning is being embraced and applied. One primary example is the area of enterprise education (see Chapter 5 for further discussion, and examples of programmes which are embracing this approach). However, our consultations suggested that enterprise modules can lack status and be seen as side-lined within the curriculum. Within schools and universities, enterprise and social enterprise modules tend to be confined to Business Studies streams or

units, meaning that young people who have not elected to take on such courses have little chance to access enterprise education elsewhere. There need to be more opportunities

> ## "The thing that really bugs me about the education system is that they try and push every single person through the same sieve. We're not the same. How do they expect a million kids to do the same thing?"

for young people to learn to be entrepreneurial beyond the realm of business, with the current focus directed largely at preparing young people for self-employment.

Moreover, we found that many young people themselves attach a very narrow meaning to the concept of enterprise, relating it primarily to business and profit-making rather than seeing entrepreneurialism as a set of transferable skills and qualities that can be applied in a variety of contexts. The language of entrepreneurship is often inaccessible and off-putting to young people, who can struggle to identify with it. As Richard Strudwick, Head of Secondary Education at Enterprise UK, noted:

"… enterprise is actually a word that turns quite a lot of young people off because they associate it with being entirely money-driven and very individualistic … There are a lot of myths that surround entrepreneurs … [that] it's a very blinkered individual who chases money."[78]

The gap between education and 'real life' leads to disillusionment and disempowering experiences: Our consultations revealed that many young people leave education feeling ill-prepared for the world of work - and life more generally. Experiences of the structured nature of the classroom are often replaced by experiences characterised by lack of structure and support, and young people have little transitional space within which to develop confidence and achieve independence. The lack of alignment between the demands and requirements of educational settings versus the workplace and 'real life' can result in unrealistic

expectations and resultant feelings of frustration, disappointment and disillusionment. Young people who try to 'play by the rules' can sometimes feel let down by the system; as one young man articulated during a focus group with unemployed graduates:

"When you're in school, the mindset that is sold to us is that if you have all the qualifications that you need, you will get the job that you want. Whereas as soon as you come out of university, you realise that it is not like that at all … then you find out 'I haven't got a job'; then you get depressed because you haven't got a job and you've been lied to and you're in debt."[79]

3.2 Fixed pedagogy and pathways

Evidence from our consultations suggests that education and careers IAG lack the flexibility needed to correspond with the increasing complexity of the labour market and youth transitions, and tend to be experienced by young people as overly rigid and prescriptive. Young people feel disempowered in a scenario where certain pathways are devalued and closed off. Many are presented with few opportunities outside of an academic, linear route, and streaming of students at an early age is curtailing aspirations and closing down future options.

'One-size-fits-all' pedagogy and curriculum: Our consultations with practitioners highlighted that, in the context of a rigid national curriculum, which places emphasis on formal learning and assessment, the majority of schools employ a "one-size fits-all pedagogy", which fails to accommodate different learning styles, and biases towards young people who work well within a directive teaching process.[80] The existing curriculum, qualifications system and associated teaching styles can be alienating to many young people, and these rigid approaches have been pinpointed as a cause of disaffection, underachievement and dropout.[81]

Inflexible educational and occupational pathways: The education and school-to-work system needs to develop to be more compatible with young people's desires to "try different possible educational and occupational paths

until they find the one that provides the right identity match" and is "increasingly experienced by them as intolerably rigid and inflexible."[82] During a focus group with Young Ambassadors from The Prince's Trust, one young woman asserted:

"The thing that really bugs me about the education system is that they try and push every single person through the same sieve. We're not the same. How do they expect a million kids to do the same thing? Things you're not good at. Why don't they stop wasting time and focus on the things that people are good at?"[83]

Not enough alternatives to the academic, linear route: Many of the young people who participated in this research felt that there are not enough alternative pathways available to them, and that they tend to be limited to following an academic route oriented towards higher education. Less academically focussed pathways – such as vocational routes and qualifications - were seen as devalued and lacking status and/or visibility.[84] For example, in research by the former Learning and Skills Council (LSC), 92% of learners said they knew what Apprenticeships were but did not know how to apply for one.[85] There is a stigma attached to going down non-academic routes, despite the fact that some of these qualifications can sometimes be more complex and demanding than their more academic counterparts.[86] As an EHRC report found, top universities do not appear to recognise certain vocational courses and, while BTEC national vocational qualification are worth two A-levels in some instances,[87] less than half of all universities recognise them.[88] A lack of status, as well as stigma, attached to vocational routes is an issue which has also been observed more widely internationally.[89]

One young woman complained to us that, after leaving secondary school, "it seemed like the only thing to do" was to stay on in full-time education.[90] While "only a few of us were excited" at the prospect of further education, there was a sense that "if you didn't want to do it, you wasn't doing anything with your life." She thought that the lack of productive alternatives

to the academic, linear route lead many young people down destructive pathways: "the boys get into trouble and drugs or the girls in the council flat get pregnant ... There is no good way out of it."

Some of the young people with whom we consulted suggested that the current emphasis on academic results can be the cause of much anxiety and stress and, as one young person noted, can stifle their "love of learning."[91] The overwhelming focus on academic achievement, with not enough support or alternatives, has been pinpointed as a key

A lack of productive alternatives to the academic, linear route leads many young people down destructive pathways: "the boys get into trouble and drugs or the girls in the council flat get pregnant ... There is no good way out of it."

contributor to current inequalities in learning, and is feeding into a widespread fear of failure (often resulting in drop out) amongst a substantial minority of young people, with 37% or approximately 1.2 million young people worried about not succeeding at school.[92]

Streaming students at an early age is curtailing aspirations and reduces future options: In other instances, certain groups of young people feel steered down vocational routes, with academic opportunities closed off to them, regardless of their ability. In research undertaken for the Apprenticeship Pathfinder project, the Young Foundation highlighted how information about Apprenticeships tended to be targeted at young people who were considered to be disadvantaged and/or disengaged, or those who were least likely to succeed academically.[93] Many of the young people and practitioners consulted for this report expressed the view that learners have to make decisions about their GCSEs at too early a stage, and are often steered into making choices with little information and insight into their implications and alternatives. This can predetermine and

often narrow their potential future career options, simultaneously "curtailing aspirations."[94]

This is particularly the case for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, it emerged during our consultations that some young people had never even been told about higher education as a possible option, or were actively steered away from this pathway. Tom Ravenscroft (Director, Enabling Enterprise) related the "shocking" experience of talking to some "bright" students who "didn't know what university was and had never thought of the idea of staying on.[95] " Similarly, Raphael Mokades (Managing Director, Rare Recruitment) observed that students in disadvantaged schools are often "positively discouraged" from thinking about attending top universities, and are "frequently told not to apply."[96] While this can be well-intentioned on the part of teachers, who "don't want the kids to get their hopes up unduly", the result is that these students' "ultimate level of achievement is being pushed down all the time."[97] More generally, Mokades noted that, in disadvantaged schools which tend to experience behavioural problems with students, the emphasis, and the pride, is reserved for nurturing the "good kids" (those passing exams, and attending and behaving in class) over achieving "excellent academics."[98] Targets are therefore set up in terms whereby bright young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are not pushed to excel academically and are not equipped to compete on equal terms with their more privileged counterparts.

The issues explored above highlight some complex factors which contribute to a scenario where young people feel disempowered in navigating their learning journeys. As the evidence has suggested, some young people feel pressured to follow academically-focussed pathways, with vocational routes devalued or obscured, and can end up disenchanted with learning. Paradoxically, in other instances, bright young people are steered away from academic routes, with aspirations and future options becoming closed down.

Later, in Chapter 4, it will be suggested that the value-laden and subjective nature of some

approaches to careers IAG can be negated through a focus on young people's agency, and supporting the skills and competencies needed to make informed and empowered choices.

3.3 Engagement with young people's aspirations and motivations

Many of the young people who participated in this study said that they felt demoralised and demotivated by their experiences of careers IAG, and saw existing provision as not being aligned with their aspirations and needs. Moreover, the perspectives of young people and practitioners alike suggested that more could be done to engage with young people on the level of personal development, and to raise aspirations amongst young people who lack direction. Evidence suggests that many young people are exposed to limited and limiting sources of influence in their family and community environments and stereotyping relating to careers IAG, subject choice and work experience, all of which constrain their options, and sometimes curtail aspirations at an early age.

Tailoring careers IAG to individual and group needs and aspirations: The young people we spoke to expressed frustration at a lack of access to personally tailored careers IAG, citing a particular absence of advice that builds on their own personal strengths, talents, interests and aspirations. Careers IAG was seen as overly "generalised" by young people. One young man complained that responses from careers advisors appeared to be formulaic, and that it seemed as if young people were being offered a "default answer"[99] to personal questions. Our consultations also suggested that careers IAG should be more sensitive to, or better cater for, the specific needs of particular groups, such as unemployed graduates, young people with disabilities, or young people seeking asylum.

Furthermore, advice was described as "demoralising" and "not trying to promote your strengths."[100] As one unemployed graduate emphasised, "they don't take aspirations into account."[101] This feeling of devalued aspirations was acute amongst all young people consulted

for this report, but was particularly so for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Young people reported feeling that they were expected to be happy with whatever job was offered to them, and did not feel that they were 'entitled' to expect or aspire to more. One young woman said that service providers geared at supporting disadvantaged young people into work lack "respect for young people" and convey the message that "beggars can't be choosers":

Throughout my life I've had to settle for less because I'm in the 'less pile.' So whatever I'm given I should accept no matter what. I can't turn it down … I'm made to feel like that ... You're nothing."[102]

Many young people described feeling as if popular public opinion held that they did not "want to work" and would prefer to live off benefits. This stood in stark contrast with the views of young people and practitioners consulted for this report, which emphasised the important role that work plays for young people in personal fulfilment and well-being, achieving a positive identity and belonging, and a sense of independence and autonomy. For socially excluded young people in particular, work can be an important vehicle for social integration **(see Box 1)**. A better engagement with and acknowledgement of these deeper, underlying motivations will serve to reduce the chance of alienating young people from the system, support engagement with institutions, and encourage attempts to actively seek work and better participate in the labour market.

Schools need to do more to raise aspirations and address personal development: Young people who lack motivation and confidence need special support to raise their aspirations. In our consultations, young people and practitioners expressed the view that more could be done in schools to address young people's personal development, with practitioners in particular feeling frustrated by a packed curriculum which does not allow for sufficient time to focus on this area. Our consultations suggested that many young people leave school

with little self-awareness or insight into their individual strengths and talents. This represents a key factor that feeds into young people's experiences of disempowerment within school-to-work transitions.

Box 1 What motivates young people?

Evidence suggests that motivation is a key determinant of learning, and low motivation can often be a barrier to engagement in education in the long-term.[103] Gaining insight into, and engaging with young people's subjective motivations relating to education and work could play a potentially crucial role in designing education and IAG that better corresponds with the needs of young people, and ultimately ensure better educational engagement and outcomes.

Our research suggested that, for many young people, accomplishment is both about systemic success (qualifications, jobs, income etc.) as well as subjective satisfaction (experience of recognition and motivation).

Notably, young people are not motivated solely or even primarily by economic factors. Often, where money is highlighted as important, this is seen as a means towards a more intangible end, such as access to social drivers and social mobility. Our consultations with young people indicated that work is deeply bound up with wellbeing and personal fulfilment, identity and belonging, and independence and autonomy. Some of these themes are discussed below.

Wellbeing and fulfilment: In our online survey, personal fulfilment/living a fulfilled life was cited most frequently by young people (66%) as the most important outcome of their working lives (see Figure 2). Many young people consulted for this report emphasised the importance of factors like the values of an organisation, development opportunities, job satisfaction and likeable co-workers.

Giving back to society: Some experts observe that the present generation are looking for "more meaning and purpose in their work"[104] than previous generations, and work is becoming a more important way for young people to communicate their values to the outside world.[105] Young people are also demonstrating a deeper social consciousness,[106] which is reflected in their reported employment aspirations and motivations: close to half (49%) of the young people surveyed for this research reported that they are motivated by "changing the world/giving back to society", and around one third of young people (31%) reported that they wanted to do work "to help other people in a charity, non-governmental organisation or as a community or youth worker."

Identity, Independence and autonomy: The transition to employment also feeds into young people's drive for independence and autonomy, and can represent "reaching adulthood" and being a "full person."[107] Making money is often associated with less tangible motivations – for example, one practitioner observed that young people from less privileged backgrounds are often motivated by financial entrepreneurship because this represents independence, and "doing it for themselves."[108] Similarly, business and entrepreneurship are often bound up in having a chance to "make an impact" or "make their mark" on society.[109]

Social integration: For young people at the margins of society, such as young asylum seekers and young people with disabilities, achieving employment can be an important way of achieving a sense of belonging and social integration, or "a place in society."[110]

Social mobility: Social mobility is also a key driver for many young people, and 'room to advance' is of key importance for many young people whose parents met with obstacles and blocks to progression within an organisation.[111]

Figure 2 What are the most important things you are looking to get from your working life (Respondents were asked to tick top three)
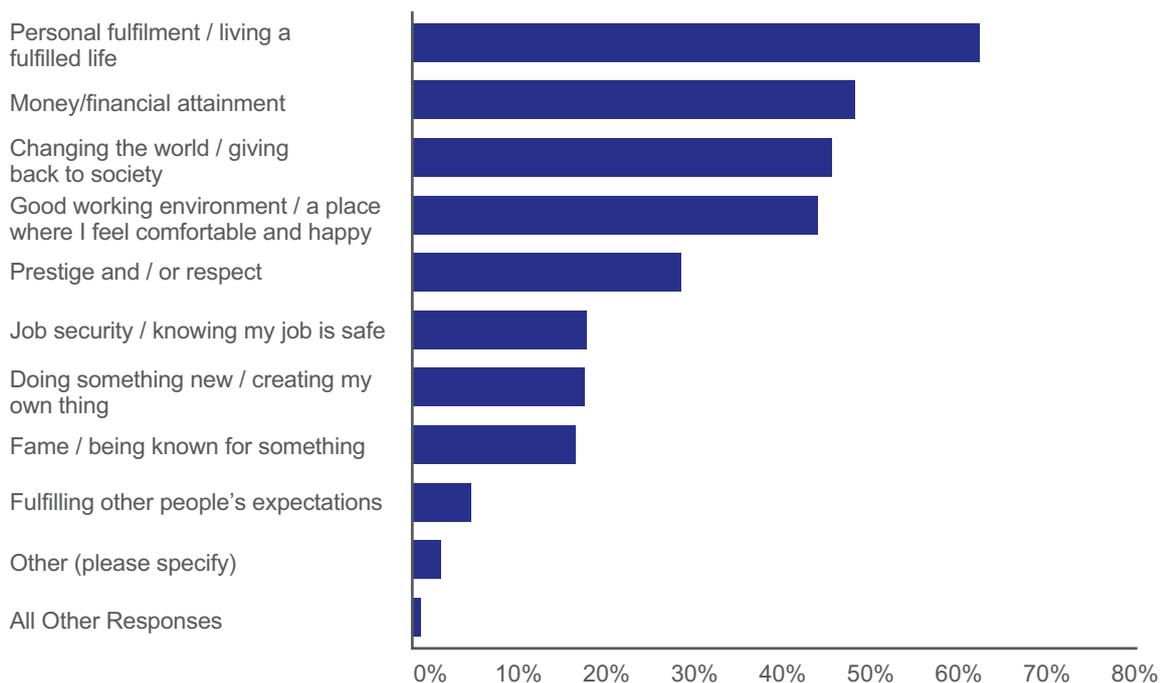
As one young man put it,

"In the British education system there is a serious lack of motivating young people to motivate themselves. They don't really know what they're good at."[112]

One young woman, a Prince's Trust Young Ambassador who is currently working as a teacher, explained that:

"When I speak to my students and ask them what they want to do, I think a lot of the time it's a case of they don't know what they're good at so they don't know what they want to do. They haven't been shown their strengths. They can quickly point out their weaknesses because that's what they're used to. It's not that they're lazy. It's a case of they don't know what they've got. It's difficult but everyone's good at something."[113]

In our consultations, practitioners were clear about the importance of young people's personal development, but felt unable to give this the time it required due to the focus on academic achievement. However, the link to their individual aspiration is what will ultimately motivate individuals to achieve; as one practitioner pointed out, young people need the aspiration in order to "stretch them to reach the qualification."[114]

Furthermore, young people can experience limited and limiting sources of influence in their family and community environments. Our survey findings **(see Figure 3)** suggest that, for many young people, schools, families, friendships and community networks are not seen as having a great shaping influence on employment aspirations. The majority of the young people we surveyed (73%) cited their 'own investigations and ideas' as a key factor that has shaped their employment aspirations. Fewer than one in three young people surveyed cited any other source as an important influence. These included, amongst others, lessons and subjects at school (32%); work experience (30%); a mentor, teacher or someone else they look up to (27%); their parents and their work (23%); peers and siblings (12%); and family and community networks (12%).

More generally, our consultations revealed that many young people lack accessible role models, and many know little about life beyond their immediate networks and geographical localities. While career guidance from young

Figure 3 Who or what has most shaped your employment aspirations?
(Respondents were asked to tick top three)
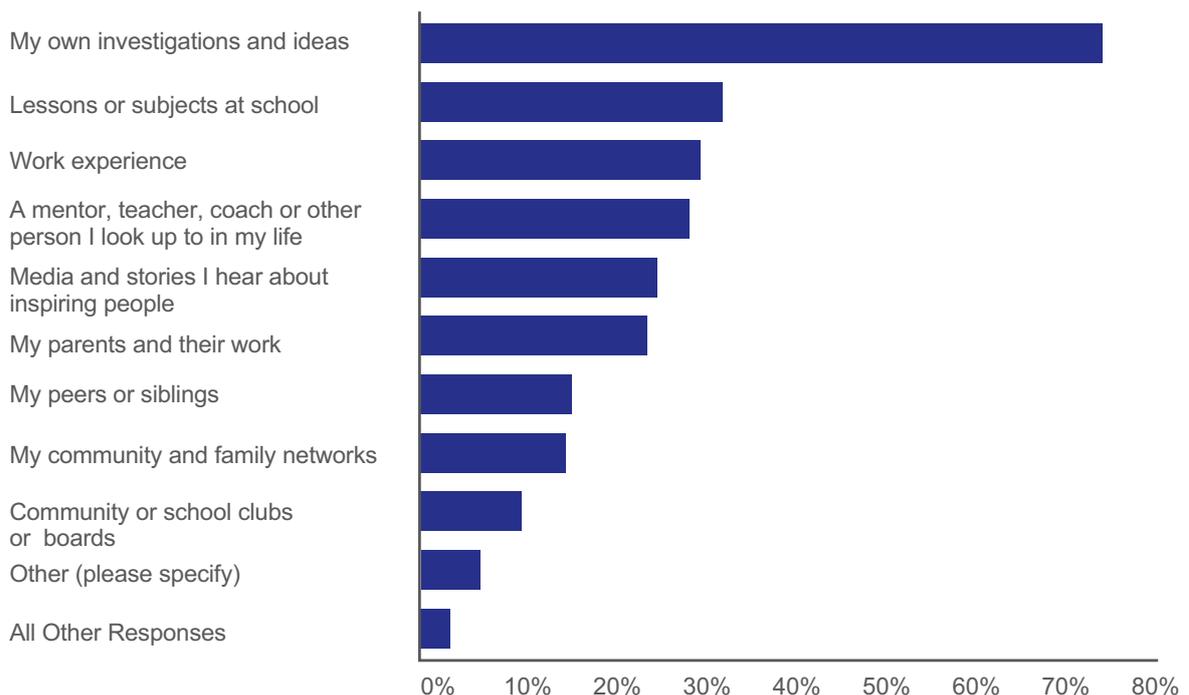
people's immediate networks of friends and family can be valuable, the result can be a tendency for young people to enter professions requiring a similar level of education to that achieved by their parents,[115] and to choose career paths of similar skill level. For example, one study found that 56% of children whose parents have a professional career also wish to have a professional career, while only 13% of children whose parents are in semi-skilled occupations would contemplate a professional career.[116] The high proportion of young people growing up in workless households compounds this scenario. Nearly one in ten of the young people we surveyed reported that "nobody in my household works." UK Labour Force Survey statistics indicate that about 1 in 6 (1.9 million) children under 16 are growing up in workless households.[117]

Stereotyping relating to careers advice, subject choice and work experience is limiting young people's options and aspirations at a young age: Our research revealed that the careers IAG that young people receive can be shaped by limiting stereotypes. Kathleen Cronin, Founder and Director of Ignite Leadership, a programme that offers leadership development and inspiration for girls and women, observed that many people giving young women careers advice are "not aspiring *for* the girls"[118] and tend to offer them gender-stereotyped advice and push them into vocational, low-paying jobs. This is particularly so for disadvantaged young women and young mothers. Our consultations with young people with disabilities, and practitioners working with this group, revealed a similar pattern of lowered expectations and narrow horizons (see **The Markfield Project** case study).

More generally, research conducted by the Equality and Human Rights Commission has found that stereotyping relating to careers advice, subject choice and work experience impacts more significantly on distinct groups, including girls, the disabled, the working class and some ethnic minorities, and serves to limit young people's options and aspirations at a young age.[119] As one young woman observed during a focus group, even the characters in cartoons and stories to which children are

exposed at an early age demonstrate these limiting class and gender stereotypes: "You've only got Bob the Builder and Postman Pat, there are no doctors or solicitors and all the women work in shops or knit or are princesses or famous. This is the wrong message."[120]

3.4 Persistent social inequalities

The UK has seen a long-running decline in social mobility, with those in top jobs and professions being less socially representative over time.[122] (See Box 2 for data on inequality and social mobility in the UK). Despite the policies of successive governments, deep social inequalities remain. Education and IAG can do more to ensure that young people are able to make the most of opportunities and succeed.

Many young people have to gain work-related skills and guidance through informal channels, often through their families and their networks, rather than the opportunities offered by the education system.[122] As such, it is often the very young people who have the opportunity to acquire such skills through informal means, as well as the confidence needed to put these skills into practice, who benefit the most - those young people with greater social capital.

Research cited by the report of the *Panel on Fair Access to the Professions* confirms that social capital has an uneven distribution. Young people from poorer backgrounds are less likely to establish social networks beyond their immediate circle, and the social networks of better-off families tend to be more diverse than the social networks of poorer families - thus restricting the wider support and opportunities available to them. This "social capital gap" may also have a negative impact on educational aspirations, with some research finding that young people with less-developed social networks are much less likely to expect to stay in school after the age of 16 than are those with more-developed social networks.[123]

Raphael Mokades, Managing Director of Rare Recruitment, a graduate recruitment company that helps firms achieve greater diversity and offers mentoring, counselling and guidance to graduates from under-represented groups, said:

"One candidate said to me: 'It's all very well for them to be judging me on this, but half of the kids they interview have been sitting round discussing what is in the Sunday Times since they were seven [years old] at the dinner table. We don't even have a dinner table, never mind the Sunday Times!'"[124]

Box 2 (In)equality and social mobility in the UK

- Educational outcomes differ markedly by gender, socio-economic group, ethnicity and disability. Boys, pupils from some ethnic minority groups, and those eligible for free school meals (FSM) are performing less well as early as age 5.[127]
- For students from lower socio-economic groups, the gap widens during the school years. The gap in students' GCSE results according to their family backgrounds remains wider than most other educational inequalities, although tentative evidence indicates that it has started to narrow since 2006.[128]
- This gap is accentuated when combined with other factors associated with educational underperformance, such as gender and disability.
- Black people and disabled people in their early 20s are twice as likely not to be in employment, education or training (NEET) as white people and non-disabled people.[129]
- While women now do better than men in every aspect of educational qualification, the pay gap between men and women remains. The gender pay gap is lowest for the under 30s, rising more than five-fold by the time workers reach 40.[130]
- Post-war growth in new professional opportunities brought about a wave of social mobility, in which many people from less well-off backgrounds were able to progress up the social ladder. However, access to society's top jobs and professions has become less socially representative over time, and the UK has seen a long-running decline in social mobility.[131]
- Social mobility has historically been lower in the UK than in many other countries. Of six European countries the UK had the lowest levels of social mobility for women and the second lowest for men. Since the 1970s social mobility has been relatively flat in the UK, although it has been higher for women compared with men.[132]
- In our survey, young people's responses reflected varying levels of optimism regarding social mobility – just over half (54%) felt that they had a better chance to succeed in their working lives than their parents/carers/older relatives, just over a quarter (28%) said they had an equal chance of succeeding, and just over 10% felt that they had a worse chance.

Nearly half of the young people we surveyed (42%) ranked "developing a good network of the right people in my field of interest" as one of the most important factors in helping them to achieve their employment goals. Simultaneously, however, one in five young people (21%) surveyed reported "a lack of contacts in the sector that interests me" as one of the greatest challenges they face in reaching their employment goals. During a focus group with Young Ambassadors from The Prince's Trust, one young woman observed that:

"I think people who are well-connected have a real advantage in terms of the workplace. Because there are loads of professions [where] the best way to get in is to know someone who's in there … It's like a cycle. The divide just increases … Some people have a better shot at it than others by nothing that they've achieved themselves, but just by luck."[125]

Our consultations revealed that many young people have limited networks, which restricts wider support and opportunities available to them, and also has a negative impact on educational and work-related aspirations. Many young people who lack cultural and social capital experience an absence of choice or available pathways, and can sometimes feel as if they are being "forced in one direction" and unable to "make any deviation."[126] This can manifest itself in a sense of aimlessness and lack of aspiration, and can serve to reinforce and amplify existing experiences of marginalisation and exclusion (see, for example, the **Brighter Futures London** case study, which illustrates this point poignantly with the experiences of young asylum seekers).

This chapter has looked at some of the challenges and complexities in existing education and IAG provision, highlighting the voices and perspectives of young people and a range of other stakeholders. The next chapter provides insight into innovation in the field and draws on practice to offer guidance to bring existing provision in line with the changing needs of young people and the economy, and to address social inequalities.

4 | Rethinking school-to-work transitions: Lessons from innovative practice

4. Rethinking school-to-work transitions: Lessons from innovative practice

The previous chapter has provided evidence of the challenges and complexities relating to education and IAG provision. Drawing on lessons from innovative practice **(see Chapter 6** for detailed case studies of twelve programmes) that is being developed and applied within a range of settings, and serving young people with diverse needs, this chapter offers guidance on how best to bring existing provision into alignment with the changing needs of young people and the economy. We propose a model of systemic change **(see Figure 4)**, built around:

- New building blocks for 21st century learning
- A long-term, joined-up approach
- Flexible and non-prescriptive frameworks for learning and advice
- Rethinking roles, relationships and mindsets

This chapter includes a framework of guidance **(see Figure 5)**, drawing together lessons from innovative practice, to support their practical application.

4.1 New building blocks for 21st century learning

Through our analysis of innovative practice, we have isolated a number of foundational elements or 'building blocks' for 21st century learning, which can enable young people to develop employability skills, and navigate their transitions through education and employment in an empowered and autonomous manner.

At the heart of the model is an approach that emphasises skills development through applied, practical learning, which can be realised by injecting enterprise into the curriculum. Within this approach, a number of more specific elements are key, including the importance of providing young people with: opportunities for collaborative social interaction; experiences that situate learning in context; real ownership and responsibility; a safe environment in which to take risks and experience failure as well

as success; and space to reflect and assess distance travelled.

Build employability skills through applied, experiential learning
At present, the overriding emphasis on qualifications comes at the expense of giving young people the opportunity to develop the transferable skills and competencies needed for employment. Addressing this requires a shift away from qualifications and conceptual (knowledge-based) learning towards an approach that emphasises skills and applied (practical) learning. Recent years have seen a significant amount of support for introducing practical learning to young people, which is seen as "a way of giving people, of all abilities and interests, a better understanding of the work and academic environments they will encounter as they move through life."[133] A variety of programmes initiated by the former government have sought to introduce elements of practical learning into school curricula, as well as further and higher education,[134] and the recently-released Wolf Report on vocational education,[135] and forthcoming review of the National Curriculum, will inform the coalition government's priorities in this area.

Figure 4 A model for generating systemic change in education and IAG provision
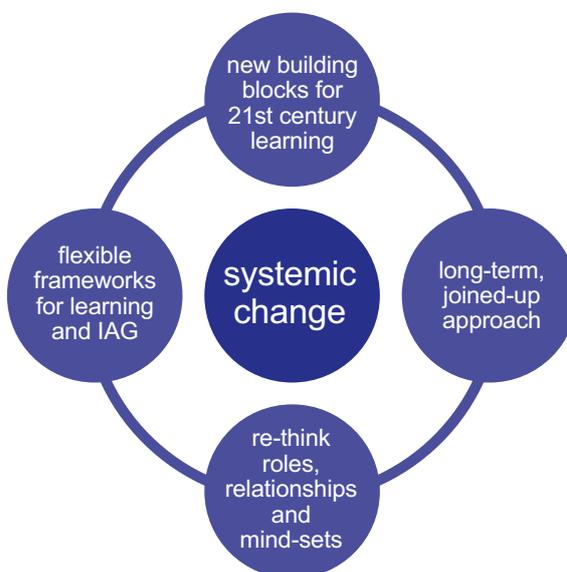
Figure 5 Framework of guidance for practice

Foundational elements for systemic change	Key lessons	Putting it into practice
1. New building blocks for 21st century learning	Build employability skills through applied, experiential learning	Emphasise experience for the workplace, both through mirroring workplace conditions and practices within the school environment, as well as through direct workplace experience/engagement
		Focus on approach to delivery, rather than curriculum: developing skills and acquiring qualifications should be complementary rather than opposing endeavours
	Inject enterprise into the curriculum	De-stream enterprise education from business studies and higher education
		Work towards greater recognition of and support for enterprise programmes and the skills they develop
		Reframe enterpreneurship and provide young people with more accessible role models
	Provide opportunities for collaborative social interaction	Provide young people with opportunities to lead as well as follow
		Provide young people with opportunities for intergenerational interaction, outside their peer group context
	Situate learning in context	Create stronger links between classroom learning and its utility in the workplace, and life
	Promote real ownership and opportunity	Provide young people with the opportunity to take ownership of, and design and lead on tasks and projects that have 'real world' impact
	Create a safe environment in which to take risks	Expose young people to risk and uncertainty, alongside opportunities to reflect through trusted relationships
	Allow space to reflect and assess 'distance travelled'	Provide young people with opportunities to reflect, understand and articulate their own skills
		Consider self- and peer-evaluation
2. A long-term, joined-up approach	Focus on partnership and joined-up working	Understand young people as active partici- pants and partners in learning and IAG, rather than passive recipients
		Explore the role that young people could play in the design and delivery of careers IAG

Foundational elements for systemic change	Key lessons	Putting it into practice
	Focus on partnership and joined-up working	Understand young people as active participants and partners in learning and IAG, rather than passive recipients
		Explore the role that young people could play in the design and delivery of careers IAG
	Raise the impact and scale of education-business links	Display an 'openness to the outside world'
		Create more dialogue between employers and schools – apply learning from the world of business to the school environment
	Work with the wider community to drive social mobility	Draw on the support of a wde range of partners to bridge gaps in social capital and to raise aspirations
		Consider working with families and communities to challenge limiting sterotypes
	Recognise learning and careers IAG as a cumulative and ongoing process	Avoid one-off days and projects; link learning to a 'grand transformative journey'
		Embed into the formal curriculum
		Build IAG as a 'cumulative, active process', which commences earlier than age 14
3. Flexible and non-prescriptive framework for learning and advice	Create flexible framework for learning	Develop personalised, local applications of learning models
		Harness formal and non-formal learning contexts to create learning opportunities which are life-wide as well as life-long
		Provide young people with more faciliated opportunities to drive positive social change in their communities
	Personalise IAG	Engage with young people on the level of personal development and dedicated the time to 'help young people think about who they are'

Foundational elements for systemic change	Key lessons	Putting it into practice
		Provide young people with inspiration as well as information through the power of storytelling and personal narratives
		Faciliate opportunities for young people to have face-to-face contact with inspirational people from a range of professions and trades
	Develop more responsive models of IAG	Emphasise skills rather than specific careers, giving young people insight into a range of careers and enabling better articulation of aspirations
		Challenge constraining practices and demystify processes
		Open up the meaning of 'success' and pathways to achievement
4. Rethinking roles, relationships and mindsets		Reflect on a movement from 'teacher' to 'facilitator'
		Create an environment and culture which supports entrepreneurialism, risk-taking and innovation, addressing the development journeys of adults and young people alike

The programmes showcased in this report all embrace a 'learning by doing' approach, helping young people to acquire employability skills through practical, project-based learning which gives them the chance to put skills into practice. Many place a strong emphasis on giving young people experience of the workplace, both by mirroring workplace conditions and practices within the school environment, as well as through work experience placements, workplace visits, and mentoring and volunteering schemes with local business and large corporations (see, for example, **Studio Schools**, which are designed to be a "transition to the workplace",[136] and have many features of the workplace: for example, they are open all year round, and students have to book holidays over the course of the year). In many instances, young people gain vital skills, an understanding of how the world of work operates in practice, and insight into potential career paths. What sets these approaches apart from mainstream education is not so much what is offered, but how it is delivered. Programmes such as **Enabling Enterprise** and **Studio Schools** are teaching the national curriculum and traditional subjects in non-traditional ways, emphasising practical work and enterprise through project-based activities, and embrace an approach where developing skills and acquiring qualifications are complementary rather than opposing endeavours.

Inject enterprise into the curriculum
Many of the programmes showcased in this report are working in the remit of 'enterprise education,' increasingly seen as a central solution for improving outcomes for a range of young people, and which tends to embody the principles of 'learning through doing' (see, for example, **Young Enterprise, Enabling Enterprise, Studio Schools, Bulwell Academy; Giving Nation** and the **School for Social Entrepreneurs** school-based programme, all of which focus on learning through social enterprise).

An emerging body of evidence suggests that enterprise education can be an important way of engaging all young people, including the disengaged, building the skills needed for future employment, and filling the gaps in the current skill set of young people.[137] Teaching enterprise behaviours can play a key role in raising confidence and self-esteem, increasing attainment and helping young people classified as NEET back into education, work or training.[138] However, as noted in Chapter 3, narrow understanding and applications are limiting its reach and efficacy in current practice. Our research underscores the need to de-stream enterprise from business studies in schools and higher education, and to inject enterprise more broadly into curricula. Alongside this, there is a need for greater recognition of enterprise programmes and the kinds of skills they develop, and a concomitant need for greater support and commitment from senior management. Finally, it is important to reframe entrepreneurship – by debunking negative myths that make the concept off-putting to young people **(see Chapter 3)** and providing young people with more accessible role models with whom they can better identify. Opening up the meaning of 'enterprise' as a more inclusive concept that signifies an attitude to life and a transferable skill set, rather than just something related to money, will be vital in widening the current narrow focus on self-employment.

Opportunities for collaborative social interaction

Many of the case studies profiled in this report illustrate the role that opportunities for collaborative social interaction and experience of a range of roles can play in advancing young people's learning and development of employability skills. Collaborative working emerged as an important means for young people to develop vital social and emotional skills, including self-awareness, empathy and awareness of others.

Young people need opportunities to lead as well as follow, and to experience and negotiate a variety of social contexts and interactions to build social skills and the confidence to put these skills into practice. Programmes

showcased in this report emphasise group work with peers, providing young people with the chance to develop teamwork and leadership skills, and to learn about relationships, power, influence and authority (see, particularly, the **Enabling Enterprise** and **Young Enterprise** case studies, which give insight into some of the complexities of this process). Taking young people out of the peer group context and providing opportunities for inter-generational interaction is also important. **Working Rite**, a work-based mentoring project which takes teenagers out of the peer group and places them alongside adult trades people, illustrates the maturing experience that this can offer.

Learning in context

Creating stronger links between classroom learning and its utility in the workplace and life is central to making the case that learning is 'worth it' to young people, and can also help them connect the lessons of today with the skills needed for success in the future. As one young woman put it,

"Instead of just doing basic lessons, they should relate [classroom learning] to future jobs. That gives the individual a chance to find out what subjects they really like. And they will work harder and maybe make it a career choice. Work on what you're good at."[139]

A key part of the **Enabling Enterprise** programme, for example, involves taking students out on trips each term. Enabling Enterprise partners with organisations – such as high profile law firms – and takes students on site visits to see how their learning will be of use in later life. Through this process, young people can "start to connect what they were learning in the classroom to what would actually be useful for the rest of their lives." Young people enrolled in Enabling Enterprise's French programme, for example, used the experience to find out from employees how studying languages had helped them in their careers, and took part in a video conference with the Paris office of the firm. This "helped them to see their learning in context and why it was useful" and in this sense was "very powerful."[140]

Real ownership and responsibility

A common element underpinning many of the approaches showcased in this report is that they provide young people with the opportunity to take ownership of, and design and lead on tasks and projects that have 'real-world' impact, avoiding hypothetical or simulated learning experiences. Young people should be allowed relative freedom of action to make real choices about what they do and how they do it.[141]

Our research indicates that programmes which embrace such an approach can increase motivation, help foster creative ability and application of knowledge, and enhance engagement in learning. As experts have observed, "creative ability and motivation are reinforced by the experience of making an impact," and effecting concrete, real-world outcomes.[142] The experience of making an impact, in turn, is vital to building self-belief and a sense of self-worth. In programmes such as **Space Unlimited**, young people see this as the most valuable outcome of their experience: "the opportunity to have their ideas heard and to be counted, and to therefore believe that they [are] worth something."[143]

A safe environment to take risks

The role of risk-taking is often overlooked in educational contexts,[144] and risk and uncertainty tend to be eliminated from the learning environment. However, as Richard John (Programme Manager, Giving Nation) observed, it is:

"not reflective of life if there aren't ups and downs in education … There needs to be the opportunity for young people to not only succeed, but also have a taste of failure … Arguably the greater learning comes from the failure rather than the success."[145]

A growing body of evidence is indicating that opportunities for young people to take risks in a safe environment can have benefits on numerous levels: for employers, the economy and society and young people. Learning about risk can help young people to make decisions about subject choices and routes through education and careers, can build confidence,

and can help young people to participate effectively in services that affect them. Additionally, when young people experience

It is "not reflective of life if there aren't ups and downs in education … There needs to be the opportunity for young people to not only succeed, but also have a taste of failure … Arguably the greater learning comes from the failure rather than the success."

failure as a result of risk-taking in a safe environment, this can help them to develop resilience and better manage risk in the future.[146]

In programmes such as **Giving Nation** and **Space Unlimited** an explicit element of the approach involves exposing young people to risk and uncertainty. The Space Unlimited model, for example, allows young people to encounter things that do not work, tolerates disagreement within groups, and enables young people to work through problems and mistakes themselves, rather than resolving issues through adult intervention. For risk-taking to be an effective tool, however, it needs to be coupled with opportunities to reflect, which we explore below. Environments in which young people feel prepared to take risks and are able to learn from failure require secure, trusting relationships,[147] and adults need to manage their own anxieties about risk and uncertainty (as discussed more in part 4.4 of this chapter).

Space to reflect and assess 'distance travelled'

Providing opportunities for young people to reflect plays a key role in helping young people to take skills forward, and can be a space where the "greatest learning takes place" (see, for example, **Giving Nation**).

As the UK Commission for Education and Skills report, *Employability: Incentivising improvement,* has noted, assessment and recognition of employability skills is becoming a key focal point, because of the influence this is perceived to have on teaching and learning.[149]

Assessment and recognition of personal employability skills is valuable insofar as it can enhance learners' performance, enable them to reflect on, understand and articulate their own skills, and apply them in different settings. There is debate, however, about how attitudes and behaviours that underpin personal employability skills should best be assessed, given that they do not lend themselves to more traditional types of assessment, such as standard tests. The challenge here is to develop new, more flexible approaches to assessment that are at the same time rigorous and credible for all involved. Measurement should recognise 'distance travelled' by learners in order to reinforce the idea that employability skills continue to develop throughout life. Approaches such as self-evaluation and peer-evaluation can play an important role. The notion of the "active reflective learner" is central, supporting learner empowerment and self-direction, and practitioners need to support learners in playing a role in self-assessment.[150]

4.2 A long-term, joined up approach

More broadly, our consultations and desk-based research highlighted the importance of a long-term, joined-up approach that sees learning, skills development and IAG as an on-going process that is best done in partnership.

Partnership and joined-up working
As Josephine Green, a consultant on human-focussed approaches to innovation and growth, has observed, the 21st century will be "less about doing things for or to people and more about doing things with and by people themselves" and, therefore, a 21st century education system will focus more on working collectively.[151] The importance of partnership and joined-up working emerged as a key theme from our research. Specifically, key areas to address include: involving young people as active participants and partners in learning and IAG; raising the impact and scale of education-business links; and mobilising partnerships with the wider community to drive social mobility.

Young people as active participants and partners in learning and IAG: Many of the programmes discussed in this report are underpinned by

a philosophy that understands young people as active participants and partners in learning and IAG, rather than passive recipients. Programmes such as **Space Unlimited** highlight the role that working in partnership with young people can play in unleashing the creativity and innovation of young people as well as adults and organisations.

Similarly, young people need to have a more active role in IAG, which should be more of a dialogue and offer young people a greater sense of autonomy in decision-making. As research in the field of positive psychology indicates, "autonomy, including autonomy of decisions about important aspects of life such as careers, is one of the three fundamental psychological human needs.[152]" In this sense, it is important that career advice should not be based on a model whereby recommendations feel like impositions. The **School for Social Entrepreneurs** school-based programme, for example, gives learners the chance to 'cross-examine' a panel of 'expert witnesses' – social entrepreneurs who provide 'evidence' on their work experience across a range of fields and issues – exemplifying a model of IAG where young people take an active, enquiring role rather than being 'lectured' to.[153]

There is also much room to explore the role that young people could potentially play in the design and delivery of careers IAG. The importance of embracing a youth-led approach was underscored in our consultations with young people. This is exemplified in the approach embraced by a young social entrepreneur, Seun Oshinaike, interviewed for this report, who is setting up an initiative[154] geared at providing an alternative to mainstream career services.[155] The idea is to set up an inter-school quiz or debate around careers-related issues, modelled on popular TV quiz shows such as Mastermind and Question of Sport. He emphasised the importance of engaging young people more and sparking debate around careers, noting that he and his team are going in to schools to get young people involved in the design, so that the final product reflects young people's needs and preferences. As he observed, "You can't just

expect young people to get inspired; you need them to get involved." [156]

Education-business links: Raising the impact and scale of education-business links is also important. Evidence suggests that where quality partnerships between business and schools/colleges exist, young people "find increased motivation and subject relevance, gain insights into the world of work, and increase their work-related and entrepreneurial skills." [157]

Many of the programmes featured in this report have strong links with businesses and the wider communities in which they are located, and display an openness to the 'outside world' rather than being segregated from it. The **Bulwell Academy**, for example, brings in staff members who have experience and established contacts and networks in the business world, and has established a 'Business Advisory Board' constituted of employers who are able to link the academy to external business or education opportunities whilst providing a business mentoring service to senior leaders. **Studio Schools** offer young people aspirational paid work placements linked to employment opportunities in the local area, giving students insight into how businesses operate and direct experience in their local labour market.

Kathleen Cronin, founder and director of **Ignite Leadership**, stressed the importance of "creating more of a dialogue between employers and schools"[158] and developing bridging and/or sponsor programmes between the two. She noted that many companies and organisations have large Human Resource departments and provide coaching and employee development programmes. These existing in-house resources and opportunities could potentially be applied within the context of schools developing an age-appropriate approach. Ignite Leadership is doing just this by applying learning from the executive coaching world in the context of schools.

Working Rite's work pairing model exemplifies an innovative approach to incentivising employers to engage with young people's work-related learning and development. A key

factor in the programme's success is that it has been shaped to meet the needs of local tradespeople, pitching its publicity around the needs of the business. This also serves to contribute to the authenticity of the experience for the young people involved.

Working with the wider community to drive social mobility: More generally, as the report of the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions has recognised, social mobility will be best achieved through partnership.[159] Our research suggests that better partnerships between schools and businesses could play an important role in bridging social capital gaps as discussed in Chapter 3. More broadly, schools will need to draw on the support of a wide range of partners – universities, professional bodies and associations, civic institutions and community organisations – to raise aspirations amongst young people from families where higher education and work in the professions is not the norm. This could also require interventions within families and communities to challenge stereotypes (discussed in part 4.3 of this chapter) and raise aspirations.

Learning and careers IAG as a cumulative, on-going process
As the NIACE Inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning has found, the UK's current system of learning provision has failed to respond to the major demographics of an ageing society, and to variety in employment patterns as young people take longer to settle into jobs and older people take longer to leave work.[160] Our research reconfirms the need for learning and careers IAG that are understood as on-going and lifelong in both instances. This means avoiding 'one-off' skills development days and projects; embedding skills development into the existing curriculum; and embracing a long-term approach to IAG that starts at an early age, and which understands this as a cumulative, active process.

Developing employability skills requires a 'long-term, joined up approach': Many of the innovative approaches cited in this report explicitly avoid 'one-off' days and projects, a number of these delivering over the course

of a year or even more, and underscore the importance of developing employability and enterprise skills and capabilities over time. Tom Ravenscroft (Director, Enabling Enterprise) emphasised the need for a "long term, joined-up approach," and highlighted the need for all learning to be "connected with [learners'] skills development" and linked to a "grand … transformative journey which they're a part of."[161] More broadly, programmes such as **Enabling Enterprise** have adopted an approach where skills development is embedded into the formal curriculum, rather than being an 'add on', facilitating the development of skills in the context of teaching core subjects. By coupling skills into the existing curriculum, Enabling Enterprise offers an approach that removes the need for teachers to have to choose between teaching either employability skills or content. In their experience, as students pick up skills they become more enthused by the subject, and their attainment increases accordingly. Alongside this, as teachers come to see practical learning as an approach that really connects with students, they become more likely to incorporate elements of practical learning into other areas of their teaching – thus embedding the approach more widely.

Need for long-term approach to careers IAG: It no longer makes sense to think of careers IAG in terms of a "one off inoculation."[162] Given that we now experience multiple and diverse transition points throughout our lives, young people (and adults) will have recurring needs for IAG as they navigate pathways through education and work.[163] To respond to this, IAG "needs to be a cumulative, active process, rather than a passive or merely single event" and needs to start early, and continue throughout life.[164]

Young people and adults alike stressed the need to start this process at a far earlier age than is currently the case. The Recruitment and Employment Confederation's UK Youth Employment Taskforce recommends that young people should have an understanding of the world of work by the time they are 14, and that this should then be built upon during the years

14 to 21 when young people are preparing to enter the jobs market.[165] Consequently, there is a need for programmes that are tailored in age-appropriate ways to meet young people's developmental needs. **Young Enterprise**, for example, delivers primary school programmes which offer a progressive scheme of work-related learning modules that take students on a journey of exploration through the world of work, financial capability and enterprise. Modules start with a personal orientation at the level of 'Ourselves' and 'Our Families' and become more business-focussed as students progress through 'Our Community', 'City', 'Nation', culminating in 'Our world', which directs focus on global trade.

4.3 Flexible and non-prescriptive frameworks for learning and IAG
Given the new emphasis on partnership, dialogue and collective working, 21st century education is likely to be "messier, more informal, exploratory, experimental and improvised."[166] This, in turn, requires greater flexibility and a move away from standardised, prescribed frameworks. While there are certain underlying elements that are common to many of the examples of innovative approaches to learning and IAG which we cite in this report, it is important to recognise that there is no single, 'one-size-fits-all' solution.

Flexible frameworks for learning
Personalised, local applications of learning models: Greater flexibility and creativity within learning frameworks are essential if we are to optimise young people's engagement in education, and ensure greatest inclusivity. Evidence submitted by the 157 Group to the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee Inquiry into young people not in education, training and employment noted that:

"Motivation is one of the biggest barriers to learning, therefore creating an interest in learning is a major challenge. A standard curriculum will not necessarily work for all learners so a creative, flexible framework is needed to engage their interest and which can be tailored to their own personal needs and aspirations."[167]

There is a need for more bespoke programmes to be developed and tailored to needs of particular young people and their learning styles, and models should be flexibly applied in a manner that is relevant to the local context. The **Studio Schools** model, for example, has created a curriculum framework that allows for a high degree of flexibility, and personal coaches work alongside students to develop personalised learning programmes tailored to individuals' needs and aspirations. And, while all Studio Schools are characterised by a common set of elements and principles, individual schools are adapted to local circumstances and the needs of the local economy.

Harnessing formal and non-formal learning contexts: Greater choice, flexibility and variety in learning are important in helping to keep young people engaged in education, and to re-engage those who are disengaged.[168] In particular, our research revealed the importance of providing learning and development opportunities beyond formal schooling. In this regard, educational opportunities "need to be 'life-wide' as well as 'life-long.'"[169]

Young people can develop skills and competencies needed for success in life and work by various routes, including a richer school experience as well as extra-curricular activity and participation in clubs and societies.[170] In fact, some evidence suggests that the skill base for encouraging the development of competencies such as risk-taking and entrepreneurialism may currently lie more in informal settings and spaces than in formal learning environments.[171]

Our research and consultations with adults and young people alike highlighted that informal, extra-curricular activities – such as debating, sport or drama clubs, and volunteering opportunities – can be instrumental in providing young people with the opportunity to take on the ownership of, and responsibility for, projects, provide the catalyst to translate their passions into action, and develop vital skills, initiative and a positive "can-do"[172] attitude in the process. Such activities can also help young people to transcend the "constraints

of being in a classroom" – where "you are there to learn, not necessarily to do" – and give them valuable experience of the "outside world."[173]

As noted earlier, close to half (49%) of the young people surveyed for this research reported that they are motivated by the possibility of "changing the world/giving back to society," and around one third of young people reported that they wanted to do work "to help other people in a charity, non-governmental organisation or as a community or youth worker." Providing young people with more facilitated opportunities to drive positive social change in their communities could be a valuable means of harnessing young people's social consciousness in the interest of developing skills, as well as benefiting their communities.

Leadership and citizenship development opportunities emerged from our consultations as particularly important factors. Established programmes - such as The Prince's Trust, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, Scouts and Guides, and **Young Enterprise** – were seen as particularly instrumental by young people as well as practitioners. There was a view that these 'tried and tested' initiatives warrant more investment and funding, which is often redirected into new initiatives and pilot projects. Opportunities in this area for disadvantaged young people in particular were highlighted as critical in enhancing self-esteem, raising aspirations, building social capital and linking young people for life, unlocking a spirit of entrepreneurialism – helping young people to recognise and mobilise the resources available in themselves and others, and connecting young people at the margins of society to centres of power (See, for example, **Brighter Futures London**). However, while arguably being in the position to benefit most, there are fewer chances for young people from less privileged backgrounds to benefit from such opportunities.[174]

Mainstreaming and embedding these opportunities, taking forward the principles of youth-led practice and co-creation that many of these programmes espouse, and building

closer relationships and partnership between formal and informal educational settings could potentially increase the range of opportunities available for young people to develop employability skills, and could help share knowledge and practice.[175]

Personalise information, advice and guidance
"IAG needs to be tailored to the needs and circumstances of the individual young person and to reflect the ways in which young people want to access information and advice."[176]

Our research showed that young people are interested in learning about careers in a highly personalised manner, and underscored the importance of offering young people information and advice that is of personal relevance to them, and which responds to and builds on their underlying motivations, individual talents and aspirations.

Engage with young people on the level of personal development: Programmes such as **Enabling Enterprise** are built on a recognition that qualifications and skills need to be complemented with personal qualities such as the resilience to persevere, and the aspiration to have something worth persevering for. However, as noted in Chapter 3, it can be challenging for schools to dedicate adequate time to personal development alongside

"Many young people are looking as much for inspiration as information."

academic pursuits. School systems need to develop the capacity to "help young people think about who they are,"[177] and need to engage far more with young people on the qualitative level of personal development[178] in the manner that programmes such as the **School for Social Entrepreneurs** school-based programme and the **Bulwell Academy**'s 'Employment Intelligence' programme are doing explicitly. Personal coaching is being applied by programmes such as **Ignite Leadership** and **Rare Recruitment** (used in

group and individual contexts respectively), and has been found to be a useful tool for sustainable learning and personal development.

Provide young people with inspiration as well as information: Our research revealed the power of storytelling and personal narratives over impersonal information on the world of work, and showed that "many young people are looking as much for inspiration as information."[179] For example, consulting work conducted by **Space Unlimited** with universities to help them recruit more students showed that young people were far less interested in the courses, prospectus and even the potential jobs to which a line of study could lead, and far more interested in the lives of the people who were in those jobs already, what they found fulfilling, and whether the job met their expectations – in the words of Heather Sim (Founder and Chief Executive, Space Unlimited) "all of those deeply personal and human needs."[180] Many of the programmes profiled in this report facilitate opportunities for young people to have face-to-face contact with inspirational people from a range of professions and trades – for example, the **School for Social Entrepreneurs** school-based programme's 'Expert Witnesses,' or **Ignite Leadership**'s 'Ambassadors' - who also serve as role models and can play an important role in widening aspirations. Similarly, the internet is opening up new channels for sharing such information. For example, **www.icould.com** is an inspirational website which gives young people the 'inside story' into how careers work, and showcases the stories of individuals in a wide range of careers – from telecom engineers to police officers, from landscape gardeners to web designers. The icould storytellers relate, in their own words, their real life, varied and unique careers journeys, talking about what they do, what it is like, how they came to be where they are, their successes and challenges, and their hopes for the future.

Non-prescriptive information, advice and guidance
Information, advice and guidance also needs

to be more responsive to the complexity and unpredictable nature of the labour market and youth transitions, and to open up and value multiple pathways into employment.

Emphasise skills rather than highlight specific careers: Exemplifying such an approach, the **Bulwell Academy**'s 'Employment Intelligence' programme focuses young people's attention on skills and attributes rather than highly specific jobs and careers, reflecting an acknowledgement that the jobs in which young people might ultimately work "may

Rethinking the building blocks of learning requires, in turn, new roles, relationships and mind-sets.

not yet exist" and giving young people insight into a range of jobs available to them.[181] The approach emphasises and attaches value to understanding the students' preferred working and learning styles, and not just academic performance. In a school where a large proportion of students are receiving free school meals (an indicator of poverty), the approach also enables young people to communicate their ambitions to their parents in a way that does not alienate those who may be out of work or in low paid occupations.

Challenge constraining practices, including streaming and stereotyping: Achieving a less prescriptive IAG service requires challenging constraining practices, including the practice of streaming young people at an early age, and demystifying the academic and job application process in order to ensure greater transparency (see **Rare Recruitment**, which embodies this principle), in order to ensure that all routes are accessible and visible to young people across the social spectrum. More widely, there is a pressing need to challenge stereotyping within careers IAG, which is narrowing the options available to young people, and curtailing aspirations. Our consultations suggest that engaging with the wider social networks in which young people are located – their families, communities, and advice providers in youth work settings, schools and job centres – will be instrumental in challenging stereotypes,

requiring a widening of focus beyond the individual young person (see, for example, the **Ignite Leadership** case study).

Opening up the meaning of success and pathways to employment: There is also a need to give attention to values and the meaning of success in the context of education and work. Schools need to promote awareness of, and attach value to, multiple pathways, and challenge the prevailing conception that vocational routes are the preserved option for those who do not succeed in academia. There is also a need to take pressure off young people to follow pre-mapped pathways. More broadly, dedicating time to engaging with young people about the meaning of success could play a key role in widening aspirations as well as developing more realistic expectations.

For example, **Young Enterprise**'s 'Learn to Earn' programme dedicates time to discussing the concept of success with young people, and is geared at opening up young people's ideas to include alternative pathways and outcomes, and impressing upon them by the end of the day that "success isn't necessarily monetary or fame-based, but it's just doing something you are good at, or happy doing."[182] A key element of Young Enterprise programmes involves the support of volunteers from local businesses and large corporations. In a context where there is pressure on young people to "have a path that is completely linear," their stories show that, in practice, education and employment transitions can be "unforeseeable" and somewhat "random." This can help to build more realistic expectations among young people, and also be "really reassuring" for older students who are feeling uncertain about what they want to do.[183]

4.4 Rethink roles, relationships and mindsets

Rethinking the building blocks of learning requires, in turn, new roles, relationships and mindsets. Many of the recommendations presented in this report would destabilise existing power relations and challenge roles; young people may feel "at sea" and struggle to stop looking to adults to "tell them what to do";

equally, adults may experience it as a challenge to "stop doing things for" young people.[184]

Nick Temple (Policy and Communications Director, School for Social Entrepreneurs) stressed that, even with the most radical, new approaches to schooling, if these are populated with teachers of the "traditional mindset," it is unlikely that real gains will be made in terms of young people's learning outcomes.[185] In order to support new forms of learning, Temple argues for the need for a new type of educator: the role of the traditional "teacher" – whose remit is "to tell you when you're wrong" – needs to be replaced with the role of the "learning facilitator" – who provides space for students to make mistakes and help them to learn from these.[186] Common practices and understandings – such as teachers always being considered 'right,' and the idea that there is only one, definitively correct answer to questions – need to be challenged, and this will sometime require that teachers 'unlearn' previous ways of doing things.[187]
More generally, when thinking about developing the enterprising capability of young people, it is important to create learning environments and cultures that support entrepreneurialism,

risk-taking and innovation and attend to the developmental journeys of both students and staff alike. Alison Bingham (Director of Business and Enterprise, The *Bulwell Academy*) observed that the **Bulwell Academy** places much emphasis on creating an enterprising climate for learning for its students, and this involves nurturing the enterprising capability of the staff themselves. Bingham notes that this has required "a substantial cultural shift," recognising that "teachers sign up to educate, not to develop workforce skills or start up businesses. There is, of course, a balance to be maintained."[188]

Addressing the learning and developmental journeys of educators is therefore as critical as attending to those of their students. The need to attend to adults' behaviours, attitudes and mindsets is increasingly being recognised as important in supporting young people to develop and apply their creativity and pursue innovation.[189] **Space Unlimited**, profiled in this report, advocates a set of principles – which they term 'uncommon sense' – and guiding tools to help teachers and practitioners feel more confident about designing and running creativity and innovation-based activities for young people.

5 Mobilising young people as the 'forgotten engine of change': Conclusion and recommendations

5. Mobilising young people as the 'forgotten engine of change': Conclusion and recommendations

This report has highlighted young people's voices as they reflect on their paths through learning and into work: voices which are varied, informed, passionate and engaged. This is at odds with young people's experience of transitions, which can disempower, rather than promote active involvement and self-direction.

Drawing on lessons from innovative practice that is being developed and applied in formal and informal learning contexts, and responding to the varying needs of different groups of young people (see Chapter 6 for full case studies), we have outlined a model of systemic change, and a framework of guidelines to support practice development in education and IAG provision.

First, a set of *new 'building blocks' for 21st century learning*, which are vital in enabling young people to develop employability skills, and navigate their school-to-work transitions in an empowered and autonomous manner. At the heart of the model is an approach that emphasises skills development through applied, practical learning, which can be realised by injecting enterprise into the curriculum. A detailed analysis of innovative practice revealed a set of key elements, including the importance of providing young people with opportunities for collaborative social interaction; experiences that situate learning in context; the chance to take real ownership and responsibility; a safe environment to take risks and experience failure as well as success; and space to reflect and assess distance travelled.

Second, an overriding theme concerned the need to respond to the changing nature of employment transitions by *embracing a long-term, joined up approach*, wherein learning, skills development and careers IAG are understood as on-going, life-long and life-wide processes that are best designed and produced in partnership with young people. A new emphasis on partnership, dialogue and collective working will require, in turn,

more informal, exploratory and experimental approaches: in this context, there is a need for *flexible, non-standardised and non-prescriptive frameworks* for both learning and guidance. Recommendations include the need for personalised, local applications of learning models, and careers IAG that is tailored to the needs and circumstances of the individual young person. Learning and development opportunities beyond formal schooling are important, particularly leadership and citizenship development; mainstreaming non-formal learning opportunities and more partnership between formal and informal educational settings could potentially increase the range of opportunities available for young people to develop employability skills, and could help to share knowledge and practice. Efforts to challenge constraining practices including streaming and stereotyping, and opening up the meaning of success and promoting multiple pathways to work are also critical.

Some of these core ideas and principles, including the need for a non-uniform approach and the importance of partnership and joined-up working, are reflected in the 2010 schools White Paper, The Importance of Teaching, which outlines plans for a new Education Endowment Fund to incentivise innovative projects (rather than mandate a uniform approach) to drive school improvement and raise the attainment of disadvantaged children in underperforming schools, and to create a new collaboration incentive.[190]

However, creating a more collaborative and innovative climate for learning and IAG will require dedicating efforts towards *re-thinking roles, relationships and mindsets*. The case studies profiled in this report highlight new ways of thinking about beneficiaries, and underscore the need to reflect on the new and different roles of young people in the system.

Elsewhere, it has been recognised that consumer models for delivering public services

in areas ranging from health care, to policing to education – where professional systems deliver services to passive clients – fail to take account of "the crucial dimension that allows doctors to heal, teachers to teach and carers to care: the relationship with the patient, pupil or client." There is a growing recognition that "professionals need their clients as much as the clients need professionals," and of the equally important role played by those on the receiving end of services, without which "doctors are almost powerless to heal, just as teachers are powerless to teach and police to prevent crime."[191] It has been observed that:

"The fact that social needs continue to rise is not due to a failure to consult or conduct opinion research. It is due to a failure to ask people for their help and to use the skills they have. This is the forgotten engine of change that makes the difference between systems working and failing."[192]

It is in this space that the concept of co-production is gathering steam, built on a growing recognition that equal partnerships between professionals and the public are crucial to improving public services.[193] A mounting body of evidence is showing that when young people get involved in decisions that affect them, services improve – and education is no exception.[194] However, co-production is not about consultation or participation in any narrow sense. In the context of education, this is not about consulting young people more, or involving them in more decisions; it is about encouraging them to use their skills, experiences, and insight into their own needs to help develop and deliver services alongside teachers and other professionals. This is the recommendation which sits at the heart of this report.

The UK is seeing an emergence of a co-production sector which is "enormously vital
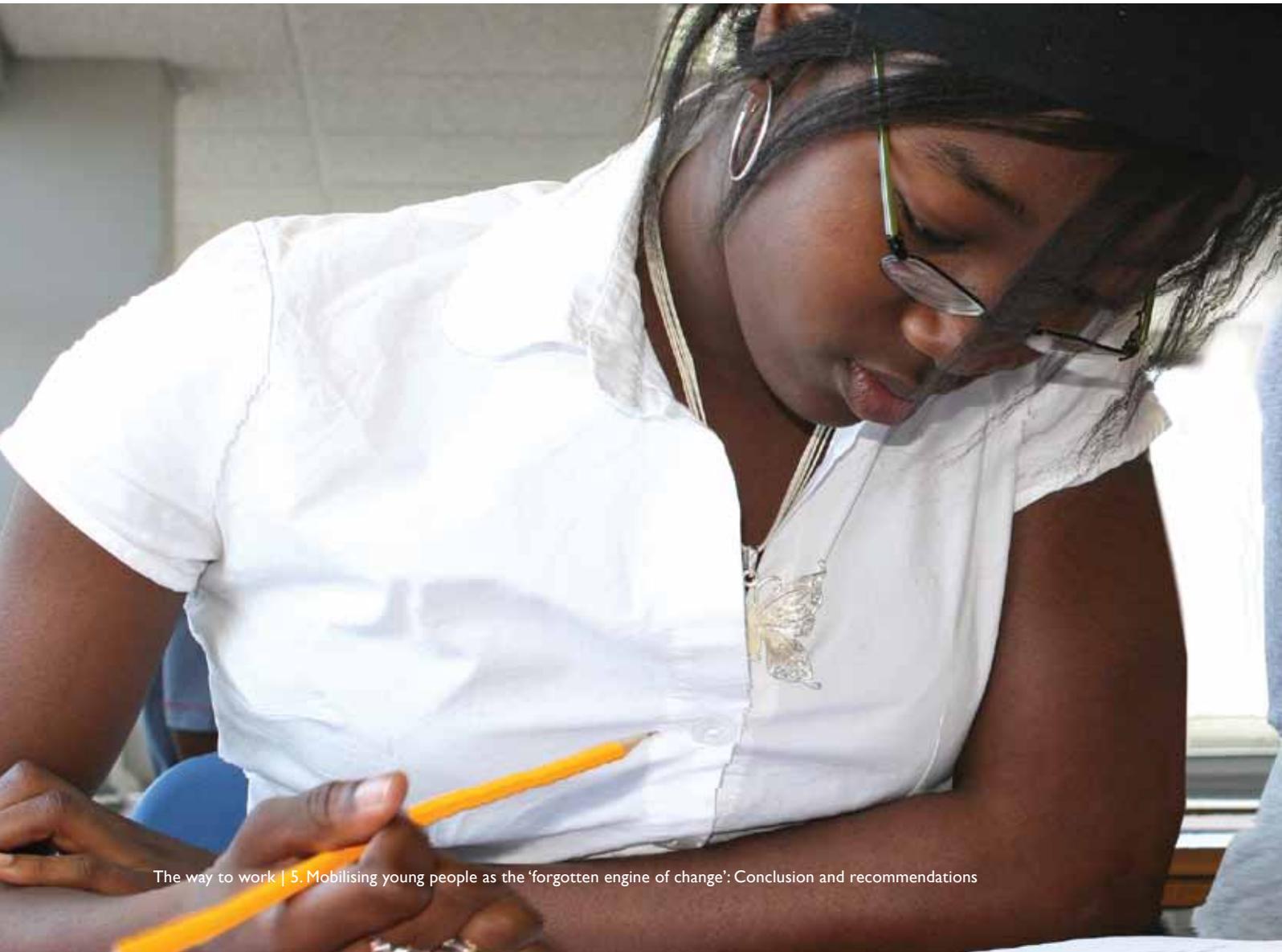
and innovative," and which stands as a "crucial aspect of the emerging debate on localism and mutualism in public service."[195] However, while co-production provides a strong critique of existing approaches to reform, the sector lacks self-awareness, and a stronger agreed understanding and evidence base are needed in order to make a real impact in policy and in mainstream public services.[196] To date, co-production is emerging most strongly in health and social care, but education and careers IAG provision offers rich opportunities to explore new possibilities. However, co-production is not clearly defined as a concept, and the challenges in breaking down the pervasive power relations within the education system would make such conceptualisation particularly difficult. An exploration of co-production within the education system would require a radical restructuring of roles and cultures. Indeed, this would extend to young people, who are not always comfortable when power relations shift significantly.

This report, and the voices of young people detailed within it, strongly advocate the need to explore a co-production agenda in the context of education and IAG provision, and the need for an in-depth look at how young people can be engaged in the design and delivery of services in this area, and potential possibilities and limitations in such an approach. Such an approach, we believe, could mobilise young people, as a "forgotten engine of change," in order to put them into the driving seats of their futures, and to drive forward innovation in a system that is in need of radical transformation.
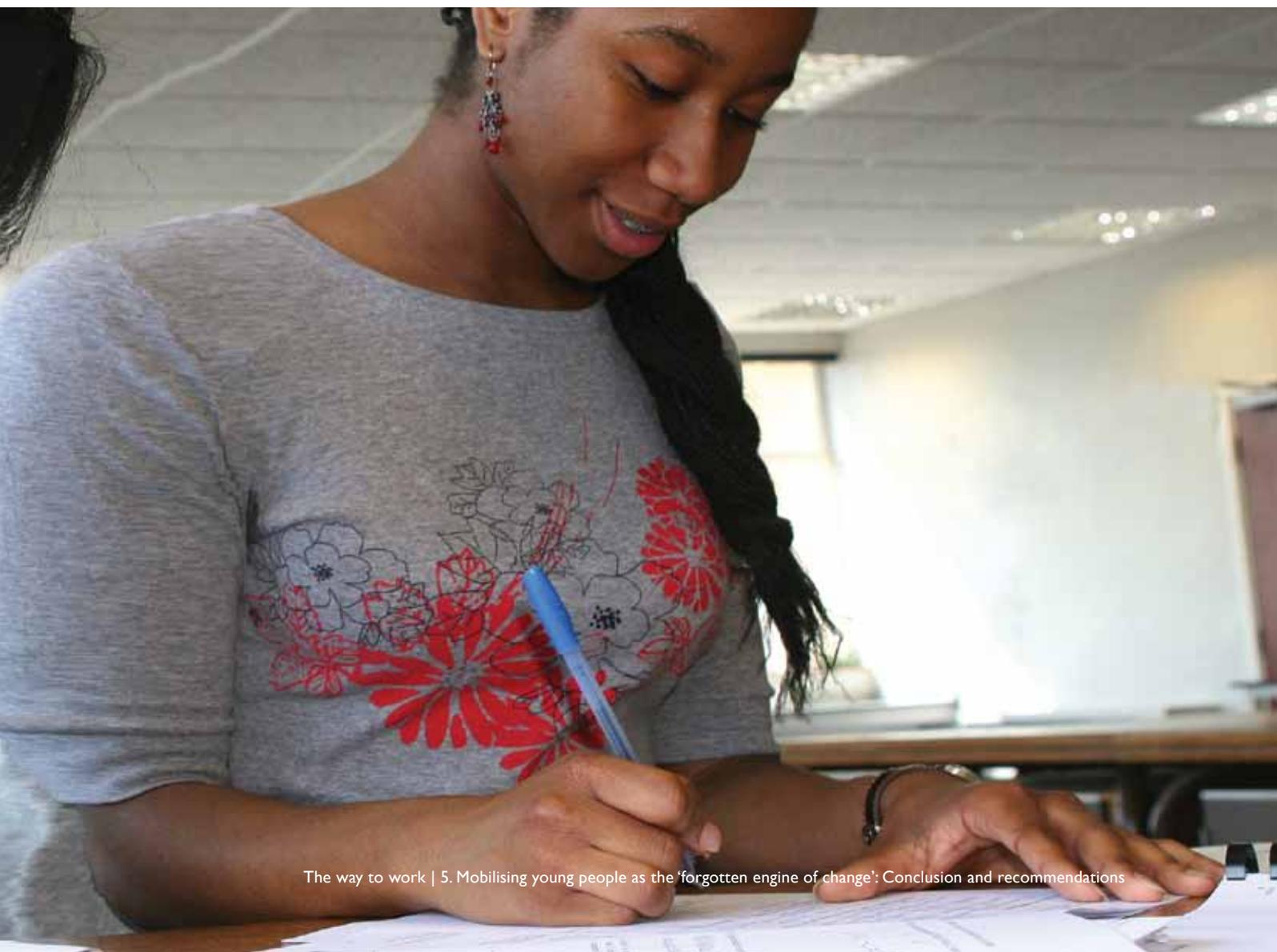
6 Learning from innovative practice: Full case studies

6. Learning from innovative practice: Full case studies

This report has drawn extensively from existing examples of innovative practice. This chapter presents detailed case studies of twelve UK-based programmes which exemplify innovative approaches to education and careers IAG provision. These include:

• Studio Schools
• Enabling Enterprise
• Giving Nation
• Young Enterprise
• The School for Social Entrepreneurs school-based programme
• The Bulwell Academy
• Working Rite
• Space Unlimited
• Ignite Leadership
• Rare Recruitment
• Brighter Futures London
• The Markfield Project

These programmes were selected to represent some of the range and diversity in approaches that are being used in this area. The programmes range from those in their pilot stages to the well-established, and exemplify work that is going on in both formal as well as informal educational contexts, and catering to the specific needs of different groups of young people, particularly those experiencing challenging transitions (including young people with disabilities, young asylum seekers; minority ethnic groups and young women; young people at risk of disengagement from education and training; and young people living in resource-poor settings).

Studio Schools

Website: www.studioschoolstrust.org
Founded: 2007
Location: Throughout the UK
Description: Studio Schools embrace project-based learning to build important skills for life and to enable young people to make more effectively the transition to the workplace.

Background and aims

Studio Schools are a new kind of school designed to help 14 to 19-year olds better prepare for the world of work. Studio Schools use a project-based learning model to provide young people with qualifications and a full range of skills – while also engaging them in working in, and running, business and social enterprises and directly serving customers.

The programme was developed in response to a growing body of evidence[197] indicating that schools are not equipped to impart employability skills, including teamwork, enterprising behaviour, resilience, creativity, decision-making, and social skills. The programme's founders noted that employers often say that many young people lack employability skills and, problematically, many employers therefore seek to acquire these skills by importing them – hiring foreign workers rather than those born and educated in Britain. This trend only serves to further maroon people in "workless ghettos", and counteracts community cohesion, particularly when unemployment starts to rise.[198] This context helped drive the desire to create a school that could respond to some of these problems, provide the skills sought by employers, and to help young people to develop into more employable adults. The aim is to have an overall transformative effect on young people's lives by saying to them that "work is important."[199]

The initiative is also geared at tackling the problem of widespread disengagement from traditional schooling, targeting those young people who remain in school but become disinterested in their education and fail to fulfil their potential. The current educational system is geared towards those who are more suited to an academic learning environment, which can be alienating to more practical learners, and which can lead to disengagement and underachievement. Studio Schools have been developed to better suit the needs of and re-engage these students, creating new options

for them and enabling them to develop the skills and qualifications they need to succeed, while simultaneously bringing benefits to the local communities in which they are located.

The first Studio Schools opened in September 2010 in Luton and Kirklees, with new schools set to open in every region of England by 2012. Studio Schools were officially launched in November 2010 by the Schools Minister and were highlighted in the 2010 Schools White Paper, The Importance of Teaching.[200]

Key ingredients
Key ingredients include a focus on practical learning and exposure to the world of work, including paid work experience and personalisation.

Practical learning and emphasis on employability and life skills
Studio Schools are not designed to replace other secondary schools. Rather, they aim to complement them by providing an alternative approach suitable for young people looking for a more entrepreneurial option or alienated by traditional pedagogy. Studio Schools offer a more practical, hands-on approach to education than traditionally provided, building on evidence that this can successfully motivate disengaged young people and prepare them for the world of work. The innovative curriculum framework has been developed in partnership with the country's leading educational bodies. What makes the approach unique is not so much what is offered but how it is delivered: the schools teach the national curriculum through inter-disciplinary, enterprise-themed projects. The style and ethos is different to most existing schools, with a much stronger emphasis on practical work and enterprise, with employability and life skills underpinning all the schools' activities. Although students obtain GCSEs and diplomas, they will do them through project-based activity.

Studio Schools take education out of the traditional classroom setting, with students learning primarily through enterprise-themed projects in their local area. Learning is contextualised and rooted in the local community – for example, students could be

tasked with producing a health report for a local hospital or a business brief for a local business.

Exposure to the world of work
The schools are seen as a "transition to the workplace" [201] and, accordingly, will have many features of a workplace. For example, Studio Schools are open all year round, rather than closing down for six weeks in the summer and three weeks at Christmas, and students will be required to book holidays over the course of the year as in the workplace. Students are in mixed-age classrooms working in small teams. At the age of sixteen, students will do two days a week with an external employer, and will be paid, so that students "feel like it's a job" – distinguishing it from most work experience opportunities.[202] The work placements are aspirational and linked to employment opportunities in the local area, thus allowing students to develop an in-depth knowledge of how businesses operate and giving them direct experience of their local labour market. Through this, according to David Nicoll (Founder and Chief Executive, Studio Schools), young people "get exposure to the world of work and they start to acquire those skills that are necessary if you're going to succeed in the work. They actually get to see how other people live their lives."[203]

As well as the link to the labour market, Studio Schools endeavour to build a bank of one week internships with prestigious national and international employers. For example, students might go and work in the National Theatre or in Allen & Overy's Brussels office, in order to give young people a sense that there is "life beyond [their] immediate social network."[204] This also helps to build aspiration, as it exposes participants to a range of individuals in different positions and at different levels of authority. This exposure to the workplace helps young people to understand the range of work opportunities available, and to get a sense of where their own career journeys could lead.

Personalisation
The Studio Schools curriculum framework allows for a high degree of personalisation for each of its students, ensuring that they are able to follow the learning programme that best suits

their strengths, interests and needs. The model includes personal coaches, who work alongside students to develop personalised learning programmes tailored to individuals' needs and aspirations.

Small schools
Personalisation is aided by a small school size, which is also a key feature of the model. The model involves schools of around 300 students, building on evidence that highlights the crucial role that small school environments play in improving attainment and engaging the disengaged. The small size is critical to building strong relationships between students and staff, aiding the development of individually tailored learning programmes and making it easier to manage and successfully deliver the paid work experience element of the curriculum.

Local application
The key elements will be built upon by each individual Studio School which will adapt the model to local circumstances and the needs of the local economy. Individual Studio Schools are connected by the Studio Schools Trust, a membership body that unites all Studio Schools, which acts as a linking point and aids the sharing of best practice, provides advice and curriculum support and is responsible for ensuring high educational standards across the board.

Enabling Enterprise

Website: www.enablingenterprise.org
Founded: 2008
Location: London, Manchester and Nottingham
Description: An educational programme that prepares students for 'real life', by embedding enterprise and practical learning into secondary school subjects, complementing qualifications with skills, resilience and aspiration.

Background and aims
Enabling Enterprise is a programme geared at providing young people with an education that prepares them for 'real life', by embedding enterprise and practical learning into secondary school subjects and offering students an extra GCSE-level qualification to recognise their efforts. Their premise is that young people

need skills above all else – including the ability to lead, organise themselves, be effective in a team, and present their ideas effectively. Furthermore, the programme is founded on the recognition that skills need to be complemented by the resilience to persevere and the high aspirations to have something worth persevering for.

Tom Ravenscroft (Director, Enabling Enterprise) started the programme while teaching vocational business in east London as a Teach First teacher (a project that recruits talented graduates and places them as teachers in challenging schools). Ravenscroft was working with a fairly disengaged group of young people who were not responding to traditional approaches such as worksheets and textbook questions. He thought that by involving them in something practical – actually doing business, rather than talking or thinking about it – that this might lead to better engagement. The idea evolved into a programme that started in, and began to spread through, Teach First schools. Currently, Enabling Enterprise works with 3,500 students across 35 programmes in London, Manchester and Nottingham. The programme is now in its second year, and they have recently launched a programme for students who have completed the core course, and also for students still in primary school.

Key ingredients
Practical learning as a way of engaging disengaged young people
A key feature of the programme involves harnessing the creativity and entrepreneurialism of young people who are disengaged from school but who "want to go out and do things" in a way that links back to what they need to learn.[205]

Early on, Ravenscroft and his colleagues came to the realisation that the programme was not just about setting up a business; the value in the approach lay in the fact that, according to Ravenscroft, "kids were doing something practical and actually having to lead their own small teams to create something. It was actually the process of creating something and building skills which had been really valuable."[206]

From the Enabling Enterprise perspective, 'entrepreneurialism' is viewed in the broadest possible sense. While recognising that the term has traditionally been linked with business and making a profit, Enabling Enterprise defines the concept broadly as starting, leading and being the advocate for any project. Ravenscroft maintains that "entrepreneurship is about having the vision of the outcome and then finding ways of driving it though to make it happen." By harnessing young people's entrepreneurial energy, this helps them to develop proactiveness and vision, and to "realise they can do something, and they make it happen" – all of which can aid them on their employment transitions.[207]

Developing skills alongside qualifications
A key element of the programme is its emphasis on building skills alongside qualifications, which Ravenscroft sees as complementary endeavours. Enabling Enterprise programmes reflect this philosophy: there are seven different courses in a range of subjects – e.g. French, English, Maths, Science, ICT - that complement the formal curriculum but which are at the same time very skills- and project-focussed. Moreover, the courses that Enabling Enterprise offers are accredited, meaning that students gain not only additional employability skills but also an extra GCSE-level qualification.

The programme targets the development of social skills in particular, including leadership, teamwork and communication. This aspect of the programme responds to the observation that mainstream education is not doing enough to equip young people with basic social skills, which are highly sought after by employers – a scenario that is contributing to the disconnect between what students do in school and what is later expected of them when they enter the workplace.

There is a strong focus on giving young people opportunities to learn to lead as well as to be led when appropriate, and to contribute constructively when they are not the leader. The approach requires that young people work in teams for most activities, with designated leaders for each. This is a powerful learning experience for young people. The experience of leading their peers can initially be a challenge for them , particularly when they are not leader each week, and this requires working quickly to convince others to trust their leadership and convince them of the best course of action (tapping into key communication skills, empathy and motivation). With time, young people gradually start to self-organise into roles without the need for external intervention, taking responsibility for different areas, even when they are not the formally appointed leader. And, by the end, it is no longer about the 'formal title.' During the year, their perception of leadership changes profoundly, as young people "begin to appreciate that most power is through informal channels" and the consequent need to think about how to mobilise these.[208]

The programme also explicitly facilitates opportunities for young people to work with peers in their classes as well as from other schools, thereby taking young people into new social situations that are out of their "comfort zone." These settings, says Ravenscroft, require "fairly basic sorts of social interactions" - such as how to "make small talk" – but which young people are not necessarily able to do with ease. The programme creates settings that help young people to test and build even these simple skills and capabilities which they typically would not get in the classroom or at home.[209]

Building confidence needed to put skills into action
In tandem with targeting skills development, Enabling Enterprise simultaneously places emphasis on building the confidence young people need to put skills into action. This comes partly from building a track record of completing tasks week after week, combined with an emphasis on encouraging personal reflection on what worked and what didn't work in each case. This reflective process is seen as pivotal in helping young people to build on the skills they have learned and continue the journey forward.

Connecting classroom learning to future employment: Putting learning in context
A key part of the Enabling Enterprise programme involves taking students out on trips

each term. They partner with organisations – such as high-profile banks or law firms – and take students on site visits to see how their learning will be of use in later life. Through this process, young people "start to connect what they were learning in the classroom to what would actually be useful for the rest of their lives." Young people enrolled in Enabling Enterprise's French programme, for example, used the experience to find out from law firm employees how studying languages had helped them in their careers, and conducted a video conference with the Paris office of the firm. This "helped them to see their learning in context and why it was useful" and in this sense was "very powerful."[210]

These trips also play an important part in raising young people's aspirations. At present, according to Ravenscroft, an emphasis on qualifications means that schools tend not to engage enough in broadening young people's aspirations. However, he emphasised, young people need the aspiration in order to "stretch them to reach the qualification." Visits to businesses at Canary Wharf had a powerful effect on raising students' attainment levels and, feeding into this, challenged the prevailing negative culture surrounding academic achievement: "They suddenly saw that getting good qualifications was a key part of working in these areas. And because they wanted the cool job over in Canary Wharf ... it became cool to do well and to be achieving highly."[211]

A long-term, joined up approach
Skills development is typically delivered to students in a fragmented manner, who consequently fail to "understand how it all joins up ... they just can't see the connections at all."[212] Enabling Enterprise distinguishes itself from traditional approaches to skills development by embracing a "long-term, joined up approach."[213] As Ravenscroft stresses:

"You really want everything they do to be connected with their skills development and linked to some grand journey which they're part of ... So it's trying to move away from one-off days to some sort of transformative journey ... That's why I insisted this is a one year

programme rather than being delivered on one-off days."[214]

Giving Nation
Website: www.g-nation.co.uk
Founded: 2008
Location: Throughout the UK
Description: A Citizenship Foundation programme for 11 to 16-year-olds that aims to develop the culture of giving and the issues of citizenship in the UK through programmes in schools.

Background and aims
Giving Nation is a Citizenship Foundation programme that supports secondary schools undertaking work to support charity and community. The programme aims to boost learning about charities, social enterprise and individual giving. It does this by providing a curriculum-based active learning resource and a grant to schools to begin work on the project. Young people work together as a class to identify an issue or problem in their local community and, over a series of weeks, with £50 start-up capital, and using their own skill set and motivation, create their own solution. The different communities, backgrounds and issues affect the route that enterprises take; for example, inner city schools have focussed on issues such as gang violence or street crime.

The programme uses social enterprise as a way of creating a dynamic and active learning environment, allowing students to gain real-life insights into local issues, engendering team work and other key skills and community involvement.

Key ingredients
Engaging the 'unusual suspects' through project-based learning
At the core of Giving Nation is a project-based learning approach to citizenship. By creating an active learning environment, says Richard John (Programme Manager, Giving Nation), the Giving Nation programme "gives equal opportunity to everyone," not just the "usual suspects" who are already engaged in leadership roles within the school, by involving young people as an entire class in setting

up a social enterprise. The programme is deliberately school-based and driven through the curriculum in order to ensure the greatest inclusivity. It gives everyone the opportunity to get involved and not just the most academic.[215]

Using social enterprise as a vehicle for developing key skills
Giving Nation engages young people in forming a consensus about what particular cause they are going to champion and then working together around this common cause. This introduces young people to the concepts and experiences of democracy and representation, voting and advocacy, and involves developing and putting teamwork and collaboration skills into practice. The class works as a team, identifying individual strengths and allocating appropriate roles on this basis, with the class coming to function and perform as a business. The process of identifying strengths plays an important role in helping young people to identify skills that they can then later develop and hone into a possible career path.

Young people are involved in identifying problems in their local communities, and then researching and developing a level of insight and empathy into the cause they are addressing. The emphasis is local, given that young people are most in touch with issues that are close to them and best positioned to create a change. Young people then have to reach out into their community, identifying allies and developing links with teachers, local businesses and/or local community members, talking to people and then creating a solution. In this respect, "it's the community pulling together in order to achieve success."[216] In the process, young people develop vital interpersonal and project management skills, all of which contribute towards future employability and help to develop an active and engaged citizen for later life.

A safe environment to take risks
The programme gives all students the chance to be introduced to and acquire employability skills in a safe environment that encourages critical thinking, and where they can take risks and learn from failure as well as success.

An explicit element of the programme involves exposing young people to risk and uncertainty; according to Richard John, it is "not reflective of life if there aren't ups and downs in education". He maintained that:

"There needs to be the opportunity for young people to not only succeed, but also have a taste of failure … Arguably the greater learning comes from the failure rather than the success. This approach to learning gives young people the confidence to ask themselves: what have I taken from this experience and how can I apply this to other experiences?"[217]

Time for reflection
Another core element of the Giving Nation programme is the final, reflective stage that takes place after the young people have researched, delivered their activities, and produced their product or service. This part of the programme, Richard John notes, is "the conclusion of their experience, it's class-based, it's discussion based. So it's a very honest approach." The reflective process plays a key role in helping young people to take skills forward, offering them the space to assess the distance travelled, reflecting on the obstacles they encountered, how they overcame these, and learning that "things are never set in stone, that they should be constantly fluid and moving in order to reach their goals."[218]

Authentic opportunities to take ownership and responsibility
A key aspect of the model involves giving students ownership of the programme, and embracing a "student-led" approach. The programme has been well-received by young people, who "enjoy the fact that they have ownership and responsibility" over the issues their projects address, reinforced by the fact that they are given start-up funding. Students who have participated in the programme have described it as "'unlike anything else we've done;'" in particular, unlike many of their other classes, the programme is not "hypothetical" – it is, Richard John notes, "genuine, active learning." Consequently, students' level of motivation and engagement in the programme is far higher. In some instances, the programme

has had impact beyond the individual level and "completely transformed the ethos of the school" - with the social enterprise projects becoming on-going projects within the schools.[219]

Young Enterprise

Website: www.young-enterprise.org.uk
Founded: 1963
Location: Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and nine English regions
Description: A nationwide charity that builds valuable skills and enterprise capability through a range of enterprise programmes delivered within schools

Background and aims

Young Enterprise offers a range of enterprise programmes to young people between the ages of 4 and 25 years, engaging more than 300,000 students per year with the partnership of 3,500 UK businesses and a network of 5,000 Young Enterprise volunteers. Young Enterprise builds valuable skills and enterprise capability and provides young people with a university-recognised certificate and/or qualification. Enterprise capability is a key output of work-related learning programmes and is defined by Young Enterprise as innovation and creativity; risk-management and risk-taking; the drive to make ideas happen; a can-do attitude; financial capability; and economic and business understanding.

The project has measurable impact: amongst business-owning alumni, Young Enterprise was ranked as the most significant experience they drew upon when establishing and building their venture. Overall, data shows that alumni feel that Young Enterprise contributed to their skill development more than anything else, including work experience, extra-curricular activities and school. Moreover, alumni are more likely to volunteer: 55% volunteer compared with 39% for a control group. Alumni are more successful in their careers than their non-participating counterparts, with a greater appreciation of their skills and the opportunities available to them on leaving school. They are also more passionate about their jobs: 77% of alumni say they are fulfilled and engaged by their jobs, compared to only 59% of a control group.

Key ingredients

Young Enterprise relies on a long history of successful practice and a tried-and-tested approach to engaging and inspiring young people to develop their entrepreneurial skills and attitudes. They have two core offerings – a longer-term programme and shorter day programmes, both of which are explored here in depth.

The Company Programme
Their flagship Company Programme hinges on the idea of giving young people the chance to gain experience in the world of business entirely through their own initiative. It gives students in Year 10 to 13 the chance to start and run their own businesses for a whole year. Young Enterprise aims to provide as realistic an experience of entrepreneurship as possible, in that students have to raise capital at the start (either by putting on fund-raising events or selling shares to peers and family members) and then, once they have start-up funds in place, launching a product. They have to take care of everything that goes into making a new business work – from marketing to analysing sales figures and managing daily operations.

Young Enterprise supports students through various means: for example, through offering a computer programme on their website which allows students to do their books more easily, and a pack that allows students to start a special business bank account with HSBC. Young Enterprise staff are supported by business advisers, who are volunteers from local businesses or large corporations. Volunteers are trained up and then allocated a student-run enterprise to visit at least once a month during the course of the programme. These volunteers also commit to exposing young people to the world of business in various ways – for example, by allowing students to hold board meetings at their company offices to make the experience more realistic.

A key focus of the programme is co-operation and initiative. Emphasis is placed on students developing what Michael Anderson, Development Manager for Young Enterprise

London, characterised as "co-operation under their own steam" rather than in a way that is "foisted on them by a teacher or adult" as is often the case. By placing them in a situation without too much adult intervention, young people are compelled to take the initiative, gradually learning to self-organise into roles (such as managing director, marketing director, human resources and IT), and develop rapport and teamwork skills in the process. Students gain insight into the challenges of leadership and teamwork – for example, the process of appointing a managing director often starts as a "popularity contest", but down the line students start to realise that the most popular person in the group is not always the most adept at organising tasks and people – often prompting a "minor revolt" as roles are reallocated.[220]

Michael Anderson explains that this is an important opportunity for young people to learn that leadership is about more than just "being in charge", and is not an arena limited only to "the most charismatic or the most popular people":

"It's good in different situations to see other leaders emerge and gain respect ... And when you see students do gain respect through their ideas or their work, they become more self-confident and more charismatic and they do actually sound louder ... so it's kind of self-perpetuating."[221]

Students get exposure to working with adults as well as peers. Often, executing a project involves liaising with school staff, offering students the opportunity to engage with adults on more equal terms than is typical of the student-teacher relationship.

Interpersonal skills, teamwork and initiative developed through the project are seen as key to future employability, given that they are transferable from job to job. Alongside these, the programme also facilitates the development of more business-oriented skills, for example, through providing sales opportunities at local markets for students to sell their products.

The Company Programme has impressive results: alumni are twice as likely to start their own business as their peers, and participation in the project correlates with higher future earnings.

Day programmes
Young Enterprise recognises the importance of entrepreneurial qualities outside of the context of starting one's own business, viewing these as transferable across the contexts of both school and the workplace.

With the success of the Company Programme, Young Enterprise began to offer day programmes with primary and secondary school students, which are tailored to the needs of different groups. Primary school programmes tend to be focussed more generally on work-related learning, offering a progressive scheme of models that take students on a journey of exploration through the world of work, financial capability and enterprise. Modules start with a personal orientation at the level of 'Ourselves' and 'Our Families' and become more business-focussed as students progress through 'Our Community', 'City', 'Nation', culminating in 'Our world', which directs focus on global trade. The focus here is less on students running a business and more about exploring the world of work and the range of career paths available.

What distinguishes the approach is that "it is not like a prescriptive careers day": many young people have very narrow conceptions of what jobs exist, often taking celebrities and footballers as their role models, and Young Enterprise programmes are geared at opening up conceptions of success. Even in secondary school programmes where there is talk specifically about salaries, jobs and the things needed to get these jobs, Anderson asserts that they "try and encourage students to see the future as still open."

The 'Learn to Earn' programme, for example, geared at students aged 12 to 18 years, is a day programme that challenges young people to make the connection between education, training and employment. The programme is designed to help students with GCSE choices by putting their choices into context. Delivered

in schools with Young Enterprise business volunteers, it includes personal skills and talents assessment and research into future employment opportunities. The first part of the day is spent discussing the concept of success, exploring young people's views on what it means to be successful. The aim is to open up young people's ideas to alternative pathways and avenues and impress upon them by the end of the day that "success isn't necessarily monetary or fame-based, but that it's just doing something you are good at, or happy doing." While it is important not to shut down aspirations of, for example, being a footballer or celebrity, and to encourage young people to chase their aspirations, the focus is on making sure that "they don't close down all other paths."[223]

As noted above, at the core of the Young Enterprise model is a reliance on volunteer business advisers, drawn from local businesses and large corporations. Many young people lack realistic role models, which does little to open up their understanding of the possible pathways available to them. Young Enterprise addresses this through their volunteer programme, wherein tangible role models from the business community are brought into the classroom to talk about their lives. These volunteers talk to young people about their jobs, their daily lives and the route they took to their job. Many of these stories illustrate to young people that the pathway to employment rarely follows a direct route from school, to university, and then straight to a job. In a context where there is pressure on young people to "have a path that is completely linear", these stories show that, in practice, education and employment transitions can be "unforeseeable" and somewhat "random." Anderson notes that this can help to build more realistic expectations among young people, and also to be "really reassuring" for older students who are feeling uncertain about what they want to do. Volunteers are also effective as young people can identify with them, and because they are seen as "people rather than teachers." Students also draw on their time with the volunteers as an opportunity to network and often chase them up for work experience.[224]

The School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) school-based programme

Website (SSE Liverpool): www.sse.org.uk/school.php?schoolid=5
Founded: 1997
Location: Regional schools in Cornwall, Devon, East Midlands, Fife, Hampshire, Ireland, Liverpool, London, Suffolk, Yorkshire and Australia
Description: A school-based project of the School for Social Entrepreneurs aiming to raise and widen career aspirations and build enterprise skills.

Background and aims
Since 1997, the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) has offered a year-long programme of action learning, tailored to develop social entrepreneurs. The programme embraces a 'learning-by-doing' approach that emphasises experience, experimentation and personalisation, and each local or regional SSE tailors and adapts the SSE methodology to suit the area and its respective networks. The underlying principles are to promote practitioner-led programmes which involve peer support, practical (or action) learning, and personalisation.

While the flagship programme targets people aged 20 and over, SSE Liverpool, based in Blackburne House Enterprise Directorate, has been applying the approach in the context of a school for business and enterprise, based in an economically marginalised community. The aim was to work with a small group of young people to raise and widen aspirations beyond the stereotypical career choices, and develop skills that would help those young people who left school with few qualifications. The programme was started in 2008, piloted with a cohort of ten young men and women who met once a week for two years, mirroring their GCSE years. The group have now graduated, and each one of them stayed with the programme for the duration of their final two years at school.

The programme has been hugely successful, helping students develop a strong portfolio of technical skills such as copy writing or film and audio production, as well as a host of core skills

such as those required in communication and teamwork, career planning and preparation for work, customer service, diversity and equality, IT and presentation. The National Open College has recognised the programme with a Diploma in Professional and Personal Skills.

The programme will be rolled out with future cohorts of students at the school, and the SSE is planning to continue working with the group of young people in a way that supports their chosen college programme, and designing a programme that places the young people at the core of it. There is also interest in partnerships with programmes such as Young Advisors[225], and with youth clubs and community centres to deliver the programme. The programme is of particular appeal in a context where further education places are diminishing, and fees rising, as the youth sector shrinks.

Key ingredients
Learning beyond the classroom
A key element of the programme is to facilitate learning beyond the confines of the school grounds. Sylvia Pearson (Development Manager, SSE Liverpool) maintains that school and college tend to be very structured environments where young people tend to be "cocooned" and led through a "hand-held curriculum." [226] This is at odds with later life, where young people will be expected to take far greater freedom and responsibility for themselves and their learning and actions.

They started by doing project visits around Liverpool, taking the young people "out and about" to experience the city, and to meet a mix of people, in contrast with the relatively homogenous population of the town in which the school is based. Young people met a wide range of entrepreneurs, seeing entrepreneurship in action rather than just hearing about it, and working with people ranging in age, ability, disability, and ethnicity. This broad exposure to a diversity of individuals has been of particular value in the learning process.[227]

Focus on skills
The programme targets the development of

fundamental literacy and numeracy skills as well as social, self-presentation, communication and negotiation skills, teamwork and leadership. According to Pearson, many of the young people "have the rights skills set" but do not necessarily know how to apply their skills appropriately. The programme aims to help students develop insight into how they can use the life skills they already have in "good and successful ways to progress."[228]

A core element of the programme involves exposing young people to different social environments, in order to develop core social skills, self-esteem and confidence in their ability to present and handle themselves appropriately in different social contexts. There is a strong emphasis on self-esteem, which is seen as a "foundation to build skills upon."[229] Emphasis is placed on group work, and encouraging the roles and responsibilities of the young people to grow and evolve as part of the group.

*Widening aspirations through 'telling it like it is":
The role of 'Expert Witnesses'*
A key part of the SSE model involves giving its students the opportunity to listen to, learn from, question and network with social entrepreneurs - real practitioners who come to the SSE to share their experience and offer expertise and advice. This was translated into the school model, with 'expert witnesses' brought into the classroom to provide evidence for young people to 'cross examine'. Instead of lecturing, these visitors offer insight into their challenges and successes, and engage in debate as well as answering questions. In the school model, witnesses are briefed to 'tell it as it is' – explaining what they look for when they recruit young people and what skills they need. Pearson noted that young people's aspirations had clearly widened during the course of the programme: for example, during initial interviews, young people's aspirations were confined to roles common in their community including caring, working in beauty parlours and bricklaying; after nine months they identified aspirations including sailing, joining the army and becoming a landscape gardener. Pearson notes, "That came out of meeting people, broadening their horizons, and having people

behind them who said, 'You can do this'."
Opening up these horizons, says Pearson,
means young people "can write their own future
and write their own jobs."[230]

Opening up the meaning of success
For Pearson, the programme is more than
"just about education": "it's that whole getting
ready for adulthood … It's about their personal
development and being in the world, not just
the world of work." Pearson notes that "There's
definitely a mindset from everybody now in
education that success means GCSEs and
A Levels. I think that's not necessarily the
case. I think there's got to be far more of the
qualitative work that the SSE does on personal
development." She emphasised the importance
of the "little things" such as being able to
converse with adults, or approach a stranger
with confidence and shake their hand.[231]

Personalisation, tailoring and flexibility
A highly personalised approach lies at the heart
of this model. Even though qualifications are
involved, students can opt for different units
based on their talents and interests, and there
is room to useevidence these qualifications
in different ways. Similarly, the school staff
"appreciate that one size doesn't fit all" and
recognise that not everybody should be
channelled into the SSE programme.[232]

The success of the SSE approach in the school
context is also attributable to the way in which
it has been adapted and tailored in an age-
appropriate manner, allowing room for flexibility
by evolving the approach "as they went" rather
than having highly prescribed processes and
outcomes in mind from the start.[233] This is in line
with the culture and ethos of the school in which
the approach was piloted, which embraces
a culture of entrepreneurialism, constantly
evolving the curriculum in line with the needs
of young people and the local community. This
culture played an important role in facilitating the
success of the programme.

Partnership and collaboration
SSE Liverpool sees its work as a "partnership"
with young people: "I think the whole ethos
must never be 'we're doing this to you' … I think

it's listening to young people. I think it's ripping
up your agenda … It's listening." Pearson
explains that, "As a partnership, we've worked
out what we can and can't do. We've done
an awful lot of discussion." She recognises
that this is easier for her as someone who is
somewhat removed from the formality of the
school as opposed to a teacher.[234]

Similarly, the school itself is open to partnership
and collaboration, and is always seeking to
bring in and involve people from the local and
business community. The SSE has also played
an important role, stressing the importance
of working in partnership with school staff,
and valuing and upholding their rules and
approaches, and including staff in their
programme, rather than parachuting in and
taking over.

The Bulwell Academy

Website: www.bulwellacademy.co.uk
Founded: 2009
Location: Bulwell, Nottingham
Description: An Academy school focused on
developing young people's entrepreneurial and
business skills.

Background and aims

The Bulwell Academy[235] specialises in business
and enterprise skills development and caters
for over one thousand 11-16 year-olds with up
to a further 250 places for post-16 students.
The academy strives to create an environment
and a curriculum for a 21st century school, by
fostering an enterprising climate for learning
and working closely in partnership with local
employers and the community. The academy
operates in new, state-of-the-art buildings.
Delivered by Nottingham's Local Education
Partnership, part of the project created jobs for
local skilled and unskilled workers, helping to
boost the local economy. In the first year, the
academy achieved a 6% rise in GCSE A*-C
grades in maths and English.

Key ingredients

Learning by doing and basic skills
The academy puts 'learning by doing' at the
forefront of the curriculum without sacrificing
academic achievement, offering strong

academic and vocational courses alike and presenting students with many paths to success. Bulwell also places a strong emphasis on basic skills for all students, who spend the first hour of each day in 'Business Communities' developing both their literacy and numeracy skills as well as enterprise skills and other competencies (including communication, leadership, teamwork, decision-making, risk-taking and analysis, confidence, creativity, initiative, respect, responsibility, resilience and resourcefulness). Enterprise skills are viewed as the core qualities that students require to be successful in their academic learning and securing their future economic wellbeing

Business links
Alison Bingham, Director of Business and Enterprise at the Bulwell Academy, has previous experience of running small businesses and latterly worked in government policy specialising in enterprise skills development. She was recruited to help inject business and enterprise thinking into the academy through developing high-quality vocational education and establishing links and partnerships with employers. An early achievement was to establish the Bulwell Academy Business Advisory Board. The Board is a non-governing body constituted by employers who have an understanding of how the academy operates and are able to link the academy to outside opportunities and provide mentoring support to staff. Reflecting on the Bulwell Academy approach, Bingham attributes its value to the fact that: "It's open to opportunities, it's forward-thinking and it's flexible."[236]

Personalised, non-prescriptive careers information, advice and guidance
The Business and Enterprise team at the Bulwell Academy has been developing and delivering a new 'Employment Intelligence' programme which responds directly to criticisms that young people are not prepared for the world of work. The Employment Intelligence programme begins with students 'spying' on the world of work and gaining 'intelligence', as the student matures they become 'employment

intelligent' (or ready for the world of work). The programme is geared at preparing students for the reality of the workplace, and the language of business. The programme involves helping them understand "the ground rules" for the workplace – such as arriving on time, self-presentation, and a positive attitude – and offering them a safe environment in which they are able to air some of their misperceptions and identify their personal strengths and weaknesses.[237]

At the heart of the Bulwell model is a forward-looking approach that focuses on transferrable skills and attributes, rather than on specific careers; and a personalised approach that engages students in identifying their individual talents, strengths and weaknesses. Bingham explained that career advice and guidance "tends to go in straight lines" [238] , while young people's transitions into and through employment do not. In order to address this, they have adopted a far less prescriptive approach:

"At the Bulwell Academy, we prefer not to focus on specific jobs as such and instead talk much more about skills and attributes ... We very much come from the stance that the jobs that they may be doing in the future may not yet exist. So we want them to have the confidence in themselves, through realising where their passions lie and understanding their strengths and weaknesses to see the range of jobs that are available to them."[239]

The approach seeks to encourage students to reflect on their individual interests and strengths through the application of personality profiling techniques, thereby helping them to develop a narrative of their talents and potential future path which draws not only on academic success, but on personal interests and family traditions. This approach is particularly relevant for the specific demographic of young people attending the school, half of whom receive free school meals (an indicator of poverty in the UK context). Among this group, focussing on careers may be alienating for some parents (who may be unemployed, on long term benefits or in low-paid, unskilled work),

so switching the emphasis tot personality, attributes, skills and passions allows young people to talk to their parents and communicate the dreams they have without parents feeling alienated, allowing greater potential for parents to respond in a supportive and encouraging manner. More generally, this approach helps to build pride by valuing each individual and equipping young people to take responsibility for their own actions.

An enterprising climate for learning
On a broader level, the Academy creates an environment where students experience an enterprising climate for learning. The Academy emphasises a long-term approach, exposing young people across the years to enterprise concepts and practices and developing their enterprise capabilities as a cumulative process. In particular, they hold back from "one-off" projects.[240] Also, they focus on developing in-house staff capability, rather than "parachuting external consultants in." In this regard, Bingham says they are on a "journey of developing the enterprise capability of the staff themselves." This has required a "huge cultural shift, recognising that teachers sign up to educate, not to develop workforce skills or start up businesses."[241]

Working Rite

Website: www.workingrite.co.uk
Founded: 2005
Location – Head Office: Edinburgh
Location of projects: Edinburgh; Glasgow; Aberdeenshire; Dundee and Angus; Perthshire; North Ayrshire; Caithness and Sutherland; Clackmannanshire, and Scottish Borders. Four projects have also been launched in England, in Sheffield, Sunderland, Newcastle and Gateshead (with a fifth soon to be launched in East Sussex). These projects follow many of the Working Rite principles but, given the different funding and training compliance rules, they are unable to follow the 'pure' Working Rite model.
Description: A work-based mentoring model that matches up young people to local tradespeople, offering meaningful work experience and a rite of passage into the world of work and adulthood.

Background and aims
Working Rite is an Edinburgh-based social enterprise specialising in work-based mentoring projects. The model supports teenagers (80% young men) aged 16-19 to achieve maturity and readiness for work. It pairs each young person with a tradesperson for a six-month, full-time learning experience. It is aimed at young people who are "fed up with the classroom", and for whom formal, modular training is not an attractive option.[242] Through work placements with an adult who acts as both employer and mentor, the project aims to help young people to develop into responsible, self-aware adults.

The programme was developed in response to the fact that the classroom-based approach was not working effectively as a mode of training, from the perspective of students and tradesmen alike. The programme started in Scotland and has since been replicated in a number of locations there as well as in England. Each local project is run by an existing organisation in the local area, often a housing association. Working Rite works with such organisations and other partners to identify funding, set up the project's systems, recruit the project co-ordinator, and induct the co-ordinator into the Working Rite method.

The 'Rite' in the name implies a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood, experienced through the chance to work alongside adults. The initiative engages with the question of what it means to be a 'good man' in society and the community, aiming to re-establish a positive vision of male adulthood and to re-create an initiation to adulthood. Sandy Campbell (Chief Executive and Director, Working Rite) links his vision with the way societies have always initiated young people into adult life: traditionally, when a young man reached a certain age, an elder took him away from the peer group and engaged him in a "rite of passage" to "learn the key ingredients of adulthood."[243] Increasingly however, in Western society, young people are socialising less with their elders, locked within a peer-based culture and even sequestered from adults in schools and youth clubs. In the absence of strong role models, many young people are turning to

gangs, and insulating themselves "in a culture of cynicism and rebellion." [244]

The idea behind the programme is to re-invent an approach that worked well in the past - the "old-fashioned" method of apprenticeships, which has been largely taken over by a more skill-based, modular approach.[245] It creates an environment where teenagers leave their peer group and go through a maturing experience in the company of people older than themselves, reproducing the influential role that one's first boss plays in so many lives; the programme's motto is: Everyone remembers their first boss.

Key ingredients
Real and mutually beneficial
Working Rite is based around a 'deal' that both young people and tradesmen agree to, a brokered 6 month work placement or working partnership between the two parties. The tradesperson commits to paying £1 per hour, so the young person earns nearly £100 per week (the state paying about 2/3 of this) – meaning that the young person earns as much as in a first-year apprenticeship. Both parties regard the experience as 'real work,' and not a 'project' or a training course. The trainee gets experience that looks, feels and pays like a real job; gains real practical skills and on-site experience; and is treated as one of the workforce, and the experience provides a strong route into a full-blown apprenticeship and eventual employment. The tradesman gets an extra pair of hands at minimal cost, including no expenditure on tools or protective equipment; is shielded from the bureaucracy and paperwork that would otherwise by entailed (e.g. health and safety checks and insurance are taken care of through Working Rite), and gets a hassle-free recruitment process with no obligation.

A key element of the programme's success is that it been shaped to meet the needs of local tradespeople, making the approach into a viable business model. Working Rite pitches all of their publicity around the needs of the business, rather than the young person, distinguishing it from most youth organisations which tend to emphasise the training needs of young people. The Unique Selling Point is, "How do you

fancy an extra pair of hands for £1 an hour? No paperwork. No commitment." Working Rite do not ask for any commitment on the part of employers, nor do they expect employers to commit to offering the young person a job at the end of the process; they simply "trust the relationship to take its course."[246]

Relationship-based learning with an adult
Young people are always placed in a one-to-one situation with an adult, with none of their peers around. The programme is rooted in "relationship-based learning", where a young person is inspired by a person with whom they form a relationship, rather than learning which is "broken down into individual skills and then accredited and certificated." Although it is not formal training, it is nonetheless a valuable learning experience, whereby young people "are learning about the culture of work."[247]

Impact
The programme's results are impressive: roughly 800 young people have taken part in the last six years, and before the recession 75% of participants progressed to full time employment or apprenticeships. Working Rite stands as a "very effective yet easily replicable model to tackle the growing number of young people who are not in employment, education, or training."[248] It was granted the 2009 Award for Social Enterprise by the Centre for Social Justice, heralded as "excellent example of the third sector's capabilities: providing innovative solutions to problems that have long defeated the State." [249] At the 2009 Conservative Party Conference, Lord Freud noted the success of Working Rite and cited the party's intention to create 100,000 places for young people on its model, and the coalition government's programme[250] set out ways to support the creation of such work pairings, alongside apprenticeships, as part of a wider programme to get Britain working.

Space Unlimited
Website: www.spaceunlimited.org
Founded: 2006
Location: Glasgow
Description: A consultancy business where teenagers are the advisors. The project taps

into young people's innovative capacity to offer insight to clients and offers young people a valuable real-world opportunity to gain and build skills and confidence.

Background and aims

Space Unlimited is a Glasgow-based consultancy offering fresh insights and new understanding to clients such as KPMG, Oracle and NESTA. They do this by helping such clients to collaborate with young people who see things differently, approach problems imaginatively and aren't afraid to say what they think. A team of expert facilitators put young people in the lead, enabling them to apply their creativity to real issues facing the client organisation. Young people get the opportunity to gain real-life learning beyond the classroom while clients get a new way of generating fresh insights that can improve business performance and enhance employee development.
The aim is to enhance the innovative capacity of organisations while simultaneously helping young people to build life skills and confidence. Examples to date range from consulting on the value of online social networks, to finding new ways of supporting young people to find work (particularly in a time of recession), to helping the Scottish Government to consider what the Curriculum for Excellence means to students.

Heather Sim (Founder and Chief Executive) created the Space Unlimited approach after working for nearly 20 years in economic and business development. In that role, she developed a love for learning about what encourages innovation and what holds us back from our natural creativity. Space Unlimited began in 2003 when Scottish Enterprise brought together 600 young people, teachers from 12 secondary schools, and numerous companies for an experiment. The experiment showed that creating a space where people could take on roles they weren't used to could bring about new insights and encourage innovative working. Sim has led the company since it was set up in September 2006, as a spin off from Scottish Enterprise.
The consultancy is now hoping to expand into England and develop its work with teachers

in order to have a broader impact on how young people gain the skills they need – creativity, resourcefulness and resilience – for the 21st century. The programme focus is to foster innovation by encouraging risk-taking and instilling young people with the ability to handle uncertainty, which is seen as key competency in today's world. Sim says:

"Innovation involves uncertainty. It's just not possible to try out something new without taking some risks along the way. Learning how to handle uncertainty and risks is therefore a crucial life skill. You might say it's common sense."[251]

Key ingredients

A real-world learning environment with real risks
The first ingredient contributing to the programme's success is that "it's real" – projects have not been "made up" for young people to do "for fun", and they do not, therefore, see it as patronising.[252]

Second, the philosophy espoused is to allow young people the space to design and lead the project, which can often present challenges: many young people are "at sea" at the beginning - as they have little previous experience of taking charge – and may look to adults to tell them what to do. The important thing here is for supportive adults to show "absolute confidence" that young people will achieve something worthwhile from the outset of the project and to "stop doing things for" young people.[253]

Finally, Space Unlimited is willing to allow young people to direct a project's course, within reasonable limits, which allows participants to make mistakes and learn from failures. Linked with this, there is also an emphasis on encouraging young people to reflect on what has not worked, and on positively managing disagreement within groups about what to do next. Space Unlimited allows young people to work through problems and mistakes themselves, rather than intervening to sort these out for them and moving them along to the next task.

Combining skills development with personal development

The two core skills that are promoted through the programme are resilience and resourcefulness, as these, according to Sim, are key qualities needed for creativity and innovation and, more widely, are what help people function as healthy adults. These involve, first, the ability to "bounce back" from difficult experiences (along with the ability to view these as learning opportunities rather than failure) and, second, recognising one's own assets and resources, and "how to use these to generate a return that matters to you", whether financial or social. It is "about being enterprising in the sense of using the resources you've got." The key benefits for young people are not solely linked to skills development, however; for most it is about personal meaning, self-worth and self-belief. Sim explains: "Any young person we work with on our projects, almost without exception, will say one of the things they enjoyed most about the project was the opportunity to have their ideas heard and to be counted, and to therefore believe that they [are] worth something."[254]

Creating the right environment: Teaching adults 'uncommon sense'

In Space Unlimited projects, all involved are asked to take on roles that are different from the norm – and therefore to take a few risks. It can be daunting for those who are accustomed to occupying the role of 'responsible adult' to give young people the space to be innovative. However, Space Unlimited has discovered that when adults succeed in creating effective conditions and in managing their own feelings about risk and uncertainty, then the benefits for young people are significant. These include a willingness to share previously unvoiced ideas, taking responsibility, asserting preferences and seeking respect from others.

One of the key things that Space Unlimited has learned is that "young people are more comfortable with this approach than most adults, and that the attitudes and behaviours of adults towards risk and uncertainty have a significant impact on the value of the experience for young people."[255] In order to

address this, they advocate the principles of what they call "uncommon sense."[256]

Space Unlimited was selected by NESTA as one of five pilot projects to learn more about the skills and attitudes necessary to encourage risk-taking and innovation in mainstream education and informal learning settings. This yielded insight into the mindsets and behaviours that help people manage uncertainty. As a result, Space Unlimited has created a range of tools to help teachers and practitioners to feel more confident about designing and running activities for young people based on creativity and innovation.. "It takes skills and experience to do this well – to create a space for others to be innovative. That's why we think of it as 'Uncommon Sense'."[257]

They stress, first and foremost, the importance of paying attention to adult behaviours – which often may not receive particular attention or priority in initiatives or contexts where the focus is on youth. A key need is for explicit support and guidance for adults, being clear about roles, greater dialogue about expectations and outcomes, and what success may look like. In particular, adults need to be encouraged to think about risk and uncertainty as holding positive possibilities as much as the potential for danger, and develop their own levels of comfort in dealing with uncertainty. Adults need to:

"develop greater introspection about their own positions. They need to be prepared to be wrong and be open to challenge. They need to recognise their existing beliefs about the young people, their own thoughts about whether their ideas are any good and how these views may be a barrier. They need to learn to ask good questions that are genuinely open and that don't advocate a solution."[258]

Finally, Space Unlimited has found it important to "reflect on value and value reflection." [259] They place greater value on the debrief and reflection process for all adults involved as well as young people, and emphasise self-evaluation as a key part of the reflective approach. As they note, in schools, "young people rarely get asked to give feedback,

especially on adult behaviours." [260] In the Space Unlimited approach, in contrast, getting feedback from young people is a key part of the approach – and valuing this process is advocated as a way of giving young people greater voice and encouraging greater awareness of their own progress and of the relevance of their learning for wider work and society.

Ignite Leadership

Website: www.ignite-leadership.org and www.girlscan.co.uk
Founded: 2009
Location: London
Description: A personal leadership programme for teenage girls aiming to raise aspirations, work-readiness and confidence.

Background and aims

Founded in 2009, Ignite offers leadership and personal development workshops and programmes that aim to help girls and young women to define what success in life and work means to them, and then connects them with role models, opportunities and networks to help them realise their potential. The approach draws on executive-style coaching techniques to help increase their confidence, self-knowledge and resilience, access real life practical experience, and develop employability and leadership skills.

The idea for the programme came to Kathleen Cronin, Ignite's founder, as a result of her experience of mentoring and coaching a wide range of aspiring leaders throughout her career. She was passionate about access to affordable career development opportunities for girls and young women, and identified coaching as the ideal tool for sustainable learning as she developed the ideas and programmes behind Ignite. Revenue for the programme is generated through a social enterprise model, in which coaching for women in their careers provides income that supports the activities of the girls' leadership programme.

The programme was developed in response to the lack of visible women in leadership roles who can stand as role models for the younger generation; a persistent gender pay gap; and gendered stereotyped career choices and advice, wherein women are still disproportionately channelled into the 'five Cs' - clearing, catering, cashiering, caring and clerical work - as opposed to a far greater diversity of occupations for men.

Ignite Leadership's intended social impact spans a number of levels. On an individual level, the programme aims to instil individual young women with increased self-knowledge, self-confidence and resilience. On a wider level, the programme aims to have an impact on organisations, communities and society by generating a greater diversity of candidates for entry level leadership positions, internships and fast track programmes; a more diverse workforce across sectors; and more accessible role models for present and future generations of girls and young women.

Key ingredients

Ignite offers comprehensive career development programmes delivered in schools or community settings, such as youth work settings, after-school clubs or summer programmes. The approach "turns[s] the advice model on its head" [261] : supporting girls to make their own choices and providing access to real-world information, role models and opportunities to make sure those choices are well-informed.

Coaching
Before getting any specific careers advice, girls are involved in workshops using a coaching approach to develop self-knowledge, self-belief and emotional resilience. In this phase of the programme, girls develop an understanding of their strengths, values and motivations. Group work is a key aspect of the approach, which helps facilitate "vicarious learning" [262] – learning from and observing others' behaviour and tactics – providing an important context for learning key employability skills such as good communication, teamwork and collaboration.

Real-world information and inspiration
From there, the focus turns to "real world information" [263] on different industries, careers

and associated lifestyles and pay ranges. This is done through online resources as well as through Ignite's network of 'ambassadors', women from a range of backgrounds and sectors at various stages in their career journeys – from further education and apprenticeships, to entry level positions, up to management roles and leadership positions. Girls also learn about specific issues relating to women in the workplace, develop research skills, and learn about career management skills.

Through Ignite's GirlsCan project, girls are offered not only information but also inspiration. Girls are presented with inspirational stories from positive, female role models who 'tell it like it is.' From their stories, girls can learn about different life choices and career paths, and highs and lows, successes and failures. Girls can access these stories via the new GirlsCan website (**http://www.girlscan.co.uk**), or during Inspire workshops which are delivered in schools, where the ambassadors are brought in to talk to girls about their journeys: "When they were speaking about the past experiences and how they overcame many tough difficulties and didn't give up. I loved it because it inspired me not to give up in the career paths and obstacles I face in the future." (16 year old girl from South London)

Connecting girls to real-world opportunities
The next stage involves connecting girls to real world opportunities. This involves action planning sessions where girls develop personal action plans to take their own learning about careers forward. Ignite also helps the girls to access opportunities such as shadowing and work experience based on their action plan goals.

Engaging the wider community and society
Moving forward, Cronin is exploring the idea of raising aspirations for young women in the wider community. She explained that many people who are offering young women careers advice, are "not aspiring *for* the girls" [264] and tend to offer them gender-stereotyped advice or suggest vocational, low-paying jobs. In this regard, there is a need to work with the community and careers advisors to raise

aspirations. This would involve applying the model in a similar manner but targeting not only young women but also the community around them.

School-business links
Cronin also stressed the importance of "creating more of a dialogue between employers and schools"[265] and developing bridging and/or sponsor programmes between the two. She argues that this is in the interests of young people and employers alike, given that employers often mention that young people are not coming to them with the right skills. Many companies and organisations have large Human Resource departments and provide coaching and employee development programmes; these existing in-house resources and opportunities could potentially be modified as appropriate and applied within the context of schools. Ignite's own model demonstrates the success of a similar approach: the model involves transferring and applying learning from executive coaching into the context of schools.

Rare Recruitment
Website: www.rarerecruitment.co.uk
Founded: 2005
Location: Throughout the UK
Description: Rare Recruitment connects exceptional graduates from diverse backgrounds with some of the UK's top businesses and organisations.

Background and aims
Rare Recruitment is a graduate recruitment company that helps firms achieve greater diversity and offers mentoring, counselling and guidance to high achieving graduates. It helps to prepare and place individuals from diverse backgrounds in firms that typically under-represent some groups (for example women, black and minority ethnic [BME], and disabled graduates).[266]

Rare Recruitment identifies and cultivates talented young graduates who wouldn't otherwise connect with top corporates – those who have ample raw talent and motivation, but who often fall short on awareness of

opportunities, guidance, self-confidence or social capital - and tries to "inject some of that social capital that otherwise exceptional people might lack."

The company serves to fill two niches: first, firms' need for greater diversity and, second, the need for work-related mentoring and guidance among young people. The pool of talent from which Rare Recruitment draws is typically made up of highly talented, high-potential students whose parents will not have worked at executive level; who would not have been exposed to the opportunity to work at a high level in blue-chip firms; and who are predominantly from BME backgrounds. Most of these young people would not have self-selected to apply to the country's top firms before Rare Recruitments intervention.

Rare Recruitment tends to work with the Times Top 100 graduate employers, most of whom are "unusually discerning and aggressive" in their recruitment. For these elite institutions, the key attributes sought in graduates are excellent verbal and written communication, the ability to think creatively and problem-solve, and "either excellent academics or a massively arresting personality."

Each autumn, Rare Recruitment staff visit large numbers of universities to run recruitment events, which are free and open to all. It also offers design and consultancy work with firms, which includes designing programmes, creating bespoke assessment tools, sifting applications, carrying out interviews and offering advice on how to market to key groups of students.

Key ingredients
Bespoke career advice
Rare Recruitment's candidates are initially assessed for potential on five measures – educational achievement, work experience, leadership/membership of extra-curricular organisations, and integrity and personal impact. Successful applicants are invited to take part in an initial interview, where they are asked a series of questions about their values, hopes and aspirations. Their responses form a personality profile, which enables Rare

Recruitment staff to compare their responses to the average and identify the things that are unusually important to their clients. They then offer each student bespoke, individual advice on which careers routes might suit them best. This personalised approach engenders a high degree of trust, meaning that Rare Recruitment is able to suggest suitable careers to students which they might not have otherwise considered due to preconceptions.

Demystifying the academic and job application process
Raphael Mokades (Managing Director, Rare Recruitment) emphasised that in order to allow young people from all backgrounds to have access to employment opportunities, it is critical that both the academic process and the job application process is "completely transparent." Mokades notes that "There is this mentality that you get your head down, work hard, pass your exams, and you will do OK." But gaining employment is about more than simply working hard and achieving academically, he asserts: it is about "knowing how to play by the rules of the game." Young people need to know what a competency-based application ought to look like, how they can prepare for online tests that companies use, what is likely to happen in an interview, and what is likely to happen in a task-based activity in an assessment centre.[267]

Once a student has decided on a career path, Rare Recruitment focuses on helping him or her make a successful application: testing candidates on numerical, verbal and non-verbal reasoning (also offering study sessions to improve scoring), offering practice books and re-tests where appropriate, and exposing them to mock interviews and assessment centres. The focus is not on conditioning students to answer in a prescriptive way, but on reshaping bad habits and illustrating "how high they have to aim if they are to get hired."[268]

Coaching and personal development
Long-term coaching, both in and out of the workplace, is the key to unlocking the potential and skills of these young people, Mokades asserts:

"I believe that if you get enough one-on-one time with someone committed and bright, it will come out. If you can do (something) on an examination paper in an exam hall, which all of these students have proven they can, you must be able to do it out loud; it's just about practice."[269]

Rare Recruitment runs bespoke coaching and development programmes for candidates interested in particular organisations and sectors. Currently, three such programmes are in operation, geared respectively at helping candidates into the Civil Service Fast Stream; the NHS graduate scheme, and into careers with Rare Recruitment's legal clients, with more in the pipeline.

Many of the young people in Rare Recruitment's intake groups have not had access to educational opportunities or family input that cultivates their creative and independent thinking, whilst public-school and Oxbridge-educated young people are trained early on to be leaders and to demonstrate "confidence, charm… and likability. It is such "gold dust" that Mokades aims to bring to his candidates in helping them to prepare for the interviews.[270]

Impact
For every four graduate applications made through Rare Recruitment, on average, two people get interviewed, and one person gets hired. Bespoke coaching and development programmes have also achieved significant impact – for example, candidates who have been in Rare Recruitment's Civil Service Intensive Coaching Programme, currently in its third year, are 16 times more likely to get hired into the Fast Stream.

Brighter Futures London
Website: www.abrighterfuture.org.uk
Founded: N/A
Location: London
Description: A self-advocacy group comprised of 15-21year-old asylum seekers and refugees who are working to improve the lives of others in a similar situation in England, through advocacy and campaigning on key issues faced by asylum seeker and refugee youth.

Background and aims
Brighter Futures London is a self-advocacy group comprised of 15–21-year-old asylum-seekers and refugees who are trying to get their voices heard and to improve the lives of others in a similar situation in England. The group is facilitated by Praxis Community Projects in Bethnal Green, London.

Its campaign has focused on the right to work; a joint campaign with the Refugee Council, TUC (Trades' Union Congress) and STAR (Student Action for Refugees), calling on the government to let young asylum seekers work.

Campaigns are conceived of and delivered by young people in consultation with staff members. Young people receive training in campaigning, public speaking, creatively expressing their messages, and how to tailor their messages to their given audience. The initiative provides young people with personal and social development opportunities while they are awaiting the outcome of the asylum application which helps to prepare them with the skills, aspirations and cultural capital needed to make successful transitions into the workplace.

Key ingredients
A professional environment: Treating participants 'like adults'
A key aspect of the approach, according to Sarah Hodgson (Project Worker, Brighter Futures London) is to "treat them like adults," cultivating a professional environment within which young people can learn key workplace skills – for example, stopping and listening in a business meeting, arriving on time, preparing beforehand, communication skills and personal appearance. They encourage participants to self-impose "ground rules" around what makes a good meeting – such as having respect, using appropriate language (e.g. no swearing), arriving on time – which helps them to stop and think about being in a professional workplace and how to adapt their personal behaviour accordingly.[271]

Harnessing informal learning
Sarah Hodgson explains that, "Being left in limbo has huge implications on feelings of

self-worth, personal development, and social development."[272] Young people arrive in the country with little or no social and cultural capital, and this can pose multiple challenges and can result in a sense of aimlessness. For example, some of these issues came to the fore during a recent photo project in which all the members of the group were given a digital camera and told to take pictures of their working week – to highlight what they do if they have work, and what they do if they don't have work. Hodgson reflected that,

"Really poignant pictures came out of one young lady, she took pictures of her morning, getting up at midday, not really rushing to do housework, watching DVDs, taking a very long bath, because she had nothing to do, and the sense of aimlessness, and the void really … And she had taken a picture of a sign saying: 'One way'. And that was how she felt; she felt like she was being forced in one direction, she couldn't make any deviation … But just no access to money, no access to making choices."[273]

Informal learning and development opportunities are harnessed, as a means to raise aspirations, and connect young people who tend to be at the margins of society, to centres of power and influence. Hodgson emphasised:

"To just go to the centre of the British Government to talk to member of parliament, what a learning experience ... To know that you can access the centre of something. There's a sense that they don't access the centre, the power, where things are in the middle of London. People get stuck in their areas and don't move. And that can impact on aspirations as well …"[274]

They have attended Question Time for young people, bringing them into contact with MPs, helping young people to engage politically and around other campaigns that align with the right to work. Additionally, Brighter Futures London has partnered with other organisations to maximise development opportunities. For example, the Intercultural Communication and Leadership School involved a group

of participants in a week-long residential including leadership training, which has played a powerful role in fostering a spirit of entrepreneurialism amongst the young people and in some cases has helped individuals into self-employment.

The Markfield Project

Website: www.markfield.org.uk
Founded: 1979
Location: Haringey, London
Description: The Markfield project is a community centre promoting rights, independence, inclusion and choice for disabled people and their families.

Background and aims

The Markfield project is a voluntary sector organisation established in 1979 that works with children, young people and adults with disabilities. Markfield runs a variety of youth projects including a programme called MPower, which is focused on empowerment and leadership of adolescents with disabilities or those who have a disabled family member. The MPower group works alongside Markfield staff to develop youth-led ideas and to "help make a difference to what happens at Markfield and in London."[275]

While the young people involved with Markfield have or support people with a variety of disabilities – from cerebral palsy to attention-deficit hyperactivity disorders – what they have in common is the challenges they and/or their loved ones will likely face in transitioning into employment. While the transition into adult life and work can be challenging for all young people, it presents particular difficulties for disabled young people: young people with a disability or health problem are three times more likely to be not in education, employment or training.[276] The problems continue beyond school and higher education: just 59% of disabled graduates are in work versus those with no known disability.[277] Our survey of nearly 500 young people revealed that 75% of disabled respondents felt only "somewhat confident" in achieving their employment aspirations – as opposed to 55% of non-disabled young people.

MPower and other youth programmes at the Markfield Project aim to build leadership skills and attitudes among young people who may not previously have had opportunities or supported spaces to explore their potential. Importantly, it seeks to help develop young people into independent, self-directed adults who can make choices about their lives and the services with which they interact.

Key ingredients
Barbara Zajac (Play Development Manager, Markfield Project) said that professional aspirations for the young people with whom she works are not dissimilar from those of other youngsters – they are keen to tap into their passions to find fulfilment in the workplace, seeking a career related to "what they actually enjoy doing.... what they're like, what they enjoy and what they would like to do."[278] One of the key aims of the project is therefore to create a space for young people to develop leadership skills and confidence to take into their working lives in the future.

Developing leadership skills and experience
Young people involved in MPower and in Markfield's other work are actively leading projects, and Zajac says that her goal is that every group involved with them would be able to run and lead their own projects – this kind of involvement "get[s] the most out of them".[279] Ownership and autonomy are key themes, with young people forming tight-knit groups where many take on responsibilities. They are working to develop leadership skills, and Zajac notes that in this empowered environment young people are "building up, they have better communication skills; they build relationships and confidence and social skills. They learn how to work as a group and working together towards goals".[280] The key to building up disabled young people as leaders is "just knowing a young person and really working with them, [to understand] what support they need (to be successful)".[281] Markfield also aims then to put young people in the lead, which means for Zajac that they "make young people in charge… and make them feel like they own the project or they own the sessions" and that "that's when you get the most out of them."[282]

Mpower has taken on a variety of projects at Markfield and in the community, including planning and fundraising for a play space that was inclusive for all. Once the play space was built, the young people also worked to ensure access was inclusive for young disabled people, convincing the funders to employ disabled young people as inclusion workers to help guide mainstream children to include disabled young people in their play.

Building confidence
Zajac identified self-confidence as a major issue for disabled young people in gaining and keeping employment. Many young people involved with Markfield are surrounded during adolescence – in their families and in the Markfield centre - by people who can support them to fulfil their potential, and they communicate easily with each other and often support each other in communicating. But when they enter the workplace, often in an environment where individuals have no training in supporting disabled people, these and other factors "can really knock down their confidence and motivation."[283] When asked about young disabled people's entrepreneurship, Zajac noted that "[society] disables them straight from the beginning, not giving them a chance even to start. How do we know if we don't give them a chance and we don't support them?"[284]

Through its various youth projects, Markfield creates opportunities for young people to gain and build confidence in their own talents and abilities. The young people Zajac works with often find art and music to be a particularly compelling mode in which to express themselves, and Markfield offers them opportunities to produce their own artwork, CDs and DVDs, building skills and confidence.

Gaining independence
A key factor in working with disabled adolescents is supporting their transition to gaining more independence. This transition is particularly important for working life, as many young people will find their environments and support structures radically altered when they transition to employment. Zajac noted that whilst the young people may experience

these transitions as both empowering and challenging, these experiences may also raise issues for some parents. She notes, "Sometimes even parents find it difficult... It's like, 'He's so little, I don't want him to go to youth sessions,' and I'm like, 'He's a big boy, he's turning twelve, he's growing.'" There are two interrelated issues: "letting go for parents and building up young people's independence as well."[285] Zajac also noted that financial independence is a core motivator for her young participants in thinking about their working lives. Some may be from financially deprived backgrounds and/or experience less financial independence than non-disabled youngsters.

Apendix B:
Online survey

Appendix B: Online Survey

1. How old are you?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
13	2.5%	12
14	6.6%	32
15	13.2%	64
16	8.9%	43
17	13.8%	67
18	13.2%	64
19	4.8%	23
20	4.3%	21
21	5.4%	26
22	9.7%	47
23	5.6%	27
24	6.6%	32
25	5.4%	26
answered question		**484**
skipped question		**9**

2. What is your gender?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Male	37.0%	180
Female	62.0%	302
Transgender	0.4%	2
Other	0.4%	2
Prefer not to say	0.2%	1
answered question		**487**
skipped question		**6**

3. What is your ethnicity?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Bangladeshi	2.5%	12
Indian	3.5%	17
Pakistani	2.9%	14
Other Asian background	2.3%	11
African	6.0%	29
Caribbean	2.1%	10
Other Black background	0.2%	1
Chinese	1.4%	7
Mixed background: Black African and White	0.2%	1

	Response Percent	Response Count
Mixed background: Asian and White	2.7%	13
Mixed background: Black Caribbean and White	1.6%	8
Mixed background: Other Dual Heritage	1.4%	7
Traveller: Roma	0.2%	1
Traveller: Irish Traveller	0.0%	0
Traveller: Other Traveller	0.0%	0
Arab	0.2%	1
North African	0.0%	0
Iraqi	0.0%	0
Kurdish	0.2%	1
Any other Middle Eastern background	0.0%	0
White British	65.0%	316
White Irish	1.0%	5
Other White	4.1%	20
Prefer not to say	2.5%	12
answered question		**486**
skipped question		**7**

4. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (A disability is something that can be physical or mental and affects your day-to-day life. It can take many forms, e.g. needing to use a wheelchair, having a long term illness, severe asthma, dyslexia, epilepsy, ME, depression or anxiety.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	9.5%	46
No	88.2%	426
Prefer not to say	2.3%	11
answered question		**483**
skipped question		**10**

5. What is your yearly household income?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
£80,000 or above	7.8%	38
£60,000-79,000	4.3%	21
£40,000-59,000	11.3%	55
£20,000-39,000	15.9%	77
Under £20,000	23.5%	114
Don't know	31.5%	153
Prefer not to say	5.6%	27
answered question		**485**
skipped question		**8**

6. Where do you live?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
England	92.5%	447
Wales	1.4%	7
Northern Ireland	0.4%	2
Scotland	3.1%	15
Outside of the British Isles	2.5%	12
answered question		483
skipped question		10

7. Do you have, or do you plan to get, any of the following qualifications?

Answer Options	Have	Plan to get	Response Count
GCSEs	78.5% (350)	21.5% (96)	446
Diploma	33% (37)	67% (74)	111
A levels	50.5% (199)	49.5% (195)	394
NVQ/ GNVQ	50% (44)	50% (44)	88
University degree	30% (122)	70% (287)	409
Post graduate degree	17% (37)	83 % (182)	219
Other	59% (33)	41% (23)	56
If you ticked "Other", please specify	48		
answered question			482
skipped question			11

8. What are your employment aspirations for the future? Please tick your top two.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
To be a professional, such as a journalist, engineer, lawyer, nurse, teacher or banker	62.5%	283
To do skilled vocational work, such as working as a carpenter, carer, plumber or hairdresser	2.0%	9
To help other people in a charity, non-governmental organisation or as a community or youth worker	30.5%	138
To go into politics or be a civil servant	24.5%	111
To be an artist, musician, writer or sportsperson	15.2%	69
To start my own business or company	25.2%	114
I don't know	3.8%	17
I don't want a job	0.2%	1
I don't care what kind of work I do	0.7%	3
Other (please specify)	5.3%	24
answered question		453
skipped question		40

9. Who or what has most shaped your employment aspirations? Please tick your top three.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
My own investigations and ideas	73.2%	331
Media and stories I hear about inspiring people	25.0%	113
Lessons or subjects at school	31.6%	143
A mentor, teacher, coach or other person I look up to in my life	27.2%	123
My peers or siblings	11.9%	54
Career counselling	2.0%	9
My parents and their work	24.3%	110
My community and family networks	11.7%	53
Work experience	30.3%	137
Entrepreneurship projects at school	4.4%	20
Community or school clubs or boards	8.6%	39
Other (please specify)	6.9%	31
answered question		**452**
skipped question		**41**

10. What are the most important things you are looking to get from your working life? Please tick your top three.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Job security / knowing my job is safe	19.7%	89
Money / financial attainment	50.0%	226
Prestige and / or respect	25.9%	117
Good working environment / a place where I feel comfortable and happy	46.9%	212
Personal fulfilment / living a fulfilled life	65.5%	296
Changing the world / giving back to society	48.9%	221
Doing something new / creating my own thing	17.9%	81
Fame / being known for something	4.9%	22
Fulfilling other people's expectations	4.4%	20
I don't know	0.4%	2
Other (please specify)	1.8%	8
answered question		**452**
skipped question		**41**

11. Which of the following is most important to helping you achieve your employment related goals? Please tick the top two.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Getting good grades and obtaining qualifications	65.5%	296
Gaining key foundational skills such as numeracy and literacy	3.3%	15
Gaining vocational skills in your area of interest (such as carpentry, hairdressing or plumbing)	4.2%	19
Gaining "soft" skills like team-working, communication and negotiation	23.7%	107
Gaining experience through work placements or internships	51.3%	232
Developing a good network of the right people in my field of interest	41.6%	188
Other (please specify)	2.2%	10
answered question		**452**
skipped question		**41**

12. How confident do you feel about achieving your employment aspirations for the future?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very confident	35.5%	160
Somewhat confident	57.6%	260
Not very confident	6.9%	31
answered question		**451**
skipped question		**42**

13. What are the biggest challenges you face in reaching your goals/aspirations in terms of employment? Please tick the top two.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Competition from other people looking for work	61.9%	279
Not enough experience of work	28.4%	128
Lack of qualifications	8.6%	39
A lack of contacts in the sector that interests me	20.8%	94
Low skill level in key areas like Maths and English	3.5%	16
Not enough jobs available	37.3%	168
Low motivation	4.9%	22
Low confidence	10.9%	49
I don't know	3.5%	16
Other (please specify)	10.4%	47
answered question		**451**
skipped question		**42**

14. What are your chances for succeeding in work compared to your parents'/carers'/older relatives' chances?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Better—I think I have a better chance to succeed in my working life	53.7%	241
Worse—I think I have a worse chance of succeeding in my working life	10.7%	48
Equal—I think I have about the same chances to succeed	27.6%	124
Unsure—I don't know	8.0%	36
answered question		**449**
skipped question		**44**

15. Do one or both of your parents/carers/older members of your household work?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, at least one person in my household works	86.2%	394
No, nobody in my household works	8.5%*	39
Prefer not to answer	5.3%	24
answered question		**457**
skipped question		**36**

*17% (1.9 million) was the national average for 2009 (www.poverty.org.uk)

16. Are you interested in having a similar career or job as your parents/carers/older relatives?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	19.2%	75
No	69.2%	270
Unsure	11.5%	45
answered question		**390**
skipped question		**103**

17. What do you think employers are looking for in employees? Please tick the top two skills areas.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
"Soft" Skills - like the ability to work in a team, communicate well, and listen to others	60.0%	268
"Hard" Skills - like expertise in your area of work, such as being good at maths for someone in the financial sector	50.6%	226

"Enterprise" Skills - like taking the initiative, looking for opportunities and being creative	36.9%		165	
"Practical" Skills - like punctuality, professional dress style and a good and positive professional manner	22.6%		101	
"Leadership" Skills - like the ability to successfully take the lead for a team on a task or project	26.0%		116	
answered question			**447**	
skipped question			**46**	

18. Do you feel like you are (or were) being taught and given the chance to practice these skills in school? Please tick the box for each area of skills.

Answer Options	Yes	No	Unsure	Response Count
"Soft" Skills - like the ability to work in a team, communicate well, and listen to others	76% (336)	16% (69)	8% (35)	440
"Hard" Skills - like expertise in your area of work, such as being good at maths for someone in the financial sector	66% (288)	23% (101)	11% (49)	438
"Enterprise" Skills - like taking the initiative, looking for opportunities and being creative	39% (168)	50% (219)	11% (49)	436
"Practical" Skills - like punctuality, professional dress style and a good and positive professional manner	66% (286)	27% (119)	7% (33)	438
"Leadership" Skills - like the ability to successfully take the lead for a team on a task or project	53% (234)	35% (152)	12% (52)	438
answered question				**444**
skipped question				**49**

19. Do you think your education/experience at school prepared you, or is preparing you, for the world of work?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.8%	226
No	32.6%	145
Unsure	16.6%	74
answered question		**445**
skipped question		**48**

20. When you hear the word 'entrepreneur' what you do think?
Please tick the two you think relate most directly to being an entrepreneur

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Someone who makes a lot of money and is successful	36.1%	160
Someone who 'goes it alone' and isn't afraid to take risks, who is driven and determined	79.2%	351
Someone with a particular mindset or attitude towards work	38.8%	172
I don't know what a an entrepreneur is	1.8%	8
Other (please specify)	7.9%	35
answered question		**443**
skipped question		**50**

21. Do you personally know anyone who is an entrepreneur?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	51.7%	229
No	39.7%	176
Unsure	8.6%	38
answered question		**443**
skipped question		**50**

22. Do you think you are an entrepreneur, or could become one?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	46.6%	210
No	11.3%	51
I don't know if I could do this	19.5%	88
I don't want to be an entrepreneur	21.1%	95
I don't know what an entrepreneur is	1.6%	7
answered question		**451**
skipped question		**42**

23. If you don't want to become an entrepreneur, or you don't think you can become one, why not? Tick all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I don't have the skills	32.8%	44
I don't have the personal characteristics	52.2%	70
It takes too much money	36.6%	49
Other (please specify)	22.4%	30
answered question		**134**
skipped question		**359**

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Biography

Lauren Kahn is a research associate at the Young Foundation, where she works on a major programme of research mapping effective and innovative practice in youth leadership development, drawn from across the globe, as part of The Youth of Today. Her other work at the Young Foundation has focussed on community leadership; methods of social innovation; and social innovation and creativity in cities. She joined the Young Foundation in September 2008. Previously, Lauren worked at the Centre for Social Science Research, based at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Her work there included research on childhood and adolescence in post-apartheid South Africa; research on HIV/AIDS-related diagnosis, disclosure and stigma; and research exploring the links between violence, poverty and social exclusion. In 2007, Lauren completed her MSSc in Psychology at the University of Cape Town. Her dissertation explored female adolescent sexual decision-making, relationships and reproductive and sexual health.

The world of work and transitions to adulthood and independence are in a state of flux. Young people negotiating their transitions to adulthood are faced with unprecedented choice and opportunity, but also far greater levels of uncertainty and risk.

The Way to Work looks at shifts in the labour market, the workplace and transitions to employment, highlighting the need for education and careers information, advice and guidance that responds to the changing needs of young people and the economy.

Drawing on the voices of young people, some of whom were involved in leading the research, and building on lessons from innovative practice that is being developed and applied in formal and informal education settings across the UK, the report proposes a guidance framework for practitioners, educators and policy-makers on how education and IAG can be developed and aligned to best support and empower young people to be active negotiators of their learning and work pathways.

the youth of today