

SSDA Project:

SSC IAG Role Development

Final Report on Sector Skills Councils

March, 2005

Jenny Bimrose
Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL

Tel: 024 765 24231
Fax: 024 765 24241
Email: j.bimrose@warwick.ac.uk

Sally-Anne Barnes
Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick

Michael Orton
Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick



WARWICK INSTITUTE *for*
EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH



Contents

	Page
Foreword	
Acknowledgements	
Executive summary	i
Part A: Pathfinder Sector Skills Councils	
1. CITB-Construction Skills	1
2. e-skills UK	7
3. SEMTA	12
4. Skillset	23
Summary of Pathfinder SSCs' IAG services	33
Part B: Other licensed Sector Skills Councils	
5. Cogent	42
6. SummitSkills	48
7. Automotive Skills	52
8. GoSkills	58
9. SkillsActive	63
10. Lantra	69
11. Skillfast-UK	74
12. Improve	81
13. skillsmart	86
14. Skills for Logistics	90
15. People 1st	94
16. Skills for Health	97
Summary of other licensed SSCs' IAG services	100
Appendices	
1. Interview schedule	109
2. Prompts for use with question 4a – understandings of IAG	116

Foreword

This study is being funded by the Sector Skills Development Agency, through Skillset. It builds upon and extends findings from an initial survey of Sector Skills Councils' (SSC) careers and information, advice and guidance (IAG) provision, published in March, 2004.

The second phase of investigation provides a more in-depth analysis of the role, development and nature of the information, advice and guidance function. Information collected from the sixteen Sector Skills Councils that took part in the initial survey forms the basis of this report. It presents a comparative analysis of data collected from the sixteen SSCs and has a dual focus:

- First, it examines in some detail the origin and nature of services offered within each of the SSCs; and
- Second, it reviews plans and possibilities for future development of the IAG function.

Part A of this report: 'Pathfinder Sector Skills Councils' focusing on the (then) four Pathfinder SSCs was produced as a stand-alone report in July 2004.

Acknowledgements

Warwick Institute for Employment Research would like to thank the Sector Skills Development Agency and Skillset for their support for this project.

Sincere thanks go to the sixteen participating SSCs, representatives of which gave generously of their time during the data collection phase of the research.

Specifically:

- Julian Humphreys, Business Manager, Recruitment and Careers, CITB-ConstructionSkills
- Helen Porter, Project Manager, e-skills UK
- John Bristow, Careers and Education Manager, SEMTA
- Ilka Walkley, Manager, skillsformedia
- Susan Smart, Products and Services Project Leader, Cogent
- Keith Marshall, Chief Executive, SummitSkills
- William Blacklock, Director of Learning and Skills, Automotive Skills
- Matthew Scarff, Apprenticeship Executive, GoSkills
- Kate Tetley, Vocational Learning Manager, People 1st
- Jane Bondar, Careers Adviser, Improve
- Peter McLaren-Kennedy, Head of Communications, Skillsmart
- John Bowman, Director of Policy, Skills for Logistics
- Joanna Bayton-Smith, Cross Sector Coordinator, Skillfast-UK
- Louise Wood, Head of Marketing and Communications, Skillfast-UK
- Sue Hook, Programme Manager National Occupational Standards and Cross Sector, SkillsActive
- Peter Stansbie, Director of Strategy, Skills for Health
- Chris Catchpole, Careers and Employability Development Manager, Lantra

Each sector report has been checked for accuracy by the person providing the information.

Special thanks go to Ilka Walkley and Adrian Tolson, at skillformedia for their expert and good-humoured project management.

Executive Summary

IAG role development

There are **similarities in the development of the IAG function** within three of the Pathfinder SSCs and several of the other licensed SSCs, since each developed from legacies left by their organisational predecessors (the Industry Training Boards and the National Training Organisations). The current development of an IAG function within the licensed SSCs is varied and often restricted by resource availability.

In most of the Pathfinder and other licensed SSCs, the **IAG function extends to promotion of the sector**, as well as support for those working within. This is regarded as an important priority for future developments.

Recent **policy developments** (in particular, the publication of the Skills Strategy White Paper¹, highlighting a gap between public policy and IAG) **are having a variable impact on thinking and practice across the Pathfinders**.

IAG is not high on the agenda for some of the licensed SSCs, but a minimum level of service is operated by many. The **minimum service provision** for all the SSCs includes maintaining a website and up-to-date literature on the sector.

Only three of the licensed SSCs in this study have **no IAG function**, but do provide some form of service which includes information on the sector

IAG teams

There is **considerable variation in team size and types of relevant expertise** was focused across the four Pathfinder SSCs and three other licensed SSCs. The majority of the other licensed SSCs have **no dedicated IAG team**, but have people in place who, as part of their role, have responsibility for IAG and its development.

All four Pathfinder SSCs offer specialist **careers information and advice** on their websites.

¹ DfES, DTI, DWP and HM Treasury (2003) 21st Century Skills: Realising our Potential (Individuals, Employers, Nation), CM 5810, London: The Stationery Office.

Type of IAG services offered

IAG provision across the SSCs range from **highly proactive and creative to minimalist and reactive to demand**.

Many SSCs **limit their offer to information and advice**, whilst enquirers in need of more in-depth guidance are referred to other agents, such as learndirect.

Discrete client groups are prioritised differently by different SSCs. This ranges from an exclusive focus on the IAG needs young people to an exclusive focus on adults. Such priorities reflect sectoral concerns.

Similarly, **differences are evident in service offers to groups under-represented in employment** across the Pathfinder SSCs. Again, this reflects particular sector concerns and sensitivities.

Where the IAG role is well-developed **marketing of services is sophisticated** with a range of media used. This was particularly evident in the Pathfinder SSCs. Some of the licensed SSCs are undertaking innovative activities to promote their sectors, with the activities and marketing of some other SSCs restricted due to limited resources.

All of the SSCs work with, and have links with a wide range of **agencies and public bodies**. The nature of these links differ from Council to Council, as does the precise nature of the links.

Understanding of IAG

The **current understanding of IAG** by key personnel across the SSCs is derived variously from: consultative work; survey results on valued client services; current career materials; and the experiences of IAG team members. This understanding varies in level of complexity across both the Pathfinders and other licensed SSCs.

Overall, **IAG is understood to be about life choices**, with accurate and high quality information essential to enable people to move forward in their career and enabling people to understand the implications of certain information.

Views about the **potential value of IAG** to the sector is **reflected in the different priorities set** for this work.

Aims

Organisational aims for IAG varied from a highly **proactive and creative approach** to identifying and developing methods for improving career choice, **to a more passive and minimalist approach** to the provision of high quality, comprehensive information available on demand. Different aims reflected, unsurprisingly, different resource bases.

Many SSCs aim to be a **central point of contact** about careers information on the sector.

Groups targeted for IAG provision reflected sector priorities.

Qualification levels targeted by IAG provision also vary by sector.

Future Plans

Current plans for **future provision** of IAG encompass ambitious media campaigns and political lobbying to more modest information up-dates.

Additional funding support would allow the Pathfinder SSCs to work towards their **ideal scenario for IAG provision** and the other licensed SSCs to **develop their careers strategy and IAG functions**.

IAG managers and co-ordinators were **enthusiastic about, and committed to, service provision** and found possibilities **exciting in terms of serving the needs of the sector**.

Accreditation for IAG was generally regarded as desirable, with two of the four Pathfinders having already achieved recent success in this area. For the majority of the other licensed SSCs accreditation was not regarded as appropriate, because of their limited IAG provision.

Work with agencies and other bodies

Close and effective working relationships with agencies and public bodies providing IAG are, for the most part, an embryonic but **desirable goal** for the majority of the SSCs.

Models for practice

All the SSCs were **able to specify, clearly, the advice they would, if asked,** offer to SSCs with less-well developed IAG functions and to SSCs in a similar position to themselves.

All the SSCs were also clear about particular **strengths of their current IAG provision** for their sector and the ways this could be improved.

The other licensed SSCs with a less well developed IAG function would like to **find out more about IAG provision and practice** within other SSCs.

Labour Market Information (LMI)

[Please note: only the four Pathfinder SSCs were questioned about LMI.]

Labour Market Information (LMI) is **defined** widely.

The different levels of understanding of **types of LMI** are evident in that collected and designated as suitable for IAG by the SSCs.

The type of LMI **collected** by the SSCs relates to both client demand and consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Various methods of dissemination are used for LMI.

Methods for evaluating the quality of LMI are under-developed.

Part A: Pathfinder Sector Skills Councils

1. Report on CITB- ConstructionSkills

1.1 IAG role development

CITB-ConstructionSkills has always had an IAG function of some sort since its original beginning as an Industry Training Board in 1964.

The current IAG function has its roots in the late 1980s and early 1990s with drivers such as curriculum initiatives in schools. Since then, IAG has developed and is subject to regular review and development.

Recent developments: Skills Strategy White Paper

CITB-ConstructionSkills is cited as a case study in the Skills Strategy White Paper. It is currently reviewing its strategy and how to meet all customer needs. This is an on-going, evolutionary process, which is not directly attributable to the publication of the White Paper.

1.2 IAG team

There are approximately 70 people directly involved in IAG, together with another 30 full-time equivalent post-holders who are involved periodically.

Operation

IAG is primarily provided by education teams in each of the CITB-ConstructionSkills ten regional offices. Each team typically consists of five or six people. Teams work in a very similar way, though recognise local differences, such as the different education system in Scotland². Teams report to regional management and are recruited locally. The Business Manager for Recruitment and Careers manages the national IAG process (for example, establishing an overall strategy).

² In this report, reference is principally made to work in England, but it should be remembered that CITB-ConstructionSkills also covers Scotland and Wales.

Background of careers advisers

Members of the education teams have a wide variety of relevant professional backgrounds. This is seen both as a strength and a means of improving the service. Some are ex-industry people, others are former teachers and approximately 10 per cent have an IAG background (with this proportion growing). As a rough estimate, approximately 20 per cent of staff hold an IAG National Vocational Qualification.

1.3 Type of IAG services offered

Differential careers provision

CITB-ConstructionSkills does not do a great deal of one-to-one work with young people, but a lot of group work with young people is undertaken along with a great deal of work with those who work with young people. Information is available both on-line and off-line so that young people can make an informed choice. This information is relevant, generally, to all age groups, although the language used (e.g. in leaflets) and specific products may differ in their appeal.

Information is given over the telephone to individual enquirers. Staff try to establish the reasons underlying requests for information. Guidance is regarded as a more complex area. Care needs to be taken as to what guidance is given, since people may make career decisions based on it.

Adults

Work with adults is an area CITB-ConstructionSkills is trying to develop, with the aim of putting across a consistent message. Currently, work is done with Jobcentre Plus and other adult IAG providers. Whilst occupations in the sector are the same for adults as young people, entry routes may differ.

Marketing provision

People hear about the CITB-ConstructionSkills in a number of ways. Careers libraries, careers staff in schools, promotional events, search engines (such as Google) and so on, all direct people to the IAG section of the CITB-ConstructionSkills website. As the website is available 24/7, this is an important and increasingly popular method of marketing career opportunities in the sector.

Agency working

Careers organisations

A great deal of work is undertaken with careers advisers, including in-service training days (INSET), professional development days and industry days. A wide range of products are available for professionals to use when working with small client groups.

Schools, colleges, universities

Similar work as with careers advisers, together with additional activities, such as taster days at Further Education colleges and universities.

Employers

Lots of briefings are provided for employer groups, trade associations and training groups.

Job seekers

No direct work is currently undertaken with jobseekers, but work is done with Jobcentre Plus to ensure staff have accurate and relevant information.

Trade Unions

Unions are aware of CITB-ConstructionSkills IAG work through involvement in relevant committees, but no IAG work is currently undertaken directly with the unions.

Public and other agencies

Work with other agencies includes a wide range of organisations such as the Learning and Skills Councils, Business in the Community and professional bodies. The aim is to improve communication regarding construction, ensuring other organisations have up-to-date information. Providing IAG about the industry is the ultimate aim, but the immediate goal is getting information (via others) to young people so that they can make informed decisions.

1.4 Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG

It is difficult to generalise regarding IAG. Attempts by other organisations to define IAG have so far failed.

Using the list of prompts (Appendix 2), education and training, finance and exploring opportunities and constraints could come under all three elements of information, advice and guidance. Being told what you should or might do, should not be part of IAG. Guidance is more about decision-making. Personal issues, assessments and making contacts could equally be included in all three elements of information, advice and guidance. Applications and job search strategies are more about advice and guidance, whilst increasing awareness could, again, be information, advice and guidance. Awareness raising is more guidance than clarifying preferences.

Development of current understanding

Understanding of IAG comes from a combination of consultative work, survey work with young people, the breadth and depth of experience of the current team and 'a lot of commonsense'.

Potential value of IAG

IAG should already be providing an accurate view of the industry. This is particularly important. IAG provision is failing if an accurate impression of the industry is not being conveyed.

Priorities in IAG work

Enabling young people to make an informed career choice.

1.5 Aims

Organisational aims

Enabling young people to make an informed career choice (see Section 1.4, above).

Specific groups targeted

Those giving IAG to young people are the main target. Connexions personal advisers, careers teachers, parents of young people making career decisions are all targeted before the young people themselves. With young people the target is not solely Key Stage 3, but the whole 5-19 age group.

Qualifications levels targeted

None specified, though one priority is young people achieving higher GCSEs.

1.6 Future plans

Current plans for future provision

A television advert is about to be completed. Work with key partners (e.g. the Institute of Career Guidance) is being developed.

Priorities

Ensuring accuracy and consistency of the information available for young people. People asking the same question should get the same answer, irrespective of its source.

Ideal scenario

Work with every school, every academic year. Whilst accepting that CITB-ConstructionSkills can produce information, but cannot make people read it – at least telling people about it would represent an ideal.

Additionally:

- A DVD about the sector for wide distribution. However, a business case cannot be made, since it represents only an optional extra.
- A mobile IAG unit (tour bus) would also be useful, but needs to be done in collaboration with others.

Most exciting

The television advert.

Accreditation

CITB-ConstructionSkills was previously accredited and is now exploring Matrix accreditation. Some portfolios have already been developed.

1.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

Connexions' remit is to provide non-biased IAG so that young people can make an informed choice. CITB-ConstructionSkills are happy to continue to work collaboratively, in a supportive role, with Connexions.

1.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

CITB-ConstructionSkills has a track record and history of providing IAG, so there are opportunities for all SSCs to learn from each other. However, currently no mechanism exists to support this process. For example, some IAG work simply involves the repackaging of previous materials, with only some new products necessary.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

Its history, knowledge of the sector and brand in the marketplace (CITB-ConstructionSkills was mentioned in the skills White Paper).

1.9 Labour Market Information

Definition

LMI covers all aspects of supply and demand in the sector (by region and occupation) together with the need to undertake forecasting.

Types collected

A comprehensive range – covering everything from industry indicators to DTI statistics.

Basis on which collected

Demand for LMI is employer-led.

Consultation processes

Not at present, but some in prospect on using LMI as a curriculum resource.

Making LMI available

Information is available on the CITB-ConstructionSkills website and partners are given hard copies.

Evaluating effectiveness

Some evaluation is currently undertaken, but further work is needed on both the usefulness and accuracy of LMI. An example of a recent change implemented as a result of evaluation relates to the length of reports being reduced.

2. Report on e-skills UK

2.1 IAG role development

e-skills UK does not currently have a dedicated IAG function. However, it does have the aim of improving 'sector attractiveness', which includes providing careers information on its website and undertaking some careers-related projects.

This SSC represents an amalgamation of the former IT and Telecommunications National Training Organisations, plus e-business. The amalgamation resulted in the formation of the e-skills NTO, which has become the e-skills UK SSC. There is no obvious tradition of IAG provision within predecessor organisations.

The sector's poor image is based on a popular belief that work in IT involves sitting in front of a screen doing programming – regarded as 'nerdy' and 'geeky'. Careers information is, therefore, of paramount importance in raising awareness that this is an incorrect view and that diverse opportunities exist.

Additionally, there is a gender imbalance with only 20 per cent of IT professionals being women, with this figure falling. There is a need to redress this imbalance and provision of careers information targeted at girls is one way.

As it does not have a dedicated IAG function, e-skills UK does not have an IAG strategy.

2.2 IAG team

e-skills UK does not have an IAG team.

Operation

e-skills UK is an organisation with 60 employees and a flat organisational structure. It is project driven. The project manager responsible for sector attractiveness has other responsibilities and spends only two days a week on this area of work. Other project managers may become involved in IAG related work depending on individual projects (e.g. e-skills UK is a partner in the ESF 'GERI' project on gender and racial equality).

The main IAG related activity is providing careers information on the e-skills UK website. Individuals who contact e-skills UK for careers information are advised to contact their local IAG provider. This advice is also given on the website. Organisations (e.g. Further

Education colleges) that contact e-skills UK are provided with appropriate promotional information.

The main priority is to target information at careers advisers and Connexions services so they will have the right information for their work with clients.

Background of careers advisers

The project manager with responsibility for IAG has an IT background. Other project managers may have some IAG experience, though this is unlikely.

2.3 Type of IAG services offered

Differential careers provision

People who approach e-skills UK are directed to the website, where information can be accessed. e-skills UK has very limited paper materials. Available materials have been produced through specific projects and are mainly aimed at teachers.

People contact e-skills UK for careers advice, but are referred on, as staff are not qualified, nor have the resources necessary to provide IAG.

The applies equally to all age groups.

Under 16s

A particular sectoral concern is with research that demonstrates how girls aged 10-13 lose interest in IT. Computer Clubs for Girls (CC4G) is a major project aimed at addressing this problem.

Agency working

Careers organisations

Previously, specific projects have involved work with careers advisers, but there are currently no such projects. Similarly, previous projects have facilitated careers workshops in schools.

Schools, colleges, universities

If an education institution contacts e-skills UK, appropriate materials will be sent to them.

Employers

Again there are no direct IAG related activities undertaken with employers, though as with other SSCs, e-skills UK works closely with employers in identifying sector needs.

Job seekers

e-skills UK did have an ESF funded project for the over 40s, but this has ended.

Public and other agencies

Work with other agencies is done on a project specific basis.

2.4 Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG

If someone asks for ***information***, they are referred to relevant materials and project information.

Advice is not provided.

Guidance is 'pointing people to other organisations'.

(Please note: prompts to help with the definition of IAG (Appendix 2) were not found appropriate to the work of e-skills UK).

Development of current understanding

Understanding of IAG comes from working on projects with (external) people who have experience of IAG.

Potential value of IAG

It is hoped that careers material will provide a better view of the sector and redress a lot of misconceptions about working in IT.

Priorities in IAG work

Conveying the message that there are lots of diverse career paths in the sector.

2.5 Aims

Organisational aims

Conveying the message that there are lots of diverse career paths in the sector (see Section 2.4 above).

Specific groups targeted

Girls aged 10-13 (see Section 2.1 above). Other work is more general.

Qualifications levels targeted

Employers prefer to recruit graduates, but e-skills UK would like to see non-graduates recruited and then given training. e-skills UK is doing work on Modern Apprenticeships and an ITQ (equivalent to an NVQ).

2.6 Future Plans

Current plans for future provision

There is no current plan for IAG provision. Careers materials will be developed on the website that target careers advisers, but there are no definite plans.

Ideal scenario

'Glossy' materials would be very helpful in raising awareness, but there are simply no resources.

Most exciting

Pulling together careers materials on the e-skills UK website.

Accreditation

Not applicable.

2.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

This is dependent upon specific projects. e-skills UK works with Connexions services through the GERI project (see Section 2.2 above) and these types of relationships can develop through further project work. Resources are the key problem.

2.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

Everything relating to careers information has been created through project work. The personal view of the relevant project manager is that there needs to be a focus for IAG activity, which is provided by project work.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

Materials that have been developed are good quality because they have come out of projects with a focus on specific targets.

2.9 Labour Market Information

Definition

e-skills UK has a research team which provides data on what has happened and is expected to happen in the sector.

Types collected

The research department provides primary and secondary research data.

Basis on which collected

There is consultation about data collection, but this is a sector in which many employers are very dynamic and already aware of skills shortages and gaps.

Consultation processes

As there is no IAG function there is no IAG-LMI liaison.

Making LMI available

Information is available on the e-skills UK website, including a highly regarded quarterly bulletin.

Evaluating effectiveness

The effectiveness of the labour market information is evaluated.

3. Report on SEMTA

3.1 IAG role development

The information, advice and guidance function can be traced back to 1976, under the Engineering Industrial Training Board. IAG has been undertaken and developed by successive organisations (including EnTra and EMTA as the National Training Organisations).

Representatives from employing organisations, trade unionists and educationalists are on the board at SEMTA Sector Skills Council. The original aim of the organisation was to promote the sector and attract more 'high calibre' people into the industry. This aim is still very much part of the focus of the council and the IAG service today.

The SEMTA IAG service is known as 'ECIS', the Engineering Careers Information Service. The key role of the service is to offer information and advice. Guidance is provided in a limited way as they recognise that more professional qualifications are needed to offer this service. The staff has relevant experience and knowledge of the sector, but are clear that they are not professional guidance practitioners.

Recent developments: Skills Strategy White Paper

The SEMTA IAG service has not changed in response to the Skills Strategy White Paper publication, since its main aim has been to target younger people directly. Young people in this context are defined, mainly, as those up to the age of 25 years, or those embarking on a career in the industry.

3.2 IAG team

There are three members of the IAG team including a Careers and Education Manager who oversees the work of the other team members, based at the main office in Watford. All three members of the team offer information and advice, and guidance in a limited way.

Operation

The Careers and Education Manager is often travelling, working mainly face-to-face with clients, educational institutions and employers.

Office-based team members offer information and advice via email and a free phone number for clients. Here, the term 'client' includes young people, careers advisers, personal advisers and educationalists. Many calls result in an immediate response which can range from giving information to signposting relevant sources. Alternatively, contact details are taken and the call returned when relevant information has been obtained. Some further, follow-up conversations are required. The number of individuals contacting the service via email and telephone are recorded to monitor the operation of the service.

The IAG service also gets involved in many external events such as educational exhibitions aimed at advertising and promoting the industry. It is the role of the Careers and Education Manager to offer information and advice where appropriate.

In addition, the service is able to offer a website and literature on the industry.

Background of careers advisers

Much of the work undertaken by the IAG service is based on information and knowledge gained from documents and government papers on industry developments, together with information on relevant qualifications, subjects and courses.

The careers advisers hold no formal careers guidance qualifications, so the service is very much based on industry knowledge and on-the-job experience. All advisers have relevant experience, whilst two have related qualifications:

- the manager is a qualified professional engineer and was a qualified youth worker with counselling experience;
- one office based adviser is a qualified teacher; and
- the other office-based adviser is able to draw upon her own experiences.

All staff have six-monthly appraisals where training needs are identified and all undertake continuing professional development. There are resources for external training courses, if required.

3.3 Type of IAG services offered

Differential careers provision

A range of colourful literature, designed to make an impact, is produced. A website and CD-ROM are used with adults and young people. Overall, the key role of the careers

service is to emphasise the availability of different routes into the sector. For example, to inform people that:

- a degree is not essential for work in the sector; and that
- an apprenticeship can lead to a degree (e.g. the Foundation degree, which is hoped will become the norm for entry).

Under 16s

The service mainly targets younger people, effectively informing children of 11-12 years about careers in the industry. Literature highlights the relevant subjects for careers in engineering and science.

Over 16s

The service aims to enable people of about 16 years of age (Year 11) to make informed decisions about their careers. Specifically, it involves informing people about the range of alternative pathways into the sector, in addition to the traditional academic route.

The 'Insight' initiative, aimed at young women undertaking 'A' levels (in relevant subjects), is a one week residential course at a university. It offers participants the chance to meet female students and professionals working in the sector, as well as the opportunity to work on practical challenges. This programme is offered at several universities and is heavily subsidised by SEMTA

Young people thinking about higher education

For those wishing to enter higher education, the IAG service tries to emphasise the level of commitment required to study science and engineering courses, together with the requirement for academic rigour.

Adults

Whilst the service is not targeted at adults, it is able to offer limited advice, together with information, to assist with career choice. Those wishing to change career and enter science and engineering are referred to a professional careers guidance practitioner, for analysis of strengths and weaknesses, which would be part of a rigorous guidance process.

Marketing of provision

The careers service is well established and is well-known as 'ECIS'. ECIS has its own headed paper within the organisation describing themselves as 'a function of SEMTA,

the sector skills council for...' so there is a strong identifiable link between the careers service and SEMTA.

Marketing is wide ranging and includes:

- production of various articles for newspapers, trade papers and magazines targeting both careers advisers and young people;
- advertising campaigns;
- involvement in an exhibition programme (e.g. participation at careers exhibitions and events);
- participation in various initiatives and programmes (such as 'Insight'); and
- use of the 'Enginuity' website.

Agency working

Careers organisations

The service promotes its capability for supporting careers advisers in their work. For instance, the IAG team recognises that it has limited links with young people. It works with careers advisers and organisations to promote understanding of modern careers in science and engineering. Occasional seminars are offered and the free phone service is available to advisers.

Schools, colleges, universities

There are not many direct activities undertaken by the service with educational institutions, because of the lack of resources. However, attention is drawn to the ambassador schemes and SETNET (government initiative, 'Science Engineering Technology Mathematics Network') which is partly funded by SEMTA.

Employers

Again, no activities are undertaken directly with employers, but the service works with several organisations which are encouraged to promote themselves and the good opportunities available in their organisation. Larger companies, such as BA Systems and Rolls Royce, are more able to promote career opportunities available in their company. However, there is an awareness that smaller companies need to think more about how to promote opportunities available in their company, so that they attract the candidates of a suitable calibre.

Job seekers

The service does not have direct access to vacancies for job seekers, but draws attention to relevant websites and resources. This work is mainly undertaken over the phone and an information sheet listing these sources is available at the various exhibitions and events.

Trades Unions

SEMTA as an organisation is run by representatives from trade unions, employing organisations and educationalists. In practice, much support comes from trade unionists. Links are limited, but this is not because of any particular policy.

Public and other agencies

There are strong links with:

- Department for Education and Skills;
- Department of Trade and Industry;
- Regional Development Agencies;
- Learning and Skills Councils; and a very close working relationship with
- learndirect.

The careers service, when necessary, refers people on to Jobcentre Plus, but the SSC has no direct linkages.

Additionally, the careers service works with the Welsh National Assembly, Scottish Executive and the Careers Service in Northern Ireland as a 'helping hand' promoting the work they undertake. For instance, SEMTA worked with the Welsh National Assembly to produce routes map in the Welsh language, together with separate literature reflecting the Scottish educational system and national specific qualifications.

3.4 Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG

Information and Advice

Information giving involves providing good information either by telephone or post. Advice is the follow up conversation which can take place immediately, or at a later date.

Guidance

Guidance is undertaken by the careers service, but SEMTA's IAG work involves certain elements.

Information, Advice and Guidance can be exemplified as (please note: the following are considered to be more specific to information and advice):

- labour market;
- education and training;
- finance (e.g. sources of funding);
- exploring opportunities and constraints;
- making decisions for yourself with someone else's input;
- support with applications;
- problem solving;
- help with personal issues;
- assessment of interests, skills, aptitudes, etc.;
- help with making contacts;
- help with making applications;
- help with job search strategy;
- increasing self-awareness (about potential and limitations);
- clarifying preferences; and
- discussing options.

IAG is not about telling someone what they might or should do. It tries not to dominate. The careers service signposts - directing clients to the right place for information. The SEMTA IAG service aims to encourage clients' ideas and understanding of the modern science and engineering sector to help them make their own decisions and gain respect.

Development of current understanding

Understanding of IAG has developed over a number of years through experience. It has developed from the original aim of the 1976 training board which was to promote the sector with the objective of attracting 'high calibre' young people to work in the sector.

Potential value of IAG

It is definitely the role of the IAG service to provide a more accurate view of the sector. This includes trying to promote a more accurate picture of what opportunities are available. Many of the current images of engineering (not particularly science) are

outdated, so the public has a limited understanding of the sector. Conveying and promoting accurate images and information about the (engineering) sector has particular value.

Priorities in IAG work

With technological changes and growing production of goods overseas, the sector has a 'real need' to encourage bright young people to consider engineering and science as a career. In the past there were many opportunities at the lower levels of engineering (i.e. operative level), but there has been a shift upwards. Currently, there is a greater need for people at technician level, plus those with a degree and for engineers who are incorporated or have achieved Chartered level. The sector is trying to stress to the careers services that the industry needs more good quality young people and that low achievers or those struggling to attain good GCSEs should not be looking at engineering as a careers option, because there are limited long-term opportunities at lower levels.

3.5 Aims

Organisational aims

It is the aim of the SEMTA careers service:

- to provide an accurate picture of the sector;
- to provide up-to-date information and advice; and
- always leave people with a positive message.

Specific groups targeted

Groups targeted included:

- 'brighter' young people to address the need to fill positions at the professional levels; and
- women, particularly in engineering and at the professional level, as there are less than 5 per cent female professional engineers in the sector.

Qualifications levels targeted

The service targets, in very broad terms, those at degree level, but is also targeting those with vocational qualifications at level 3 and above.

3.6 Future Plans

Current plans for future provision

More resources are needed and this is recognised to be a high priority. With additional resources, future provision would include:

- a major re-design of the website; and
- updating and revising the literature.

There is a concern about the impact of the service – how it is measured and what would happen if the service did not exist.

Priorities

Priorities for the service include to:

- gain more funding and expand available services;
- be larger and more interactive;
- update and revise existing literature; and
- rethink and improve the website.

Ideal scenario

Although the number of individuals contacting the service is available through key performance indicators, this only provides limited feedback. Tracking individuals and what they do with the information they receive would be interesting. Individuals on the 'Insight' initiative are currently tracked so there is some information on what subjects and qualifications they enrolled on, what they achieved, their career path, etc. However, resources are limited and whilst the same information on normal enquiries would be useful, there is a question as to how this work could be undertaken.

Most exciting

The development and expansion of the role of IAG in the SSC, as an implicit support service.

Accreditation

The service has recently achieved the Matrix accreditation through the Guidance Accreditation Board. It is hoped that this will give more credibility to the service and enable staffing to increase so that services can be expanded.

3.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

The service works closely with a whole range of agencies and other bodies, two examples include:

Small Piece Trust, Leamington Spa

The Small Piece Trust offers a wide variety courses linked to engineering for both young people under 16 years of age and students on gap years. There is a strong linkage with the agency, and partnership activities are undertaken with them.

Society of Motor Traders and Manufacturers (SMTM)

Several joint initiatives were undertaken at the Motor Show at the NEC with this trade association including a stand with information promoting the wide range of opportunities in the automotive sector for young people.

Similar activities are undertaken with aerospace people at the Society of British Aerospace Companies (SBAC).

By working with the agencies and public bodies it is the aim to draw attention to the main sectors and sub-sectors within the industry. The service would like to be more specific (especially about the diversity of job roles in engineering and science), but is unable to produce masses of literature on different jobs because of lack of resources and the necessity to continually up-date the information. However, the service is able to point people in the right direction for more specific information.

3.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

For other sector skills councils with a less well developed IAG function, the advice from SEMTA careers service would be:

- do not underestimate the resources needed to do the job effectively;
- do not operate at a simplistic level where details of a client can be taken and information put in the post – SSCs should be looking to do more than this; and
- to have a helpful telephone manner and the ability to draw out crucial information from the clients.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

The main strength of the service is that all staff are helpful, have a good telephone manner and, more importantly, have the ability to ask the right questions and draw out information from clients so that the right help, information and advice can be given. Also, the service recognises its limitations, realising when to ask someone else for help and reaching a stage when you can help no further.

3.9 Labour Market Information

Definition

Within SEMTA, there is a specific and well established research department which collects labour market information on the categorisation of people, geographic trends, issues around skills shortages, etc. This is not a careers function.

Types collected

The research department collects a whole range of information from surveys (telephone and written), current trends and predictions through employer skills survey which asks for feedback on what is the current situation and how they see the sector progressing in the next five years. This is, therefore, an identification of the sectors 'needs' and the need for certain types of employee. This labour market information is used as evidence to lobby government ministers.

Basis on which collected

There is a definite demand for this information, particularly from government departments.

Consultation processes

The careers service and research department operate within the same building so consultation and collaboration can take place when necessary. For instance, the careers service consults with the research department on analysing the information collected from the individuals who attend the 'Insight' initiative.

Making LMI available

Information is readily available as printed matter, formal publications and more often it is becoming available electronically on the website.

Evaluating effectiveness

The effectiveness of the labour market information is currently evaluated.

4. Report on Skillset

4.1 IAG role development

The 'real identified' demand for IAG in the sector originated from the trade union for technicians in the industry (BECTU). They were the first to recognise that their membership - traditionally freelance - did not have access to support services (ideally) provided by employers. Initially, it was assumed that the primary need was for advice to support up-skilling in the sector, so the focus was based on training needs analysis (TNA). However, it quickly became apparent that the need extended beyond TNA to more general career development. This activity was originally resourced from the Union Learning Fund, together with some funding support from the European Social Fund (ESF). The National Training Organisation, Skillset (subsequently licensed as a Sector Skills Council) became involved, supporting provision in various ways, including financially and by providing representation on a steering group.

Up to this point, the service had been restricted to England. However, by 2000, it was apparent that, not only did members' needs extend to general career development support, but that there was unmet demand in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Skillset formally recognised that an industry-based IAG service was required and became actively involved. At the beginning of 2003, the service was re-positioned within Skillset, with a partnership agreement with BECTU and joint management arrangements in place. However, for various reasons, this arrangement is now subject to review (i.e. Skillset has become a fully licensed Sector Skills Council) and there has been formal acknowledgement that careers work fits naturally within the remit of SSCs; the industry 'footprint' goes beyond industry technicians.

Recent developments: Skills Strategy White Paper

The Skills Strategy White Paper represents something of a watershed in the provision of IAG within Skillset. Publication of this paper has highlighted the gap existing between public policy and the aspirations of Skillset to develop a high quality IAG function. Whilst the White Paper specified education and training as areas in which SSCs needed to become more involved, it failed to mention the importance of their involvement with IAG. Additionally, it has focused attention on how SSCs need to work with Learning and Skills Councils to develop an integrated IAG service and, because of the focus on level 2 qualifications, has resulted in Skillset identifying a need to ensure that public policy

reflects IAG the requirements of the sector, i.e. workforce up-skilling (from level 3 to level 4).

Initially, Skillset expressed concern about the White Paper by focusing on the need to involve SSCs in the production of labour market information (LMI). Active lobbying has been undertaken, which, appears to be starting to have effect.

4.2 IAG team

Overall, Skillset currently employs 65 people and has three main 'functional' departments, as follows:

- standards and qualifications;
- research; and
- careers.

These Departments work through national, regional and sector-specific teams (e.g. Film; Interactive Media) and are supported by an Investment Department, managing industry funds to support the work of Skillset.

The Careers Department employs 27 freelance advisers and eight full-time staff. Working with the manager are four co-ordinators. Administrators support the work of the co-ordinators.

Operation

The aim of the department is to provide comprehensive careers support to all industry sub-sectors and the majority of occupational areas (e.g. ranging from camera operators; hair and make-up artists to researchers, producers). Information produced by the Research Department is fed through to Careers, which uses this information in its careers work. It does not, however, have either a marketing or recruitment function. Guidance interviews are only available for those with industry experience.

Skillset team

The manager has overall responsibility for the functioning of the careers department. Working with her are four co-ordinators:

- careers co-ordinator (develops relationships with other careers organisations);
- information co-ordinator (manages website, learndirect and learndirect Scotland help lines, career handbook, weekly e-bulletin for careers and learndirect advisers);

- client services co-ordinator (manages direct delivery of services); and a
- film co-ordinator (provides a special focus to an area previously neglected).

Freelancers

The 27 freelancers are issued with an annual contract from Skillset. They work and are paid on a daily basis. This method of operation is important since it is consistent with how the freelancers work within the industry. Organisation of guidance sessions is undertaken by client services (see above).

Sustainability has now become an issue for the careers function, together with the overall fit within the organisational structure.

learndirect

Approximately three years ago, Skillset entered into an arrangement with learndirect to deliver sector specific information. This has resulted in the establishment of 16 telephone lines for England (and Wales) and four Scotland (and Northern Ireland). To support these advisers, Skillset provides:

- occupational information;
- initial training support; and
- on-going training (to update knowledge).

The learndirect advisers are expected to give basic information and then refer more complex inquiries on to specialists at Skillset. This working arrangement is currently being evaluated.

Background of careers advisers

The priority in the recruitment of these advisers is relevant industry background, rather than specialist career qualifications. Some also offer employment experience relevant to careers work (e.g. with the Citizens Advice Bureau, as tutors or in pastoral care). The original goal was to ensure that all advisers were qualified to NVQ level 3 in Guidance (through the Open University). This has proved over-ambitious since for some advisers the guidance work is very much secondary to their industry work and does not represent a priority. To date, only three advisers have successfully completed their NVQ3, with two more about to complete.

Planned continuing professional development (CPD) is available to advisers on a voluntary basis that is responsive to their identified needs. This mainly consists of

sector information (trends, new developments, etc.), as well as Diversity, Train the Trainer and Redundancy Support. It is delivered within a framework of twice-yearly Advisory Review meetings and an individual annual performance review. Client evaluation of guidance sessions is fed into these reviews, and is also provided in summary form to advisors every quarter. These staff development support systems are being reviewed and improved continually.

4.3 Type of IAG services offered

Differential careers provision

All provision is based on 'individual and industry needs'.

Under 18's

Funding for guidance work with under 18s is not available. This, together with the historical legacy of previous provision being concentrated on the current workforce has resulted in general services for the under 18s being limited. The career handbook, website and e-mail support service and career fact sheets are likely to be most suitable source of intelligence about the industry.

Adults

Guidance provision is targeted at adults with industry experience. No distinction is made between employed or unemployed adults, except where funding arrangements preclude skillsformedia from providing a service for other reasons.

Marketing of provision

There is little direct targeting of individuals – mainly this is done through intermediaries. Various marketing methods are used, including:

- website;
- advertising in the trade press and some other newspapers (e.g. Media Guardian);
- direct mailing to careers agencies/careers libraries/subject heads (mainly in Further Education and Higher Education); and
- outreach activity (e.g. attendance at regional events).

Referrals are also made from learndirect and regional agencies within the industry (i.e. Regional Screen Agencies).

Agency working

Different types of service provision are available to various types of agencies:

Careers organisations

Work with careers organisations includes:

- a survey of IAG services (completed);
- outreach activities;
- special events;
- membership of professional associations; and
- responses to queries.

Schools, colleges, universities

Little structured work is undertaken with these organisations. Where educational institutions receive targeted mailing, this is done on an *ad hoc* basis (i.e. where a head of department becomes known).

Employers

Priority is given to the demand side of the industry. In particular, the need to develop employers' understanding of how IAG can help their business. This is achieved through:

- input to the development of workforce development strategies;
- employer panels (to find out what employers need); and
- research (to inform development of IAG service).

Job seekers

No activities are currently focused on this client group. Recent contact with Jobcentre Plus was very positive and a working alliance is under development.

Trades Unions

Because of the central role that the Union played in the development of IAG services, the relationship is close, consisting of:

- a formal partnership;
- briefings;
- bespoke events;
- negotiation with employer's for skillsformedia to provide redundancy support; and
- joint promotional activities.

Public and other agencies

Discussions are underway with:

- National Learning and Skills Councils;
- learndirect;
- Jobcentre Plus,
- Scottish Executive; and,
- the Careers Service in Northern Ireland.

Initial approaches have been made to the Welsh National Assembly.

4.4 Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG

A hierarchy of provision was described as follows:

Information

Where someone wants straightforward information (e.g. skill development, training course)

Advice

Where someone knows they have a skill development need and requires helping accessing the necessary support

Guidance

Where a person needs to develop skills; learn how to present themselves; undertake a skills audit; and may have some complicating factors (e.g. been out of the workforce for some time).

Development of current understanding

It is difficult to track back to the origins of this understanding. Reports were read, research undertaken and the manager participated in discussions. It took time to understand that there is a gap between policy and practice.

Importantly, an understanding of what is valued by clients (via client feedback forms) has influenced views on IAG, together with the perceptions of careers advisers of their roles.

Potential value of IAG

To provide a more accurate view of the sector: 'That's what we're here for!'

Priorities in IAG work

Two key priorities:

- correcting misconceptions about the industry; and
- providing a realistic understanding of the sector (broadening and deepening).

4.5 Aims

'Supporting individual aspirations in the context of industry need'.

Organisational aims

'To help individuals make better decisions about their careers, with the purpose of ensuring that individuals have access to more sustainable employment and the industry has access to requisite skills.'

Specific groups targeted

Three specified:

- under-represented groups (in particular, members of ethnic minority groups and disabled people);
- new entrants – to provide them with more realistic aspirations (i.e. controlling supply rather than stimulating demand into a small industry); and finally
- established freelancers who need support because of the volatile nature of employment opportunities available.

Qualifications levels targeted

Skillset is interested in those with higher level qualifications – specifically progression from level 3 to level 4. Around three quarters of new entrants across the audio-visual industries have at least one degree. In some sectors (e.g. interactive media and computer games), this rises to 90 per cent. It was stressed that the high levels of qualifications does not mean that support was not necessary.

4.6 Future Plans

Current plans for future provision

At the time of the interview future IAG provision included:

- more sophisticated use of LMI;
- lobbying government to allow Skillset to have appropriate influence;
- develop better information resources; and
- Sector Skills Agreements.

Priorities

Priorities for IAG provision by the SSC include:

- to ensure that public agencies recognise and value the potential contribution of Skillset to IAG;
- to deliver high quality support to these services;
- to secure tangible industry support and collaboration for this endeavour;
- to achieve a comprehensive, UK wide service; and
- to manage coherence and coordination amongst IAG agencies, with SSCs as a key partner in delivery.

Ideal scenario

To ensure that IAG is embedded in all industry supported learning (in addition to priorities listed above).

Most exciting

Four identified:

- the potential to increase access – to change the industry culture from ‘**who** you know’ to ‘**what** you know’;
- development and more sophisticated use of LMI;
- the potential to combine industry expertise with guidance expertise; and
- the potential to re-shape workforce over time (align supply and demand).

Accreditation

Already accredited.

4.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

At the heart of this work (see Section 4.3, above) is the belief that whereas the role of public agencies is to support effective decision making, the role of Skillset is to provide (and interpret) information to assist with this decision-making process. In this, it is essential to reflect the reality of our sector.

4.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

To other SSCs with a less well developed IAG function, the advice would be to:

- think carefully and work hard to position IAG within the organisation;
- work with colleagues and ensure they understand that IAG is not a 'stand alone' activity, but that it makes the rest of what they do work;
- be clear about the purpose of IAG and able to communicate this effectively;
- be aware of balancing employers' needs with individual aspirations;
- collaborate with publicly funded IAG services and avoid duplication; and
- be realistic about what can be achieved alongside other organisational priorities.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

Industry knowledge and links with industry.

4.9 Labour Market Information

Definition

'Anything that helps people to understand the labour market and the opportunities for them within it'. For skillsformedia purposes this includes:

- industry sector profiles;
- skills gaps and shortages;
- job opportunities;
- occupational information;
- information about progression routes; and
- information about education and training.

Types collected

The types of labour market information collected includes:

- workforce survey, annual Census;

- sector-specific occasional research, e.g. Film, Interactive Media, Post-Production;
- skills forecasting;
- skills intelligence network;
- occupational information; and
- LMI from clients (collected but not recorded or developed – currently a wasted resource).

Basis on which collected

Moving towards demand-based provision, but since the planning and development of LMI is currently under-resourced, the priority relates to demands placed by outside agencies (particularly funding agencies).

Consultation processes

Survey of IAG partnerships (funded by Learning and Skills Council) now undertaken. Now determining priorities, based on resources available

Making LMI available

Mainly through the website and fact sheets.

Evaluating effectiveness

Not undertaken so far, but planned through an outside agency.

Summary of Pathfinders SSCs' IAG

IAG role development in the Pathfinder SSCs

The **development of an IAG function** within CITB-ConstructionSkills, SEMTA and Skillset has been similar. The IAG function within these Pathfinder SSCs is well established and developed from their organisational predecessors such as the Industry Training Board and National Training Organisations. e-skills UK does not have a specific IAG function partly because there was no apparent IAG function within the predecessor organisations. However, e-skills UK does provide careers information and advice on its website and do undertake various careers related projects

e-skills UK, SEMTA and Skillset **IAG functions** have traditionally promoted the sector and supported those working in it, and this is still very much their aim at present.

The recent publication of the **Skills Strategy White Paper** highlighted the gap between public policy and IAG. This has had an affect on Skillset as it was recognised that there is a need to be more involved in education and training as well as developing an integrated IAG service with the Learning and Skills Councils. The publication has not changed the IAG service at SEMTA as it has always targeted young people and worked with those up to the age of 25. CITB-ConstructionSkills is currently reviewing its strategy in light of this publication. e-skills UK does not have an IAG strategy so is not affected by this publication.

IAG teams

CITB-ConstructionSkills has the largest IAG team of 70 (plus 30 full-time equivalent posts). The staff are former teachers or individuals who have previously worked in the industry, 10 per cent of the staff have backgrounds in IAG. At present, approximately 20 per cent of the staff are qualified with IAG National Vocational Qualifications. The CITB-ConstructionSkills IAG is provided by education teams which operate in 10 regional offices.

The **Skillset** IAG team is comprised of 27 freelance advisers and eight full-time staff. The recruitment of IAG staff is based upon industry background and relevant careers work experience rather than specialist careers qualifications. Three advisers have

completed their NVQ Level 3 in Guidance and a further two are to complete shortly. Information produced by the research department is disseminated to the careers department where it is used in their work. In the careers department, there is one manager and four co-ordinators who are responsible for different elements of the service. The freelance advisers have annual contracts and are paid on a daily basis.

SEMTA has three members in its IAG team; all have relevant experience and varying backgrounds including a qualified professional engineer and a teacher. The Careers and Education manager mainly operates on a face-to-face basis offering advice to clients, educational institutions and employers through various outreach activities. The remaining advisers offer information and advice via email and the telephone.

e-skills UK has no IAG team. The manager responsible for promoting the sector has a background within IT and works on promoting the sector two days a week. Other project managers may become involved in the IAG work dependent on their projects.

These four Pathfinder SSCs all offer careers information and advice on their individual websites.

Type of IAG services offered

The **careers provision** at CITB-ConstructionSkills and SEMTA is predominately aimed at young people. Both SSCs are aimed at helping young people making informed choices by communicating information about their sector, routes into their sector and the opportunities available in their sector. This is undertaken through a range of materials and electronic media. In addition, CITB-ConstructionSkills and SEMTA are involved in several projects targeting groups who are underrepresented in the sector. CITB-ConstructionSkills is trying to develop its work with adults, whereas SEMTA offers limited advice to adults and is more likely to refer adults to learndirect.

Skillset careers provision is based on individual and industry needs. There is no funding for guidance work with those under 18 years of age. Guidance provision is aimed at adults with experience of the industry and no distinction is made between the employed and unemployed.

e-skills UK only offer careers information on-line, as there is not printed material, and all who approach the SSC are directed to the website for further information. There are some projects aimed specifically at girls.

The IAG provision available through CITB-ConstructionSkills, SEMTA and Skillset is well established and **marketing** is focused on their participation at careers exhibitions and educational events; printed literature; adverts; involvement in local projects; direct mailing to careers organisations and libraries (in the case of Skillset); and their own websites.

The four Pathfinder SSCs all work with, and have links with various **agencies and public bodies** which includes activities such as:

- professional development days;
- free phone service;
- taster days and courses;
- access to literature;
- outreach activities; and
- employer surveys.

The work with public bodies and other agencies include strong links with professional bodies, Jobcentre Plus, learndirect, Learning and Skills Councils, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh National Assembly and the Careers Service in Northern Ireland.

Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG is described as a hierarchy:

- **Information** is the provision of good relevant data (either face-to-face, by post or email)
- **Advice** is the conversation that is needed after information has been given to assess a client's needs and the support they require. Advice activities include application and job search strategies.
- **Guidance** is more complex and is where a person needs to develop ideas and skills. Guidance activities include: making decisions; increasing awareness; and clarifying preferences.

e-skills UK currently do not provide an advice service. e-skills UK and SEMTA undertake very little guidance work so refer the majority of the clients requiring guidance to other organisations.

For CITB-ConstructionSkills and SEMTA IAG is exemplified as: using prompts; labour market; education and training; finance; exploring opportunities and constraints; assessment of interests, skills and aptitudes; and clarifying preferences. It was clear that telling someone what to do or what they might do is not part of IAG.

The **development of the Pathfinder SSCs' current understanding** of IAG is derived from consultative work, survey work on what is valued by clients, knowledge of current careers materials combined with the experience of the IAG team.

The **potential value of IAG** is to:

- provide an more accurate view of the sector including the provision of accurate information; and
- promote an accurate picture of the opportunities available in the sector.

The **priorities in IAG** work is to:

- enable young people to make informed choices;
- convey the message that there are diverse career paths into the sector;
- attract more good quality young people;
- correct the misconceptions about the industry; and
- provide a realistic understanding of the sector.

Aims

The Pathfinder SSCs' organisational aims are:

- To enable young people to make an informed choice (CITB-ConstructionSkills);
- to convey the message that there are diverse career paths into the sector (e-skills UK);
- to provide an accurate picture of the sector; to provide up-to-date information and advice; and to always leave people with a positive message (SEMTA); and finally
- to help individuals make better decisions about their careers, with the purpose of ensuring individuals have access to more sustainable employment and the industry has access to requisite skills (Skillset).

Specific groups targeted by the four Pathfinder SSCs include:

- Connexions personal advisers;
- careers teachers;
- parents of young people;
- young people (aged 5-19 years);
- girls aged 10-13 years;
- 'brighter' young people;
- women;
- underrepresented groups (including members of ethnic minority groups and disabled people);
- new entrants; and
- established freelancers (applicable only to Skillset).

Qualification levels targeted by the SSCs include:

- young people achieving higher than GCSE level;
- non-graduates as there should be more opportunities for them to be recruited and trained by employers;
- degree level individuals; and
- individuals with vocational qualifications at level 3 or above.

Future Plans

Current plans for **future provision** of IAG includes:

- the production of a television advert;
- to work with key partners (including the Institute of Career Guidance);
- to improve and rethink the website;
- to update and revise existing literature and develop better information;
- to use LMI more sophisticatedly; and
- to lobby the government to allow SSCs to have an appropriate influence.

e-skills UK has no current plans for IAG provision, but careers materials are continually being produced and made available on their website.

The four Pathfinder SSCs **priorities for IAG** provision are:

- to produce accurate and consistent information especially for young people;

- to gain more funding in order to expand services and make those that are available bigger and more interactive;
- to improve and rethink their websites;
- to update and revise existing literature;
- to ensure that public agencies recognise and value the potential contribution of SSCs to IAG and to deliver high quality support to these services;
- to secure tangible industry support and collaboration;
- to achieve a comprehensive, UK wide service; and
- to manage coherence and coordination amongst IAG agencies, with SSCs as a key partner in delivery.

In an **ideal scenario**, SSCs would like to:

- work with every school, every academic year;
- produce a DVD and glossy materials;
- run a mobile IAG unit (tour bus) to promote the industry;
- track individuals and what they do with the information they receive;
- track individuals on initiatives organised by the SSC; and
- ensure that IAG is embedded in all industry supported learning.

The **most exciting** elements of IAG provision for the four Pathfinder SSCs include:

- the production of the television advert;
- pulling together materials on the website;
- the development and expansion of the existing IAG service;
- the potential to increase access;
- the development and more sophisticated use of LMI;
- the potential to combine industry expertise with guidance expertise; and
- the potential to re-shape workforce over time (i.e. align supply and demand).

Accreditation

SEMTA and Skillset have achieved the Matrix accreditation.

CITB-ConstructionSkills was previously accredited and is now exploring Matrix accreditation.

e-skills UK is not accredited.

Work with agencies and other bodies

CITB-ConstructionSkills is working with Connexions to provide impartial advice to young people so that they can make informed decisions.

Although dependent on specific projects, **e-skills UK** does work with Connexions services through the GERI project.

SEMTA works with a whole range of agencies and other bodies to encourage young people into the sector as well as targeting underrepresented groups through specific initiatives.

For **Skillset** their role with agencies and other bodies is to provide and interpret information to assist and support decision making processes.

Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs with less well developed IAG function is:

- to take the opportunity to share experiences;
- do not underestimate the resources needed to do the job effectively;
- do not operate at a simplistic level where details of a client can be taken and information put in the post – SSCs should be looking to do more than this;
- to have a helpful telephone manner and the ability to draw out crucial information from the clients;
- to think carefully and work hard to position IAG within the organisation;
- to work with colleagues and ensure they understand that IAG is not a ‘stand alone’ activity;
- to be clear about the purpose of IAG and be able to communicate this effectively;
- to be aware of balancing employers’ needs with individual aspirations;
- to collaborate with publicly funded IAG services and avoid duplication; and
- to be realistic about what can be achieved alongside other organisational priorities.

Strengths of IAG provision for:

- CITB-ConstructionSkills – history, knowledge of the sector and the brand in the marketplace;
- e-skills UK – good quality materials as they are produced from specific projects, and focus on specific targets;

- SEMTA – advisers are helpful, have a good telephone manner and have the ability to ask the right questions, but also the service is able to recognise its limitations;
- Skillset – industry knowledge and links with industry.

Labour Market Information (LMI)

Labour Market Information is **defined** as:

- supply-demand equation – how many people are in the sector and how many are needed, and therefore the identification of the sector's 'needs';
- forecasting together with data on what has happened in the sector;
- categorisation of people;
- geographic trends;
- issues around skills shortages and gaps;
- industry sector profiles;
- job opportunities;
- occupational information;
- regional data;
- progression routes; and
- information about education and training.

Skillset defined LMI as 'Anything that helps people to understand the labour market and the opportunities for them within it'.

The **types of LMI** collected by the four Pathfinder SSCs include:

- industry indicators;
- DTI statistics;
- primary and secondary research data;
- surveys (telephone and written);
- employer skills survey focusing on current trends and predictions;
- workforce surveys;
- Annual Census;
- sector-specific research;
- skills forecasting;
- skills intelligence network;
- occupational information; and
- LMI from clients (although unused at present).

LMI is **collected** by the SSCs on the basis of employer-led demand, demand from government departments and outside agencies, as well as by consultation with employers.

CITB-ConstructionSkills and e-skills UK do not, at present, **consult** or liaise with others on its LMI. At SEMTA, a process of consultation and collaboration between the careers service and research department is undertaken when necessary. Skillset has undertaken a survey of IAG partnerships which is funded by the Learning and Skills Council.

LMI is made **available** through:

- SSC websites;
- formal publications;
- quarterly bulletins; and
- fact sheets.

CITB-ConstructionSkills, e-skills UK and SEMTA all **evaluate the effectiveness** of their LMI, but CITB-ConstructionSkills stated that further evaluation is needed regarding both the usefulness and accuracy of the LMI. Skillset currently do not carry out any evaluation of the LMI collected, but there are plans for this work to be contracted to an outside agency.

Part B: Other licensed Sector Skills Councils

5. Report on Cogent

5.1 IAG role development

Cogent originally developed from OPITO, the national training organisation (NTO) for oil and gas, and IAG within this NTO was about industry attractiveness (about 1999). Cogent was a trailblazer, but then expanded to include the petroleum and chemical industries and recently the nuclear and polymers industries. These additional four industry areas did not undertake IAG or have a defined IAG role. The role of IAG within Cogent SSC has, therefore, developed from the experiences with oil and gas and has been expanded to the other industries within the sector.

5.2 IAG team

One person works on IAG in Cogent and this is her primary role. Other colleagues help and contribute to IAG for specific events and activities.

Susan Smart has worked on IAG in the sector for several years starting with the early NTO, OPITO. Her skills and knowledge have been developed through this experience. She has no formal IAG qualifications, but will be undertaking a qualification in the near future.

5.3 Type of IAG services offered

For individuals at GCSE level

There are a number of activities aimed at pupils taking GCSEs to promote the industries in the sector. Individuals may, therefore, hear about the sector through Cogent's participation in schools careers events. Cogent also participates in events for teachers and schools together with placing adverts in careers publications to promote itself.

If an individual contacted the Cogent switchboard for information and advice, an information pack would be sent out containing: information on where to find out more; web addresses for employers and recruitment agencies; leaflets from other organisations and associations; 'day in the life of...' real life cases/stories; contact information; and information on the 'Talking Job' website where individuals can listen or

read about people in the sector. If IAG person was contacted directly then the information pack would be sent out, but she would be able to talk about the sector and give information and advice.

For adults making a career change

A similar process would be undertaken for adults making a career change – the same information pack would be sent out. Adults are more likely to need to get information on recruitment sites/agencies.

Agency working

Careers organisations

Cogent's IAG work with careers organisations and advisers includes organisations' specific events aimed at careers advisers and giving them information on the different industries within the sector to increase their knowledge about the sector. Information on Modern Apprenticeships in oil and gas managed by Cogent is also communicated.

Schools, colleges, universities

The IAG work with schools and colleges includes responding to requests from these organisations to talk about the industry and Modern Apprenticeships plus attending careers evenings. There is also a schools radio quiz/challenge in: North East on Scotland on oil and gas; and the East of England on nuclear, energy, oil and gas. It is a fun competition aimed at highlighting the industries and raising the profile of the sector.

Every other year there is a major exhibition/conference called 'Offshore Europe' in Aberdeen. Cogent does an 'education day' in which up to 300 senior pupils are taken to the exhibition to give them some exposure to the industries and sector; to attend presentations by people in the industry and to be given a guided tour of the conference.

The SSC attends careers events at universities. A road show exhibition on careers within the oil and gas industry called 'Industry attraction' visits several universities to tell people about the industry and the opportunities available. This will be managed by Cogent in the near future.

Employers

Cogent's IAG work with employers included getting them involved in, and sponsoring, some of the activities and events with schools, colleges and universities. Employer representatives assist at careers exhibitions and presentations. Many of the 'upstream'

organisations (i.e. those in the oil and gas industries) have strong links with schools. These links are important as they not only raise the profile of the sector, but also the organisations.

Cogent has also put together a schools 2 day programme for an employer which included 3 trips (a hands-on practical trip, a tour round a survival centre, and an opportunity to go in a drilling simulator).

Focus groups have also been held for the upstream industries, including employers and associations, so that they can influence activities for the SSC as a whole.

Job seekers

At present, no work is undertaken with job seekers, but information packs can be sent out to them.

Public and other agencies

Cogent has strong links with Careers Scotland as it has partnership and good working relationships with the schools.

5.4 Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG

Information is all the literature produced by the SSC including the fact sheets, website and the activities they undertake and manage.

Advice is pointing individuals in the right direction to find out more about the industries within the sector and to get more information. Advice is given through the knowledge gained and thus being able to advise individuals about employment in the sector and make them aware of the opportunities available. Anyone calling would get advice.

Guidance is guiding an individual in what they should do in order to become whatever. Cogent plans to develop guidance services in 2005.

The current understanding of IAG at Cogent has developed through reading publications and reports.

It is believed that Cogent has the potential:

- to improve the image of the sector;
- to improve the information available; and
- to provide profiles of the industries within the sector.

Cogent has a difficult job to do in improving the sector as people often have poor perceptions of the industries within the sector. For instance, 'nuclear' is often perceived as unappealing. Cogent, therefore, has to improve the information that is available on the sector to raise its profile. It needs to sell an accurate/full story, and create a positive image of the sector. The SSC has the responsibility to present a balanced view of the sector by explaining the industry and what it is about.

5.5 Aims

Organisational aims

- To create a complete suite of information on all the industries within the Cogent sector. There is, currently, a lot of information on the oil and gas industries.
- To brand products, for example, 'Opportunities' for university students, 'Options' for secondary education pupils and 'Outlook' for the workforce (those not in education or those wanting to changing careers).

Specific groups targeted

Pupils/students are targeted to raise the profile of sector and present a positive image to the future workforce. Careers advisers and teachers are targeted as they are both in an influential position and can also identify pupils/young people who want to work in the sector. Where possible, design and technology teachers are contacted.

5.6 Future plans

Current plans for future provision

Immediate plans include to:

- increase literature and information on website to bring it up to speed and to cover all the industries within the sector;
- organise a school city event in the Highlands;
- arrange a school challenge/radio quiz in the North East of Scotland and the East of England;
- organise an engineering road show to schools in Norfolk and Suffolk; and to

- develop regional teams in Scotland, the North, the Midlands and the South to plan activities to work on a regional basis as the industry workforce is not transient and is regional based.

IAG activities planned for 2005 underpin the aims of the organisation to raise the profile of the sector. Work in 2005 also includes undertaking a market assessment and visiting schools, colleges and employers to ask them what is of value to them and what works.

Priorities

The biggest priorities in terms of IAG are producing literature to cover all industries in the sector and the branding initiative.

Ideal scenario

Ideally, the SSC would like to have blanket coverage of all industries in the sector as there is, currently, a focus on upstream industries. Also, the SSC would like to have the capacity to deliver all activities across all industries.

Most exciting

In terms of IAG, the most exciting element is being given the IAG role because in some SSCs IAG is not given enough importance. IAG is a strong element of Cogent as it is understood that it is important to look at the future workforce. Also, all the activities that are undertaken involving schools and other people are exciting as they emphasise the reality of the industry.

Accreditation

The SSC is competence and standards driven so it has been looking at the Matrix accreditation. This is planned for the future.

5.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

SSC role with agencies and other bodies

Cogent works with Careers Scotland, which has a duty to provide careers information and advice to schools, so the more information the SSC can provide on the sector the better informed the organisation. Cogent uses the services of Careers Scotland to help with liaising and arranging activities with schools for Cogent. Many of the Cogent events are arranged through Careers Scotland as schools are more likely to respond positively to events arranged in this manner.

IAG in the sector

Cogent is in a position to provide and deliver the information needed. Whereas guidance is regarded as a full-time role which Cogent is not currently in a position to offer or likely to provide in the near future. Information and advice definitely can be provided by Cogent and should be their role.

5.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

- To provide good information about the sector in interesting, fun and enjoyable ways which people will remember (e.g. the school challenges/quiz).
- To create an interactive website.
- Information should be delivered in a way that people will remember – short, sharp and lively – conveying a serious message.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

In relation to IAG, the strengths of the organisation include:

- going out, interacting and engaging with people to promote the sector;
- not being paper-driven;
- delivering different activities to raise the profile of the sector;
- talking about our industries and not 'our company' to promote the sector; and
- promoting the sector through branding.

Improving IAG in the sector

- To get to more people, to cover all the UK (if had unlimited resources).
- To use the findings of the market assessment to extend and improve activities which will have been identified as adding value.
- To look at prioritising areas such as the downstream industries (i.e. those in the refinery and nuclear industries) in particular regions.
- To get to more of the industries, particularly those in the North West.

6. Report on Summitskills

6.1 IAG role development

Summitskills had been operating for about 9 months at the time the interview took place.

The current IAG function has been developed from 'virtually nothing, informal and *ad hoc* to quite structured, responsive and effective'. At the point of licence, two employees had been inherited from each of three NTOs that were combined to form Summitskills, together with one administrator. This represented a team who were specialist in particular areas (plumbing, electrical, heating and ventilation, refrigeration and air conditioning) and who could respond to both telephone and email enquiries. However, because of the nature of their work (both home-based and out on the road much of the time) it quickly became necessary to develop fact sheets (FAQs) which then provided the basis of information that could be used by the administrator with enquirers. This system was successful in shifting the burden from specialists, but it continued to take up much of the administrator's capacity.

To deal with this, an approach was made to the Ufi learndirect in Manchester and Leicester, together with other SSCs (like Semta). All enquiries now go through learndirect and most can be dealt with in this way. Summitskills have briefed and trained learndirect advisers and continue to support their work with information packs. Additionally, they provide back-up with specialist help where the queries are more complicated.

An important advantage of this arrangement is a single point of contact for IAG for the four sectors that have been brought together in Summitskills. All publicity information gives a learndirect number. One other advantage is that learndirect provides demographic data on callers (e.g. gender, ethnic origin, age, geographical location, etc.)

This has now been running for about 3 months and the service is getting between 800-1,000 calls a months.

6.2 IAG team

Within Summitskills, there are six operations managers, backed up by an administrator. IAG became 'a job people did along with everything else' – it actually became a distraction from the primary tasks individuals were employed for. The Operations

Managers are typically professional standards developers – so Summitskills does not have a dedicated IAG team. These Operations Managers are all home based, in regions with particular specialisms.

In addition, there are the trained call-centre people at learndirect, with skills relevant to call-centre work. Summitskills provides back-up to these people.

6.3 Type of IAG services offered

There are two types of service offered:

- reactive IAG – people contacting Summitskills; and
- responsive IAG – response when approached.

Proactive IAG

Particularly relevant for Connexions, where Summitskills help Personal Advisers to understand what would be required from people entering the sector. Connexions is prioritised because it represents an 'easy hit'.

Responsive IAG

Briefings and information sheets. Face-to-face briefings are given wherever Summitskills gets a response. (Schools give a very poor response – do not seem to want to let Summitskills or employers in to talk to pupils). However, a prime concern at the moment is controlling supply (both young people and adults) and creating demand on the employer side.

6.4 Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG

IAG is helping primarily young people understand the implications of an easy statement like: 'I think I'd like to become an electrician.'

It covers qualifications, length and nature of training, course/training centres, apprenticeships, earning, the pleasures and discomforts involved in a particular job. Also, what a career in the sector looks like in the broad, together with information about 'bridges and opportunities'. It is possible to make only limited progress with enquirers, then it is necessary to refer them on to an agent (who are geographically close to where

the enquirer lives) so that advice can be given on training centres and/or Managing Agents and local employers.

Understanding of IAG has come from years of experience and listening to employers.

6.5 Aims

The focus is on improving the understanding of people wishing to enter the sector (Summitskills works with others on this, for example, Trade Associations). The sector currently has a poor image which has arisen from bad media coverage (e.g. Rogue Traders). A particular issue at the moment is the 'rogue plumber trainer'. Additionally, there is a need to educate employers, who have a tendency to base their views of suitable training on their own experiences (complete an apprenticeship, then set up as sole traders).

Summitskills aims to provide publicity materials that give a clear and accurate message, to correct misunderstandings and give a clear message about what the industry regards as competent.

Specific groups targeted

The current target group are adults wishing to re-train. The industry needs to become less dependent on 16 year old white males because there is a diminishing pool of 16 year olds and they have poor levels of ability and qualifications.

The biggest barrier to adult re-training is funding, which is simply not available to the appropriate level. Currently, Summitskills does advise adults how to access funds (through Jobcentre Plus and Learning and Skills Councils)

6.6 Future plans

The priority is the consolidation of the new initiative with learndirect. Since this has only recently got fully underway, there is a need to review and evaluate. The intention is to let the arrangement operate for 6-9 months and then formally evaluate. Only after this period of time will it be possible to obtain reliable data on which to base decisions about future priorities. (This will be the first time there has been a structured base of information to inform the development of IAG for the sector).

The new partnership arrangement with learndirect represents an innovative idea for the sector. Previously, IAG has represented ‘a bit of a pain’ – a distraction from the real business. Now, Summitskills has turned this round to providing information that will help to give the sector a strategic direction.

6.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

Summitskills is best placed to operate at two particular levels:

- to respond to standard enquiries (‘I want to be an electrician’) – this type of enquiry is adequately dealt with in a call-centre environment; and
- back-up from a sector expert – the best people to talk about options are the ones who have developed the qualifications.

A combination of these two represents the best possible model. Further development of the service will be informed by the results from the evaluation of the new learndirect partnership arrangement.

6.8 Models for practice

It was noted to be difficult to generalise, since SSCs have different circumstances and needs. Summitskills had a very good idea of the questions that people were asking routinely. This provided the guiding principles that say 85% of calls could be answered by anyone with a briefing sheet. Of the remaining 15%, 10% can be answered by someone with a broad knowledge of the sector and only 5% will need to talk to someone who was an electrician. The key driver of moving to the current model of practice was that the vast majority of questions could be answered by anyone with a proper resource base.

In conclusion, IAG has the potential to emphasise the coming together of the sector. This aspect of IAG is extremely important – one telephone number to answer all enquiries related to this sector.

7. Report on Automotive Skills

7.1 IAG role development

The IAG function in Automotive Skills is currently being developed. The Automotive Skills SSC is building upon the careers materials and publications of the former NTO, the Motor Industry Training Council. This former NTO did not have a specific IAG function.

7.2 IAG team

There is one person, the Lifelong Learning Manager, whose work is dedicated to, and who is responsible for, IAG within the SSC. The Lifelong Learning Manager has a background in developing/organising an IAG function within a related industry. She is a trained adviser and is IAG qualified.

This dedicated IAG person is supported by the Director of Learning and Skills and the Workforce Development Manager. This support is important as recognises the links between IAG, qualifications, recognition of achievements and career pathways. Both the director and the manager have broad policy backgrounds which are not specific to IAG, but include employment in awarding bodies, the qualification/curriculum authority and NTOs.

There are currently no plans to recruit more staff into this work, but it is expected that more dedicated staff will be need if the service is to expand with an expanded advice function online or over the telephone.

7.3 Type of IAG services offered

Pupils undertaking their GCSEs and thinking about a potential career path in the sector may hear about the IAG function through:

- contacting the learndirect helpline;
- contacting the SSC directly; and by
- visiting the Automotive Skills website.

This would be backed up by careers information which is in the process of being developed. Materials and information from the Motor Industry Training Council is used at present. A 'careers pack' and CD ROM is being developed which will contain

information on the young apprenticeship schemes that are specifically targeted at 14-16 year olds.

An individual contacting the SSC would initially receive a 'careers pack' and CD ROM (when these are available) which would then be followed up with further information if required by the enquirer.

For adults making a career change

For an adult making a career change, a mix of materials from the 'career pack', which will be tailored-made to the individual needs, would be sent out. This pack will also include information on the adult apprenticeships for:

- those already working in the sector who are skilled, but not qualified; and
- those who are not in the sector, but are looking for a career change and are thinking about the automotive sector.

Agency working

Automotive Skills SSC is currently building up partnerships and work with careers advisers and organisations including Connexions.

Schools, colleges, universities

The SSC's IAG work with schools involves attending careers exhibitions and careers evenings which are organised at a local and regional level. However, with only one person dedicated to IAG, it is not possible to attend exhibitions and events all the time. The young apprenticeship scheme is run in partnership with five organisations which each have links with one or two schools so talks on the scheme can be organised through these affiliations. These partnerships create an understanding of individual needs which can be extrapolated and used to address the needs more broadly.

The SSC aims to initially work with colleges through the Centres of Vocational Excellence Network.

The SSC attends careers events at universities and is working on a foundation degree programme involving four higher education institutions. This programme requires considerable resources as is only in the initial stages of development.

Employers

For Automotive Skills, employers are the 'guiding light' so attendance at any employer-led exhibitions and events is important. Although the SSC would like to attend more events such as these, this is difficult with only one dedicated IAG person.

Job seekers

The work with jobseekers involves responding to any enquiries which may come in.

Public and other agencies

Automotive Skills has a strong partnership with learndirect which is responsible for running the dedicated automotive sector helpline.

The work with public and other agencies is concentrated on improving the sector's image, proving that it is an attractive space to work and trying to, for the public, increase the sector's presence.

7.4 Understanding of IAG

The Automotive Skills SSC's current understanding of IAG has developed through knowledge of, and an understanding of, the work which is undertaken at a national level by the Learning and Skills Councils and other national bodies. Much of the SSC's current understanding of IAG is based on the Lifelong Learning Manager's IAG experience/knowledge and background of IAG work in other sectors.

The SSC definitely believes that IAG has the potential to improve the view that people have of the automotive sector.

Current understanding of IAG

Information is about: the labour market in general and research into the labour market; education and training; finance and sources of funding; the exploration of opportunities and constraints; helping an individual make decisions; an assessment of interests, skills and aptitudes; help with making contacts (which may include vacancy information in the future); and helping with job search strategies.

Increasing an individual's self awareness, help with clarifying an individual's preferences and discussing options with an individual, which are understood to be elements of **information and advice**, are all undertaken by the learndirect advisers. The work of

these advisers is supported by the SSC who give them as much information on the sector as possible.

Advice is understood to be about: education and training in general; signposting individuals to finance and sources of funding; together with exploring individual opportunities and constraints. The SSC is developing, from their new management standards, an online diagnostic self-assessment routine for people to complete. It is hoped that this routine will give individuals the information they need in order to help them make decisions.

Guidance is about being neutral, as with information and advice, and detecting individual interests and supporting them, but is also about matching individual needs with the needs of the sector. At present, the SSC does not want to support individuals with application writing, or help with problem solving and personal issues as believes that this requires a bigger dedicated IAG function.

7.5 Aims

Organisational aims

The SSC's organisational aims in providing IAG include:

- to ensure that those interested in working in the sector are encouraged into the sector; and
- to help individuals make the right decisions by ensuring that those coming to the SSC for IAG get a balanced and neutral view of the sector.

The core aim of the SSC is to ensure that the sector has a good supply of people and a workforce that is trained, skilled and adaptable.

Specific groups targeted

As there is a gender imbalance in the sector the SSC has targeted women with the aim of increasing their participation in the sector. Diversity issues are also addressed and under-represented groups are targeted. The SSC is currently in the final stages of setting out a strategy for the overall IAG function, which will include strategic aims for addressing these groups.

Work with Connexions and other public agencies will be undertaken when required.

7.6 Future plans

Current plans for future provision

The current SSC plans for IAG include:

- the development of the careers strategy;
- the expansion of the IAG function within the SSC; and
- to review and evaluation of the careers strategy in 6 months in the light of any research and evidence which will have been produced by the SSC research team (sector information is sparse at present).

Priorities

The biggest priorities in terms of IAG are:

- completing, and getting right, the careers strategy; and
- getting people and organisations external to the SSC committed to the strategy which will not be difficult as the overall SSC strategy was developed with input from employers, sector organisations and employment associations.

Ideal scenario

Ideally, the SSC would like to have additional capacity over the next 6-12 months which will be focused on communication issues, such as attendance of conferences, events and exhibitions, but will also be about expanding the PR/marketing side of the SSC to increase awareness about the role of the SSC and its importance.

Most exciting

The most exciting element in terms of IAG in the SSC is the range of new careers materials which will be available together with the fact that IAG provision will reflect the reality of the sector. Currently, there is an image that the sector is quite technical; the new careers materials will reflect the changes in the sector that it is not just technical, but individuals need, for example, people skills. It will also promote the sub-sectors and their importance.

Accreditation

The SSC in principle, and when appropriate, would like to be appropriately accredited with the Matrix standard.

7.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

SSC role with agencies and other bodies

Automotive Skills SSC see the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, Scottish Qualifications Authority, the Learning and Skills Councils and other awarding bodies as key partners in the work they undertake. The work with these bodies involves providing them with up-to-date and accurate information on the sector.

IAG in the sector

Automotive Skills SSC believes that they and the learndirect advisers on the automotive sector helpline are best placed to offer IAG on the sector at a national level. It is hoped that all the information produced by the SSC can be channelled out through various organisations and institutions with the aim of changing the image of the sector.

7.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

- To have a strategic view, as it is important to have an overall, coherent and focused strategy for IAG.
- To have a dedicated IAG resource (preferably more than one person) and support for IAG. For example, within Automotive Skills the Lifelong Learning Manager has a central role in the organisation.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

In relation to IAG, the strengths of the organisation include:

- having the right person in post;
- having a strategic/overarching view of the role of IAG; and
- making the right partnerships and agreements in place with national bodies that can support the SSC IAG work.

Improving IAG in the sector

- There is a need to be quicker, to push the SSC work forward.
- To have access to more money/resources to put into this area of work.

8. Report on GoSkills

8.1 IAG role development

GoSkills covers passenger transport and also has a remit for the Aviation Authority. At the time of the interview, GoSkills had not yet achieved full status as an SSC, so IAG services were limited. Up to the present, a limited range of leaflets is available, mainly focusing on entry to particular occupational roles ('How to be a ...'). Additionally, more specialist information leaflets are produced, on topics like EU legislation on driver training. An infrastructure is in place which enables enquiries to be processed (i.e. a named person to take telephone queries and respond by sending information).

The Aviation industry has its own custom and practice around recruitment and marketing, so it may be some time before 'employer buy-in' is achieved for IAG for this part of the industry.

8.2 IAG team

There are three team members: the Standards and Qualifications Manager, who holds overall responsibility for IAG: the Standards and Qualifications Executive (who has no direct involvement in IAG) and the Apprenticeship Executive (who had been in post for only about 4 months at time of interview). The Apprenticeship Executive holds the remit to develop policy and practice in the area of IAG, which is currently described as 'embryonic'.

This IAG service provided by the centre is supported by the Regional Business Advisers, whose remit is to represent GoSkills in the Regions. It is envisaged that eventually these Advisers will be the first point of contact for regional enquiries. However, these advisers have been in post for less than 4 months, so their operation is still under development.

The Marketing Team also provides support to the IAG function, mainly in the form of publicity materials, but again this is under development.

The relevant background of the Apprenticeship Executive relates mainly to experience gained from previous employment with the Learning and Skills Council. In this capacity, he had gained extensive experience with the 16-19 age group (through involvement with Connexions services). Other knowledge gained has been picked 'on-the-job'. He has

no training in IAG. He regards himself as very well networked with Learning and Skills Councils and Connexions companies, but reports no experience relevant to adult enquiries.

8.3 Type of IAG services offered

The two priorities for the Sector are currently: the ageing workforce and the shortage of drivers. There is, therefore, a need to develop links with job centres, and develop services to adults but policies are yet to be developed. One other need is to develop a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with the 5 large bus companies, to clarify procedures around recruitment and referral.

For young people

Services include advice about the Modern Apprenticeship. It is expected that Modern Apprenticeship's would be actively promoted to this age group, unless an individual came with a particular enquiry, when appropriate information leaflets would be provided.

For adults making a career change

Services for adults would depend on where they live. As policies and procedures are developed for the Regional Advisers, they would be the first point of referral. In the future. It is intended to develop a 'Memorandum of Agreement' with the large employers so that clear procedures are set out for referrals for vacancies.

Agency working

Links with Connexions are being built upon and developed.

Schools, colleges, universities

This comprises mainly information leaflets. The SSC is keen to develop a website that permits information about the sector to be distributed more efficiently.

So far as services with Universities are concerned – these are under-developed because there are so few occupations requiring level 4 qualifications (though GoSkills is actively involved with the development of Foundation Degrees).

Employers

Working groups (e.g. bus and coach and aviation) have been established to consider different areas of employment. These represent expert groups for standards and

qualifications, but also offer a valuable resource for IAG. These are central to future IAG policy.

Also links being developed with other SSCs (e.g. engineering) so that a response can be made to queries.

Job seekers

The services for with jobseekers involves processing and responding to any enquiries which may come in.

8.4 Understanding of IAG

Understanding of IAG is been developed at GoSkills. Previously, the Apprenticeship Executive was only familiar with careers advice and this understanding was developed during employment with the Learning and Skills Council. Within the SSC it is felt that there is not sufficient knowledgeable to offer enquirers any guidance about options in the sector, so currently only offers information and advice. It is, however, frustrating when someone requires a response that is beyond the expertise available in GoSkills.

IAG is understood to be about life choices. At present the priority for GoSkills is the provision of focused, specific and accurate information in response to particular queries. Ideally, enquirers should be given specific information, like a contact name, company name and 'next steps' advice. It is not appropriate, at present, to talk about options in the sector (in the future, a new member of staff may be recruited to take on this role).

The SSC has the potential to provide a coherent, unified view of the sector, which is very important. So there is certainly a role in raising and improving the public perception of the industry.

8.5 Aims

Organisational aims

The aim is to provide a one-stop shop for 'careers information and advice' and reduce fragmentation in the sector. This will involve linking up information and advice with job placement (e.g. if someone wants to train to be a bus driver, need to advise about the closest employer who could provide fully funded training). Clear lines of communication

with employers, therefore, need to be set up to ensure that a seamless service can be offered that complements what employers already do.

Specific groups targeted

The Business Plan contains an explicit commitment to equality. The sector is male-dominated, but until research is undertaken that provides information about fundamental issues about barriers to certain groups, an informed policy response is not possible.

[Please note: In Scotland, a leaflet has been produced which presents a case study of woman returner being employed in the sector].

8.6 Future plans

Strategy needs to be negotiated, but this cannot be achieved until there is 'employer buy in'. Their agreement is crucial before progress can be made with any ideas on IAG.

Priorities

The biggest priority for the SSC is:

- bus and coach drivers (particularly the need to train drivers) – though this has to be agreed within GoSkills.

Ideal scenario

GoSkills is still a SSC in development – resources, consequently, are limited, so future scenario-building is constrained by this situation.

Most exciting

When striving to get fundamentals in place, it is difficult to focus on the future or ideal scenarios. Specialist employees and/or training for careers advice would be some considerable way 'down the road'.

Getting a website up that gives a uniform message to/about all employers is ideal.

Accreditation

Not relevant at the moment.

8.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

SSC role with agencies and other bodies

Work with employers is the highest priority. After this, there is a need to build links with Jobcentre Plus, so that understanding is increased about how referrals can/might work.

IAG in the sector

SSCs are best positioned to deliver careers advice for the sector. In some cases an advisor has to get back to enquirers – there is a question of confidence and time to develop policies and procedures.

8.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

Accepting the differences between this industry and others, it still seems that employers buy-in is of paramount importance. There is a need to undertake research to inform strategy and infrastructure to deal with enquiries.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

A very good relationship exists with employers which is of central importance.

9. Report on SkillsActive

9.1 IAG role development

SkillsActive is the Sector Skills Council for active leisure and learning. It has been established by employers in the sport and recreation, health and fitness, playwork, outdoors and caravan industries.

SkillsActive has developed from being an NTO and it inherited from the NTO some careers information and a process for responding to written IAG enquiries. This year, for the first time, SkillsActive has developed a specific IAG strategy. The IAG strategy was introduced in October 2004 and runs until October 2005. The strategy consolidates planning work that has already been done and is raising the profile of IAG within SkillsActive both in terms of raising awareness about the need for resources but also so that staff who receive enquiries realise the importance of dealing with those enquiries. The strategy is now part of the SkillsActive business plan and there is a core budget for IAG work. As the impact of IAG work is analysed so a case can be made for additional resources such as additional staff.

9.2 IAG team

There is no specific IAG team within SkillsActive. One person in the Technical Unit, whose key function is dealing with national occupational standards, is working on IAG for the equivalent of half a day per week. There is a development officer within the Technical Unit who works on a number of issues also spends around one day a week on IAG, developing IAG materials and working on the IAG strategy. Additionally there is a Communications Team who assist with tasks such as the design of IAG materials. SkillsActive has nine regional offices, and an office each for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, but no staff at regional level have an IAG role (see below).

SkillsActive inherited some IAG functions inherited from its former NTO, but there were no staff within the NTO that had a specific IAG role. The one person working in the Technical Unit previously worked for the NTO, but was not involved in IAG, has a background as a trainer and a training manager. The development officer's background is in sport. There is no-one within SkillsActive with an IAG background, but this is being addressed through the IAG strategy.

9.3 Type of IAG services offered

SkillsActive has outsourced the provision of telephone IAG to learndirect. Learndirect is at present funded to work with SSCs and the service is free to callers. Learndirect staff have been briefed by SkillsActive and have access to all SkillsActive IAG materials. If learndirect receives a more complex enquiry they will refer it to those responsible for IAG in the Technical Unit at SkillsActive to provide more detailed information.

For young people

Young people may find out about the IAG provided by SkillsActive by visiting the SkillsActive website. Also, SkillsActive has sent IAG information to Connexions services and school careers libraries. SkillsActive has also recently started to attend careers events. Some people contact their SkillsActive regional office. Regional offices have IAG materials which they can send to people but otherwise will refer callers to the SkillsActive website or to Technical Unit or development officer.

If a young person contacts the unit they first try to ascertain which part of the sector the young person is interested in. The young person can then be sent appropriate materials and referred to the appropriate part of the website. They would ask what qualifications the young person is pursuing because SkillsActive has information on entry routes through GCSEs, 'A' levels, Modern Apprenticeships and so on. Some young people do not have much idea what they want to do, so in that case the unit would talk them through the sector and send them general information. Many young people want web based information so they can be referred to the SkillsActive website but also given others such as websites for relevant employers. Young people often ask about a specific occupation and SkillsActive is developing case studies which will be particularly helpful in such instances. Contact by e-mail would be treated the same, with the response containing the unit's contact details plus the learndirect free phone number.

For adults making a career change

The process would be similar for adults although some information e.g. about apprenticeships would not be relevant. The sector attracts large numbers of women returners and middle age people seeking a career change, and more enquiries are in fact received from adults than young people. Adults are provided with the same web-based or paper-based information as with young people, but most adult telephone enquiries are now also diverted to learndirect.

Connexions, schools, colleges and universities

SkillsActive has done a mail out to Connexions and schools providing web links and so on. Learndirect also takes calls from Connexions and schools. Work so far has focused on schools and Connexions rather than colleges and universities.

Employers

Work is undertaken with employers through existing employer networks. Member employers can access and use SkillsActive IAG materials, and can advertise vacancies on the SkillsActive website.

Other agencies

SkillsActive is working with other SSCs, for example Skillset has helped with the development of IAG materials. At careers events SkillsActive often shares a stand with another SSC to pool resources.

9.4 Understanding of IAG

IAG is regarded as helping people find their way through the plethora of information that is available. For example, there is a lot of information available about sport, but it is about helping people find the information they need and find their way around the information. This might mean signposting people to another place or talking them through a particular qualification route, so it can be at very different levels. With regard to the prompts in the questionnaire (see Appendix 2), IAG refers to people's understanding of what a job is, but also why they think it is the job for them, and the skills they will need. It is about more than giving people an information sheet. It is also about people recognising what they need to be like e.g. enjoying working outdoors. There is also a need to be realistic e.g. if there are 30,000 sports science graduates a year but only 10,000 jobs. Therefore, it is understood that good IAG also needs to be realistic as to what is available.

This understanding of IAG has been gained through experience of receiving IAG and through work. However, this is becoming an issue because SkillsActive wants to do activities properly and it has been recognised that it needs specialist advice or training for current staff.

There is a common perception that anyone can work with children or in sport, it does not matter if you are qualified and it is an easy way of changing careers. This is not the case and IAG could improve these perceptions.

9.5 Aims

Organisational aims

The primary aim of SkillsActive in providing IAG is to help employers in the sector to recruit and retain the right people because many employers in the sector have recruitment problems and high staff turnover. It is also about enabling potential employees to get the most out of the sector, giving them a realistic view of the sector and helping them access appropriate qualifications. This will also help employers to recruit and retain the right people.

Specific groups targeted

Men need to be targeted in playwork. Otherwise, the issue is attracting people who will see the sector as a career rather than a stepping stone in order to reduce staff turnover. Part of the SkillsActive IAG strategy is to use labour market information to gain a better understanding of who is joining and leaving the sector, whether an employer's workforce reflects the local population in terms of ethnic diversity, and looking at the gender balance in the sector. There is a perception that lots of young people join and then leave the sector but monitoring of the workforce will enable SkillsActive to see if this is actually the case. This work will be undertaken by the SkillsActive research department and once that information is available SkillsActive may seek advice from an IAG expert as to how to target the right people.

9.6 Future plans

Future plans of the SSC are based on the IAG strategy with key issues being about raising awareness of the importance of IAG within SkillsActive, monitoring the effectiveness of the learndirect service, and developing information in new formats e.g. interactive CD ROMs.

Priorities

The biggest priority for the SSC is getting employers, schools and Connexions to see SkillsActive as the first stop for IAG in the sector.

Ideal scenario

The SSC would like to offer more information to Connexions and schools and in more exciting formats, and advertise in the careers press where advisers look. At the moment SkillsActive is missing people because they do not know about the organisation, but the current budget is insufficient to undertake such advertising.

Most exciting

The provision of the learndirect telephone line because, if it works, it is a widely available number with sector specific resources behind it.

Accreditation

SkillsActive is starting the process of seeking Matrix accreditation. The SSC is also applying for the Investors in People award and there is considerable cross-referencing with Matrix accreditation so SkillsActive hopes to complete the two at the same time. However, as SkillsActive provides only part of the service and some is provided externally (i.e. the telephone service), accreditation would only apply to SkillsActive provided IAG so this needs to be discussed with the Matrix adviser. However, the Matrix accreditation is part of the IAG strategy and the process will be started.

9.7 Working with other agencies

SSC role with agencies and other bodies

Connexions services have a vital role in providing IAG about the sector because young people can access Connexions locally, and Connexions is so large. The main task is to keep Connexions up-to-date with information about the sector. It is considered almost worse for someone to get incorrect IAG about the sector than none at all.

IAG in the sector

SkillsActive in effect has a co-ordination role, and often the buck stops with SkillsActive in giving information that other organisations have not been able to provide. In particular, SkillsActive is a resource for employers to draw on.

9.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

There are good links between SSCs so talking to other SSCs is very useful. Outsourcing work is certainly helpful for SSCs that do not have a large IAG function.

For smaller SSCs, IAG is not something that can be provided by someone in addition to the rest of their job.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

The particular strength of SkillsActive is its detailed knowledge of the sector and having staff that are experts in each of the sub sectors.

The SSC would like to be able to provide more information and in more exciting formats.

10. Report on Lantra

10.1 IAG role development

Lantra was the NTO for the sector and has now become the SSC. It does not have an IAG function in terms of providing full IAG to individuals, but it does have some services and is at a stage of considering future development. In particular, the SSC inherited from the NTO the Lantra Connect service which deals with enquiries about careers in the sector (see Section 9.3 below).

10.2 IAG team

At present in Lantra there is no dedicated IAG team. One person, who has background in training and employability schemes, has responsibility for development in this area. This something of a change from previous practice as responsibility rested with people across different industry groups. Lantra Connect is largely a switchboard service and staff throughout the SSC can respond to enquiries. Staff have knowledge of the sector rather than IAG backgrounds. Further training is an issue for consideration.

10.3 Type of IAG services offered

Lantra has previously sent out literature to schools and so on, but that becomes out of date quickly. This has been identified as an issue and one specific task is to develop a process so that 16 year olds do know where to look for information. This is being done by developing two websites: one for 14-19 year olds, and one for adults. The websites will be operating early in 2005 and potential users can then be notified. The websites will provide an introduction to the sector and then signpost people to sites which contain more detailed information because many of the industry groups already provide very good information and duplication needs to be avoided.

For young people

A young person contacting Lantra would probably first go to Lantra Connect. Lantra Connect acts as a switchboard or filtering service for enquiries about careers in the sector. Basic information can be provided or enquiries passed to a more senior member of staff. Lantra also had good links with the land-based colleges so can refer people to education and training providers as appropriate. In future it will be possible to refer callers to be website, and it is recognised that the process needs to be developed.

For adults making a career change

The same process as with young people also applies to adults.

Agency working

Lantra has worked with the DfES and Defra regarding careers information e.g. responding to consultants appointed by the DfES. However, this work has been put on hold while Lantra reviews how to approach careers work and how best to use resources effectively. Lantra has started to talk to learndirect about possible partnership.

Careers advisers

In the past work with careers advisers has been limited. Some work has been done with Connexions on the provision of information about the sector, and some events have been held for careers advisers to gain an understanding of the sector e.g. one was held at the Smithfield Show. Lantra aims to develop this area of work.

Schools, colleges, universities

Lantra works very closely with the land-based colleges for example regarding qualifications and national occupational standards. Work on careers with colleges, however, is limited although colleges can have an input at a strategic level through various working groups.

Employers

Lantra has industry groups in which employers are involved and create industry action plans. Careers appears on virtually all the industry action plans e.g. improving people's perceptions of the sector and specific industries. In terms of action, the land-based engineering industry has recently launched a careers website, which Lantra has also assisted with. A leaflet has been produced about forestry in Scotland.

Job seekers

See above information regarding young people.

10.4 Understanding of IAG

IAG is about providing information, advice and guidance to individuals, or possibly organisations, to develop and create the necessary information to enable people to move forward in their career. It is giving them information, advising them how to do it and then guiding them. This could include having labour market information, information

about qualifications and training providers, career opportunities and continuing professional development. It is about the career development of the individual, but organisations may also need information for the development of their own staff. So it is broader than guidance providers who deal with people on an individual basis. In terms of the prompts in the questionnaire (see Appendix 2) all would appear to be relevant to a careers adviser, but at the time of the interview this role was not filled. Labour market information is of particular importance.

Understanding of IAG has been developed through personal experience of the Lantra team.

IAG does have potential to improve people's views of the sector. The sector does have an image problem. For example, news stories about there being no money in farming mean people do not see that there are career opportunities in agriculture. IAG, with the right people with the right knowledge, could reflect the true picture. It is, therefore, important to ensure IAG providers have accurate information.

10.5 Aims

Organisational aims

Lantra's strategic approach aims to influence and inform IAG providers, provide labour market information and actively promote careers in the sector, but these need further development.

Specific groups targeted

No specific groups are targeted. The workforce in the sector is ageing so young entrants would be welcomed. Groups that need to be targeted by Lantra are careers advisers, parents and young people, people seeking a career change and non-traditional entrants who are under-represented in the sector.

10.6 Future plans

Lantra is currently reviewing its position regarding IAG but the aim is to improve information provision. Learndirect is one option, website development is taking place, and more labour market information is needed. An action plan needs to be developed from the general strategic aims. Once the websites for 14-19 year olds and adults are

launched, Lantra will need to ensure careers advisers and Connexions services are aware of them.

Priorities

The main priority is to change people's perceptions of the sector. That means getting the right message across and making sure people have the right information.

Ideal scenario

Resources are limited. All the proposed developments are dependent upon funding being available.

Most exciting

IAG is a real challenge, but offers the potential to make a difference.

Accreditation

Not applicable.

10.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

SSC role with agencies and other bodies

Connexions and careers advisers provide the front-line service and are an invaluable part of the IAG system. But their knowledge of the land-based sector is limited.

IAG in the sector

The quality of the IAG provided is important not who provides it. Lantra has strong links with the industries in its sector so should be in a position to provide something itself but as an SSC is should perhaps work more strategically. There is a debate about this. Lantra currently takes a strategic approach rather than providing its own service, but this will be reviewed.

Connexions and schools have a responsibility to provide accurate information. There are many people in the sector who have done a degree and then had to take a further qualification to be of relevance to the sector. All partners – Lantra, Connexions, the DfES and so on – need to be involved and no one organisation is of greater importance than the others.

10.8 Models for practice

It would be very helpful to find out more about IAG and practice within other SSCs.

11. Report on Skillfast-UK

11.1 IAG role development

Skillfast-UK is the SSC for apparel, footwear, textiles and related businesses, and is an employer-led organisation. Skillfast-UK is an amalgamation of three NTOs: clothing, footwear and textiles. The IAG function in Skillfast-UK has been inherited from these three NTOs. However, these NTOs had very little careers information and the careers work undertaken was limited. The clothing NTO had the most developed IAG function and had created a website 'Careers in Clothing' which was inherited by Skillfast-UK and has been the basis of the new Skillfast-UK careers website. The footwear and textile NTOs had no developed careers role or strategy and were limited to one person with a dedicated IAG role. Information that was given out by these organisations was undertaken in an ad hoc manner.

At present, Skillfast-UK's remit is only to provide information, not advice and guidance. The role of IAG with Skillfast-UK is very much in development.

11.2 IAG team

At present in Skillfast-UK, there is no dedicated IAG team and there is no plan to recruit a team. The careers information that is soon to be published is being led by the marketing team and is using information from the research team. Altogether, there is approximately three people working on the information, but this is not exclusively and in addition to their main roles. People are drawn into the role according to their expertise. It is the overall role of those working on the information to raise awareness of the opportunities available in the sector.

Those individuals working on the careers information have mixed experience and backgrounds. The information is mainly produced from working with employers who have a vast amount of experience of working in the sector.

11.3 Type of IAG services offered

The IAG services offered and careers activity are branded under 'Fabricadabra' which includes three types of activity is the branding for the careers activity and includes:

- a website (to be launched shortly) consists of electronic media for use in the classroom raising awareness of the jobs in the sector and different job profiles;

- free workshops for teachers held across regions and countries which explain how work related learning may be delivered in the classroom (for example how the skills that employers need may be incorporated in to their lessons); and
- 'All Stitched Up' which is a school visit service – employers host school visits allowing young people to learn about the business/factory.

In addition, the 'Careers in Clothing' website is about to be re-launched which will be the main careers website and will contain the majority of the information about the sector. This will have four headings: careers in clothing; careers in textiles; careers in footwear; and careers in textile servicing.

For young people

Young people, specifically, may learn about the services offered by Skillfast-UK through an 'All Stitched Up' school visit, use of the CD ROMs, or from a teacher who has attended one of the workshops. It is hope that young people will, in the future, be directed toward the website.

A young person contacting the service will be directed to the website. If they have no access to the internet, an adviser will work through the website with them to gain the information needed. If the service was unable to help then a young person may be directed to Connexions or their local careers service.

A leaflet will be published shortly containing broad information on the types of careers in the sector and the various jobs. The aim of the leaflet is to market the sector and increase awareness about the variety of jobs available in the sector.

For adults making a career change

A similar process for adults making a career change contacting the service would be undertaken, for example direct to the website or taking them through the website. Additionally, adults with particular concerns or with specific needs may be directed to learndirect.

Agency working

As previously mentioned, Skillfast-UK is in the process of setting up partnerships with some public agencies, including Careers Scotland, Careers Wales, the Northern Ireland Careers Service and Connexions, to disseminate the Fabricadabra website and careers information. Also, Skillfast-UK is setting up a three-way partnership with Scottish

Textiles and Careers Scotland to disseminate the SSC careers materials to careers practitioners across the country.

There is also some tension between the agenda of the DfES and the SSC agenda for the sector. For example, the DfES commission job profiles to be written which can be an out-dated as focuses on fashion designers, whilst the SSC is trying to promote the wide variety of jobs that are available in the sector. It is felt that the DfES is undermining the promotional materials by portraying an inaccurate picture of the sector.

Careers advisers

Skillfast-UK is in the process of contacting Careers Scotland, Careers Wales, the Northern Ireland Careers Service and Connexions to set up protocols in which their website (and careers information) can be disseminated to careers advisers.

Schools, colleges, universities

Skillfast-UK works with schools acts as broker and sets up visits with employers in the sector. In addition, a series of workshops are run for teachers which is the primary interest of the SSC.

The SSC's work with further education colleges is focused on the 'Can you cut it' competition which is aimed at those studying textile design and on fashion courses and getting to think about the technical elements of their work. This competition included workshops and networking sessions which allowed students, teachers and employers to meet and understand each others needs. With further resources this competition will be run again with the addition of a 'master class'. It is also the aim of these workshops to raise the technical skills of the college lecturers which can be passed on to students who will be better equipped when they go on to higher education courses.

At the time of the interview no work was being undertaken with universities.

Employers

Employers will be able to advertise their vacancies and placements freely on the Skillfast-UK careers website.

All the careers materials for Fabricadabra were produced in consultation with employer as part of the Employer Learning Network which has employer-led steering groups within each region.

Job seekers

In the North West region a project called 'ASK' has been set up in partnership with, and takes place at, the Innovation Centre at UMIST. This project was set up to address the skills needs of the sector, specifically the lack of technical skills. Job seekers, school leavers and some graduates participate in a 10 week competency course which increases their technical skills.

11.4 Understanding of IAG

Understanding of IAG has been driven by the workforce development team and made those working on the careers materials aware of the obligations of guidance. A marketing stance is taken towards IAG and is focused on what employers want and how they particular parts of the sector promoted. As an employer-led organisation the careers activity is informed by employers. The SSC is in the process of developing partnership with careers agencies and organisations which will inform future careers activity.

The IAG team at Skillfast-UK definitely believe that IAG has the potential to improve the view that people have of the sector and educate people about the range of employment possibilities in the sector. The overall aim of IAG is to attract more skilled and highly qualified people in to the sector. The sector has been at the forefront of industrial changes (such as downsizing, global competition, and the need to work smarter) and has successfully met these changes which have to be made public. There is also a need to inform people about the availability of flexible jobs and employers will to invest in their employees together with the range of interesting jobs that are available in the sector.

Current understanding

Information is reasonably impartial and general; informing people about the sector and giving them a realistic picture of what is going on in the sector. No value judgements are made.

Advice and guidance are on opposite ends of a scale. Advice is taking individual needs and circumstances into account. Guidance is more about telling people what is suitable and giving them a value core, but this is not undertaken by Skillfast-UK.

11.5 Aims

Organisational aims

The SSC's organisational aims in providing IAG include:

- to be a central point of contact about careers information on the sector for employers, young people and mature people wanting a career change;
- to ensure that careers information is comprehensive, as much of the information on the sector is fragmented at present, using the detailed knowledge of the sector from employers;
- to provide specialist information (for example job titles and roles) using the planned review of occupational standards; and
- to build a more productive relationship with Connexions.

Specific groups targeted

Currently, Skillfast-UK is forming relationships with the Careers Scotland, Careers Wales, the Northern Ireland Careers Service and Connexions in order to target careers practitioners across the four countries to disseminate their careers information.

The SSC is specifically targeting teachers of 14-19 year olds through face-to-face workshops as it is believed that this is believed to be the best way of reaching young people and informing them about the opportunities available in the sector.

11.6 Future plans

The current SSC plans for IAG include:

- Fabricadabra (including website, workshops for teachers and the 'All stitched up' project);
- careers website which is to be launched shortly;
- literature aimed at educating people about the sector and making people think more broadly about the opportunities available in the sector; and
- promotional cards for teachers to take away which is aimed at young people and promotes the careers website.

There is a plan to monitor the service, the number of inquiries and the types of calls received over the next six months to determine whether a dedicated phone line with learndirect needs to be set up. This monitoring will also inform enhancing the careers materials and information that is available.

Priorities

Currently, the main priorities of the SSC are:

- to get the Fabricadabra website up and running;
- to ensure that the careers information is comprehensive and correct; and
- to find resources to maintain and update the careers information.

Ideal scenario

Ideally, the SSC would like more resources to keep the careers information and LMI up-to-date.

It was suggested that ideally SSCs should work together as a network especially in regards to their work with learndirect.

Most exciting

The IAG team is most excited about working with the careers organisations across the four countries and specifically working with the individuals in those organisations that have been put in place to work with the SSCs and the opportunities that this will create. The potential to being together all the information on the sector is stated to be most exciting.

Accreditation

There are no plans to accreditation for the service in the next 18 months.

11.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

SSC role with agencies and other bodies

The Skillfast-UK role with agencies and other bodies is to be the sector expert and to be able to identify skill gaps, skill shortages together with what employers need. This role is also to provide an accurate and realistic picture of the sector. The remit of the SSC is also to set up a clear structure where people can find careers information on the sector.

IAG in the sector

At present, learndirect is best placed to offer IAG on the sector, but ideally it should be Skillfast-UK. Learndirect is able to access a database on the sector which makes them

in a better position to offer IAG on the sector, but this information is not specific. To be in a position to offer IAG on the sector Skillfast-UK would need more resources.

11.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

- To get going with IAG as it is a massive job.
- To ensure that IAG is a priority in the organisation.
- To have a more open approach with other SSCs that will enable SSCs to learn from each other (for example what works and what does not work).

Strengths relating to IAG provision

Although the SSC has no great strengths relating to IAG provision as it is in development, the Employer Learning Network is reasonably well-established so careers information is developed in consultation with employers who have strong links with schools and further education colleges. Therefore, a strength of the IAG strategy in development is that it is not being developed in isolation.

Improving IAG in the sector

- To have better knowledge of IAG information and sources (for example, what is reliable? What is up-to-date? What is a credible source?).
- To have a pool of information across the SSCs about, for example, further and higher education courses.

12. Report on Improve

12.1 IAG role development

Improve is the SSC for the food and drink manufacturing industry and is an amalgamation of five, now obsolete, NTOs. One of the NTOs (Food and Drink) had an IAG function based on the provision of careers information on its website, but much of it was out of date so Improve is largely starting from scratch. Improve has, however, already incorporated IAG in its business plan, with a clear strategy and action plan for development. There is an 18 month business plan and a five year strategy.

12.2 IAG team

There is the only one member of staff who works on IAG, although there are links with marketing staff in promoting the service. The IAG staff member has a background in social work, but has worked for learndirect, had a secondment at Skillset and has an NVQ level 3 in advice and guidance.

12.3 Type of IAG services offered

Improve is developing a careers website to act as a one stop shop for everyone from school children to career changers, but also for parents, careers advisers and human resources people in businesses. The first phase of IAG provision will be launched in March 2005. The second phase of the website development will include a job search facility. Resources do not allow for a diagnostic tool, but the website will include a career planning tool. This will help individuals assess their skills and interests, and provide advice on matters such as CVs and interview techniques. People need more than information and for example they need to be able to decipher what their skills are and implement that within the world of work. This will help target people who may never have thought about working in the sector.

For young people

Young people may hear about Improve through Connexions or their schools, or from careers fairs and events which is another major area of Improve's work. Young people who contact Improve about careers are all directed to the IAG member of staff – most contact is by e-mail with telephone calls being rare. Queries, researching additional information if necessary, and referring people on to other organisations as appropriate are all tasks performed by the one IAG member of staff.

For adults making a career change

The process is the same for adults.

Agency working

Much of the work being undertaken with the Regional Development Agencies, the Learning and Skills Council, Business Link and regional food groups aims to promote the sector on a regional basis.

Careers advisers

The aim is to share knowledge about the sector. Improve is the voice of employers in the sector so with careers advisers its role is to share information and research about what is going on in the sector. At this stage of development, however, Improve is in the process of making contact with careers advisers and creating networks. As work develops, so Improve will be able to share information and labour market intelligence.

Schools, colleges, universities

Improve is working closely with Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs). Research is being done with universities to establish the extent of the shortage of food scientists.

Employers

Improve is the voice of employers in the sector and ensures that the needs of employers are reflected in all its work. For example, many employers say new entrants are not ready for the world of work so Improve is developing an employability passport. If employers are identifying skills gaps then that will be fed into IAG work for example in relation to marketing.

Job seekers

Improve has close links with Jobcentre Plus. Improve is helping to use their research and will also work with Jobcentre Plus on marketing and at events. With events, Improve's aim is to be able to have a large stand and then hire out space to a CoVE, a regional food group, Jobcentre Plus and so on, so that too would serve as a one stop shop.

12.4 Understanding of IAG

Guidance refers to the help given to a client to help them in their decision making. It is about helping clients identify options not making decisions for them. It is important to note that the following understanding of IAG has been gained through the career and qualification of Improve's IAG member of staff.

Information was defined by the following:

- labour market information in general;
- general information on Education and training;
- finance such as sources of funding;
- help with personal issues (but Improve would only be providing information for other agencies);
- help with making contacts in the sector; and
- help with making applications.

Advice was defined by similar activities as those defined as information. Advice is:

- labour market information in general;
- general information on Education and training;
- finance such as sources of funding;
- exploring opportunities and constraints;
- support and help for those making applications;
- problem solving;
- help with making contacts in the sector;
- help with job search strategies;
- increasing self-awareness (about potential and limitations); and
- discussing options.

Finally, **guidance** is defined by activities such as:

- labour market information in general;
- exploring opportunities and constraints;
- being told what you might or should do;
- making decisions for yourself with someone else's input;
- problem solving; and
- assessment of individual interests, skills and aptitudes.

IAG is the driving force for changing people's perceptions of the sector. Improve faces a major task in dispelling myths concerning employment in the sector. IAG can promote images of real jobs, salaries and so on in the sector.

12.5 Aims

Organisational aims

Improve wants to provide up-to-date information in different formats. However, this must be tied to the objectives of the business plan which are about the need for 100,000 new entrants in the industry over the next eight years.

Specific groups targeted

There are skills shortages throughout the sector, so there is a general need to raise awareness rather than target specific groups. One group that does need to be targeted is parents because they in turn influence their children's choices.

12.6 Future plans

IAG through the website will be tailored to the individual whether it is a school child or a Human Resources director. Through working with the research department on labour market intelligence the aim is to provide structured advice as to how skills, jobs and qualifications in the sector are changing i.e. what will this job look like in five years' time. The development of the job search facility will be very helpful for Small and Medium Enterprises who cannot afford to advertise generally, and will raise the profile of Improve.

Priorities

The main task is to change people's views of the sector and make them think of the sector as a first choice not a last choice for careers.

Ideal scenario

A telephone helpline would be great, but resources do not allow it.

Most exciting

To reach some of the business goals in the business plan e.g. attracting 100,000 new entrants, and attracting motivated people. There is real work to do, but unfortunately it has been a neglected area.

Accreditation

Matrix accreditation is being applied for and will hopefully be achieved in Spring 2005.

12.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

SSC role with agencies and other bodies

Other agencies need to cascade structured IAG, drawing on the Improve website and labour market intelligence, so as to promote the sector as a real area of work.

IAG in the sector

Careers advisers are best placed to provide IAG through Connexions, college careers units and so on. Improve's role is to provide the specialist knowledge and information about the sector.

12.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

It is important to listen to employers and understand the needs of the sector. Also, use your marketing department because there is an issue of how people will actually hear about you. Agency working is important in getting your message across.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

Strong links with employers.

13. Report on skillsmart

13.1 IAG role development

No operational functions were inherited from any predecessor organisation – so skillsmart ‘started from scratch’. Initially, therefore, IAG was not high on the agenda. They examined what could be provided in terms of the minimum level of service with other issues (like increasing the qualification level in the industry) representing clear priorities.

Three types of provision were identified to give this minimum level of coverage including:

- the learndirect helpline;
- the industry magazine; and
- the website.

When and if resources permit, current provision will be reviewed. Late in October 2004, a meeting was scheduled (for the first time) with ten senior retailers to identify what their particular needs are in terms of IAG and (importantly) what they can provide. This approach was informed by a strong conviction that it is the retailers who are best positioned to provide IAG. Future enhanced IAG services are likely to be dependant on the outcome of the October meeting.

13.2 IAG team

Two members of staff work on a part-time basis on the IAG remit – the Head of Communications and the Head of Policy and Research Director. The organisation cannot afford to appoint a dedicated staff member at the moment, so the responsibility is ‘tagged on’ to other job descriptions. Priority is currently to build capability to raise income to support IAG.

13.3 Type of IAG services offered

There are two aspects of IAG that are being given priority – giving information through the magazine and driving inquiries through learndirect. In addition, effort is made to direct clients towards recruitment websites and retailers. However, the organisation has to work from ‘a very low industry base’ so far as IAG concerned – with a good deal of progress yet to be achieved.

There is no distinction in the way a young person, compared with an adult, would be dealt with when approaching skillsmart for IAG.

Currently, representatives of the SSC are unable to go into schools, colleges or universities because of resource restrictions. The only curriculum-based activity that the SSC has been involved with was the production of a CD ROM, for which funding was received from the Learning and Skills Council. This has been designed for teachers to use as part of the curriculum and it is likely the SSC would look for ways of doing more of this type of development work in the future.

Similarly, no work directly with unemployed or adult clients is being undertaken.

Employers

A strong conviction was expressed regarding the central importance of employers in shaping and delivering the IAG function. How this develops will depend, at least in part, on the October 2004 meeting.

13.4 Understanding of IAG

Current understanding

For skillsmart IAG is about:

- trying to raise awareness;
- providing good quality information to enable individuals to make educated choices;
and
- talking people through options and help them to plan their career progression.

This understanding was acquired by 'being thrown in at the deep end' and working with policy people. So it was derived from trying to understand the way policy makers approached various issues.

IAG is extremely important and has great potential, because it's about selling the industry. The primary role for the SSC is to ensure that the people who work directly with clients are equipped with the right materials and information to do their job properly.

13.5 Aims

Organisational aims

Dependent, largely, on resource availability – ideally wish to develop work in this area.

Specific groups targeted

No particular client groups targeted for IAG the sector needs to become more effective at recruiting higher skilled people into the industry. Many entrants to retail use the industry as a 'stepping stone', so need to improve the quality of employees.

13.6 Future plans

Priorities

To provide intermediaries with the information they need to do their job. It is also necessary to change the attitudes of intermediaries to the industry. This would probably involve persuading employers to improve conditions of service to make the sector more attractive.

Ideal scenario

Helpline – with a helpline the SSC could become much more proactive, by moving away from a situation where it has to wait for calls to come in, to one where and it is able to adopt a more proactive approach to attracting enquiries.

Skillsmart also wishes to be more proactive in education, by securing more involvement in the curriculum (research indicates that this applied approach is extremely powerful). Such an approach would need to be much more subtle than a straight selling approach.

Older people are more difficult to influence – so have to accept that achieving the IAG agenda is going to be long term.

Most exciting

The most exciting aspect of future plans was the meeting with employers (October 2004) and the SSC's involvement with on-line recruitment agencies. It was noted that the SSC wanted to work with these agencies to develop different approaches to recruitment.

Accreditation

Not applicable for the SSC's current level of provision.

13.7 Work with agencies and other bodies

Employers are best positioned to give IAG as they do the job and know what's going on and until they are prepared to improved services to help intermediaries, it is difficult to make progress. The retail sector needs to improve performance in this area.

13.8 Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

- Get companies on board.
- SSC's should get themselves ready to provide the intermediaries with high quality information – since they are 'starved of good information'.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

Skillsmart feels that it takes a reflective and critical approach – this is evident in the articles published in the magazine. With this, comes an awareness of weaknesses in the industry and a willingness to confront and deal constructively with shortcomings.

Finally, skillsmart is trying to use the media more effectively, particularly the trade press (e.g. 'The Grocer'). These are extremely powerful in trying to get the message across, so the SSC is trying to use established distribution networks to get the message across. There is a need to be strategic and harness resources already in place.

14. Report on Skills for Logistics

14.1 IAG role development

Skills for Logistics does not have an IAG function. At present, Skills for Logistics provides basic information leaflets and website information about qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks for which it is responsible. There are examples where in specific regions, e.g. the North West, funding has been obtained to produce a careers information leaflet aimed at young people, but this has been a response to opportunities that have arisen rather than a strategic approach. There is an understanding that IAG refers to a specific context and approach, and Skills for Logistics does not have a strategy nor service in that sense. Rather, it provides basic information and advice about the sector and qualifications.

The notion of IAG is in a sense someone else's agenda based on the provision of services to individuals. Skills for Logistics is an employer-led organisation and its responsibility is meeting the needs of employers. At some point that touches on IAG e.g. people joining the sector will have received IAG, but it is not for Skills for Logistics to have a view on IAG, although Skills for Logistics would expect to work with IAG providers. However, Skills for Logistics does not see that it has to buy in to a notion of IAG in which the 'A' and 'G' have particular meanings. Skills for Logistics is more about providing information, with information having a small 'i'.

Skills for Logistics has not made a decision, either positive or negative, as to how to approach IAG in a formal sense. It is providing basic information about qualifications as appropriate. Skills for Logistics' strategy plan includes an aim of improving the image of the sector and that includes a reference to careers, but that has not been developed in the context of IAG.

Skills for Logistics is a new organisation. It gained its licence in February 2004. The largest previous relevant NTO was itself a very small organisation, and there was no history of IAG within the NTO.

14.2 IAG team

There is no IAG team within Skills for Logistics. One member of staff does have an IAG background but that is not why they were recruited and their role is not to provide IAG. Work on the provision of information is broadly spread and does not rest with one or

more particular members of staff. For instance, it could be reception staff being asked for information about the sector through to the generation of information for the website. However, the availability of a member of staff with an IAG background means that there is expertise that can be drawn upon if appropriate.

14.3 Type of IAG services offered

Skills for Logistics has followed the Skills for Health model and worked with a commercial jobsite provider, with initial funding from the Department for Trade and Industry, to create a Skills in Logistics website. In addition to the creation of the Skills in Logistics website, Skills for Logistics considered working with learndirect. It has not pursued that option, but partnership with learndirect in the future is not precluded.

If a young person telephoned Skills for Logistics direct with a basic query about the sector the receptionist would send relevant information. Skills for Logistics has an approved training provider network so anyone with a query about qualifications would be referred to their nearest training provider. The young person's attention would also be drawn to the Skills for Logistics and Skills in Logistics websites. The same would apply to adults. This approach is not as yet a formalised process.

Work with other organisations

The problem is that there are a very large number of organisations involved in the provision of IAG, there is complexity in differences between the home nations, and there are very large numbers of individuals working within IAG. Skills for Logistics would like to ensure IAG providers have up-to-date and persuasive information about the sector but the number of people this includes e.g. teachers in schools, is daunting. Hence the preference is for web based information, which also means there can be greater control compared with simply sending out information leaflets. If Skills for Logistics could promote the message that its website is the place to look that would be very powerful.

14.4 Understanding of IAG

The SSC's understanding of IAG is that it is a description of a process for supporting an individual who is looking to change or develop their career. Information is the least resource intensive level. Advice is a further level and raises issues about the qualifications of the person giving the advice, and guidance even more so. To give guidance means you need to know what you are doing and that is part of the caution

Skills for Logistics has regarding the 'A' and 'G' elements of IAG. In giving advice and guidance to people about changing their career you need to be clear on what basis that is being done. To give advice and guidance you need to be properly trained.

The SSC's understanding of IAG has not come from one specific source and has been developed from SSC's staff understanding and SSC fora.

The image of the sector could be improved if young people and adults had better information about jobs in the sector, irrespective of how that is provided or by whom.

14.5 Aims

The primary aim of Skills for Logistics in providing information is to ensure that employers understand the programmes that Skills for Logistics offers. Most things are written from the employer rather than job seeker perspective. The principal audience is employers.

14.6 Future plans

Skills for Logistics plans to improve the quality of information available about the sector, and improve the dissemination of information. How this is to be achieved is still to be determined. At the time of the interview, there is a general aim of improving information, but no model has been decided upon.

14.7 Work with other agencies and bodies

A particular concern with careers information is how widely it is disseminated and keeping it up-to-date. There is a fear that a school careers library could be holding very out-of-date information. Therefore, the preference is again for web based information.

It is believed that the delivery of IAG is best done by IAG professionals. Skills for Logistics wants to ensure that those professionals have the right information. That is the role of Skills for Logistics. Skills for Logistics would not want to employ IAG professionals nor undertake an IAG role.

14.8 Models for practice

It is thought that it would be helpful to find out more about practise within other SSCs.

15. Report on People 1st

15.1 IAG role development

People 1st does not have an IAG function. People 1st has a partnership agreement with Springboard, which is a charitable organisation, to provide a careers service for the sector. Springboard also undertakes an active programme of work such as ambassador programmes, young manager programmes and the production of classroom aids. This partnership was established by the preceding NTO. With the creation of the SSC the scope of Springboard has been broadened to reflect the full footprint of People 1st, rather than just hospitality as was previously the case. The partnership with Springboard enables People 1st to focus on skills development.

15.2 IAG team

There is no IAG team within People 1st.

15.3 Type of IAG services offered

People 1st does receive telephone calls from individuals regarding jobs. Members of staff refer callers to Springboard or a careers guidance provider e.g. Careers Scotland. If a person is asking for specific information e.g. about qualifications, People 1st staff will provide that information. People 1st is seeking to develop its own website to provide more information on qualifications and skills. This is, however, solely about the provision of information and is not about providing guidance. Callers can also be signposted to local training providers if appropriate. This is the same for enquiries from young people and adults (also see Section 16.4 below).

Agency working

Agency working is a key area in ensuring labour demand and supply match, and involves close working with public agencies such as Regional Development Agencies and the Learning and Skills Council.

Employers

People 1st undertakes consultation with employers so as to match labour demand and vocational learning supply, and then feeds the results back to other organisations e.g. Further Education colleges. People 1st works on behalf of employers so employers are the key group for People 1st to work with.

Schools, colleges, universities

People 1st works very closely with colleges and universities for example helping with course design, the provision of labour market information and continuing professional development. By and large, work with schools is done by Springboard. People 1st generally tends not to be involved in education for the under 16s.

Careers advisers

People 1st involves careers advisers on issues such as developing new training programmes. Much more work with careers advisers is undertaken by Springboard.

Jobseekers

It is hoped that as the People 1st website is developed more information will be available as a recruitment and selection tool.

15.4 Understanding of IAG

There is a distinction between information and guidance. If someone wants help with making a decision People 1st will not do that. Information will be given on training provision and labour market information. If someone does not know what job or career they want to pursue then that is about guidance. People 1st will help with widening people's ideas e.g. if a housekeeper wants to widen their career or have new learning opportunities People 1st would suggest looking at something like interior design. This, however, would apply only to adults, not to young people. People 1st would not tell people what to do. People 1st is impartial so would not recommend a particular college or employer. This understanding has been gained during the People 1st advisor's own career.

IAG does have the potential to improve people's view of the sector. Hospitality in particular has an image problem and people do not see the sector as offering a career.

15.5 Aims

Springboard will remain the key delivery partner. People 1st does plan to work more closely with guidance providers such as Careers Scotland.

15.6 Future plans

Ideally, People 1st would like to have career routes clearly available on its website, but resources mean the timetable for this is stretched. People 1st would welcome partnership arrangements with guidance providers, but this is very difficult to do within current resources.

15.7 Work with other agencies and bodies

Guidance providers help people make the right decision about careers, making it clear what the career routes are within the sector and ensuring decisions are based on accurate information.

Springboard is best placed to offer IAG on the sector, but others such as careers organisations and careers advisers in schools also have a role to play.

15.8 Models for practice

It would be interesting to find out more about IAG provision and practise within other SSCs.

16. Report on Skills for Health

16.1 IAG role development

Skills for Health was established in April 2002 with support from the four UK health departments, the independent and voluntary health sectors and staff organisations to become the sector skills council for health across the UK. The work of Skills for Health is central to the strategic development of the health sector workforce. The content and breadth of the Skills for Health programme covers linkages with all major workforce development initiatives.

Skills for Health has a general policy that it should not duplicate functions already performed by other organisations within the sector. IAG is already provided in the health sector by NHS Careers. Therefore, in accordance with the general policy not to duplicate functions provided by other organisations in the sector, Skills for Health has not developed its own IAG function, and there has never been an IAG function within the organisation.

16.2 IAG team

There is no IAG team within Skills for Health.

16.3 Type of IAG services offered

Skills for Health does receive some telephone calls from individuals regarding jobs. These are dealt with by admin. Staff who refer the caller to NHS Careers/NHSU. This is the same for enquiries from young people and adults. Some people enquire about qualifications and these are more difficult to deal with. Callers who ask about qualifications may be passed to a more senior member of staff for information, but ultimately are referred to NHSU or their local college.

Agency working

Skills for Health does not do any work with careers advisers, schools, employers or other organisations regarding IAG because this would be a duplication of effort within the sector. Skills for Health has an agreement with the NHSU and meetings between the two take place at senior levels. NHS Careers is a body in its own right and it provides IAG for the whole of the NHS so there is no need for a partnership agreement.

Occasionally Skills for Health receives a request to attend a careers fair; these are referred to NHS Careers because otherwise there would again be duplication within the sector.

16.4 Understanding of IAG

The SSC's understanding of IAG is that it is about the provision of IAG to individuals about careers, qualifications and careers generally. It may include organisations such as schools but the focus is on the individual. This understanding has been gained during the IAG team's own career.

The sector is already well served for IAG and nor is it a business sector. It is a public sector SSC: it is not operating in a competitive business sector and this is a significant difference compared with other SSCs. The view of Skills for Health is that the sector is already well served for these things and there are other organisations operating within the sector – it is not just about Skills for Health.

16.5 Aims

Providing IAG is not part of the role of Skills for Health and the organisation has no plans to offer IAG. If Skills for Health was approached by NHS Careers/NHSU to discuss issues it would respond to those requests. If it was found that there were gaps in IAG provision within the sector then Skills for Health would talk to other organisations to rectify this, but this seems highly unlikely. This is a policy decision and is not due to lack of resources.

16.6 Future plans

Skills for Health is redeveloping its website, and developing tools to help people use national occupational standards and competencies. This is part of Skills for Health's core role and is separate to IAG. It is important particularly for organisations to understand competencies and occupational standards. Skills for Health has resources for the development of these tools and its website and is not looking for additional resources.

16.7 Work with other agencies and bodies

See above.

16.8 Models for practice

It would be interesting rather than useful for Skills for Health to find out more about IAG and practise within other SSCs.

Summary of other licensed SSCs IAG

This summary includes findings from the SSCs who were licensed, but did not have pathfinder status: Cogent, SummitSkills, Automotive Skills, GoSkills, Lantra, Improve, skillsmart, Skills for Logistics, Skillfast-UK, SkillsActive, Skills for Health and People 1st.

IAG role development in licensed SSCs

Like the Pathfinder SSCs, these had developed from one or more, now obsolete, NTOs. Although some of these NTOs had IAG functions, much of the information and resources were out-of-date so SSCs have predominately started from scratch. The **development of an IAG function** within these licensed SSCs is varied and often restricted by resources.

Currently, IAG is not high on the agenda for many of these SSCs, but a minimum level of service is operated by all. This **minimum service provision** includes maintaining a website and literature on topics like qualifications, apprenticeship frameworks, careers and roles in the sector. Many of the SSCs have entered into formal agreements with the learndirect helpline. These include SummitSkills, Automotive Skills, skillsmart and SkillsActive. Some SSCs are considering and/or planning enhanced IAG services for the future. For instance, Improve and SkillsActive have incorporated IAG into their business plans and have clear development strategies.

IAG services are mainly seen as part of the agenda to raise the profile of sectors and increase qualification levels. The emphasis has been, therefore, to provide information and not advice and guidance.

The IAG function in Automotive Skills is currently under development. GoSkills defines their IAG provision, at present, as limited.

Skills for Logistics, Skills for Health and People 1st have **no IAG function**, but do provide some form of service which includes the provision of sector information. Skills for Health is not developing its own IAG function as this would duplicate the work of other organisations with well-developed IAG services in the Health sector.

IAG teams

Cogent and Automotive Skills have one person who is responsible for IAG in the SSC. These people are supported by colleagues who help with specific IAG events and activities. GoSkills has several people involved in developing and expanding the SSC's IAG provision.

There is no dedicated IAG team within SummitSkills, Lantra, Skills for Logistics, Skillfast-UK, SkillsActive, Skills for Health or People 1st. However, the majority of these SSCs have people in place who, as part of their role, have responsibility for IAG and its development (i.e. in Improve, skillsmart and Lantra).

Although many of the people working on IAG have related backgrounds in training, only a few people in these roles have a careers guidance qualification or background.

Type of IAG services offered

Many licensed SSCs only offer **information and advice**. Enquirers in need of more in-depth **guidance** are referred to other agents. It is recognised by some that specialist advice and training of current SSC staff would be required to undertake this work successfully.

A number of **activities for pupils** at GCSE level are undertaken which promote the sectors. For example, these activities include: schools careers events; events for teachers and careers advisors; placing adverts in careers publications; and advising on Modern Apprenticeships. The work of skillsmart is limited to young people only.

There are examples of good practice with some SSCs undertaking **innovative activities** both with pupils at GCSE level and adults. For example, Cogent runs a schools radio quiz aimed at highlighting the industries in the sector as well as raising the profile of the sector, plus organises trips to sector exhibitions and employers. Also, Skillfast-UK in partnership with the Innovation Centre at UMIST runs a project addressing the need for more people with technical skills in the sector. This project is aimed at job-seekers, school leavers and some graduates participating in a 10 week competency course to increase their technical skills.

Further IAG activities include:

- workshops organised in schools for teachers;

- events at universities;
- development of a foundation degree programme;
- attending careers exhibitions and evenings at both a regional and local level; and the
- publication of a magazine.

However, some SSCs are unable to attend exhibitions and visits educational institutions due to limited resources.

Careers provision for many of the SSC includes:

- sending out information packs to enquirers (both individuals at GCSE level and adults);
- producing briefings and information sheets as well as electronic media;
- answering basic queries by telephone or email;
- a website (this in some cases includes separate websites for young people and for adults); and
- referring enquirers to a dedicated helpline such as learndirect, a careers guidance provider, their website or recruitment websites.

IAG provision is both reactive and responsive.

All the SSCs work with, and have links with various **agencies, public bodies and employers in the sector** including Careers Scotland, Careers Wales, the Northern Ireland Careers Service, Connexions, colleges (through the Centres of Vocational Excellence Network), Department for Education and Skills, Regional Development Agencies, the Learning and Skills Council, Business Link and Jobcentre Plus. Finally, many of the SSCs with linked sectors work together and many have strong links with learndirect.

Understanding of IAG

Current understanding of IAG can be represented as a hierarchy:

- **Information:** literature on the general labour market (including fact sheets, website, labour market information, sources of funding, information on education and training) and that produced by the SSCs which enables individuals to make educated choices. Information is reasonably impartial and general and as such is the least resource intensive resource.

- **Advice:** regarded as ‘pointing the enquirer in the right direction’ to find out more information, discussing options, advising individuals about employment and training opportunities in the sector; taking individual needs and circumstances into account; and using the knowledge of the advisor.
- **Guidance:** more complex, developing individuals’ ideas and supporting individual interests, but it is also about matching individual needs with the needs of the sector. It is important for guidance to be impartial. Guidance activities include: exploring options and constraints; making decisions; increasing awareness; and clarifying preferences.

Overall, IAG is understood to be about life choices. It is about developing the necessary information to enable people to move forward in their career and enabling people to understand the implications of certain information. Lantra and Skills for Health argue, however, that IAG is not just about the individual, but about organisations that need information for the development of their own staff.

Some SSCs are unclear about the distinctions between ‘information’, ‘advice’ and guidance’. For instance, Automotive Skills defines **information and advice** as about increasing an individual’s self-awareness, helping an individual make a decision; helping clarify individual preferences; and discussing individual options. Information was also defined as helping individuals to: explore opportunities and constraints; assess skills and interests; help contact employers and trainers; and help with job search strategies.

SummitSkills, Automotive Skills, skillsmart, SkillsActive and Skills for Health refer enquirers to other agents, such as learndirect, for advice and guidance.

The **development of the SSCs’ current understanding** of IAG has derived from various sources, including: knowledge and understanding of IAG work undertaken at a national level; years of experience and listening to employers in the sector; experience and knowledge of IAG work in other sectors;.

The **potential value of IAG** is to:

- improve the image and people’s perceptions of the sector;
- improve the information available on the sector;
- raise the profile of the sector; and
- provide profiles of the industries within the sector.

The **priorities in IAG** work are to:

- provide a coherent, unified view of the sector;
- attract more skilled and highly qualified people into the sector;
- promote images about real jobs in the sector; and
- sell the sector.

Aims

The SSC's organisational aims are about:

- developing more comprehensive information on the sector and the industries within it (including in different formats) for both individuals and employers;
- branding of products and services;
- improving understanding of those wishing to enter the sector and ensuring they received a balanced view of the sector;
- providing a clear and accurate message about what the industry regards as competent;
- targeting certain groups, such as adults wishing to re-train;
- ensuring that those wishing to enter the sector are encouraged;
- providing information and advice linked to job placements;
- influence and inform IAG providers to actively promote careers in the sector;
- developing relationships with other organisations, particularly guidance providers; and
- helping individuals access appropriate training and qualifications.

These organisational aims are restricted by resources and knowledge, with amch needing further development. Many SSCs aim to be a central point of contact about careers information on the sector.

Specific groups targeted by the licensed SSCs include:

- young people;
- careers advisers and teachers of 14-19 year olds;
- adults wishing to re-train/change career;
- under-represented groups in the sector;
- parents; and
- high skilled people.

Future Plans

Current plans for **future provision** of IAG by the SSCs are to:

- raise awareness of IAG and expand the IAG function within the SSC;
- develop a careers strategy;
- improve the quality and quantity of literature available about the sector;
- provide intermediaries with comprehensive information on the sector;
- provide structured advice as to how skills, jobs and qualifications in the sector are changing;
- launch and promote careers websites;
- increase the sector information on the SSC website;
- improve dissemination of information including organising more outreach activities;
- consolidate new initiatives (i.e. agreements with learndirect) and evaluate them; and to
- work more closely with guidance providers.

Skills for Health has no plans for the provision of IAG and sees its current work of redeveloping the website and developing tools to help people use national occupational standards and competencies as separate to IAG.

The SSCs **priorities for IAG** provision are to:

- complete the careers strategy and ensure commitment to this strategy;
- ensure literature is comprehensive and correct (i.e. produce literature to cover all industries in the sector);
- find resources to maintain and update careers information;
- ensure that the SSC is the first stop for careers information on the sector; and to
- change perceptions about the sector to attract and recruit more people into the sector.

In an **ideal scenario**, SSCs would like to:

- offer more information to Connexions and schools and in more exciting formats;
- comprehensive coverage of all industries in the sector;
- deliver all activities across all industries;
- the capacity to attend more conferences and exhibitions to promote the sector;
- set up a telephone helpline;
- secure more involvement in the curriculum; and finally to get
- sector careers maps available online.

Ultimately, resource availability is a key issue in realising future scenario building.

The **most exciting** elements of IAG provision for licensed SSCs include:

- the increased profile of IAG within the SSC;
- the range of new careers materials that reflect the reality of the sector;
- the development of SSC websites;
- the potential to make a difference;
- the opportunity to address goals in the business plan;
- the provision of a learndirect helpline; and
- work with careers organisations, sector employers and on-line recruitment agencies.

For most SSCs, **accreditation** is not appropriate at this time based on their level of IAG provision. However, Improve hope to be accredited in early 2005, Cogent and SkillsActive are planning Matrix accreditation and Automotive Skills are keen to go for accreditation when appropriate. SkillsActive is also hoping to achieve the Investors in People award.

Work with agencies and other bodies

Several SSCs with more developed IAG functions have working relationships with guidance providers (including Careers Scotland and Connexions), learndirect, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, the Learning and Skills Council and the DfES.

The highest priority for GoSkills is to work with employers and then to build links with Jobcentre Plus.

Cogent, SummitSkills, Automotive Skills and GoSkills believe that they are best placed to offer IAG in the sector with the support of learndirect. In contrast, Improve and Skills for Logistics understand that IAG professionals are best placed to provide IAG in the sector although, at present, their information is limited. Lantra regards the quality of IAG as more important than who delivers it.

Models for practice

Advice to other SSCs

- To provide good information about the sector, which is delivered in an interesting, fun and enjoyable way, to young people, employers and intermediaries.
- To create an interactive website.
- To understand what questions people are routinely asking.
- To have a strategic view, as it is important to have an overall, coherent and focused strategy for IAG.
- To have a dedicated IAG resource and support for IAG.
- To accept differences between industries.
- To have the support of employers in the sector and to understand their needs.

Strengths relating to IAG provision

In relation to IAG, the strengths of the organisations include:

- going out, interacting and engaging with people to promote the sector;
- not being paper-driven;
- delivering different activities to raise the profile of the sector;
- talking about 'our industries' and not 'our company' to promote the sector;
- promoting the sector through branding;
- having the right person in post;
- having a strategic/overarching view of the role of IAG;
- making the right partnerships and agreements in place with national bodies that can support the SSC IAG work; and
- having good relationships and strong links with employers.

Improving IAG in the sector

This could be achieved by:

- having one telephone number to answer all enquiries related to the sector;
- getting to more people, to cover all the UK (if had unlimited resources);
- using the findings of the market assessment to extend and improve activities which will have been identified as adding value;
- looking at prioritising areas such as the downstream industries (i.e. those in the refinery and nuclear industries) in particular regions;
- getting to more of the industries, particularly those in the North West;

- having access to more money/resources to put into this area of work;
- harnessing the resources already in place such as using the media more effectively; and
- being reflective and critical of ones own work.

There is also a need for SSCs to respond more quickly to push the SSC work forward. SSCs with a less developed IAG function would like to find out more about IAG provision and practices within other SSCs.

Appendix 1: Interview schedule

[Please note: This questionnaire was adapted for each SSC according to the IAG services developed.]

(1) Historical mapping:	
<p>Prompts: past experiences; knowledge and expertise they draw on; inheriting the service – who came with it? Who drives the strategy?</p>	<p>(a) How was the IAG function within your organisation developed? For example, was it inherited from a former NTO?</p> <p>(b) Has your organisation revisited its IAG function since the Skills Strategy White Paper was published?</p>
(2) IAG Team:	
<p>Prompts: Is there a dedicated IAG team?; planning to recruit specifically in this area?; What department or section are they a part of in the organisation? e.g. RandD, Marketing, Careers?</p> <p>Together or with different remits?</p>	<p>(a) How many people work on IAG in your organisation?</p> <p>(b) How do they operate?</p>

<p>Prompts: e.g. are they trained advisers? Do they have a background in careers guidance?</p>	<p>(c) What kind of background do those people working on IAG have?</p>
<p>(3) Mapping the process:</p>	
	<p>(a) Could you talk me through the different types of support available for clients in the groups identified below if they were interested in potential career paths in your sector:</p> <p>~ 13-14 year olds, deciding on subject options;</p> <p>~ 16 year olds, thinking about education, training or employment;</p> <p>~ 18 year olds, thinking about higher education;</p> <p>(b) How might these different client groups find out about the IAG you provide?</p>
	<p>(c) Would this be the same for:</p> <p>~ an adult making a career change;</p> <p>~ an unemployed adult?</p>

	<p>(d) What kind of work do you do with:</p> <p>Careers advisers;</p> <p>Schools, colleges, universities;</p> <p>Employers;</p> <p>Job seekers;</p> <p>Trades Unions;</p> <p>Public and other agencies?</p>
<p>(4) Understanding of IAG:</p>	
<p>Prompts: use the list of possible responses as a prompt if necessary</p>	<p>(a) What do you understand by IAG? Could you give me examples of what information, advice and guidance would refer to?</p>
<p>Prompts: Background in careers? Developed through work with consultants? Or through reading key reports?</p>	<p>(b) How did you develop this understanding of IAG?</p>

	(c) Do you see IAG as having potential to provide a more accurate view of your sector?
What are they trying to achieve?	(d) What is the most important message that you're trying to get across in your IAG work?
(5) Aims:	
Prompts: aims, expectations, strategies? What role do they think SSCs generally have in providing IAG?	(a) What are your organisation's aims in providing IAG?
Prompts: developed special strategies for these target groups?; will they work with specific groups such as public agencies/ consultants, advisers? Will they seek advice on how to go about this? Below level 2?	(b) Are there any specific groups you hope to target and why? (c) Are there any qualification levels you wish to target?

(6) Future plans:	
<p>Prompts: anything new in the next 6 months? What will they base their plans on, e.g. research/ government reports/ in-house expertise? Planning any training in this capacity? Recruiting new people in? e.g. any expansion or remain as they are?</p>	(a) What are you currently planning to provide in terms of IAG?
	(b) What is your biggest priority or major task in terms of IAG?
	(c) Is there anything additional that you would ideally like to provide but are not able to due to resources or capacity, for example?
	(d) What are you most excited about in terms of the IAG provision in your SSC?
	(e) Are there any plans to gain accreditation of the service?

(7) Work with agencies and other bodies:	
Prompts: drawing on response to question 3c – work with public agencies	<p><i>[For respondents that work with other agencies/bodies on IAG]</i></p> <p>(a) (i) You work with [public agencies and other bodies named in 3c] regarding IAG in your sector. What do you feel is the role of such bodies in relation to IAG for your sector?</p>
	<p><i>[For respondents that do not work with other agencies/bodies on IAG currently]</i></p> <p>(a) (ii) You do not work with other agencies or bodies currently in relation to IAG: ~ Can you say why not? ~ What do you feel is the role of such bodies in relation to IAG for your sector?</p>
(8) Models for practice:	
Prompts: key criteria for the effective provision of IAG?	(a) Drawing on the experience of your organisation, what advice would you give to other SSCs that are aiming to develop their IAG capacity?
	(b) What are the strengths of your organisation in relation to IAG?

(9) Labour Market Information

(a) What do you understand by LMI?

(b) What type of LMI do you collect?

(c) Is this informed by demand?

(d) Do you consult with IAG colleagues on the type of LMI you produce?

(e) How do you make the information available

(f) Do you try to evaluate the effectiveness of your LMI?

Appendix 2: Prompts for use with question 4a – understandings of IAG

Examples:	Information	Advice	Guidance
Labour market – general			
Education and training – general			
Finance (e.g. sources of funding)			
Exploring opportunities and constraints			
Being told what you might or should do			
Making decisions for yourself with someone else’s input			
Support with applications			
Problem solving			
Help with personal issues			
Assessment of interests, skills, aptitudes, etc.			
Help with making contacts			
Help with making applications			
Help with job search strategy			
Increasing self-awareness (about potential and limitations)			
Clarifying preferences			
Discussing options			
None of these			
Don’t know			

Source: adapted from MORI (2000) Demand for Information, Advice and Guidance, Research study conducted by MORI for the Guidance Council.