

MODEL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

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**Statutory Guidance:
Impartial Careers
Education**

Model Partnership Agreement

“An effective partnership with the Connexions service should be at the centre of a school’s plans for ensuring that pupils receive effective and impartial support. A local Partnership Agreement between the school and Connexions should underpin the day to day delivery of services.¹”

Introduction

Partnership Agreements help schools and Connexions services to work together effectively in pursuit of shared objectives. They can help a school² to:

- communicate strategic objectives and operational priorities to people involved in IAG delivery
- implement best practice and develop an effective “whole school” approach to pupils’ care, support and guidance
- deploy staff and other resources to maximum effect
- demonstrate to Ofsted evidence of the school’s commitment to working in partnership and using links with the Connexions service to support pupils’ achievement³
- identify and manage weaknesses in provision
- review rigorously the delivery of IAG services and, through this, continuously improve performance.

1. Statutory Guidance: Impartial Careers Education. DCSF, October 2009

2. Most Partnership Agreements currently cover arrangements between a single school and the Connexions provider. However it is also possible to develop Agreements that identify priorities for a consortium/federation of learning providers to gain maximum value from available resources and support.

3. Ofsted consider partnership with agencies to provide advice and guidance when evaluating the effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and wellbeing

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What should a Partnership Agreement contain?

1. A clear, overarching vision

A Partnership Agreement will be more effective if it is underpinned by a clear, shared vision of what the partners to the agreement are seeking to achieve.

The National College suggests school leaders *“Ensure there is a clear, articulated vision understood within and beyond the school. This should be in the context of national and local legislation, guidance and partnership.”* In the most effective schools, *“Head teachers and leadership teams had a vision for IAG as being central to the work of their schools and a relentless focus on IAG as a means of improving choices and outcomes for pupils.”*⁴

2. Analysis of needs

The Partnership Agreement should record an agreed analysis of pupils’ needs to help them progress and achieve. It should also outline arrangements for the formal assessment of pupil needs over the coming year.

3. Development priorities

A Partnership Agreement should be clear about the areas (Development Priorities) in which progress is key if the “vision” is to be achieved and “needs” met. The school’s previous year’s review of provision, pupils’ and parents’ views on how to improve services, issues identified through the school SEF and the School Improvement Plan should all inform the identification of Development Priorities.

Schools should be wary of including too many Development Priorities within the Partnership Agreement. It is important that all those involved in the delivery of the Agreement understand the school’s IAG priorities and are focussed on their delivery.

Examples of Development Priorities:

- Challenging gender stereotypical learning and work choices by boys and/or girls
- Increasing the awareness and take-up of Apprenticeships
- Raising aspirations – particularly among disadvantaged young people – to progress to higher education
- Improving the understanding of the school’s careers/IAG workforce about the full range of post-16 learning options
- Helping Personal Tutors to offer young people an effective first line of information and advice on the full range of learning options
- Improving the awareness and involvement of parents/carers in supporting their children to make effective learning and career decisions.

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4. Roles and responsibilities

The Partnership Agreement should set out the roles and responsibilities of key players in the school, the Connexions service and other agencies, including education welfare, the youth offending and leaving care teams and Aimhigher.

There should be a multi-agency approach which is understood by all partners, with common protocols and a co-ordinated way of working.⁵

Contribution of the School	Contribution of Connexions
<p>Examples</p>	<p>Examples</p>
<p>A responsible senior leader with the autonomy and resources to deliver the careers education/IAG development plan linked to the school improvement plan.</p>	<p>A designated Connexions leader/manager to monitor and support service delivery.</p>
<p>A careers co-ordinator/ careers leader with the skills, knowledge and sufficient time to lead and manage this area.</p>	<p>A personal adviser linked to the school. (Deployment will be based on a formula which takes into account the numbers, circumstances and needs of the cohort).</p>
<p>Specified inputs from the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator, the designated teacher for looked after children, the Head of Inclusion, Heads of Year, personal tutors, the lead on the 14-19 prospectus and the nominated governor for CE/IAG.</p>	<p>Identified staff from Connexions to support the use of online resources, the maintenance of the Connexions/careers library and curriculum development and the professional development of school staff who contribute to CE/IAG.</p>

5. Lesson for leaders from Impartial careers education : effective leadership of information, advice and guidance. National College June 2009

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5. Access to services

The Partnership Agreement should identify how pupils will access relevant IAG services including through self-referral, the online 14-19 prospectus and interviews and group work sessions with the personal adviser. The contributions of each partner should be clear, with agreed targets and outcomes and ensure compliance with duties under Sections 43, 44 and 45 of the Education Act 1997. It is recommended that schools agree a detailed termly work plan with Connexions, and ensure that the plans are shared with key staff in both organisations.

6. Resources

The Partnership Agreement should set out the resources each partner will contribute, including accommodation, information about pupils, labour market information and online materials.

Contribution of the School

Examples

The school puts arrangements in place for young people to receive front line information and advice through Personal Tutors.
The school will ensure that young people have access to the support available from the personal adviser.

The school shares information on individual pupils' needs to ensure that available specialist resources are used to maximum effect.

The school will liaise closely with Connexions to agree targeting and referral arrangements to specialist agencies.

The school uses the intranet, notice boards and other means to ensure pupils are aware of the full range of support available including Connexions Direct.

The school records offers of post-16 learning so that those without an offer are identified as early as possible. It ensures that Year 11 leavers:

- know that they are entitled to an offer of appropriate learning, regardless of their attainment in school
- have the careers education and guidance they need to make decisions about their future pathways
- whose intended destination is 'undecided' are identified and given further advice, with referral to specialist services where appropriate
- are supported in making applications to their chosen learning provider(s.)

Contribution of Connexions

Examples

Personal advisers develop a programme of group work and individual interviews to ensure that young people in Years 9 to 13 receive the IAG they need on next steps.

Personal advisers provide support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including transition planning and Section 139 assessments.

Personal advisers provide intensive support for pupils with high priority needs, and operate referral arrangements to specialist services.

Connexions provides out-of-school support and makes young people aware of its availability through Connexions centres and websites and work in schools.

Connexions staff monitor young people's progress and destinations and feed this back to the school to support delivery of the September Guarantee.

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7. Careers education

The Partnership Agreement should set out the school's arrangements for delivering careers education as part of PSHE education and how Connexions will support this.

8. Workforce development

The Partnership Agreement should outline how the school intends to address the continuing professional development needs of teachers and tutors involved in careers education/ information, advice and guidance, drawing on support from the Connexions service.

9. Equality and diversity

Careers education and IAG have an important role to play in actively promoting equality and challenging stereotypes. The Partnership Agreement should address how the IAG provision will support the school's policy on equal opportunities and tackling discrimination, and outline specific arrangements for ensuring that careers education and IAG delivery meets duties on equality issues. The Partnership Agreement should identify how provision will be tailored to address the needs of particular groups of young people including the Gifted and Talented, young people with additional learning needs etc.

Examples of Equality and Diversity:

- Challenging negative stereotypes by using Connexions' and other partners' expertise in a range of events and activities - such as STEM Careers Clubs to broaden knowledge of opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths and taster events.
- Supporting the review of equality and diversity issues by undertaking regular and systematic analysis of pupil options choices, destinations and work experience placements is another valuable basis for reviewing equality and diversity issues.

10. Safeguarding

Exciting and inspiring careers education/IAG will bring young people into contact with a range of people/organisations. The Partnership Agreement should be clear about arrangements for safeguarding young people when they are involved in careers and work related activities. They should also set out arrangements for briefing and supporting the personal adviser.

11. Engaging with parents/carers

Parents and carers remain the single most important influence on young people's learning and career choices and can make a critical contribution to their children's success at school.⁶ An effective Partnership Agreement will be clear about arrangements for delivering the IAG Guarantee⁷ and ensuring that parents and carers have a better understanding of the services that are available to help young people make effective learning and career decisions and will set out how they will help parents to make better use of those services.

Contribution of the School	Contribution of Connexions
Examples	Examples
Identifying dates for parents' evenings and other events to which personal advisers should contribute. Making parents aware of the national Choices publications, the 14-19 online prospectus and Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service.	Personal advisers contribute to parents' evenings and other events through presentations and individual consultation.

6. YCS and LSYPE: The activities and experiences of 16 year olds. England 2007. DCSF Statistical Bulletin, June 2008.

7. Quality, Choice and Aspiration – A strategy for young people's information, advice and guidance. DCSF October 2009

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12. Pupil voice

The Partnership Agreement should identify how IAG practice will support the school's policy for involving pupils, through gathering feedback on provision and directly engaging pupils in the delivery of CE/IAG delivery.

Examples:

- Establishing a team of Connexions ambassadors to support the delivery of IAG within the school e.g. through maintaining the Connexions library, supporting peers with the use of key resources and websites, and promoting the services that young people can access
- Routinely surveying pupils' views on provision on CE/IAG provision and including it as a regular item in School Council meetings.

13. Information sharing

A Partnership Agreement should set out arrangements for the exchange of relevant personal information about pupils between the school and Connexions. This should take account of local information sharing protocols. The arrangements should include information sharing on leavers, joiners and destinations so that the Connexions Client Information System (CCIS) can be maintained, and commitments for the September Guarantee met.

14. Monitoring and review arrangements

The Partnership Agreement should set out arrangements for monitoring and reviewing provision including who will be involved and a timetable of activities.⁸ It is important that arrangements for reviewing provision:

- are robust, challenging, open and honest so that all sides are clear where they have performed well and where they will need to do better in the coming year
- cover the statutory requirements for careers education and IAG
- cover the Principles and Key Information set out in the Statutory Guidance on Impartial Careers Education
- include the views of young people and their parents and carers and address weaknesses identified. (There are questionnaires for parents and carers and young people in Year 11 provided as part of the Resources Pack.)
- provide feedback about the quality and breadth of provision to the local authority to inform its future commissioning of IAG services for young people.

15. Formal endorsement

The Partnership Agreement should state the period the agreement covers with review dates. It is good practice for the head teacher and a senior representative from the Connexions provider to endorse the Partnership Agreement by signing it personally.

8. The Statutory Guidance suggests that the Governing Body/Management Committee should consider discussing Careers Education/IAG and pupil destinations at least once a year.



This resources pack has been produced by VT Group, the Association for Careers Education and Guidance and Youth Access on behalf of the DCSF.

We welcome your feedback.
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