

Requirements for and issues with schools Careers Education, & how the Oxford Careers programmes can help address them

Source of recommendation, criticism or initiative	Recommendation, criticism or initiative	How the Oxford Careers programmes could improve delivery
Requirements of the DfE statutory guidance January 2018 ¹	<p>Benchmark 1: A stable careers programme</p> <p>Schools can gain formal accreditation of their careers programme through the Quality in Careers Standard - the national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance. The Standard offers an opportunity for schools to undergo an external evaluation of their careers programme ... Work is continuing to align the Standard more fully to the Benchmarks ... so those schools achieving the Standard meet all eight Benchmarks. We strongly recommend that all schools work towards the updated Quality in Careers Standard.²</p> <p>The Standard has been attained, or is currently being sought, by around 30% state schools, academies and Sixth Form Colleges in England.³</p>	<p>All five programmes represent an opportunity for schools to cite their involvement with programmes which would be positively received by external reviewers. Schools would find this prospect attractive, in addition to the benefits to students brought by the programmes themselves.</p>
	<p>Benchmark 2: Learning from career and labour market information</p> <p>Schools should make sure that, by the age of 14, all pupils have accessed and used information about career paths and the labour market to inform their decisions on study options ... labour market information can be accessed from a range of sources ... Good career and labour market information can also support social</p>	<p>With staff guidance, Litmus and Octane help point students towards further information. Ignite engages students with the benefits of finding out more about Careers and equips them with the critical thinking skills to do so.</p>

¹ DfE, *Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers: Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff* (January 2018), [DfE Statutory Careers Guidance January 2018](#). This implements the adoption of the government's *Careers Strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents* (DfE, December 2017).

² *ibid.*, p.16.

³ See <http://www.qualityincareers.org.uk/> for more details of the Standard.

	mobility by raising pupils' aspirations and tackling stereotypical assumptions that certain jobs are 'not for people like me'. Career choices for girls, particularly around STEM, are affected in a range of ways. ⁴	
Requirements of the DfE statutory guidance January 2018/continued.	Benchmark 3: Addressing the needs of each pupil Schools should keep comprehensive and accurate records to support the career and enterprise development of pupils. They are an effective means of maintaining consistent advice and helping pupils, parents/carers and advisers to keep track of agreed actions and next steps. It can also help young people to showcase their skills to employers. ⁵	Litmus and Octane improve schools' knowledge of the Careers Education needs of both individuals and across cohorts.
	Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees Schools should help pupils gain the confidence to compete in the labour market by providing opportunities to gain the practical know-how and attributes that are relevant for employment. This should include the opportunity for pupils to develop entrepreneurial skills for self-employment. Schools should engage fully with local employers, businesses and professional networks to ensure real-world connections with employers lie at the heart of the careers strategy. ⁶	The Student Consultancy directly involves students in local social enterprises; Litmus and Octane help schools to target which employers and local organisations to involve with their Careers Education.
	Benchmark 6: Experiences of workplaces In addition to encounters with employers in schools, students must have direct experience with the workplace.	The Student Consultancy directly involves students in local social enterprises; Litmus and Octane help students and schools to identify sectors which most interest individuals and cohorts, which can help approaches to employers for work experience opportunities.
Requirements of the DfE statutory	Benchmark 7: Encounters with further and higher education	All five programmes represent an indirect encounter with higher education via the University of Oxford's

⁴ DfE, *Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers: Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff* (January 2018), pp.15-16.

⁵ *ibid.*, p.16.

⁶ *ibid.*, p.22.

guidance January 2018/continued.	<p>Young people should receive a range of information and opportunities to learn about education, training and career paths throughout their school life ... The school should also provide a range of opportunities for providers offering other options, including sixth form colleges and higher education institutions, to visit the school to talk to pupils.’</p> <p>Schools to write and publish a policy statement for access to such visitors ‘to set out opportunities for providers to visit.’⁷</p>	<p>leadership of them. More directly, Ignite, Litmus and Octane promote the consideration of choices about higher education; The Student Consultancy brings the University of Oxford directly into the student’s view as the awarding body of the consultancy programme. Insight Into Teaching offers direct contact with an Oxford undergraduate over three days, as does the potential for greater involvement of Laidlaw scholars visiting their home region.</p> <p>Most directly, this proposed Oxford Opportunity North programme would offer talks to students and staff in visits about the University of Oxford.</p>
	<p>Benchmark 8: Personal guidance</p> <p>Every student must have a personal guidance interview with a qualified careers advisor: at least one interview by the age of 16, and an opportunity for another by the age of 18.</p>	<p>Litmus and Octane improve schools’ capacity to offer highly personalised guidance to students through better knowledge of the Careers Education needs of both individuals and across cohorts, and the career interests of individuals. A student who has participated in the surveys has a ready starting point with which to enter, and on which to reflect on, a personal guidance interview.</p>
House of Commons Briefing Paper on Careers Guidance, January 2018	<p>A November 2015 national survey of business leaders found that 69% of them did not think that UK secondary schools prepared young people properly for the world of work. The survey made three key recommendations, two of which were ‘hold lessons around recruitment and interview techniques’ and ‘put direct contact with local businesses at the heart of careers guidance.’⁸</p>	<p>Ignite explores interviews and preparing for them; the Student Consultancy directly involves students in local social enterprises and the programme gives them training in how to engage with clients in a professional manner; Litmus and Octane help students and schools to identify sectors which most interest individuals and cohorts, which can help approaches to employers for work experience opportunities.</p>
Northern Powerhouse Partnership Report on Education, January 2018	<p>Alongside recommendations for the improvement of school leadership and the performance management of Multi-Academy Trusts, three key recommendations are made in the area of ‘Careers and Pathways’:</p> <p>1. ‘Every Northern business to mentor or otherwise</p>	<p>1. The Student Consultancy directly involves students in local social enterprises; Litmus and Octane help students and schools to identify sectors which most interest individuals and cohorts, which can help approaches to employers for work experience</p>

⁷ *ibid.*, p.25.

⁸ House of Commons Briefing Paper 07236, *Careers Guidance in schools, colleges and universities* (9 January 2018), pp.16-17: British Chambers of Commerce survey, in November 2015.

	<p>meaningfully reach out on Careers and Enterprise skills to at least the same number of people as they employ.’</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Particular careers guidance for all students receiving Pupil Premium funding. 3. All schools, as well as F.E. providers and universities, to be measured on the employment status of their students at 25 years of age.⁹ 	<p>opportunities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Litmus and Octane improve schools’ capacity to offer highly personalised guidance to students through better knowledge of the Careers Education needs of both individuals and across cohorts, and the career interests of individuals. 3. Litmus and Octane improve schools’ knowledge of the careers intentions of individuals and cohorts. Looking at the long term and notwithstanding possible data protection implications, the information demands implicit in such an ambitious target would require an overhaul of how much schools know about ultimate careers destinations. This would be aided by knowing more about potential destinations whilst their students are still at school.
<p>Ofsted standard recommended for Careers guidance for an ‘outstanding’ school, December 2017</p>	<p>‘High quality and impartial careers guidance ensures that learners follow study programmes that build on their prior attainment and enable them to develop clear, ambitious and realistic plans for their future. Learners understand the options available.’¹⁰</p>	<p>Ignite provides a coherent framework for a whole programme of Careers Education, at different stages of a student’s school career; Litmus and Octane give students a clearer idea of where their interests lie and are helpful to the formulation of clear plans.</p>
<p>HM Government’s Northern Powerhouse Strategy, November 2016</p>	<p>‘The provision of careers education, advice and guidance is crucial to supporting young people to make the right choices about their futures. The government will work with the North to ensure that local priorities are fed into the provision of careers advice, so that it is employer-led, integrated and meets local needs. This will involve joint working on the design of careers and enterprise provision for all ages, including collaboration on the work of the Careers and Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service. Where the government is piloting new approaches</p>	<p>All five programmes are highly attractive to external agencies, including those in local government and agencies seeking to identify and extend best practice. The successful regional adoption of the programmes under this proposal could lead to much positive momentum and external evaluation which would build further momentum.</p>

⁹ Northern Powerhouse Partnership, *Educating the North: Driving Ambition Across the Powerhouse* (January 2018), pp.28-29: [Educating the North](#).

¹⁰ Ofsted, *School Inspection Framework 2018* (December 2017), p. 72.

	to careers advice and guidance, we will ensure areas in the North have the opportunity to be part of any trials taking place. ¹¹	
Issue identified by Chief Inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw, December 2014	“The lamentable quality of much careers guidance is an additional obstacle ... excellent initiatives are in danger of failing because the people they are designed to help aren’t getting the information about the courses they need.” ¹²	Litmus , Octane , and Ignite all work to improve students’ knowledge of what they want to know, and working with staff, where they will find further information.
Issues identified in Ofsted national Careers survey inspection, September 2013	Too much reliance on internal staff – need for external guidance and collaboration – and need for more staff awareness of Careers pathways and opportunities. One of the 1,082 students interviewed reported to inspectors that “the most common idea was that ‘you had to choose just one job and stay in it for the rest of your career’”. ¹³	All five programmes would see schools and their students collaborating with both the university and external organisations.
	Activities are too teacher-led.	Litmus , Octane , Ignite and the Student Consultancy all place the student in either a leading role, or through the student’s self-evaluation brings Careers Education into her own personal realm.
	Resources, and particularly websites, are too profuse and poorly planned.	Ignite provides a coherent framework for a whole programme of Careers Education, at different stages of a student’s school career.
	Resources and events are often focused either on the most able or those motivated enough to sign up for them.	Litmus , Octane , and Ignite engage students across a cohort or school. Depending on the extent of adoption, the Student Consultancy can engage many students in a cohort, and can work best when those who undertake are not drawn exclusively from a cohort’s most ‘obvious’ candidates.

¹¹ HM Government, *The Northern Powerhouse Strategy* (November 2016), p. 14.

¹² Sir Michael Wilshaw, speech to launch Ofsted Annual Report 2013-14, 10 December 2014, UK Government website at [Wilshaw speech 10 December 2014](#).

¹³ Ofsted, *Going in the Right Direction?*, (September 2013) report on Careers Guidance in Schools, based on visits to 60 secondary schools and academies between December 2012 and March 2013, p.21.

<p>Issues identified in Ofsted national Careers survey inspection, September 2013/continued.</p>	<p>Schools do not work enough with employers and other local organisations: ‘links with employers were the weakest aspect of careers guidance in the 60 schools visited’.¹⁴</p>	<p>The Student Consultancy directly involves students in local social enterprises; Litmus, and Octane help schools to target which employers and local organisations to involve with their Careers Education.</p>
	<p>The National Careers Service is not accessible or informative enough, echoing criticisms of its forerunner, Connexions, in the previous decade.</p>	<p>Litmus, Octane, Ignite and the Student Consultancy all give schools another external reference point to assist with their Careers Education.</p>
	<p>Data on students’ destinations is not being used effectively enough to inform provision of resources and guidance. ‘Nearly all the schools visited had data on their students’ destinations at the end of Year 11. However, about half of these schools did not analyse these data in sufficient depth.’¹⁵</p>	<p>Litmus and Octane are profiling tools whose key pillar is their development of knowledge of a school’s students and cohort.</p>
	<p>Though the number of schools offering effective guidance was disappointing, the range of schools providing excellent guidance suggests that any type of school, regardless of its intake, funding and location can provide effective guidance.</p>	<p>All five programmes are available and feasible for every type of school in the maintained sector.</p>

¹⁴ Ofsted, *Going in the Right Direction?* (September 2013), p.19.

¹⁵ Ofsted, *Going in the Right Direction?* (September 2013), p.26.