

# Why do we need the Blueprint for Careers?

## A guide for learning providers



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*" The decisions you make about your work life are especially important, since most people spend more of their waking lives working than doing anything else. Your choices will affect not only yourself and those closest to you, but in some way the whole world."*

**Laurence G. Boldt**

**Who is this document for?** People with responsibility for managing and delivering learning, employability and careers services and programmes for learners of all ages.

The Blueprint for Careers is a new framework that supports individuals to manage their learning and career, achieve their potential and maximise their contribution to society and the economy.

The Blueprint for Careers can help people to see the importance of thinking about and developing their career. An individual's career is not just about what they do at work, but also includes their approach to learning and life. Career underpins an individual's sense of social inclusion and life satisfaction and forms a key part of the way in which they impact on society and the economy. The Blueprint is designed to help individuals to manage their careers and to enable them to realise their potential and make a positive contribution to society.

One of the key roles for learning providers is to support the progression of their learners. Research undertaken by LSIS suggests that engaging in career development activities can improve retention, achievement and progression<sup>1</sup>. The Common Inspection Framework (2012) recognises the value of this and expressly assesses progress towards learning goals and personal, social and employability skills<sup>2</sup>. The aspiration to connect learning to life and to support progression creates a strong rationale for learning providers to engage with the idea of career management and the Blueprint for Careers.

## Why is career management important?

Learning is not just about the acquisition of qualifications, but is part of an ongoing process of personal and career development. Individual's journeys through learning and work are complex and consequently need active management. The worlds of learning and work are constantly changing and individuals are likely to need to learn and adapt if they are to successfully navigate their way. Careers need to be actively managed throughout life and underpinned by a lifelong commitment to learning. The Blueprint for Careers sets out the skills, attributes and abilities that individuals need in order to be effective career managers.

<sup>1</sup> See LSIS (2009) *Career learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> century: a leadership issue for the FE sector*.

<sup>2</sup> Insert footnote

Learners who are effective career managers will be able to make decisions about what they want to learn in a well-informed and well-thought-through way, linked to their interests, their capacities and their aspirations. Placing learning within the context of personal aspirations and career also enhances learner motivation, attainment and progression. Supporting learners to develop their career management skills provides an important mechanism for linking individuals' aspirations and motivations to their engagement in learning and training.

## What is the Blueprint for Careers?

Career management skills are acquired through a range of life experiences, most commonly through those related to learning and employment. The Blueprint for Careers provides a framework to help individuals, learning providers and employers to recognise and develop these skills in a range of different ways. It has been trialed across a selection of learning organisations including schools, colleges, universities, adult and community learning, work-based learning providers and workplaces to ensure it meets the needs of all those who can benefit from it.

The Blueprint for Careers defines eleven career learning competencies that support effective career management. Individuals can use the Blueprint to focus their personal and career development while learning providers can draw on the Blueprint to inform learning outcomes and to ensure that learners are able to progress onwards in their career.

The Blueprint for Careers builds upon international practice, but has been developed in England by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) following the extensive trials. Its focus is on realising the potential of people in a way that is sustained and progressive across a life journey. It facilitates an integrated approach to career management established through continued and successive learning and experiential activities.

## How can the Blueprint for Careers be used?

The Blueprint for Careers is designed to be used across the life course in formal and informal learning, in employment and in any place where people seek to develop their skills and careers. It can also be used independently by anyone wishing to develop their career management skills. This lifelong focus is important as people's ability to manage their career can help them in making transitions between life roles and so can support both social inclusion and social mobility.

Once the Blueprint is introduced to individuals they may use it to support personal development and reflection. The Blueprint offers a resource which can be utilised individually or in a group setting. It is flexible and adaptable and can be used across a range of learning contexts which can include:

- Schools
- Sixth forms
- Independent specialist colleges
- Further education colleges
- Work based learning
- Apprenticeships
- Learning at work

- Union Learn
- Adult community learning
- Careers services
- Offender learning
- Higher education

LSIS have produced a broad range of resources and materials to support organisations to use the Blueprint for careers. These have been developed as tools for tutors to use both with individuals and groups. A guide for individuals to use is also being developed.

## The Career Learning Competencies

The Blueprint for Careers is made up of 11 career learning competencies organised under three headings.

### **A Understanding and developing myself**

1. I know who I am and what I am good at
2. I interact confidently and effectively with others
3. I change, develop and adapt throughout my life

### **B Exploring life, learning and work**

4. I learn throughout my life
5. I find and utilise information and the support of others
6. I understand how changes in society, politics and the economy relate to my life, learning and work
7. I understand how life, learning and work roles change over time

### **C Developing and managing life, learning and work**

8. I make effective decisions relating to my life, learning and work
9. I find, create and keep work
10. I maintain a balance in my life, learning and work that is right for me
11. I plan, develop and manage my life, learning and work

For further information and to access the free resources LSIS has produced to support the introduction and implementation of the Blueprint for Careers go to the Career Development section of the [Excellence Gateway](#) or contact [ann.ruthven@lisis.org.uk](mailto:ann.ruthven@lisis.org.uk)