



Guidance in Further Education

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1 Foreword

In 1998 the General Teaching Council for Scotland produced its report on guidance in Scottish secondary schools entitled *Making the Difference*. There was a certain inevitability that reports on the further education and the primary sectors would follow.

I am particularly pleased to write the Foreword to this report which explores guidance issues in further education. The Council has always been committed to further education and has always felt that the influence of the professional body should be strongly felt in further education colleges across Scotland.

This report is an important one and comes at a time when the whole education system needs to develop policies which promote equality of opportunity and social inclusion. It also comes at a time when the need for partnership between the further education and secondary sectors has never been more apparent. In these circumstances it is vital that all students have access to a wide range of guidance services.

I commend this report to all who have a professional interest in developing the work which is presently going on in the further education sector. I hope that its publication will lead to a national debate about guidance in further education and I further hope that it will influence practice throughout Scotland.

On behalf of the Council I wish to thank Ian Loudon who chaired the Group and to all his colleagues who gave so much commitment to the project. I am especially grateful to the many colleges who responded to questionnaires and to the nine colleges who were visited by members of the Group.



Matthew Maclver
Chief Executive/Registrar

2 Introduction

2.1 Following the success of the General Teaching Council for Scotland's published report *Making the Difference* in December 1998, which looked at the professional needs of guidance teachers in Scottish secondary schools, the Council decided to explore further the issues involved in guidance within the further education and primary school sectors in Scotland.

The Ninth Council therefore established a Task Group in August 1999 which was charged with the task of examining guidance issues in the further education sector. The Task Group was immediately accountable to the Council's Education Committee and two members of that Committee represented the Council on the Task Group.

The target which the Task Group set itself was to present the draft report to the Ninth Council. The aims of the draft report are:

- ❖ to review guidance across the further education sector and to describe its role and purpose;
- ❖ to identify good practice in guidance, particularly the guidance role of academic staff;
- ❖ to investigate the level of training and staff development for guidance duties;
- ❖ to investigate the level of funding available for guidance across the sector.

The Group met on twelve occasions between 31 August 1999 and 8 November 2001. At the preliminary meetings it was agreed that a survey of all further education colleges in Scotland would be the foundation for the work of this Group.

The Group agreed at the preliminary meetings that a survey of all further education colleges in Scotland would require to be undertaken as the basis for the research.

Questionnaires were sent to guidance managers in the 47 colleges across Scotland. There was a 50% return of these questionnaires.

It was agreed that these would be followed up by visits to nine volunteer colleges from a cross section of the sector. The colleges were selected conditional on permission from the individual Principals.

The group selected a range of characteristics on the basis of achieving a mix of size and geographic spread. One island college, two city colleges and six rural colleges with a mix of provision and a variety of guidance structures were selected.

The nine colleges selected were visited by three teams of two interviewers (one of the two being a guidance professional) during the months of May and June 2000.

Questionnaires to be used during the visits were sent to the senior managers in advance with a request to involve the following people in the discussions:

- ❖ senior managers;
- ❖ full-time guidance workers;
- ❖ head of academic department;
- ❖ focus group with 6 – 8 tutors;
- ❖ focus group with 8 – 10 students.

We are very grateful to the relevant staff in all the colleges who participated in this survey, without whom this report would not have been possible. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

3 Context

3.1 Background

Since the publication of the HMI report *Staying on Course* in 1992, significant progress has been made in the quality and management of guidance services in further education colleges. However, the client group has changed rapidly over the last few years and the aim of this report is to review guidance services across the further education sector to find out how they have adapted to these changes.

There are, of course, many wide ranging social and policy context challenges, along with the wide expansion of post-school provision and the diverse needs of the client group to consider.

However, there have been a number of Government and other publications issued over the last few years stressing the need for guidance services for all young people and adults. These have highlighted the need for, and the complexity, of guidance. In particular government initiatives such as Skillseekers and New Deal have built in a guidance element to support social inclusion and these have contributed to an ever-changing role for guidance services.

The Scottish Executive is preparing a new strategy document covering Adult Basic Literacy and Numeracy, to be published at the end of 2001. As the further education sector will be required to make a substantial contribution to the delivery of the targets established by this report, there will be a considerable new demand placed on the guidance services provided by colleges.

Different agencies are competing in the same market. Recent evidence given to the Lifelong Learning Committee of the Scottish Parliament would suggest that the map of provision of lifelong learning in Scotland is over-complex, with overlapping provision. In September 1998 the Government published *Opportunity Scotland: A Paper on Lifelong Learning*. The main thrust of this paper was to enable:

- ❖ adults to sustain the lifelong learning habit;
- ❖ the existing workforce to enhance their skills and learn new ones;
- ❖ the skills and employability of the unemployed to be improved and developed; and
- ❖ young people to access positive experiences so that they develop the lifelong learning habit.

3.2 The Beattie Committee Report

In 1999 the Beattie Committee Report entitled *Implementing Inclusiveness, Realising Potential* stated that "If we are to meet the needs of these vulnerable young people then we must have "joined up thinking and action" on how we help them. This means putting the needs of each young person before organisational considerations. We have called this approach "Inclusiveness" and we believe firmly that it is only in this way we can help these young people to realise their full potential." However, this statement applies equally to vulnerable adults, as do the findings of the report.

Among the Committee's vision for an *inclusive* approach was:

- ❖ guidance and support arrangements which offer timely and well-informed advice and information throughout every stage of transition.

This report, which has had strong Scottish Executive backing, highlighted the importance of guidance and identified the need for a coherent and comprehensive framework for staff training and development to include:

- ❖ basic level training for all staff;
- ❖ ongoing training and development; and
- ❖ progression routes for staff.

3.3 Learning Works: Widening Participation within Further Education

In June 1997 The Further Education Funding Council in England and Wales published *Learning Works: Widening Participation within Further Education*; the main points were that:

- ❖ colleges do not always give sufficient guidance and practical help to students aiming to enter employment;
- ❖ few colleges have sufficient trained staff to deliver careers guidance, especially at peak enrolment times;
- ❖ the most effective advice and guidance services in colleges are those which operate alongside a range of other support services for students, such as welfare advice and personal counselling;
- ❖ when these services are based on a whole-college policy for student support, which also encompasses personal tutoring, they can have a marked effect in increasing the number of students who stay and complete their courses;
- ❖ an entitlement to guidance should be included in a new learners' charter which embraces the concept of lifelong learning. This, in turn, should be linked to the national strategy to stimulate demand in further education.

Though this report was based on work conducted in England and Wales, from the research undertaken by this group these findings would appear to be equally applicable to Scotland. HM Inspectorate of Education inspect individual further education colleges every five years on quality standards under various headings, one of which includes guidance.

3.4 Adult Guidance Networks

In 1997 the Scottish Executive provided funding to create 17 Adult Guidance Networks across Scotland to achieve cohesion and co-ordination, and to raise awareness of the availability of adult guidance among adults. These networks are strategic partnerships, involving careers service companies, local enterprise companies, local authorities and higher and further education bodies. Co-ordinators are employed to maintain contact with members of the network and to drive forward recommendations by the strategic partners.

The Scottish Guidance Group, at that time chaired by the Scottish Executive, appointed consultants, Blake Stevenson Ltd, to act as the Support Unit for the Group. They produced a number of good practice guidelines and information booklets to support networks in developing quality, training and marketing at a local level. Guidance practitioners within the further education sector are members of their local network and work closely with the network co-ordinators.

In February 2001 the Scottish Executive announced the formation of Careers Scotland, which aims to provide a more integrated all age guidance service in Scotland.

3.5 The Provision of Guidance in Further Education

The HMI report *Staying on Course* (1992) proposed that there are two main purposes of guidance in further education:

- ❖ the offering of information, advice and support on curricular, vocational and personal matters, so as to enable the learner to make decisions about personal and career goals, select the most appropriate educational programme, cope with the process of learning itself and progress from the college to a desired destination; and
- ❖ a broad purpose is developmental. The process of guidance is a way of assisting the learner to become more autonomous and self-reliant.

The HMI report *Supporting Lifelong Learning* (1996) concluded that:

“The quality of pre-entry guidance has improved markedly in recent years. Induction for full-time students has also made significant progress. The quality of on-course guidance provision is variable across the country, and pre-exit support, with some exceptions, remains underdeveloped”.

The Scottish Guidance Group (1998) defined guidance as “...a process by which individuals are helped to clarify options about their futures in terms of training, education and work”.

The Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education (1986) identified 7 key activities of guidance: informing, advising, counselling, assessing, enabling, advocating and feeding back.

Taken together, these definitions provide a framework for guidance provision in Scottish further education colleges.

The recommendations of the Beattie Report, and the introduction of National Qualifications in further education colleges, has placed greater emphasis on transition and progression guidance. This has impacted on the nature of the guidance services which colleges need to offer to support learners.

Many colleges are intensifying support provision to assist students who are accessing education under the initiatives motivated by social inclusion and improving adult literacy. In recent years many colleges have strengthened their central services by employing professional guidance staff including Careers Advisers, Customer Service and Human Resource specialists.

4 Findings and Recommendations

4.1 Entitlement to Guidance

Guidance provision in colleges throughout Scotland embraces a wide range of support services under the generic heading of guidance. Personal, vocational, educational, financial and welfare support all feature, along with specialised provision to meet the requirements of specific initiatives such as New Deal and Skillseekers.

“Over the last few years the college has attracted a far higher proportion of the local population many of whom have no prior post-school education and a significant number with problems associated with deprivation; therefore the need for guidance and support has grown significantly.”

(Senior Manager)

In some colleges the central guidance service functions as an umbrella arrangement, encompassing a more diverse range of provision. Networking with external support agencies, such as Women’s Aid and the Employment Service, maximises the range of support and expertise available to students. This recognises that colleges often work in partnership with specialist support services to which learners may be referred.

Many colleges have invested considerable resources in centrally provided services, staffed by guidance professionals, as a way of improving access and student retention and breaking down barriers, key issues in promoting a policy of social inclusion. Central services provide pre-course information, advice on financial matters, personal counselling and careers advice. Many colleges operate from more than one site and consequently an important challenge for guidance services is to make adequate provision on each campus.

“The staff at the Student Advice Centre are helpful, polite, understanding and sensitive to each student’s individual needs.”

“We are spoilt, it will be difficult to go to a big university.”

(Students)

Arrangements made for guidance provided by teaching staff varies both between colleges and between departments within the same college. In many colleges a tutorial system is in use, whereby a student is allocated to a tutor for support. However, there are differences in the operation of the tutorial system. Differences include:

- ❖ the extent to which tutors provide help with students’ personal problems;
- ❖ whether tutoring is a voluntary task;
- ❖ perceptions of the guidance task;
- ❖ arrangements for referral to central services and external agencies;
- ❖ provision for part-time students;
- ❖ provision for students on advanced level courses; and
- ❖ the use of *Progress File*.

Evidence provided during the visits highlighted the importance of an effective interface between central services and tutor-led guidance activities. Amongst the issues raised were:

- ❖ arrangements for effective referral;
- ❖ the nature of records; and
- ❖ methods of assuring confidentiality.

One problem highlighted was that tutors might not always have teaching contact with members of their tutor groups.

“See different people all the time; don’t have a particular tutor.”

(Student)

There is some doubt that guidance systems as they stand are geared up to deal with the implications of the National Qualifications curriculum and the additional learner support required in this qualifications framework.

Students interviewed were critical of the lack of provision of transition/progression guidance services provided in most colleges, particularly for those moving into employment.

“Need for more guidance before leaving college;” “More job seeking skills would be useful;” “Would like more guidance prior to leaving college and progressing to higher courses.”

(Students)

Recommendations:

- ❖ All learners should have access to time-tabled guidance which should be an integral part of all courses.
- ❖ A range of guidance services should be available to ALL students including pre-entry, student finance, learning support, transition and progression guidance.
- ❖ Colleges should expand partnerships and work closer with a number of specialist support agencies, as often support from these agencies is vital to ensure that students remain in the education system.

4.2 National Policy Framework

A major element of Scottish Executive policy is to seek to create an inclusive society as a means to combat poverty, socio-economic deprivation and low levels of educational attainment. This has resulted in the Scottish Further Education Funding Council allocating specific funding to promote social inclusion by attracting previous non-participants to further education colleges. The success of this approach has resulted in colleges recruiting students who may have experienced all or some of the following:

- ❖ long-term unemployment;
- ❖ low levels of educational attainment/no previous attainment;
- ❖ a lack of core skills;
- ❖ ill-health;
- ❖ a role as a carer;
- ❖ no background of participation in post-school education;
- ❖ lone parenthood; and
- ❖ a range of needs which occurs as a result of socio-economic deprivation.

“Need more support for numeracy and maths;” “Learning support is not adequately resourced.”

(Professional Guidance Staff)

For many colleges this has changed the nature of the student population with a move away from the ‘traditional’ recruit who came to study with the skills required to successfully undertake their programme.

While the policy approach is welcomed it is recognised that the changing nature of the student population requires different approaches to guidance than those previously adopted within the sector. In particular there is now a greater need for pastoral guidance firstly at the pre-entry stage and secondly throughout the programmes of study to ensure that the student remains at the college. This pastoral guidance focuses on a wide range of matters including:

Finance

- ❖ bursary;
- ❖ benefits;
- ❖ student awards;
- ❖ debt issues.

Strategies to cope with role as:

- ❖ parent and/or;
- ❖ carer.

Social issues such as:

- ❖ substance abuse;
- ❖ lack of family support;
- ❖ territorialism (particularly with young people in urban areas);
- ❖ homelessness;
- ❖ low self-esteem;
- ❖ behavioural issues.

*“Emphasis should be on the individual and not on systems.”
(Tutor)*

It was noted that although many students experiencing social exclusion attended on a part-time basis, their complex needs were such that they required considerably more guidance than a simple pro-rata formula based on the guidance offered to full-time students would suggest. While recognising the need for appropriate record keeping, teaching staff were concerned that the needs of a variety of bodies meant that records were increasingly complex and detailed.

The further education sector differs from the secondary school sector in that there is not a definitive structure for managing guidance. Although there is no suggestion that there is a single recommended model, there are models of good practice.

There was concern that staff within institutions were ‘re-inventing the wheel’ by identifying local solutions to national issues. There was a feeling that a more strategic approach was required to common themes.

In general there are some excellent examples of good practice in all aspects of guidance across the sector. However, there are a great number of inconsistencies resulting in a different guidance service being delivered across colleges throughout Scotland.

This does not compare favourably with the secondary school sector where the education authorities have produced practical policies for all aspects of guidance delivery and training of staff.

*“Better communication between schools’ guidance and colleges would benefit students (recorded needs etc.)”
(Senior Manager)*

Recommendations:

- ❖ Consideration should be given to the creation of a National Forum to develop policies which promote equality of opportunity and social inclusion.
- ❖ There is a need for a cross-sectoral approach between further education and the secondary school sector.
- ❖ Further consideration should be given to policies which address transition guidance issues related to adult returners and career changers.

4.3 Time and Accommodation

A key issue for tutors involved in first-line guidance was the allocation of time to undertake guidance duties. Some tutors commented that the pressure on senior managers to maximise class contact resulted in the erosion of time-tabled guidance slots. However, although senior managers were aware of the need, the current funding mechanism did not adequately recognise the level of guidance support required by learners. This, they believed, was inappropriate as the student demand for guidance became more important particularly with the increase in the number of part-time students drawn from socially excluded backgrounds.

In all colleges visited this lack of time was a major cause for concern. Some tutors have no specific allocation of time. Even when time is allocated it does not account for the level of support required for a quality learning experience. This appears to be due to the pressure on senior managers to maximise class contact time.

The most common allowance of time is 1 hour per week. This does not take cognisance of caseload, the varying complexity of needs of individuals and groups or the skills level of the staff involved.

Where staff delivering guidance were concerned that they did not always have sufficient time to provide the service to students, senior managers were aware of the need to fund the time for this provision, but did not always have access to the resources required to support these activities.

It was also noted that in the majority of colleges all teaching staff were required to perform a guidance role regardless of whether they had indicated an interest in this activity and/or had undergone any guidance staff development. Furthermore, lecturing staff reported that the time available for guidance activities had been eroded as there was managerial pressure to increase formal class contact.

*“No time-tabled time for guidance - there used to be 1 hour per week;”
“Guidance is ‘stolen’ from teaching time.”*

(Tutors)

“Time allocation (for guidance) 1.5 – 2 hours on paper – depends on staffing levels.”

(Head of Department)

“Would like dedicated time per student for first-line guidance.”

(Professional Guidance Staff)

This was particularly highlighted in rural areas where part-time students might not be on campus when the specialist support was available or might have to travel a considerable distance to the main site to access this provision. It was also recognised that multi-site city/urban colleges might experience similar issues. There were additional difficulties in providing support to part-time students in colleges who were based on a number of different campuses.

The lack of appropriate, clearly identified accommodation for guidance activities was seen as a barrier to effective support for students. Confidential interviews were often not able to take place immediately due to the lack of dedicated rooms. Many staff reported that this was a major difficulty and impacted adversely on guidance activities. Even when rooms were available they were not ‘user-friendly’ in that they did not create a safe environment for either the student or the member of staff.

“Difficult dealing with confidential interviews in a discreet physical environment as there are no rooms available.”

(Tutor)

A lack of suitable accommodation for confidential interviews was a recurring theme. Tutors felt very strongly that the inappropriate environments in which guidance had to be carried out inhibited students from seeking assistance.

*“More frequent planned 1 to 1s for students who might not initiate contact.
This would remove stigma of asking for help.”*

(Student)

Furthermore there was a need to ensure that guidance staff had access to appropriate confidential communication systems and secure storage for records. Staff identified that there was no clear guidance on record keeping, and on how confidentiality could be maintained, including the use of e-mail.

Recommendations:

- ❖ There should be a clear allocation of time both for guidance professionals and for teaching staff providing first-line guidance.
- ❖ Every college should ensure that there is:
 - suitable accommodation on all sites to enable effective guidance to take place; and
 - a clear allocation of time for these guidance services to take place.
- ❖ There is a need for clear national guidelines on the storage of guidance records.

4.4 Funding

Apart from direct staffing costs of professional guidance staff, in its scrutiny of the sector, this survey found no uniformity of a specific budget for guidance. Aspects of first-line guidance were often subsumed in departmental budgets. This led to first-line guidance being inconsistent, and some departments gave greater priority to guidance than others; therefore the quality of the student experience varied. As a result there is uneven provision of guidance services across the sector.

*“Guidance was better when supported by the Region.”
(Tutor)*

Colleges are finding it difficult to operate within the financial methodology imposed by the Scottish Further Education Funding Council, which fails to recognise the role played by guidance in contributing to the quality of the student experience.

Currently the funding methodology is not taking cognisance of the additional costs incurred in providing guidance services for students with more complex needs.

*“College finds it difficult to fund guidance.”
(Senior Manager)*

In contrast to the secondary school sector, there is no funded guidance in further education. It is important that transition students, and others, are given a service which meets their expectations.

*“Fundings need to be allocated nationally.”
(Senior Manager)*

Recommendation:

- ❖ The Scottish Further Education Funding Council should consider revising the funding methodology to recognise the key role of guidance services in supporting the quality of the learner experience, and the promotion of social inclusion within further education colleges.

4.5 Training and Quality Issues

Senior managers were usually familiar with the system and aware that the quality of guidance might vary between academic areas. Again there was commonality at all levels in the concern to make appropriate provision for students who were not the traditional, vocationally focused further education learners but whose lifestyles were less organised and whose support needs were more complex. Many staff felt that a common-sense approach, even combined with goodwill, was not adequate to meet the needs of these learners. Some also felt that systems needed to be reviewed to ensure that appropriate support was available to a wider spectrum of learners.

Staff identified that they required further staff development in the skills needed to work with this more challenging group of learners and it was necessary that they liaised with appropriate external agencies when specialist support was appropriate.

Overall staff recognised that there was a need to provide effective guidance; however, there was concern that appropriate staff development was not always available. Also when staff development was available it was often at the expense of other developmental activity or to be undertaken in time out-with the college day. There was a demand for access to staff development; however staff would wish this to be available on a flexible basis and tailored to meet the demands of both individuals and the learner groups with whom they work. Specialist staff also highlighted that there was limited access to specific staff development in relation to the further education sector.

In general, professional guidance staff in further education colleges do not always believe that they have the wide range of skills necessary to support learners in an appropriate manner and therefore further staff development is required. In addition, staff acknowledged that an effective referral system to more specialist support is also required.

“Need to make sure that advisors refer on and don’t take on what they are not equipped to deal with.”

(Tutors)

In addition, many learners who have experienced social exclusion may also have individual learning requirements. These range from specific learning difficulties to those issues which arise from the social/emotional/behavioural difficulties which many non-traditional learners experience.

Effective guidance systems and practice is required if learners who have previously not been attracted to further education colleges are to be recruited, retained and then attain their educational goals. This will require all staff to be appropriately qualified and be given the opportunity to undertake regular staff development.

The review of academic staff involved in the delivery of guidance, particularly those involved in first-line activities, highlighted that they seldom had formal guidance training or qualifications prior to the commencement of these duties. A number of guidance staff had subsequently gained qualifications and undergone training but for tutors this was not always seen to be appropriate. There appears to be an assumption that teaching staff are well equipped to offer guidance.

“There is a need for guidance training for teaching staff.”

(Tutor)

Some colleges have sought to respond to the challenges of these learner groups by recruiting specialist staff. These specialist staff include:

- ❖ Admissions/Careers Advisers;
- ❖ Bursary Officers;
- ❖ European Social Fund Co-ordinators; and
- ❖ Accommodation Officers.

These staff often have both appropriate qualifications and experience which have positively contributed to the quality of the guidance offered to students. However, it must be recognised that a number of colleges are based on multi-sites and they are not able to offer this specialist support on a continual basis on every campus. Therefore students may only have limited access to such support.

The survey also indicated that the role of these specialist services had not been fully integrated into the structures of colleges with academic staff not always aware of the role played by specialist staff. Similarly support staff were also aware that there was not always appropriate opportunities for joint meetings to share information, approaches and identify common staff development needs.

“Our Guidance Working Group is crucial to the success of our guidance services.”

(Head of Department)

Recommendations:

- ❖ There is a need for all staff working with students, not only guidance specialists, to have at least an awareness of guidance skills required when working with learners.
- ❖ Consideration should be given to providing nationally designed guidance material to support generic activities.
- ❖ We recommend, in view of the large number of teaching staff involved in guidance, that the Certificate in Tertiary Education and the Professional Development Award for lecturing staff should have guidance skills as core elements.
- ❖ Further education colleges should give consideration to appropriate CPD skills for all staff delivering guidance.

4.6 Management of Guidance Services

Within colleges there is a trend towards making a distinction between centrally provided guidance services (often known as ‘student services’) and guidance provided by teaching staff. The nature and extent of central services varies between colleges. These services typically have clearly defined roles and boundaries, whereas the roles and tasks of teaching staff in relation to guidance are often less clear. Central services staff normally have very specific job descriptions, whereas the guidance activities of lecturers are not always described in detail in job descriptions or in staff manuals and therefore there is more room for individual interpretation.

The central services in some colleges involve teaching staff but that is less usual than a support staff arrangement. In smaller colleges staff may have multiple roles and one member of staff may be responsible for a wide range of services. Under these circumstances networking is particularly important, to offer appropriate referral points when specialist expertise is required.

There is a new trend to allocate schools liaison to the marketing team and away from the guidance team – this may not adequately meet the needs of the potential learners. This apparent blurring of functions between guidance and marketing may compromise the reputations of colleges in providing impartial guidance.

What is increasingly typical is a division of labour between teaching and support staff, where first-line guidance for learners on a course is part of the duties of tutors.

*“Feel that roles and responsibilities should include guidance.”
(Head of Department)*

In general, colleges place an importance on guidance by appointing a senior manager to oversee these services. However the group identified that operational difficulties were not always being addressed, and this provides the senior manager with a number of challenges.

Principals have acknowledged the importance of guidance by setting up appropriate management structures complemented by adequate resources.

Where colleges operate on multiple sites the challenges for the managers of guidance services are enormous.

Below senior management level the organisation of the range of activities of guidance is very difficult to map. Often a college will have a post which is nominally responsible for the operation of guidance. However, that person may have responsibility for a wide range of guidance services.

The introduction of new guidance structures has yet to be fully implemented in some colleges; this has led to difficulties with meetings between guidance professionals and teaching staff.

In all the colleges which were visited staff expressed concern about the lack of adequate administrative support for guidance activity. Tutors felt that their time was not well spent on routine administrative tasks associated with their role in guidance.

Recommendations:

- ❖ The first-line guidance of teaching staff (tutors) should be more precisely defined within the context of a particular college.
- ❖ The role of guidance co-ordinator is a crucial job and wherever it is placed in a college’s provision the post-holder should have management support to develop the provision of appropriate services and the authority to deploy resources.
- ❖ The operational management of the guidance function should take account of the particular local requirements of multiple sites and flexible patterns of student attendance.
- ❖ College managers should make specific provision for the administrative support of guidance activities.

5 Summary of Recommendations

Entitlement to Guidance

- ❖ All learners should have access to time-tabled guidance which should be an integral part of all courses.
- ❖ A range of guidance services should be available to ALL students including pre-entry, student finance, learning support, transition and progression guidance.
- ❖ Colleges should expand partnerships and work closer with a number of specialist support agencies, as often support from these agencies is vital to ensure that students remain in the education system.

National Policy Framework

- ❖ Consideration should be given to the creation of a National Forum to develop policies which promote equality of opportunity and social inclusion.
- ❖ There is a need for a cross-sectoral approach between further education and the secondary school sector.
- ❖ Further consideration should be given to policies which address transition guidance issues related to adult returners and career changers.

Time and Accommodation

- ❖ There should be a clear allocation of time both for guidance professionals and for teaching staff providing first-line guidance.
- ❖ Every college should ensure that there is:
 - suitable accommodation on all sites to enable effective guidance to take place; and
 - a clear allocation of time for these guidance services to take place.
- ❖ There is a need for clear national guidelines on the storage of guidance records.

Funding

- ❖ The Scottish Further Education Funding Council should consider revising the funding methodology to recognise the key role of guidance services in supporting the quality of the learner experience, and the promotion of social inclusion within further education colleges.

Training and Quality Issues

- ❖ There is a need for all staff working with students, not only guidance specialists, to have at least an awareness of guidance skills required when working with learners.
- ❖ Consideration should be given to providing nationally designed guidance material to support generic activities.
- ❖ We recommend, in view of the large number of teaching staff involved in guidance, that the Certificate in Tertiary Education and the Professional Development Award for lecturing staff should have guidance skills as core elements.
- ❖ Further education colleges should give consideration to appropriate CPD skills for all staff delivering guidance.

Management of Guidance Services

- ❖ The first-line guidance of teaching staff (tutors) should be more precisely defined within the context of a particular college.
- ❖ The role of guidance co-ordinator is a crucial job and wherever it is placed in a college's provision the post-holder should have management support to develop the provision of appropriate services and the authority to deploy resources.
- ❖ The operational management of the guidance function should take account of the particular local requirements of multiple sites and flexible patterns of student attendance.
- ❖ College managers should make specific provision for the administrative support of guidance activities.

6 **References**

The Beattie Committee Report (1999) - *Implementing Inclusiveness, Realising Potential*.

The Further Education Funding Council (1997) - *Learning Works: Widening Participation within Further Education*.

HMI (1992) - *Staying on Course: Student Guidance in Scottish Further Education Colleges*.

HMI (1996) - *Supporting Lifelong Learning: Guidance Services in Further Education Colleges and Local Guidance Networks*.

Scottish Executive (1998) - *Opportunity Scotland: A Paper on Lifelong Learning*

APPENDIX

Composition and Membership of the Task Group

Mrs Joy Boyle	Fife College (until June 2001)
Mr Chris Brown	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Mrs Meg Clifford	Falkirk College
Mr Graham Connelly	University of Strathclyde
Ms Dorothy Finlay	Council Member
Ms Nancy Houston	Ayr College
Mr Ian Loudon	Convener and Council Member
Ms Teresa McCallion	Banff and Buchan College
Ms Ann McKay	Inverness College
Mr Alan Sherry	Association of Scottish Colleges and John Wheatley College

Servicing Officer

Mr Matthew Maclver	Depute Registrar (Education) (until March 2001) and Chief Executive/Registrar (from April 2001), The General Teaching Council for Scotland
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