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Rethinking Career Education in Schools

Foundations for a New Zealand framework

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List of acronyms

CPaBL	Creating Pathways and Building Lives (project)
DeSeCo	Definition and Selection of Key Competencies (project)
DIP	Data Information Profile
ERO	Education Review Office
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
NAG	National Administration Guideline
NCEA	National Certificate in Educational Achievement
NZCER	New Zealand Council for Educational Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
RIASEC	Realistic Investigative Artistic Social Enterprising Conventional (refers to John Holland's Theory of Career Choice)
STAR	Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource

Executive summary

About this report

This report is a synthesis of recent evidence for effective practice in career education and guidance. It discusses international thinking about what young people need from schooling in the 21st century. It distils what has been learned from two career education projects in New Zealand schools, Designing Careers and Creating Pathways and Building Lives. The report shows that career education has an important role to play in developing what the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2003) refers to as the competencies young people need for a successful adult life.

International thinking

There has been a significant shift in understanding of the purpose and role of education internationally. This shift has had implications for ideas about effective practice in career education. A strong theme in contemporary literature is the need for a broader focus in career education to develop the career management competencies that underpin a person's ability to successfully navigate their lifelong career journey.

Four key points can be drawn from contemporary research and international developments:

- Career education is important to human capability building in the 21st century.
- The contribution of career education to building human capability requires more than imparting information to support job selection.
- The emphasis in career education must shift to developing the underlying competencies that will enable people to self-manage their careers over the long term.
- Career education needs to be an integral part of a new education model for the 21st century, not a separate add-on activity.

Developing career management competencies

Young people in the 21st century need to be able to respond to more diverse career development patterns and changes in life and career direction. Career education needs to emphasise helping young people to understand and grow the capabilities they need to develop their careers over their lifetime. To develop this capability in young people we need to shift from decision guidance to career development guidance.

A shift to career development guidance aligns well with the vision of The New Zealand Curriculum of confident, connected, actively involved and lifelong learners. Career education can provide a means to personalise learning and engage students in an education programme that emphasises what they will need to understand and take with them from school. This emphasis promotes greater understanding of the purpose of education and its relevance to students' lives.

New Zealand projects

Two recent projects, Designing Careers and Creating Pathways and Building Lives, provided unique opportunities for Career Services to engage in a formative process of enhancing and developing career education and guidance in New Zealand schools. A lot has been learned. These projects demonstrated that an integrated whole-school approach is the way forward, as it has the potential to bring career education to the centre of teaching and learning.

Success in implementing a whole-school approach hinges on:

- having the support of school leadership
- taking a team approach
- having supportive, challenging and well-informed external advice

- developing an overarching sense of the role of career education in the secondary school experience and what that implies for curriculum planning.

Although much has been learned, these projects had limitations. To continue to build connections between career education theory and practice and broader developments in educational policy and practice, we need:

- a clear picture of how career education can become central to teaching and learning
- programmes that address what young people need to take with them for a successful adult life. This would necessitate whole-school involvement in career education
- development of evaluation and evidence-building processes that connect the outcomes of career education to both social and economic benefits.

Next steps

This report is an important start. The next steps to develop career education in New Zealand schools need to address the reality of teaching and in particular the fact that teachers are busy people. It is important that there is a clear sense of how career education can benefit teachers' work and contribute to students' learning. Without a clear sense of the benefits, or to use a term from the business world, the 'value-added', it is difficult to see how career education can gain the level of support required to shift to the centre of teaching and learning.

The intention is to use this report as part of an ongoing dialogue about ideas, evidence and practice in career education. This dialogue will be a foundation for building consistency and evidence in the work Career Services does to support career education in schools. To be successful in this work Career Services must consider the following:

- adopting and continuing to develop a shared and consistent view of career education and guidance in schools
- demonstrating learning communities, internally (Career Services) and externally
- articulating a clear approach to career education that blends career decision guidance and career development guidance
- developing career theory and practice in relation to the theory of teaching and learning
- linking career education to curriculum, pedagogy and assessment
- signalling a preferred model and theory of practice
- developing exemplars of programme components, learning activities and experiences
- describing what career education looks and feels like in a classroom.

Background to this report

The purpose of this report

In January 2009, Career Services formed a working party to guide the enhancement and development of the organisation's work with schools. The working party's initial brief was to develop a high-level conception of the purpose of career education and to identify key audiences and processes for supporting career education in schools.

This work was intended to build on the experience and learning gained from the recently completed project Creating Pathways and Building Lives. It would distil the important components of effective practice and bring them together in a coherent overarching framework.

An important step in developing the framework was to clarify Career Services' current understanding and evidence for the effectiveness of career education. This report is to provide a first synthesis of evidence to underpin the Career Services' framework. Figure 1 represents the role of evidence in relation to the framework and to practice.

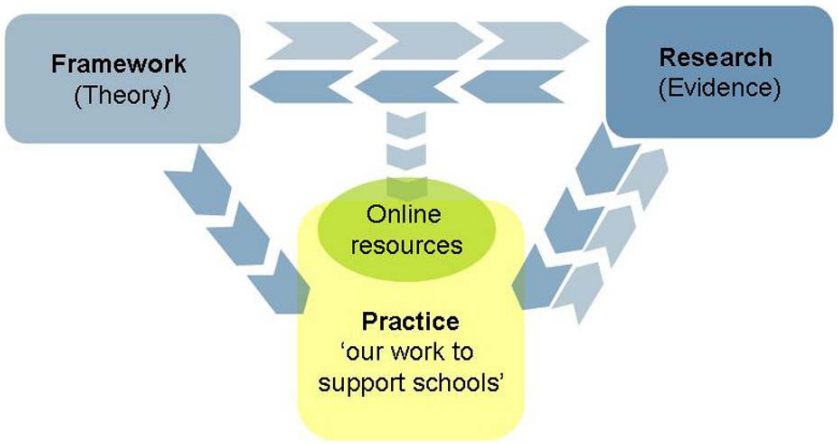

Figure 1: The interaction between theory, evidence and practice

The role of the framework is to describe what career education is about and how Career Services should go about supporting it. As greater understanding and evidence of effective practice develops, Career Services will continue to refine and enhance the framework – ideas provide creativity and energy for change, while evidence ensures we can show a positive effect when our ideas are applied to practice. A cycle of continuous improvement should, ultimately, be the focus and result of our efforts.

The approach taken in this report

This report has been approached as a sense-making synthesis. It emphasises evidence-based conclusions about practice while allowing room to explore and develop themes for which robust evidence may not yet be available (Pawson, 2006; Patton, 2006). This approach is taken because Career Services is in the early stages of developing its framework for career education in schools. We need to begin with a clear sense of the limitations of our current knowledge and create a platform for further development.

This synthesis is timely as two significant career education projects have run over the past four years in New Zealand schools. The evaluation reports for these projects provide a rich account of them and significant conclusions. In this report we will argue that both projects must be understood as products of a particular emphasis in thinking about the purpose and role of career education and guidance. That emphasis was improving students' transition from school to further study, training or work. In developing this report Career Services has been open to exploring this emphasis further through consideration of what is being said internationally about career education, its purpose and what it can contribute to individuals, the community and the economy.

Projects to develop career education in New Zealand schools

Two career education projects have been run over the past four years in New Zealand schools. The first of these was the Designing Careers pilot, 2005–2006. The second was the Creating Pathways and Building Lives (CPaBL) project, 2007–2008.

In moving from the Designing Careers pilot to the CPaBL project, the scale and the scope of the work undertaken changed. There was a shift from a targeted intervention centred on year 10 and students at risk to an emphasis on a planned, whole-school approach to career education and guidance. This shift is to be expected as the Designing Careers pilot was the first step in a broader Ministry of Education initiative to improve career education and guidance in New Zealand schools.

Figure 2 provides a brief overview of the aims and key outcomes of these initiatives.

Initiative	Aims	Key outcomes
Designing Careers **2005–2006**	• Development of Learning and Career Plans • Career planning at year 10 • Improved support for students at risk • Piloting of key resources	• Improved retention and transition from school to further study or work • Improved career knowledge and decision making • Improved use of NCEA flexibility and pathway options in schools
Creating Pathways and Building Lives **2007–2008**	• Establish an integrated whole-school approach to career education • Embed sustainable systems and plans • Improve the quality of career information, advice and guidance • Improve responsiveness to student needs • Encourage self-review	Each school has a Career Education Plan that: • enhances planning and review • builds sustainability • fosters whānau and community involvement • is designed to improve outcomes for all students

Figure 2: The aims and outcomes of Designing Careers and CPaBL

Designing Careers and CPaBL were large scale projects for New Zealand. Designing Careers involved 75 schools and CPaBL another 100 schools – there are 353 secondary schools in the country.[1] Projects of this scale offered unique opportunities to develop robust conclusions regarding good and effective practice for career education.

These projects are discussed in four parts as follows.

- Part One describes the background to these projects.
- Part Two describes the Designing Careers pilot.
- Part Three provides an overview of CPaBL and the findings from its evaluation.
- Part Four looks suggests a direction beyond CPaBL.

[1] Ministry of Education, Directory of Educational Institutions, February 2009. Some area schools have been involved in these projects, but the general point stands. This is a significant sample of the secondary schools in New Zealand.

Part One: Background to Designing Careers and Creating Pathways and Building Lives

The National Administration Guidelines (NAG) require provision of career education and guidance in New Zealand schools. These guidelines provide an overview of core expectations for school administration. They give context and further shape to how a school might go about implementing the expectations within The New Zealand Curriculum. The following is required under NAG 1.

- Each Board of Trustees is required to foster student achievement by providing teaching and learning programmes which incorporate The New Zealand Curriculum as expressed in National Curriculum Statements.
- Each Board, through the principal and staff, is required to: (vi) provide appropriate career education and guidance for all students in year 7 and above, with a particular emphasis on specific career guidance for those students who have been identified by the school as being at risk of leaving school unprepared for the transition to the workplace or further education and training.

NAG 1.vi is often a first point of reference when any career education initiative is undertaken in New Zealand schools. It places career education in the context of the curriculum, but gives no specific detail on how career education and guidance might be provided in a given school context. It merely states that schools must provide this service to all students and address the needs of those who are at risk of not making a successful transition from school.

Although Designing Careers and CPaBL reflect the context of this guideline, they cannot be explained by it. Designing Careers and CPaBL should be understood as part of a formative process intended to improve the provision of career education in New Zealand schools.

These projects reflect the Ministry of Education's response to the then government's Youth Transitions Strategy. The Youth Transitions Strategy was intended to support young people to successfully transition to post-school study and work. This intention reflected the broad government goal of equipping New Zealanders with the skills they will need in the future.

In December 2002, Cabinet agreed to a work programme for making progress towards the achievement of the government's and the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs shared goal that "by 2007, all 15 to 19 year olds will be engaged in appropriate education, training, work or other options that will lead to long term economic independence and well-being". (Mayors Taskforce for Jobs, 2003: 1)

The Youth Transitions Strategy was developed in 2003 as part of this programme. The initial priorities of the strategy were enhancing career information and guidance in schools, improving post-school services for at-risk youth and improving vocational education and training in schools (Ministry of Education, 2003a).

The Ministry of Education then developed a strategy to improve the quality of career information, advice and guidance available to students. The strategy stated that improved provision was needed to address the following barriers.

- The limited capability of some careers advisers, and the limited opportunity for professional development and training.
- The limited capacity to deliver career information, advice and guidance to Māori and Pacific students.
- The separation between the school system and other powerful career influences such as parents, families and the labour market.
- The limited time and funding allocations for and low status of career education in schools.
- The low awareness among students of the value of career information, advice and guidance and how to access it (Ministry of Education, 2003a: 3).

Ask yourself

- Would the statements above be true for your school today?

This strategy began the process that led to the Designing Careers pilot and subsequent CPaBL project. Designing Careers was intended as a starting point in a process of improving career information, advice and guidance in schools. It was to run parallel with research and evaluation. These would all contribute to developing a clearer picture of effective practice. A longer-term strategy would be developed from this evidence base to extend and enhance career education and advice in schools (Ministry of Education, 2003a; Career Services, 2005).

Separate agencies had different responsibilities in this work.

- The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) was responsible for research into youth transition and career guidance. This included the longitudinal Pathways and Prospects project (Vaughan, et. al. 2006).
- The Education Review Office (ERO) was responsible for project evaluation.
- Career Services, in collaboration with School Support Services during CPaBL, was responsible for delivery of in-school initiatives.

In 2003, the Ministry of Education also commissioned Career Services to update the publication Career Education and Guidance in New Zealand Schools (Ministry of Education, 2003b). That document provided the aims and outcomes of career education and guidance that were used in both of these projects.

Figure 3 represents the steps that led up to the CPaBL project and the process of building an understanding of effective practice.

Figure 3: Steps towards the CPaBL project and beyond

Part Two: Designing Careers pilot (2005–2006)

Overview

Designing Careers was a pilot programme that ran in 75 schools for 18 months. The pilot focused on supporting year 10 career education, in particular, students completing an individual Learning and Career Plan. It also provided intensive support to students at risk of leaving school unprepared for the transition to the workplace or further education and training.

The main components of the pilot were the following.

- Professional development support and teaching resources to teachers.
- Learning and career planning for year 10 students.
- Individual career guidance for students at risk in years 11, 12 and 13 (delivered directly to students by Career Services consultants).

In each region, Career Services staff developed a Professional Support Plan with pilot schools in their area. That plan outlined agreed support for the school. During the project, feedback was provided to the project management team and the project evaluators to identify best practice and professional development needs. This feedback led to staff professional development and further refinement of resources and information for schools.

The purpose of targeted planning assistance

Year 10 was selected as the intervention point for this project, as students in that year are nearing the end of compulsory schooling and must make decisions regarding National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) subjects in senior school. There was also recognition that NCEA was creating additional work for careers advisers. This necessitated revision of the existing careers adviser-centred delivery of career guidance.

Providing targeted planning support through a career education programme was designed to better connect decision making to consideration of career direction. Students would need to update their plans at least annually as they progressed through school. This career planning approach was thought to give greater coherence to career guidance and assist students to:

- learn about lifelong learning and the process of career planning
- take full advantage of the opportunities in NCEA, pathway options in schools, and the range of tertiary study options available
- leave school with a plan that enabled them to make a successful transition to further education, training or employment (ERO, 2006: 7).

The pilot was testing a causal chain from improved awareness to decision making, planning and transition from school.

Findings from Designing Careers

The evaluation found that the Designing Careers pilot:

- improved the provision of career education for year 10 students
- improved support for some students at risk
- raised the profile of career education among students and teachers
- enabled further development of career education at other year levels
- enabled the development of a school-wide team involved with career education (ERO, 2006: 5).

The findings showed that the impact of the project went beyond the specific intent, to influence broader staff knowledge and attitudes towards career education. Participants reported positively on the value and impact of the pilot.

The evaluators expressed reservations, however, about the difficulty in assessing outcomes of the pilot. This difficulty was due to a lack of baseline data and to the year 10 focus, which meant that any assessment of impact on successful transition would be some years away (ERO, 2006). There was also comment that Career Services staff would need further assistance to be credible providers of support to schools, particularly in relation to curriculum and school structures (ERO, 2006, 2009a, 2009b). The report stated that the pilot had not:

- documented clear outcomes with success indicators in the planning phase
- sought baseline data to facilitate robust self-review and evaluation
- provided clear lines of accountability
- provided clear information and guidelines for schools
- increased the involvement of parents in their children's career education
- provided specific programmes for Māori, Pacific or students with disabilities (ERO, 2006: 5).

Recommendations from Designing Careers

The evaluators (ERO, 2006) recommended that the pilot approach be modified for future projects. Among the recommendations suggested were changes to the design to ensure that:

- project documentation focuses on outcomes for students
- access to information is assisted and that students have the necessary skills to be able to interpret this information
- greater clarification of expectations of schools is provided.

Suggested changes to the implementation were to:

- develop whole-school career education programmes that are coordinated across year levels and link clearly to strategic planning and self-review cycles, student needs, subject areas and pastoral care systems
- establish baseline data that would enable teachers to monitor the impact of their programmes on student knowledge, learning and behaviour
- involve parents more actively
- implement appropriate and effective strategies for supporting and monitoring the progress of students at risk of not making successful transitions, and systems that are responsive to the needs and perspective of Māori and Pasifika
- review timetables, option structures, and qualification pathways to identify and remove barriers to students' ability to make successful transitions to work or further study (ERO, 2006: 53).

The pilot should be understood, like any change, as part of a process of improvement, rather than a simple transition to new practice. Given the variability in the cohort of schools across location, decile and so on, a broad range of development suggestions should be expected.

The evaluation of Designing Careers provided a clear steer for the next phase in enhancing career education. A post-Designing Careers tracking report showed that in schools where the emphasis had been on staff development and school systems, the developments from the project had been sustained (ERO, 2007). Overall, the evaluation suggested a move beyond targeted planning assistance at year 10 to a systematic whole-school approach to career education. This implied a significant shift and extension of how career education projects might be approached – a proposal that had considerable influence on the development of the CPaBL project.

Part Three: Creating Pathways and Building Lives (2007–2008)

Overview

The Ministry of Education website provides the following summary for the Creating Pathways and Building Lives project: "Creating Pathways and Building Lives (CPaBL) is an initiative for building a school-wide approach to career education, to take place in 100 secondary schools nationwide during the 2007 and 2008 school years. Based on evidence from the successful Designing Careers pilot, the aim of CPaBL is to embed sustainable systems and practices that allow effective careers advice to occur, via a whole-school approach" (www.minedu.govt.nz, accessed August 2009).

The CPaBL project was led by the Ministry of Education (project manager) with funding provided to schools for the 2007 and 2008 school years. This funding was used, alongside separately funded support from Career Services and School Support Services staff, to enhance career education in 100 selected project schools. Schools were selected from across New Zealand on a range of criteria, including: regional spread, decile, school type and roll size.

CPaBL retained the broad objective of Designing Careers to improve transition from school, while also developing the whole-school approach recommended in the Designing Careers evaluation report. In other words, the CPaBL project would take a revised approach based on what was learned from the Designing Careers pilot about the need to work holistically in schools with all students (Career Services, 2007).

Guiding principles

Career Services' guiding principles for the CPaBL project emphasised the use of a collaborative approach to strengthen the career support infrastructure and career culture in schools. This intention was clarified through the identification of the following four project focuses.

1. Shared career knowledge and skills:
    - with all staff, including those with specific or relevant responsibilities, and between schools nationally and regionally
    - focusing on school policy and plans, career education programmes and individual student plans and students with specific needs, including Māori, Pasifika, refugee and migrant.
2. Clear leadership from a team, including those involved in policy and planning and delivery, encompassing all related programmes and resources.
3. A planned approach to career education within the school, taking an incremental approach that:
    - considers resource availability for sustainability
    - includes implementation and review, with a particular focus on student outcomes and specific student needs.
4. Engaging parents and families and building relationships with the wider community (Career Services, 2007: 6).

The project was at its heart an attempt to move away from an approach centred on careers advisers. Designing Careers showed that careers advisers could not be expected to take career education to a whole school audience alone, while still providing day-to-day assistance to students. The whole-school approach required a careers lead team in each school that would develop a more proactive, systematic and planned approach to career education. This process would:

- enhance planning and review of career education
- build a sustainable, whole-school approach to career education
- foster the involvement of family and community in career education
- improve outcomes for all students (Project briefing, Ministry of Education, 2006)

Supporting the development of Career Education Plans

In order for a planned, whole-school approach to come into play, the concept of a Career Education Plan was introduced. The Career Education Plan addressed the recommendation that greater emphasis be placed on integration with school planning and systems. It would also shift the focus away from targeted year 10 planning assistance. The school careers lead team would lead the development and implementation of the Career Education Plan. In this document, the school would outline how it would develop programmes and systems that would be responsive to the needs of all students.

This shift to working with a team responsible for an integrated approach had significant implications for Career Services. The Designing Careers pilot had continued the long-standing approach of providing support to schools through the careers advisers. Career Services had well-established links to careers advisers and expertise in this role. However, the shift to working with the broader staff in schools was recognised during Designing Careers as a challenge for Career Services, as many of our staff lacked experience working with this wider school audience.

The Ministry of Education solution for the CPaBL project was to bring School Support Services staff into the project to work alongside Career Services. School Support Services staff would provide expertise in curriculum and school systems to assist in the implementation of CPaBL (ERO, 2009b: 9). Regional staff from both organisations would work together to support each school's careers lead team and provide professional development assistance where required.

Detailed outcomes

To guide the project, the Ministry of Education developed a matrix of school and student outcomes.

The student outcomes were modelled on the four aims contained in Career Education and Guidance in New Zealand Schools (Ministry of Education, 2003b). Those aims were:

- developing self-awareness
- becoming aware of opportunities
- making decisions and planning
- taking action.

The school outcomes were developed to encourage a focus on the systems and processes that support the kind of learning activities required to achieve the student outcomes. The outcomes matrix also included suggested evidence sources and implementation strategies so that the focus remained on student outcomes.

Resources

Career Services took on a further role developing background materials and resources. As part of the project, a practice-orientated review was published for schools as Career Education in Practice: An Evolving Handbook (Career Services, 2007).

Career Services was also responsible for developing a series of modules for regional staff to draw on that included guidelines for developing Career Education Plans and suggested approaches to addressing students' needs, whole-school collaboration and programme design. These modules were made available to Career Services and School Support Services staff during the project as a part of their professional development support to ensure effective delivery in schools.

Schools were briefed in late 2006 on the project and on the intention to provide modularised professional development support.

Project process

The main action steps in the CPaBL project were as follows.

- Completion of an extensive Data Information Profile (DIP) by each school, detailing student outcomes and current career activities. This would serve as baseline data for project evaluation and as a foundation for analysis of student needs.
- Development of a Professional Support Agreement between each school and School Support Services and Career Services staff. This agreement included a planning table for the project outcomes and would be a living document reviewed as the project progressed.
- Development and implementation of a Career Education Plan. The plan would provide an overarching description of the whole-school approach within the school based on the analysis of student needs and design of a programme tailored to the school context.

In-school support and professional development cluster meetings were provided to schools as they worked through these stages. Professional development clusters provided general development assistance to schools, while in-school support was tailored more specifically to individual school needs.

Evaluating CPaBL: a general overview

Establishing the project in schools took longer than expected. This delay resulted from a lack of clarity on roles and project intent among support team and school staff, and the need to establish working relationships between School Support Services and Career Services staff (who had different levels of time allocation, numbers of schools allocated and resourcing). The initial stages of the project were also delayed through the Professional Support Agreements taking longer than expected and a delay in the development of modules for the provision of professional development.

Promoting organisational change is inevitably full of challenges and unforeseen issues. A project will develop and evolve in a way not entirely predictable at the outset and result in a range of different approaches and degrees of success. CPaBL was no different. However, the strong emphasis on evaluation of the project has resulted in a formative evaluation that tells an insightful story of how the project progressed and makes valuable recommendations for the future.

In early 2009, ERO published two reports: Creating Pathways and Building Lives, CPaBL in Action and Creating Pathways and Building Lives, Overall Evaluation of the Initiative 2006–2009. These reports draw together and develop themes that came from earlier reports released during the project. The first of these reports provided an overview of the implementation of CPaBL in a way that is most relevant to schools. The second report took a more critical stance and provided an evaluation of the whole project process. It was intended for a broader audience. In these documents, ERO described what they found, the factors that supported change and the challenges experienced.

ERO framed their findings in both reports within the context of five Ministry of Education intentions for the project. Those intentions were to:

- improve the quality of careers information, advice, and guidance
- improve student motivation, engagement, retention and achievement
- assist students to make a smooth transition from school to further training and employment
- be more responsive to diverse student needs, specifically those of Māori, Pacific, refugee and migrant students, and students at risk
- encourage the involvement of families and whānau in decisions about their children's career paths (ERO, 2009a: 1).

In general, the evaluation concluded that the quality of career information, advice and guidance has improved in project schools. However, there are still issues with teachers' commitment to and inclusion of career education in curriculum learning areas. Some staff continue to view career education as the responsibility of the careers adviser and as an add-on to curricular activities, rather than as something to be integrated into the day-to-day activities of the school. The following quote is

indicative of resistance experienced in some schools: "Career education is not my job. I can't fit it in" (ERO, 2009b: 9).

ERO found that many teachers do not understand the concept of career education and view it as a specialist responsibility of the careers adviser. ERO states that this attitude needs to change. Teachers need to "recognise that a key function of the school is to provide a pathway for students to transition from school to employment or further education" (ERO, 2009a: 38).

Career Education Plans and whole-school integration

Although the depth, quality and implementation of Career Education Plans vary, most schools have developed systems and processes that are likely to result in sustainability of gains made during the project. ERO states that "[i]n schools where career education is clearly linked to subject choice, curriculum, pastoral care and other initiatives, the developments arising from CPaBL are more likely to be sustained" (ERO, 2009b: 2).

There is some evidence to suggest that schools have difficulty managing multiple development initiatives running in the school at the same time. That broad challenge is difficult to overcome. The success of an integrated whole-school approach to career education is based on a school's ability to make connections between initiatives and school systems. Schools that already have a tendency to work collaboratively and integrate different initiatives responded well to the CPaBL project.

With the revised New Zealand curriculum on the horizon for 2010, proactive schools have taken the opportunity to use CPaBL as a part of the process of reworking their curriculum delivery. In this context of broader change, CPaBL worked as a catalyst. Schools began to look at the role of career education within their overall curriculum design. Some principals noted that career education fits well with the key competencies and with the concept of more personalised learning (ERO, 2009b: 12).

Schools that have begun to take this kind of strategic approach to integrating career education have made the most progress. In future, it would be important to examine the extent to which a school has demonstrated an integrated approach in its strategic planning and in implementing different initiatives. The level of experience in doing this could significantly influence the approach taken to support a CPaBL-like process in a school.

Developing whole-school career education programmes

The evaluation found that schools had begun to develop programmes that addressed the aims of career education within the Ministry of Education's Career Education and Guidance in New Zealand Schools (2003). Schools tended to develop modules or units to meet three of the four aims: developing self-awareness, making decisions and planning, and taking action. Schools had begun to develop the fourth aim, becoming aware of opportunities, by encouraging staff in specific learning areas to connect their subjects with related jobs (ERO, 2009b: 11). In Career Services, this is often referred to as relevance building and is advocated as a first step in developing staff and student awareness of the connection between subject areas and life beyond school. In essence it is a quick win in encouraging curricula integration.

Integrated programme components were most commonly developed at year 9 and 10. Common integration areas are Health and Physical Education, for values and self-awareness activities, and year 10 Social Studies, with the inclusion of career-specific programmes such as The Real Game.

In general, the following four integrative strategies were employed.

- Integration into curriculum via learning areas.
- Enhancement of pastoral care roles through the use of form time for planned career activities.
- One-off activities or events (eg, career themed weeks).
- Capturing students' aspirations in individual learning and career plans, and using this as a basis for personalising students' learning (for example, using data on students' interests to design curriculum options).

The shift to a whole-school approach offers considerable opportunity to ensure that future provision of career education is responsive to student needs and sufficiently rich to provide meaningful learning opportunities for all students (ERO, 2009a, 2009b). While some excellent initiatives were developed, most schools did not yet have structured, coherent career education programmes (ERO, 2009b: 12).

Although comprehensive school-wide integration is not yet occurring in the bulk of schools, this development is ongoing. It may be that the initial delay in getting the project established in schools means that the two-year horizon of the project does not fully capture the progress towards integration that many schools are making.

Elements of good practice

Figure 4 on page 18 represents a summary of elements of good practice that ERO has drawn from across project schools. These elements of good practice provide a valuable resource for future initiatives. The critical factors in the success of a whole-school approach can be further distilled as:

- having the support of school leadership
- taking a team approach
- having supportive, challenging and well-informed external advice
- developing an overarching sense of the role of career education in the secondary school experience and what that implies for curriculum planning.

A team approach is invaluable given the scale of change a whole-school approach entails, but a key person needs to drive the CPaBL project from within a school. Project success was strongly influenced by the capability of the leader. This person was often the careers adviser, but in many successful schools a senior manager was involved in the team and provided clear direction for the project. Leadership support is vital. "One of the most significant factors in successfully implementing CPaBL is the principal's vision and commitment" (ERO, 2009a: 20).

Senior management involvement resulted in timely action to drive change within a school. A principal could, for example, simply ask that all heads of department report back on inclusion of careers in departmental planning.

The importance of a key driver reflects the adoption in Designing Careers and CPaBL of a long-standing approach to school initiatives outlined in work by Tony Watts (2005). The importance of the following working relationships and approach to curricula is well established in the literature on effective initiatives in schools. It is important to have:

- support from an external expert
- support from an internal expert
- a two-pronged approach to teaching and learning that brings together a career-specific programme and an embedded cross-curricular approach, where teachers are career educators.

Several principals said that it is important to retain career-specific programmes. Full integration into learning areas can result in a gradual 'planning out' of activities. A strong presence and a deliberate process is necessary to maintain and advocate for a career focus.

This project required a shift in the role of the careers adviser away from providing student support to working in a resource and support capacity for other staff and school-wide development. Making this transition required the careers adviser to take on additional leadership responsibilities. Some found this a challenge, while others thrived on this opportunity and were recognised with promotion to a leadership position within their school. This project demonstrated what a whole-school approach requires in school leadership and suggested that it would be worthwhile clarifying what leadership skills are required (ERO, 2009a: 20).

Sustainability	Process	Actions
• Strong support from senior management • Broad team membership • An effective Career Education Plan • Professional development for staff • Ongoing self-review that gathers and analyses information and leads to programme implementation • Networking with other schools	• Principal actively involved • Active team involving a school manager • Good external support • Careful assessment of current provision • A considered Career Education Plan based on data • Identification of outcomes and indicators	• Professional development for teachers • Identifying students at risk and developing targeted plans to support them • Supporting Māori, Pasifika, migrant and refugee students • Involving parents with pathways for their child, through personal contact • Making good links with the community through newsletters, website, information evenings and newspaper articles • Strengthening relationships with the local business community
Effectiveness	**Links to school systems**	
• Elements and expectations in all department documents • Included in reporting requirements • Included in staff development goals • Integrated across curricula • Appealing, well-located careers room, with space for students to use resources (print and online) • Resources publicised and used by teachers, students and parents	• Include goals related to career education in school's strategic plan • Link with pastoral care network • Students tracked during school and after they leave • Links to other school-wide initiatives • Links between careers education and subject choice	

Adapted from the report CPaBL: Overall Evaluation of the Initiative (ERO, 2009a)

Figure 4: Elements of good practice

Recommendations for the future

The recommendations suggest that future extension of this initiative place greater emphasis on establishing clear project parameters and roles at the beginning of the project (ERO, 2009a: 9-13). Despite these caveats, the general approach is supported. In concluding, ERO states that:

> Features that principals and teachers liked included appropriate resourcing, valuable professional development, the concept of a team approach to career education, helpful support from the external teams, better understanding of the analysis and use of data, and opportunities to network with other participating schools (ERO, 2009a: 41).

The impact on students continues to be a grey area that requires more evidence of long-term impact before clear conclusions can be drawn (ERO, 2009). The outcomes matrix developed to address the difficulty in measuring impact on students was not used sufficiently during the project. Schools tended to focus on inputs such as professional development rather than linking programmed activities to

measurable outcomes for students (ERO, 2009a: 27). Where outcomes are cited they tend to be related to greater opportunity awareness and better subject choice and improvements in:

- locating and using career information
- knowledge of what they might do when they leave school
- understanding of the relevance of school to their future goal
- self-knowledge (ERO, 2009a: 28).

Another comment suggests:

> Teachers need to be clear about the goals of the initiative and the ways in which it will contribute to improved relationships and outcomes for students. If they understand their role, and that it will be supported by professional development and resources, teachers are more likely to buy in to the agreed school-wide commitment to change (ERO, 2009a: 36).

The report outlines suggestions in relation to project implementation, resourcing, roles of those involved, data collection and analysis and sustainability. ERO does not, however, comment on the continued efficacy of the aims of career education that were used in the project. It may be that this level of analysis is beyond the scope of their evaluative role.

An interesting idea that emerged during the project

Staff looked at career education literature to support their work with schools. The emphasis on the need to shift career programmes towards developing career management skills struck a strong chord with many. Jarvis (2003) provided a succinct statement of the change that needed to be considered:

> It is not about making the right occupational choice. It's about equipping people with the competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) to make the myriad of choices with which adults are confronted continuously, in all aspects of their adult lives, lifelong (Jarvis, 2003).

The idea emerged, not fully conscious, that career education must step beyond the models and emphases informing Designing Careers and CPaBL, to an approach that supports long-term career development. This idea provided a powerful platform for suggesting to schools that there was more to career education than job picking and transition planning. But, what was lacking at the time was a clear sense of how this thinking might impact our understanding of career education and effective practice.

Part Four: Stepping beyond CPaBL

The success to date of initiatives to improve career education and guidance has varied between schools. While the evaluation reports offer valuable insights for future projects, they do not address the underlying approach or aims for career education. Initiatives to date have assumed that existing school structures are normative and that career education can be integrated into them. There is a need to work beyond that assumption to consider how the correct structures and processes can be put in place. To date the response to limitations of these projects has been another layer of process definition, such as an outcomes matrix, project clarification and so on, rather than establishing a clear statement of effective career education practice underlying the project's intentions.

A recently released report in the Competent Learners series (NZCER, 2009) finds that students continue to hold on to the idea that a career is focused on a job you do well in, where you stay with an employer and work your way up by getting promoted. You get a qualification early on and build skills through further training in that area. Career then, is about staying focused and being in one place. There is some recognition of contemporary holistic ideas of career. But, the authors suggest:

> They [students] are likely to be experiencing the sort of school-based career guidance that tends to be ad-hoc overall and privileges the provision of information about jobs over the development of self-management and career management skills, therefore often failing to equip school leavers with the skills they need beyond entry to a course of study or the labour market (Vaughan, 2009: 39).

It has also been said that "many people don't know how to manage their careers, because no one has ever assisted them to" (MCEETYA, 2009: 8). There needs to be a deliberate and clear extension of career education beyond information provision, job selection and transition planning. We need to think more carefully about the connections between career education as a concept and education in the context of schooling in the 21st century.

Rather than thinking of career education as an initiative to be brought to existing schools systems, it might be wise to think beyond this, to align practice with broader developments including the revision of the New Zealand curriculum. Looking at broader developments provides insight into how career education might be re-imagined in a way that is more responsive to the needs of 21st century learners. It would also align career education to the current priorities within the Ministry of Education's Statement of Intent (2009), in particular that "Every young person has the skills and qualifications to contribute to their and New Zealand's future" (Ministry of Education, 2009: 7).

This statement reflects an emerging shift away from the emphasis on transition to a more holistic objective of preparation for adult life. Career education could offer a means to build the underlying capacity to meet this objective through an emphasis on career management skills. This would, however, require a rethink of the aims and outcomes that informed Designing Careers and CPaBL.

To date, the focus has been on improving career information and guidance in schools. The purpose of this process has been to better support students making the transition from school to study, training or work. That focus reflects the previous government's broader agenda of improving youth transition.

With the new emphasis on career management competencies, it is timely to ask if the approach to career education to date is still a credible foundation for effective practice. The scope of this question goes deeper than mere project clarity, design and management enhancement. It suggests we ask: How might we interpret Designing Careers and CPaBL now in the light of what Career Services staff understand from experience? What does the international literature imply for good and effective practice?

Career education in the 21st century: a commentary on international developments

> All learning integrates thinking and doing. All learning is about how we interact in the world and the types of capacities that develop from our interactions. What differs is the depth of the awareness and the consequent source of action. If awareness never reaches beyond superficial events and current circumstances, actions will be reactions. If, on the other hand, we penetrate more deeply to see the larger wholes that generate "what is" and our own connection to this wholeness, the source and effectiveness of our activities can change dramatically (Senge et al, 2008).

We live in a world that is marked, at times, by overwhelming social, environmental and economic concerns. The extent of the pressure for change in the world around us is so great that we must shift our understanding and thinking about career education beyond historical policies and practices in schooling. We must locate career education in broader thinking about the purpose and role of schooling in preparing young people for adult life in the 21st century.

The contribution career education can make to social and economic well-being has become important in the past decade. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), for example, released Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap (OECD, 2004) as a statement of effective practice and policy implications for career guidance services. It finds all-age career guidance services facilitate efficiency of education and the labour market, and help promote social equity. Considerable emphasis is placed on the role of career education in preparing young people for adult life. That emphasis reflects broader shifts in thinking towards a competency-based approach in teaching and learning. The OECD has been important in this area, too, with the publication of Key Competencies for a Successful Life and Well-Functioning Society (Rychen and Salganik, 2003).

This chapter will show that career education must be understood within a competency framework if it is to be responsive to the needs of 21st century learners. In a competency framework the role of career education is building career development capability.

This chapter comprises four parts as follows.

- Part One discusses the emergence of a focus on competencies for adult life, how those competencies might be understood and the influence on The New Zealand Curriculum.
- Part Two describes the purpose and role of career education within a competency frame. The approach is shown to extend the CPaBL initiative towards a more fully integrated connection with The New Zealand Curriculum.
- Part Three provides an overview of OECD thinking on career guidance in schools.
- Part Four gives examples of national blueprints that exemplify a competency-based approach to career guidance.

Part One: The emergence of competencies for adult life

Overview

Writing in 1999, Nerrisa Smith noted the prevalence of commentary on the world of work in career development literature:

> Virtually every article written on career development in the last few years begins with a statement about the changing world of work. There is no doubt that the nature of careers has changed forever and that individuals are going to need to self-manage their own diverse careers (1999: 1).

That changing world of work was said to be driven by an increasingly globalised labour market, reduced job security and a greater likelihood of changes in the work people do and the skills required. These changes are the result of increased competition and technological developments. They embody a shift from industrial production to the effective and strategic use of knowledge to gain competitive advantage – the knowledge economy. This shift did not imply that industry would disappear, but rather that significant change was occurring in how goods are produced and the role people play in work. An emphasis on the relationship between paid work and other aspects of life was also said to be a factor in a predicted increase in the importance of career information and guidance. Smith concludes that this is a context where "some expert assistance will be required if individuals are to navigate their way through complex work/life arrangements and if society is going to gain maximum benefit from individuals' unique capabilities" (1999: 1).

Maximising potential

Discussion about the need to respond to an increasingly complex and changing world in a way that maximises the potential of all citizens has continued (Ministry of Education, 2009; Secondary Futures, 2005). What has changed is that the discussion has become broader and moved well beyond a focus on work to questions of sustainable development in the face of energy and resource depletion, environmental degradation and rapid societal change (OECD, 2003, 2005). Career guidance has taken on a new importance as a potential mechanism to support people to navigate these complex times. However, in a paper commissioned by the OECD, Grubb highlighted a significant difficulty:

> While there are several different reasons for the interest in career information and career guidance, what has been less widely discussed is what should be provided – that is, what mix of information versus guidance versus career-related activities is appropriate for helping young people discover who they are, and for helping older individuals changing directions rediscover what they might be (2002: 3).

These comments were made in the context of concerns about the inadequacy of an emphasis on information provision in approaches to career guidance in an information age. Web-based information dissemination, for example, has gained currency because it offers an economic way to reach a wide audience. Grubb suggests that this may be necessary but it is not sufficient. It assumes that people have a high degree of sophistication in their ability to discern what information is of value to them and to apply information to their decision making.

> The paradox of the Information Age is that we are awash in information, with more becoming available every day through the web, through systematic efforts to construct "self service" approaches to career information, and through one-stop information centres. But more information is not necessarily better than less information if people have no idea how to use it, and so something different may be necessary to prepare the new worker and citizen of the Information Society (2002: 5).

Grubb puts the case that an emphasis on information provision and single-point decision making underpins career guidance and assumptions of rational decision making, more generally. He suggests that a shift to a constructivist approach to career guidance is required to connect with current career development patterns. Importantly, such a shift would recognise that few people are able to identify a specific life-defining purpose in their teens.

A constructivist approach rejects a simplistic notion of knowledge transmission. Instead the emphasis is placed on learning experiences through which a person is able to form and develop a sense of who they are or would like to be – in other words, education is the process of guiding people to make their world meaningful. We develop detail of a constructivist approach to career education in Part Two, below.

Changes in thinking about career guidance

There has been a shift in thinking away from seeing career guidance as a point in time decision-making process – founded in the identification of a specific occupational choice – to an approach that builds the capability of people to act more effectively in building and navigating their career journey (Guichard, 2001, Grubb, 2002, Jarvis, 2003). Guichard (2001) points out that this understanding is not new to career theory; rather we now have a social and economic context where a more holistic approach is able to come to the fore. Figure 5 draws on the work of Guichard (2001) and, in particular, Jarvis (2003), alongside conversations with Career Services colleagues, to develop the language used to represent this shift.

Career decision guidance	**Career development guidance**
Linear, single destination orientation – help people to make an informed decision	Dynamic, change, growth orientation – help people to learn to live well as citizens
What do you want to be when you grow up? Separation of paid work from rest of life	Who might you become? What kind of life do you want? Paid work and life roles connected
Choose a career Making a living	Create a career Making a life
Process: • Explore self – identification of stable preferences: values, skills and interests) • Explore occupations – information to match or choose the best fit between self and options • Develop an education or training plan • Graduate, obtain work and move up the ladder • Security in the known, routine, rites of passage, job for life	Process: • Formation of preferences through reflection on experiences – follow your heart • Help people to learn how to manage their lives, manage change • What skills will I need to be resilient and able to create what I want and respond positively to change • Security, contingent on maintenance of employability

Figure 5: From decision guidance to career development guidance

We are unlikely to find the clean distinction represented in Figure 5 in practice. The challenge for careers professionals is to build people's long-term career management competence and respond to their desire to identify a specific career option and action plan. This tension is particularly apparent with students at the point of moving from school to post-school life. Young people want and need to decide on a place to start. We argue below that an effective career education response requires the drawing through and retention of some aspects of the decision guidance approach.

Jarvis develops an outline of an approach to career guidance that provides a sense of the core requirement of what should be provided. He says:

> We need a means by which career practitioners, counsellors, educators and human resources specialists can easily select resources based on outcomes they want to achieve with their clients and the skills they wish to build. We need a common map or framework of career management skills to see the linkages, or overlaps, between programs, and to identify gaps in existing programs and services. We need a common language of career management so there

> is no ambiguity or confusion among career practitioners, employment counsellors, educators and human resources specialists, or between them and the public … we need a national career management culture (2003: 13).

Developing this type of common language has obvious importance for school communities. A common career management language can encourage a shift from immediate decision making, through the limited resource of one-to-one guidance, to a whole-school approach involving competency building across all areas of school-based curriculum and pastoral care systems. The argument that follows shows that a competency building approach takes career education beyond preparation merely for the labour market and towards building the capability to contribute productively to both economic and social life.

Ask yourself

- What practical steps might a career practitioner take to blend decision and development guidance?
- What kind of resources would be required?
- Would it be possible to assess students' decision and developmental guidance needs?
- What benefit might that provide?
- What are the risks of that kind of approach?

The DeSeCo project: defining competencies for adult life

Considerable work has been done internationally in the area of developing approaches to career education for the early 21st century. Several countries have explored what works in what circumstances and drawn conclusions regarding effective career education practice (McMahon, et. al, 2003). Clear examples of well-advanced thinking and models of practice have emerged which are detailed below. Those models are strongly linked to broader thinking in the OECD Definition and Selection of Key Competencies (DeSeCo) project about the role of education in preparing people for adult life.

The sentiments raised by Jarvis also reflect a broader orientation to the purpose and role of schooling on the international stage. To understand effective career education in the early 21st century then, it is important to discuss the emergent consensus around what are referred to as key competencies (OECD, 2003, 2005) and the importance this concept has for the development of career education in New Zealand.

Since 1997, the OECD has embarked on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). This programme is an internationally standardised assessment that is jointly developed by participating countries and administered to 15-year-olds in schools. Its purpose is to assess whether students are well prepared for future challenges, can analyse, reason and communicate effectively and have the capability to continue learning throughout life. All of those are vital knowledge and skills required to participate fully in society. As a part of that programme, the OECD (2003) has undertaken the DeSeCo project.

The DeSeCo project was intended to develop a relatively sophisticated conception of what contemporary adult life requires, beyond what could be provided by a simple assessment of reading, maths or problem-solving skills and the like. This resulted in the publication of Key Competencies for a Successful Life and a Well-Functioning Society, edited by Rychen and Salganik (2003).

One of the central criteria for the OECD model of key competencies is that they are applicable across a population, that is, they are important for all people. Competencies that are not considered critical to all people are not included (Salganik and Stephens, 2003: 54). This was one of three criteria that were applied in the selection of key competencies, as follows.

Competencies should:

- be valued socially and economically
- be applicable in a wide range of contexts
- be important for all individuals (OECD, 2005: 7).

These conditions led to the identification of the following competencies (Figure 6).

Using tools interactively • The ability to use language, symbols and text • The ability to use knowledge and information interactively • The ability to use technology interactively
Interacting in heterogeneous groups • The ability to relate well to others • The ability to cooperate • The ability to manage and resolve conflicts
Acting autonomously • The ability to act within the big picture • The ability to form and conduct life plans and personal projects • The ability to assert rights, limits and needs

Figure 6: Key competencies for a successful life and well-functioning society

Detail of the competencies can be found in Rychen and Salganik (2003) and The Definition and Selection of Key Competencies: Executive Summary (OECD, 2005). For the purpose here, we include some brief comments on the OECD view of how these competencies might be used.

These competencies are not considered isolated constructs. Rather they are proposed as a matrix, to be applied in differing combinations and weightings according to the requirements of particular life contexts or situations. The OECD adopted a "functional, demand-oriented approach" to competencies that placed the emphasis on the results of the way a person acts. This approach was adopted because it "has the advantage of placing complex demands and challenges that individuals encounter in the context of work and in everyday life at the forefront of the concept" (Salganik and Stephens, 2003: 43).

Salganik and Stephens (2003) used Figure 7 to show that competencies should be understood as internal mental structures within an individual, the components of which are defined by the demands of life.

A central feature of this model is that a competency is defined by the demands or expectations of a real world context. In this way the demands of everyday life can be translated into some generalisations of what is required of all people.

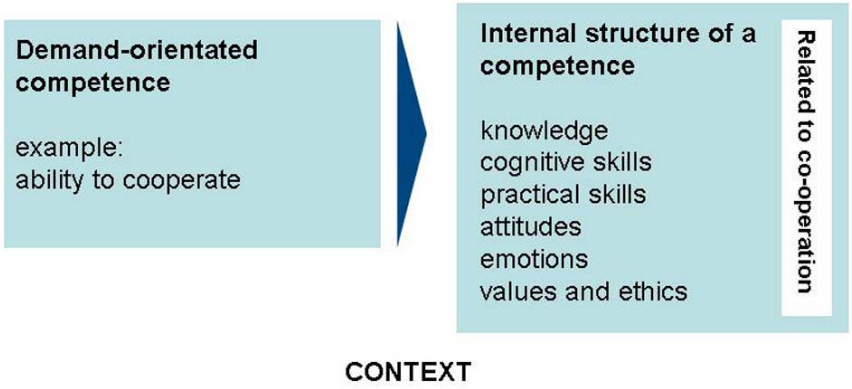

Figure 7: The demand defines the internal structure of a competency

The meaning of competency

The shift from a skills approach to a competencies approach signifies an important movement in how the contribution education makes to a society is understood and assessed. In making this shift, the OECD recognised that the benefits of education cannot be reduced to subject specific, or even generic, reference to skills. Modern life is complex and requires:

> … more than just knowledge and skills. It involves the ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilising psychological resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context. For example, the ability to communicate effectively is a competency that may draw on an individual's knowledge of language, practical IT skills and attitudes towards those with whom he or she is communicating (OECD 2005: 4).

The term competency then captures a more complete sense of human action in that it refers to the ability to mobilise "cognitive and practical skills, creative abilities and other psychological resources such as attitudes, motivation and values" (OECD, 2005: 8). Reflectiveness is considered the heart of the competency model and refers to the importance of people being able to go beyond mastering a particular skill or body of knowledge to the meta-cognitive process of thinking about those skills or knowledge (alongside values and attitudes) and how they might employ this process in their lives.

One useful way to unpick the OECD position is with reference to the French distinction between forms of knowledge. For the French, knowledge has two forms. In the form of information, knowledge is 'cognisance' – awareness, knowing about something. In its creative application, knowledge becomes 'savoir' – recognising the context or situational opportunity to apply knowledge. While a competency frame requires both forms of knowledge, the OECD approach clearly favours 'savoir' as the primary form while cognisance is an implicit or a necessary condition for creative use.

The concept of competencies adopted by the OECD is one where not only is a person able to cope with and respond to social context but is also able to actively engage in shaping the world around them – what can be referred to as active citizenship (Bourdieau, 1986; OECD, 2001). We can summarise active citizenship as:

- being able to do
- being able to reflect on how you do
- being able to use your abilities to respond to and shape the world around you.

The competencies identified are relevant to a relatively open market economy. This is a context where significant, but not complete, emphasis is placed on the preparation of the individual to actively participate in social and economic life. Collective benefit is said to accrue from individual flexibility, entrepreneurship and personal responsibility (OECD, 2005: 6-7), but could include collective valuing of, for example, sustainable development or social equity.

A well-functioning society is the aggregate of well-functioning citizens. The OECD conceives "the potential social benefits of a well-educated citizenry as including a productive economy, democratic processes, social cohesion and peace" (Rychen and Salganik, 2003: 5). If developing key competencies in all citizens is considered central to achieving these goals, then clearly career education can play an important role in providing experiences from which the development of competencies can be inferred. The OECD work states that competence cannot be assessed directly but rather must be inferred from how a person performs in a given context.

The potential role of career education

The potential for career education to show the relevance of schooling and the importance of building competency for life is important here. Career opportunities and career development take on very real and pressing significance for young people, their family and the community as students near the end of their secondary schooling. The CPaBL project has shown clearly that a well-developed career education programme can have a significant impact on how students, their family and whānau, and the wider community perceive schooling (ERO, 2009a, 2009b).

Before exploring the contribution of career education to preparing young people for adult life in detail, it is worth considering how the recently revised New Zealand curriculum has been influenced by the OECD work.

The New Zealand Curriculum

In 2002, the New Zealand Ministry of Education published the Curriculum Stocktake. That report recommended that revision of the curriculum should focus on expectations of what students would take with them from schooling into adult life. In doing so, that report signalled the beginning of a process that culminated in the 2007 publication of the revised New Zealand curriculum.

One significant shift in the revised curriculum is the replacement of the essential skills with key competencies. In making this change, New Zealand drew on the OECD model and adapted it to the New Zealand context (Brewerton, 2004). Brewerton suggested that adopting the competency model would align with the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and enhance the value of that data in ensuring quality of teaching and learning in New Zealand.

The influence of a shift in international thinking towards the requirements of adult life can be seen more generally in the curriculum vision which calls for students to be:

- confident
- connected
- actively involved
- lifelong learners (The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007).

The theme of active participation in social and economic life is apparent here and signals a model which describes not simply what students should learn but how their learning should impact on the way they act as adults – "developing the competencies they need for study, work, and lifelong learning and [to] go on to realise their potential" (The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007: 6). This theme relates to the OECD position that a competency approach to education has both private and public good implications. Individuals develop greater capacity to live well and there is a collective benefit from the contribution each person makes to general social and economic well-being.

The key competencies

The New Zealand Curriculum describes key competencies as the key to learning in every learning area. The five competencies are:

- thinking
- relating to others
- using language, symbols, and texts

- managing self
- participating and contributing.

Rutherford summarised the background work of Brewerton (2004) on the implications of the OECD work for the New Zealand curriculum as suggesting "that the concept of key competencies offers many opportunities for enhancing the national curriculum" (2004: 3). Among these opportunities, the most significant here are:

- providing a link between learning outcomes
- fostering a holistic approach
- developing an understanding of what knowledge can do
- lifting student confidence and motivation.

The curriculum emphasises building links between learning areas in a way that draws together values, key competencies and the knowledge base of each learning area (Hipkins, 2006). In other words, a competency approach is a means to anchor learning areas in a broad conception of the purpose and role of schooling in preparing young people for adult life.

Understanding the key competencies and how they will impact on classrooms is a work in progress as New Zealand schools plan to introduce the new curriculum. This process has rich potential, but we still need to fully understand the competency concept and approach and apply these to educational practice. This report may serve as the beginning of Career Services' contribution to that process.

Ask yourself

- How would a competency approach change conversations between young people, teachers and families?
- Would you need to rethink how career education is delivered in your school?
- Could career education become a key mechanism for developing the key competencies?

Part Two: The purpose of career education: a competency frame

Overview

Career education has the potential to be at the centre of teaching and learning if it is approached in a way that fits with the emphasis on developing competencies for adult life. How then might we understand the purpose and role of career education?

We suggest starting with the following.

- Career education is important to human capability building in the 21st century.
- The contribution of career education to building human capability requires more than the imparting of information to support job selection.
- The emphasis in career education must shift to developing the underlying competencies that will enable people to self-manage their careers over the long term.

The last statement is central to understanding what the international literature can tell us about effective career education practice.

Competency approaches in career education

The international literature on the competencies young people need correlates closely with the desired outcomes of career education. A competency approach to describing the aims of career education has been adopted in Canada, Australia and most recently New Zealand. Those aims are intended to emphasise the career resilience and career development capability required for people to self-manage their careers. The Canadian Blueprint for Life/Work Design (Hache, et. al. 2006), for example, has three areas covering 11 career management competencies. This frame is shown in Figure 8 alongside OECD and The New Zealand Curriculum perspectives of competency.

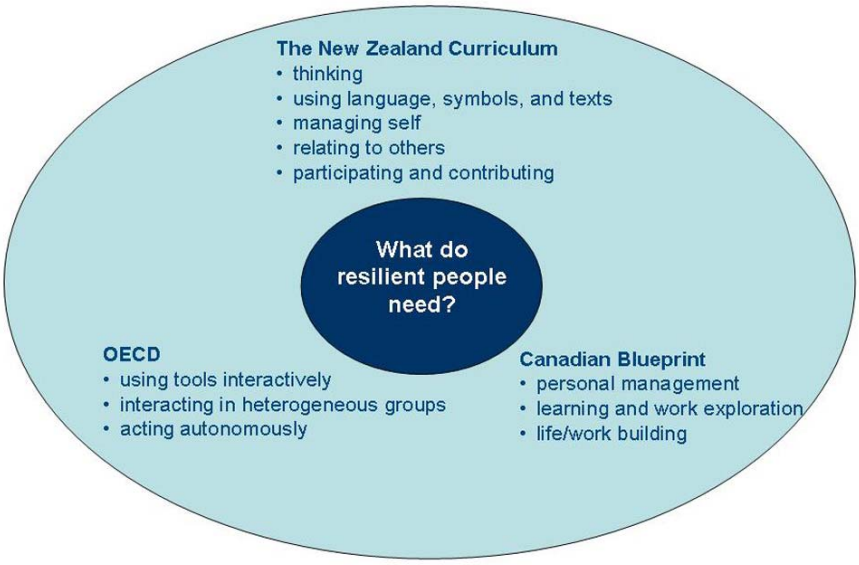

Figure 8: Perspectives on competency

A competency approach suggests how we might align our understanding of career education to The New Zealand Curriculum. People develop capability to self-manage their careers through educational experiences that build their ability to sift and discern information, and help them to understand the world of adults and how to successfully navigate that world. By making the requirements of this experiential journey more explicit, these experiences also help students to more successfully navigate the teenage years. It is vital to recognise that this point in life is not simply a "waiting room for adulthood" (Stokes and Wyn, 2007: 497).

Research into the experiences of young people shows adolescence is far from a linear process of transition to adulthood. It is a somewhat chaotic, situational experimentation and engagement with adult life in which a sense of identity is being formed (Vaughan, 2009). Although adolescence cannot be reduced to a simple linear process, there are, nonetheless, identifiable milestones within a process of transition to adulthood. Some of those milestones are physiological, beginning with the process of puberty, while others are driven by social convention. Examples at school include students moving into secondary school and from year 10 to senior secondary school. Other examples include age-based conventions such as driving at 15 and voting and alcohol access at 18. All these are examples of social markers around access to the world of adults.

Some structure and support linked to these markers can make the experience of adolescence more positive and rewarding. 'Career' might well become a point of orientation, or a vehicle, for schools to shape their interpretation of the key competencies and their broad curriculum delivery to encourage a positive and flourishing experience of adolescence. Of course the logical question is, if this were to occur, how might the task be approached?

Figure 9 shows our initial ideas of how, from a career competency perspective, career education might be used to frame the experience of school.

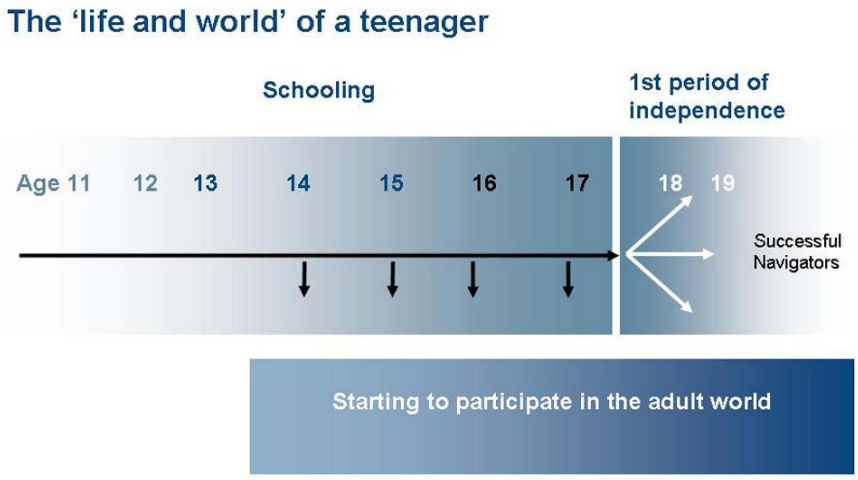

Figure 9: A broad view of schooling

We suggest that schools commence their planning for career education by thinking beyond the container of schooling to the life and world of a teenager rapidly moving towards the first period of independence when leaving school. Teachers must ask themselves what competencies students need in order to start this navigation in the first stage of independence and to move beyond. This question implies more than gaining academic qualifications. Career practitioners must address the crucial question: what evidence of effective practice is available to ensure our actions and intent (within career education programmes) are aligned to what students need to take with them from school to effectively develop a career?

A high-level conception of the first period of independence would allow the focus to be on the competencies that are required and also the developmental process necessary to build those competencies. This conception would encourage career education to be approached in a holistic and dynamic way through the development of a general framework of good and effective practice that can be flexibly applied in response to particular student needs. It would also take the focus beyond the process of transition to a broader question of career education's role in the preparation of young people for a successful adult life, including dealing with transition and change.

Ask yourself

- What do you think a young person needs to take with them from your school, in the context of your community?
- How would your school define a successful life?

How useful is a definition of career or career development?

'Career' is a problematic concept to work with. Outside of the career profession, the term is largely used in a narrow sense of the series of jobs (paid work) a person has had and the process of picking the best fit and progression through them. The narrow view emphasises paid work or occupational decision making. Career practitioners may, to a greater or lesser degree, subscribe to that sense of the word or they may adopt a more holistic view of career that encompasses a sense of all of a person's life roles and, in essence, a view of career as meaningful life journey. For example, 'career' can mean, "the combined total of a person's lifelong experiences including their education, different jobs, family life, friendships, community activities and leisure choices" (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2005).

The impact of a holistic view of 'career' may vary depending on the extent to which there is:

- a conscious philosophical adoption of this type of definition
- an alignment between theory and practice.

While Career Services is supportive of a holistic approach – expressed in a concept of 'work-in-life decision making'[2] – both narrow and holistic definitions could be problematic. To propose a particular definition of the parameters of 'career' fails to acknowledge, as the work-in-life approach does, differences in life purpose and focus amongst New Zealanders and in patterns of labour market participation, more generally. A consensus around a definition of 'career' is not useful in a context where career journeys vary so markedly and lack the predictability of previous generations.

Emphasis should, instead, be placed on the competencies people need to be self-determining (Jarvis, 2003) in forming their sense of career and in actively building the kind of life they want to lead. An important question for career practitioners may be how we might ascertain where a person is on a narrow to holistic continuum and therefore respond appropriately.

The purpose of career education

The purpose of career education is not just in developing the capacity to make a successful transition from school to adult life. Rather, the emphasis should be on the lifelong skills required to make choices and take action – career management competencies. At this point, the purpose of career education can be stated as building career development capability. The term capability is used deliberately to signal that particular career management competencies – or the aims of career education programmes – should be the means to achieving the broader purpose of education.

Ultimately, our aim should be to ensure that through a planned programme of learning, young people develop the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that are necessary to develop a career effectively. Career management competencies are a means to that end.

This is a significant shift from the approach referred to earlier as decision guidance, most notably from the trait factor-based process of drafting for or selecting jobs, to a more holistic process of enabling career development. However, identification of particular areas of interest remains an important aspect of career development and so, necessarily an aspect of effective career education. What changes is how those interests are identified (Guichard, 2001; Grubb, 2002).

[2] 'Work-in-life decision making' is an approach developed by Career Services that encourages people to think about career development holistically as a "process of managing learning, work, leisure, life roles and transitions in order to move towards a personally satisfying future" (Career Services, 2007).

The focuses of career education

Figure 10 represents a way that decision guidance and career development guidance could be blended into a new view of career education.

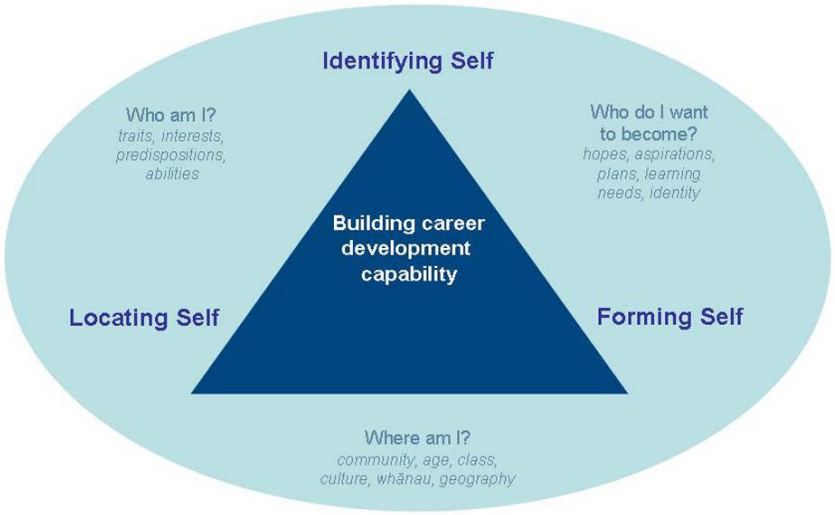

Figure 10: A competency approach to career education

The three corners of the triangle in this diagram represent the main focuses of career education. A well-developed approach to career education needs to be firmly anchored in a formative concept of the self (forming self), where both a sense of direction and the ability to move in that direction are formed in and through learning experiences. Effective career education should develop students' ability to form and re-form career management competencies. However, career education should not lose sight of the need to build context-relevant competency – locating self in a social context. Influences, constraints and developmental stages are important here. Nor should individual traits, tendencies or preferences be dismissed as archaic tools of a less sophisticated and naïve earlier age.

Some commentators (Vaughn, 2004; Vaughn, et. al, 2006) suggest that age and stage development theory is no longer useful, as the emphasis must shift to career development rather than fixed age-based stages of progression. This view is problematic in that there are clear physiologically and culturally located stages and points of development that people will go through. A stage-based perspective has ongoing value for designing career education programmes. Experiences of success and failure at these points can both constrain and enable career development.

Age and stage theory has value at a high level of abstraction, but may not explain a specific person's situation. One emphasis in building career development competency should be to incorporate age and stage theory as a means to understand the requirements for developing people's capability to respond well at different points in life. People should also be aware that there are particular aspects of human experience that they will likely share with others and that anchor formation of self. This approach retains the need for recognition of innate and cultural differences – hence identifying and locating self are part of formation of self and the process of building career management competencies.

What is being proposed here is that each of the three focuses represented in the diagram above be understood as interrelated elements of the process of developing people's capability to self-manage their careers. While forming self is the central intent of a competency approach, these three focuses can contribute in the following ways.

- Identifying self (Who am I?)

  This acknowledges people do vary in their innate dispositions. What skills, values and interests do I have? The approach shifts, however, from providing answers to being a place to start. For example, Career Services' Career Quest programme or John Holland's RIASEC tool might be used to generate initial ideas with a student. These tools can guide a process of exploring preferences and interests, but must depend on the following two elements of self-formation.

- Locating self (Where am I?)

  This connects career education to lifespan and career development theories such as Super (lifespan) and Gottfredson (socially located decision-maker)[3]. What are the social, cultural, age and stage influences that might impact on career development? Research on the importance of self-efficacy to challenging societal expectations of roles (Tang, et. al, 2008) continues to show the importance of this work. A programme might include classroom activities that use Gottfredson's (2002) modelling of how self-concept is influenced by socially constructed ideas of occupational status, gender relevance and the like to engage students in questions about what is influencing their choices of future career. Similarly, Super's lifespan model might be useful in conceptualising where students are at and developing their understanding of what they might experience as they develop their careers.

- Forming self (Who do I want to become?)

  This connects knowledge and attitudes to developing the competencies required to enact aspirations. It is where career management competencies come to the fore. This focus builds on the earlier two towards a resource of dispositions (competencies and agency) required to successfully navigate a career path. It encourages a reflective process so that students learn how to develop and navigate a career and have the ability to rethink their sense of self and career if and when necessary. This process supports the personalising of lifelong learning within a career context. Experiential learning (for example, through programmes such as Gateway) would be an important part of this process. One way to personalise career education is to consider how ready a young person is to self-manage a career. We could draw on the example of the Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory developed by Ruth Deakin Crick (2007). In this model students are assessed for 'learning power' in a way that gives a clear sense of where they are at and what gaps there may be in their learning.

The three focuses above provide a useful means to draw particular career theory and educational approaches into the development of programmes of learning that are responsive to the needs of students. An approach of this kind can provide the scaffolding necessary for young people to form a positive sense of direction and build the capability to actively engage in the career development process. These ideas can, however, appear as merely interesting sentiments unless we can usefully identify examples of how a competency approach to career education might be developed and implemented. A first step is to clarify what the model we have presented here implies for a whole-school approach. The second step is to consider recognised international models of contemporary good and effective practice.

Ask yourself

- Would this approach cover all the bases for an effective programme in your school?
- Are there limitations? How can other perspectives be incorporated?
- What would your school's career education programme look and feel like?

3 A short introduction to these theories can be found in the Educators and Practitioners section of the Career Services website, www.careers.govt.nz.

Part Three: Implications for a whole-school approach

This section considers what might be found in a well-developed competency-based approach to career education. What would it look and feel like in a school?

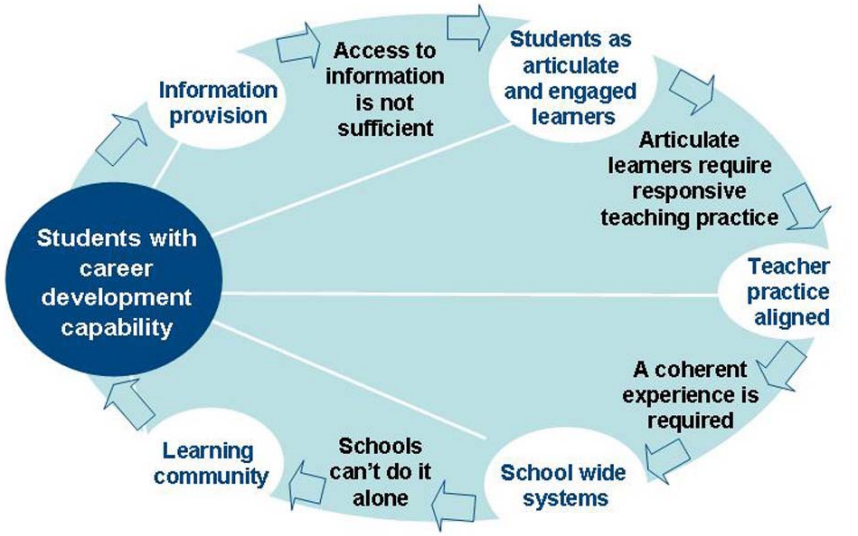

Figure 11: A whole-school approach to building career development capability

The focus in this diagram is on what each of the points contributes to the development of students' ability to engage in the lifelong career development process. Each of the points adds elements of effective practice that the preceding points do not address. A brief description of each point follows.

- Information provision
  Schools provide access to robust and relevant career information in a welcoming space, particularly to information on work, study and training options.
- Students as articulate and engaged learners
  Students are able to sift and discern information and use it to develop their sense of direction and ownership of their learning, and to express their needs to teachers.
- Teacher practice aligned
  Teachers are responsive to students who are able to articulate where their interests lie and are seeking opportunities to connect what they are learning in school with the life they want to live. Dialogue builds motivation for learning.
- School-wide systems
  Students respond well to consistent messages. A whole-school approach ensures that there is a coherent curriculum developed for career education.
- Learning community
  Schools view career education as an opportunity to become the hub of a learning community. Partnerships with whānau, employers and other supportive agencies enrich opportunities for learning. Shared understanding and support for students can feed back into growth and development of a community as a whole.

There is planned progression across the points, starting with information provision and ending with learning community. We advocate this progression so that schools start at what the evidence shows is a crucial foundation – access to relevant information – and build on from that foundation to engagement with all school staff and the wider community.

This diagram is intended to represent a general framework, to be flexibly applied. This perspective is in line with broader thinking in the area of developing and sustaining learning organisations (Fullan, 2008).

Part Four: International examples from policy to practice

This section provides an overview of OECD thinking on career guidance and education. It also looks at career development blueprints from Canada and Australia.

Career education: a policy view

This summary is based on the OECD report Career Guidance: A Handbook for Policy Makers (2004a) and the review of career guidance in 14 countries published as Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap (2004b). As these titles suggest both documents have a policy orientation. These documents tend to describe change required in terms of the structural and logistical aspects of career guidance, rather than providing a conclusive model of effective teaching and learning practice.

The first point made in these documents about schooling is that lifelong learning transforms the role of guidance in schools. The implication of lifelong learning is that schools must:

> … ensure that all students can access career guidance, not just a few; extend career guidance beyond a personal service approach *focused* upon immediate occupational and tertiary education decisions; allow all young people, as part of the curriculum, to develop the skills to manage their progression in learning and work throughout their lives; and incorporate an experiential component, closely linked to the labour market and the world of work (OECD, 2004b).

For the OECD, career guidance is central to ensuring citizens have the ability to self-manage education and employment (OECD, 2004a). Although these documents do not refer in detail to specifics of career education programmes, the policy issues identified suggest where the emphasis of programme development should be placed. The issues identified include:

- beginning at an early age
- having a role in supporting smooth transitions within schooling and beyond
- using approaches to integrating career education within curricula delivery that are tailored to the career development needs of students
- basing interventions and individual support on well-defined career-related needs
- addressing an overemphasis on selection and transition to tertiary study
- taking a whole-school approach
- covering entrepreneurial and self-employment possibilities
- undertaking effective robust evaluation (see OECD, 2004a: 12–13 for a full list).

The OECD paper goes on to present a range of questions that countries might use to interrogate these issues to develop policy responses. It also provides some examples of effective responses from member countries, such as:

- having guidance-oriented schools across primary and secondary education levels
- having portfolio systems that record students' career learning and experiences
- building bridges with the world of work
- making career guidance a cross-curricula responsibility for all school staff members
- ensuring that career guidance personnel use people who know about the world of work
- ensuring young people at risk are given separate attention.

The issues identified for young people at risk are:

- the need to make career guidance a part of reintegration (to education or work) services for early leavers
- the challenge of developing the capability of people in community services to support youth
- the need to develop proactive approaches to guidance that detect those at risk and so provide responses tailored to student retention and engagement before leaving school.

The options or responses suggested include:

- making students at risk a priority for resource allocation
- developing and supporting staff to be responsive to high-need youth
- ensuring youth have individual action plans
- using follow-up and intervention strategies that work with and through families (OECD, 2004a: 18).

Overall, the intent of the OECD is to provide a platform of thinking to encourage coherent and well-organised approaches to career guidance and education services. The OECD advocates approaches that will shift schools away from an overemphasis on immediate educational and occupational choices, towards the development of career management competencies.

> … policies for career guidance in schools need to shift away from an approach that focuses only upon immediate educational and occupational choices, and towards a broader approach that also tries to develop career self-management skills: for example the ability to make effective career decisions, and to implement them. This requires an approach that is embedded in the curriculum, and which incorporates learning from experience. Such a strategy requires a whole-school approach, and has substantial implications for resource allocation, teacher training and development, and school planning (OECD, 2004b: 8).

The following national examples take this discussion a step further, to an outline of approaches to effective practice that reflect the suggestions summarised above.

Canada: Blueprint for Life/Work Design

The Blueprint for Life/Work Design is the product of collaboration between the following career development organisations in Canada and the United States: Canada's National Life/Work Centre, the Canadian Career Information Partnership, Human Resources and Social Development Canada and the United States National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. This document has developed through several iterations and is produced by the same partnership that has produced well-known career education resources such as The Real Game series. The most recent revision of the document was published in October 2006. In his contribution to the introduction, Phil Jarvis states that:

> The Blueprint for Life/Work Design will improve prosperity in communities across the country by increasing the quality and effectiveness of products, programs and services to help people of all ages connect with good work and fulfilling lives (p8).

The Blueprint for Life/Work Design is founded on a competency-based approach. The central construct is three areas covering 11 career management competencies (listed in Figure 12). These competencies are presented as central requirements for effective career development, enabling people to engage in the ongoing life/work building process. In this model, there is no notion of end point. The intent is to equip people to live and grow well throughout life.

Considerable detail of how to approach career education from a competencies perspective is given in the Blueprint for Life/Work Design. The document includes an outline of how the competencies develop from the early years of school through to working with adults. The model includes: Competency, Level (application at primary, middle and secondary school through to adults), Learning Stage (based on Bloom's Taxonomy) and Performance Indicators (assessment guidelines).

Area A: Personal Management

1. Build and maintain a positive self image
2. Interact positively and effectively with others
3. Change and grow throughout one's life

Area B: Learning and Work Exploration

4. Participate in lifelong learning supportive of life/work goals
5. Locate and effectively use life/work information
6. Understand the relationship between work and society/economy

Area C: Life/Work Building

7. Secure/create and maintain work
8. Make life/work enhancing decisions
9. Maintain balanced life and work roles
10. Understand the changing nature of life/work roles
11. Understand, engage in and manage one's own life/work building process

Figure 12: Career management competencies in the Blueprint for Life/Work Design

The four levels for competency three (change and grow throughout life), for example, are the following.

Level one: Discover that change and growth are part of life.

Level two: Learn to respond to change and growth (1).

Level three: Learn to respond to change and growth (2).

Level four: Develop strategies for responding to life and work changes.

The model proposes an approach based on Bloom's Taxonomy to developing the competencies. The approach has four components: acquisition, application, personalisation and actualisation. Using this approach allows the Blueprint for Life/Work Design to provide both an outline of competencies and a robust approach to facilitating learning. The appendices in the Blueprint for Life/Work Design map out the competencies and indicators for programme development by level and learning stage.

The Blueprint for Life/Work Design is a clear outline of a programme of competency-based career education. However, this document provides significantly more than lesson-planning resources. As mentioned above, the document provides information on how to develop programmes both within a schooling context and within community settings. The document also serves as a resource that enables change. It provides information on effective approaches and processes for implementing the blueprint that is rich in advice and guidance founded in principles of needs-driven analysis and flexible implementation. These issues are addressed across planning, development, implementation and evaluation. That material is followed by two chapters: one on developing programmes for new entrants to year 12 schools and another for working with adults.

Australia: Australian Blueprint for Career Development

The development of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development was the result of a willingness of the partners in the development of the Canadian blueprint to support Australia in a further development of the concept for the Australian context. The project to develop an Australian blueprint began in 2002 under the mandate of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). This mandate recognised the need for a unifying framework to ensure consistency in career and transition services.

The development of the Australian blueprint for Career Development included consultation with a wide range of groups and pilots to test the usefulness of the draft in developing career development programmes. The insights from the pilots assisted the development and publication of the final document (2009) described here.

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development begins with a commentary on the "changing nature of life, learning and work" (MCEETYA, 2009: 8). Reference is made to the changing context in which people work and live, driven by globalisation, technological and demographic change. An important point raised is that "many people don't know how to manage their careers, because no one has ever assisted them to" (MCEETYA, 2009: 8). The implication of this point is that a changing context and career development patterns mean that developing people's ability to manage their careers is central to the way the purpose, structure and content of the blueprint was developed.

The Australian blueprint is not intended as a blanket prescription. Rather it is a tool to be used to design, implement and evaluate career development programmes. The intention is to:

> …enable teachers, parents, career development practitioners, employment service providers, employers or others who are in a position to support people's careers and transitions, to work with a nationally consistent set of career management competencies which will help all Australians to better manage their lives, learning and work (MCEETYA, 2009: 9).

The Australians have adopted the three areas and the 11 career management competencies of the Canadian blueprint. However, they have changed some of the language used. For example, the third area is referred to as "career building" in the Australian blueprint. They have also chosen a narrower focus than the Canadian model's reference to life and work goals and aspirations. In the Australian version, work and career are used rather than broader life goals. Figure 13 shows the Australian version of the career management competencies.

The Australian document has adapted the overall approach and, in some aspects, extended the thinking in the Canadian blueprint. For example, in competency three, the Australians have extended development phase 3 to read: "learn to respond to change that affects your well-being". This more explicitly highlights the development and extension of learning from the prior level. (See page 37 for the Canadian blueprint levels for competency three.)

Some important conceptual shifts have occurred. As with the Canadian blueprint, the competencies are organised through four developmental phases. But, rather than explicitly linking these developmental phases to definitive ages and stages, the Australian blueprint states that:

> The development phase of each learner will depend upon their family and community circumstances and the sort of opportunities and experiences they have had to develop their career management skills in the past (MCEETYA, 2009: 20).

This approach demonstrates how an age and stage approach continues to have value in a career development programme, particularly if connected and articulated in the context of a sociological view of a person's readiness and learning stage. In other words, by disconnecting the development phases from age, the Australian model provides an example of the power of a competency approach to enable the personalising of learning. However, the Australian blueprint does retain a general notion of age appropriateness by signalling that, although there is value in working across phases to meet students' needs, in general terms, these competency phases run from kindergarten and primary school through middle school to senior students and adults.

Area A: Personal Management

1. Build and maintain a positive self concept
2. Interact positively and effectively with others
3. Change and grow throughout life

Area B: Learning and Work Exploration

4. Participate in lifelong learning supportive of career goals
5. Locate and effectively use career information
6. Understand the relationship between work, society and the economy

Area C: Career Building

7. Secure/create and maintain work
8. Make career enhancing decisions
9. Maintain balanced life and work roles
10. Understand the changing nature of life and work roles
11. Understand, engage in and manage the career building process

Figure 13: Career management competencies in the Australian Blueprint for Career Development

The learning taxonomy model used to underpin the performance indicators is the four-point Bloom's Taxonomy-inspired model used in the Canadian blueprint. As with the Canadian blueprint, this taxonomy has been developed in a way that fits with the process of developing career management competencies.

Overall, the Australian Blueprint for Career Development is a well-structured document that, alongside the Canadian version, offers an invaluable guide to the development of career education programmes founded in competency development. Neither the Canadian or Australian documents are suggesting a blanket prescription for practice. Both provide a general framework to be flexibly applied in local contexts. Both countries' examples show that building career education programmes around competency can be done and has the potential to result in powerful, consistent and effective learning.

Ask yourself

- What elements of these blueprints would you integrate into a uniquely New Zealand approach?
- What are the unique features of your school that need to be taken into consideration?

Implications for the future

This report presents a picture of contemporary thinking and approaches to career education. Career education can play a significant role in aligning schooling practice with the needs of young people in the 21st century. However, for this to occur it is vital that we continue to build connections between career education theory and practice and broader developments in educational policy and practice.

This chapter discusses where best to focus the next steps in building these connections. It suggests that career education should be aligned to the emerging consensus around the purpose and role of schooling in developing a foundation of competency for adult life. In this arena, career education can and should play a vital role. To build this role we need:

- a clear picture of how career education can become central to teaching and learning
- programmes that address what young people need to take with them for a successful adult life. This would necessitate whole-school involvement in career education
- development of evaluation and evidence-building processes that connect the outcomes of career education to both social and economic benefits.

These next steps need to address the reality of teaching and, in particular, the fact that teachers are busy people. Teachers need a clear sense of how career education can benefit their work and contribute to students' learning. Without a clear sense of the benefits, it is difficult to see how career education can gain the level of support required to be at the centre of teaching and learning.

At the centre of teaching and learning

Figure 14 shows career education as an integral part of day-to-day teaching and learning, in the context of The New Zealand Curriculum's emphasis on key competencies.

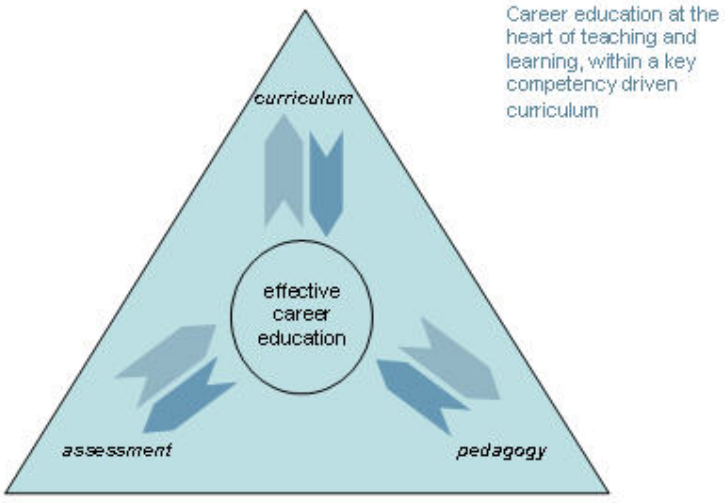

Figure 14: Bringing connectivity to an integrative approach

We need to develop exemplars of this approach to career education. In essence what is required is a classroom laboratory approach where learning activities and experiences for students are developed, delivered and evaluated. These activities can be used to create exemplars that demonstrate what competency-based career education looks and feels like in a classroom. This work could occur through pilots in specific schools and through reworking Career Services' programmes for students, such as those for Pasifika and Māori students.

The development and demonstration of this approach must connect to curriculum, assessment and pedagogy. It is at this level that effective career education becomes connected to the day-to-day teaching and learning in schools. In developing this aspect, there is an opportunity to transform the way young New Zealanders experience school. Career education should be used to personalise

learning and provide young people with a sense of the purpose and role of education in building the life they want to live.

Three important issues to consider within this work are:

- providing examples and models, without producing a recipe
- remaining conscious of the implications of advocating a particular model and theory of practice for teachers' sense of professional autonomy
- ensuring this work integrates into practice rather than adding a layer on top of current activities.

A useful model of a development process is the Ministry of Education's approach to the introduction of the new New Zealand curriculum. Schools have access to case studies which show how they might go about developing their approach to curriculum development.

Revision of the 2003 edition of Career Education and Guidance in New Zealand Schools (Ministry of Education) was underway at the time of writing this report. The revised document has moved in the direction of the competency approach advocated here. We need to continue to review and update these guidelines as developments in approaches to career education occur. It will also be important to further the connection between New Zealand practice and the blueprint approach developed in Canada and Australia. Future work could be further enhanced by continued examination of material from other jurisdictions.

Implementing a whole-school approach

Career education has reached a point where coordination and delivery in the context of a whole-school approach is beyond the capacity of one staff member, the careers adviser. To develop career education in the form proposed in this report requires significant knowledge of curriculum design and development. Strong support is also required from school management and the board of trustees to undertake a whole-school change process.

Implementing a whole-school approach requires planned staged development. The development model we have proposed in this report (see page 34 for the full description of the development model) uses what has been learned during the CPaBL and Designing Careers projects. This model is consistent with the approach taken in the Coalition of 21st Century Schools, which states that:

> Schools are complex HUMAN organisations. Educational processes are complex and affected by many variables. If schools are to be successful learning organisations for students and teachers, these variables must be interconnected as a part of a coherent whole (Getting the Connections Right poster, 2005).

A simple staged development model provides an anchoring point and means to develop a clear and coherent approach to the task of building a whole-school approach to career education. We should not underestimate the value of a clear sense of the relationship between the components of a whole-school approach. In developing these ideas further it will be important that professional development support provided to schools is connected to broader thinking and evidence for how learning organisations are established and sustained.

Extending the limits of our knowledge

Schools are familiar with the calls to ensure accountability for the money invested in education. Increasingly they have been called on to demonstrate the impact of their work. Considerable emphasis is placed on being able to detail the outcomes of educational activities and measure against them. Measurement of outcomes in the form of summative data is a lens through which a clear and comparative view of student achievement can be obtained. Such information is pivotal to showing a shift or growth of students at a macro level within and across schools.

As with all forms of measurement, summative data has its limitations. In this report our aim is to build a foundation which highlights the process through which effective career education programmes can be identified, described and enhanced. We want to be able to answer the question of what works in

what circumstance. To do this, we need to step beyond summative data to ask how and why questions, such as those in the example below (see box). It is tempting to draw simple conclusions, such as an assertion of cause and effect between career education and NCEA results. A number of authors have highlighted that such attempts at showing achievement as a measure of quality or effectiveness are an impoverished way of describing the education process (Olssen, et. al. 2004).

Career practitioners need to consider what insights might be gained through identifying outcomes related to the purpose of career education. Such a question requires a form of investigation that summative data alone cannot provide. In essence, it requires investigations into how, and the context in which, results were achieved, to enrich the understanding of where to locate measurement of career education's impact and effective processes leading to them.

Summative data as a stimulus for further enquiry

Knowing, for example, that in 2008 students at a South Waikato school achieved a 96% pass rate in STAR courses and 79% in Core Skills (career-related units) is a valuable insight into student achievement – particularly when NCEA results, more generally, are not as high.

You might want to analyse this data to ask what it is about those units that resulted in a higher achievement rate. For example:

- Is this an example of how motivation can increase when students see programme content as relevant?
- If it is, do we know exactly what has motivated the students? Could their motivation be a result of better knowledge of their opportunities after leaving school?
- If it is not, has the approach to assessment led to this rise in achievement?

Evidence should not simply connect career education to an ongoing process of developing and enhancing effective practice. It can also play an important role in showing the social and economic benefits of career education. In a paper entitled Translating Career Theory to Practice: The Risk of Unintentional Social Injustice (2009), James Sampson provides a meta-analysis of career guidance literature. His work suggests that there may be an inherent injustice in a one-to-one guidance approach to career development services and the provision of career education solely to young people. He cites an OECD (2004) commentary in arguing that these services need to be delivered in a way that is accessible to all people at all ages. This cannot be done in a cost-effective manner through one-to-one guidance. His suggestion is that these services could be made more broadly available through collaborative group learning processes that go beyond the theoretical and professional preference of career practitioners for intensive one-to-one guidance services. One-to-one services would be retained for high-need clients.

Samson's points suggest that developing a robust evaluation and evidence base for career education could be used as an opportunity to further enhance understanding of group guidance services and subsequently to translate that understanding into service delivery for people at all ages and stages. In this way, the training and expertise within the teaching profession could benefit career services more generally.

There is a recognised need to probe more deeply into the benefits that accrue from career services across a population. We suggest that evaluation of career education needs to consider a social justice imperative as well as the long-term economic benefits. One relevant example is the School Communities in Education-Employment Linkages (2007–2012) project. The intention of this project is to "… map and design improved formal systems to help young New Zealanders make good education-employment linkages to benefit themselves, their communities, and the national economy" (NZCER, www.nzcer.org.nz, accessed September 2009). A connection with this research might provide a robust foundation for showing the benefits of career education in the long term and further enhance the

relevance of career activities to school communities, including parents and whānau, employers, unions and society in general.

Next steps

This report is a first synthesis. It is by design incomplete. The intention is to use this report as part of an ongoing dialogue about ideas, evidence and practice in career education. This dialogue will be a foundation for building consistency and evidence into the work Career Services does to support career education in schools. To be successful in this work we must consider the following:

- adopting and continuing to develop a shared and consistent view of career education and guidance in schools
- demonstrating learning communities, internally (Career Services) and externally
- articulating a clear approach to career education that blends career decision guidance and career development guidance
- developing career theory and practice in relation to the theory of teaching and learning
- linking career education to curriculum, pedagogy and assessment
- signalling a preferred model and theory of practice
- developing exemplars of programme components, learning activities and experiences
- describing what career education looks and feels like in a classroom.

Understanding current thinking in career education is an important starting point. The challenge now is to translate that understanding into consistent and inclusive practice.

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Author's note

This report demonstrates the creative potential of co-construction when people are embedded in a learning community.

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Ivan Hodgetts
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