

# **Improving the management and delivery of Careers Education and Guidance**

## **Evaluation of Investor in Careers**



### **Final Report**

**By**

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The Centre for Guidance Studies (CeGS) is a research and development unit based at the University of Derby. The Centre aims to bridge the gap between guidance theory and practice. It supports and connects guidance practitioners, policy-makers and researchers through research activities and learning opportunities; and by providing access to resources related to guidance and lifelong learning.

CeGS aims to:

- conduct and encourage research into guidance policies and practices;
- develop innovative strategies for guidance in support of lifelong learning; and
- provide resources to support guidance practice across all education, community and employment sectors.

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## *Views and Perspectives*

‘Investor in Careers brought benefits to the whole school...It raised awareness of CEG amongst all staff who realised it was a whole school responsibility, and not just that of the CEG team’.

‘Investor in Careers recognises good practice. It highlights the need for updating and revisiting CEG - keeps everything current, and stops complacency’.

‘External verification of what we do has been helpful, combined with help to create links to like-minded FE Colleges’.

‘It has helped in developing an awareness of the world of work for primary school children.’

‘Although the process was extremely time-consuming, it did bring home the need to look in detail at the criteria and put more thought into the development of an effective CEG programme’.

‘I agree with accreditation in principle, but the Senior Management Team have not wished us to go down this route as most of our career provision is given in years 11-13 as most of our students stay on in the college’s sixth form’.

‘Like other ‘investor’ awards I consider them to be secondary to the needs of the school’s students and parents. The resources of the school are spent focusing on supporting students rather than gaining awards’.

‘Unfortunately, after the IiC accreditation the management of careers changed in the college and time was removed from the PSHE/CEG curriculum’.

‘Within the school, staff, Governing Body etc, CEG has had a high rating for some time. However, it was the title ‘Investor in Career’ we wanted’.

‘Reviewing CEG against Investor in Careers has enabled our CEG programme to be at the forefront of CEG developments’.

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

This report has been written by the Centre for Guidance Studies based at the University of Derby on the basis of research commissioned by Cornwall and Devon Connexions and undertaken between March and August 2005. It has been written not only to provide a critical appraisal of the current operation and effectiveness of *Investor in Careers*, but also to review options for its future development in the light of the wider current policy debate regarding the future development of Careers Education and Guidance (CEG) and Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) for young people.

The *Investor in Careers* award is a quality standard for the management of CEG in schools, colleges of further education (FE), work-based learning providers, and pupil referral units (PRUs). It was developed originally in 1994 by Cornwall and Devon Careers. In 1995, the former Careers Company began to offer licenses to other providers to implement the Award elsewhere. It is currently offered in 23 other areas across England<sup>1</sup>.

Currently 384 organisations in England<sup>2</sup> (schools, FE colleges, primary schools, and work based learning providers) either holds the Award, or are working towards it.

## Aim

The aim of the research was to review the impact of both the *process* of seeking accreditation and the *achievement* of the IiC standard on the planning, management and delivery of CEG in schools, FE colleges, and other organisations, and to make recommendations.

## Methodology

The research methodology was undertaken in three stages and involved: a postal survey of accredited IiC organisations, and those seeking accreditation (Sample A); a postal survey of a matched sample of organisations from within Licensees area which have not sought accreditation (Sample B); focus group discussions with IiC Licensees and Assessors; and 15 telephone interviews with key stakeholders.

A total of 117 organisations (a response rate of 30.9 per cent) responded to the postal survey which was conducted with the sample of organisations that CeGS understood from Licensees: were actively seeking accreditation; were accredited; or had been re-accredited, as Investor in Careers. A total of 100 organisations responded to the non-accredited sample (a 29 per cent response rate). No response bias was determined in either survey.

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<sup>1</sup> In addition, 8 other areas have held an *Investor in Careers* license in the past. Of these: some developed their own quality award; some were unable/decided not to maintain their license; others no longer exist as separate organisations.

<sup>2</sup> Additionally, one FE college in Wales holds the Award.

## Key Findings

- *Status of CEG:* Over *four in five* (83 per cent) respondents to the Sample A survey assessed the current status of CEG in their organisation at the highest two levels (i.e. 4/5). By contrast, those who have not been accredited (Sample B) were less confident overall of the status of CEG, with *just under half* of respondents (49 per cent) assessing the current status of CEG at comparable levels, and 10 per cent assessing it at the lowest levels (1/2).
- *Expected and actual benefits:* The majority of those organisations that are IiC accredited, including those who have been re-accredited, indicated that *the actual benefits* of achieving IiC broadly match *the expected benefits*. For example, 55 respondents indicated that they expected the introduction of IiC to improve the management of CEG within their organisation, and 53 organisations indicated it had done so. Similarly, 56 organisations said that they hoped accreditation would provide additional information for inspections, and 65 indicated it had done so. In terms of CEG delivery, 60 organisations indicated that they expected IiC accreditation to improve CEG delivery, and 58 indicated it had done so.
- In terms of views of the accreditation process *almost all respondent organisations* indicated that: the criteria for IiC accreditation are clear (96 per cent) and that the process of reviewing CEG against IiC was straightforward; and the process of IiC highlighted areas for improvement (97 per cent). There was slightly less agreement (although a clear majority) on issues such as the usefulness of the assessment report, and the extent to which the whole school benefited from the IiC process.
- In terms of the perceived effect of IiC on CEG provision, *significant impact* was noted by respondent organisations in areas such as: staff views and awareness of CEG (82 per cent of respondents); staff participation in CEG delivery and training (83 per cent of respondents); and evaluation of CEG provision (83 per cent of respondents).
- *Impact on young people:* Impact noted by organisations that were accredited included improvements in young people's views of CEG (79 per cent of respondents) and young people's capacity to make both choices and transitions (78 per cent of respondents).
- A *clear majority* of organisations who have achieved, or which are seeking accreditation, assessed the *overall effectiveness* of IiC as *good or very good*. Over *two thirds* of organisations which responded (67 per cent) said they would recommend IiC accreditation to others, and significantly over *three-quarters* of organisations (79 per cent) indicated that they are likely to seek re-accreditation.
- In terms of the non-accredited group (Sample B), those surveyed were asked for their views on the *potential impact* of IiC accreditation on their CEG provision in respect of the same areas explored with the accredited group. The most significant potential impact indicated by respondents - as evidenced by them indicating the two highest levels of agreement (4/5) - were as follows: 74 respondents (80 per cent) indicated that they felt IiC would enable an assessment of the current state of CEG; 68 respondents (72 per cent) indicated they felt it would improve the status of CEG, with a similar number indicating that they felt it would provide additional information for inspections.
- Interestingly despite having not done so to date, over *four in five* responding organisations in Sample B indicated that - in principle at least - they *are interested* in IiC accreditation -

51 (53 per cent) having had information, and a more concerning 28 (29 per cent) indicating they have no (or possibly in some cases insufficient) information to proceed.

- The largest *single reason* given by the majority (56 per cent) of respondents for not seeking accreditation was ‘lack of time’. It was not possible within the restricted scope of the research to test out whose time is required, and/or to further unpack the wider issues that are likely to be behind this assessment.
- Significantly, there is limited evidence from the quantitative results that a ‘lack of interest in raising CEG profile’ (5 per cent), a ‘lack of support from Connexions’ (5 per cent), or a ‘lack of interest from senior management’ (10 per cent), are significant factors in respondent organisations’ not seeking IiC accreditation. However, there is a need to explore more fully the issues of a perceived ‘lack of information and advice’ (19 per cent) and a ‘lack of requirement to achieve a quality standard’ (18 per cent).
- Stakeholders highlighted IiC’s *key strengths*:
  - *Policy agenda*: It was considered to be ‘responsive to the broader policy agenda’;
  - *Self-Assessment*: It supports organisations reflecting on *what they do*, and identifying *good practice*;
  - *Robust*: The processes involved are clear and robust (‘What is being described actually happens on the ground’), and it acts as a ‘driver of change’; and
  - *Young People*: It ‘gives a voice to young people’, in the accreditation process.
- Stakeholders identified areas of development that included: the need to develop *links to other quality awards*; to look at *continuous quality improvement*; to develop further opportunities for *consortium planning and networking* and *opportunities for accreditation*; and *web-based approaches*.

## Conclusions

- The IiC quality standard for the management of the careers education was initiated just over ten years ago in Cornwall and Devon, and is now the most widely used local quality award for CEG in England.
- As indicated, the views of those organisations that have achieved IiC accreditation (including those actively seeking accreditation, or having been re-accredited) is generally *very positive*, including amongst sub-groups represented in the sample such as FE colleges, and primary schools.
- Overall, they indicated that: the benefits of IiC outweighed costs; the general effectiveness of IiC was rated as good or better; the actual benefits matched the expected benefits of taking part; and they would recommend that others take-up the award.
- The impact on *young people*, although harder to evidence is noteworthy, in regard to reported improvements in young people’s views of CEG, and - arguably most importantly - their capacity to make both choices and transitions.

- The research highlights three inter-related *development themes* through which the potential exists to create a *Three Level Award* system (‘bronze, silver and gold’) whereby:
  - The first (bronze) level could be an entry level quality award to ensure that ‘the basics’ (i.e. statutory entitlements) were in place;
  - The intermediate (silver) level would be based on the full requirements of the current IiC award (following the suggested review); and,
  - The highest level (gold) would involve consideration of a developing range of standards related to learner/student support and progression, and be designed to underpin development work arising out of 14-19 agenda and other current policy agendas.
- Proponents of this way forward argued that this would be a more inclusive approach, and enable schools/colleges – and other organisations such as work-based learning providers and PRUs - to engage in developing their practice in line with what could become nationally agreed/validated standards and address issues concerning widening access.

## **Recommendations**

In light of these findings, CeGS would like to make the following ten recommendations, which are that Connexions Cornwall and Devon, should:

1. Circulate the main report to all those involved in the research; seek feedback at a forthcoming IiC Licensees/Assessors meeting; and local licence holders should send the Executive Summary to all local schools and other eligible organisations.
2. Devise a development plan based on the report, and feedback received from stakeholders, concerning actions they wish to take.
3. As part of this, consider with necessary parties, taking forward work addressing the development themes set out in Chapter 4.
4. Consider with IiC Licensees what opportunities there may be to share the results of this research with eligible organisations which may be interested, including updating appropriate marketing and other promotional materials.
5. Consider with IiC Assessors the concerns raised as part of the research, including improving approaches to norming/standardising assessments.
6. Consider what opportunities there might be undertake follow-up research to explore areas highlighted in this research, such as to seek more detailed views on re-accreditation, and to compile good practice case studies.
7. Consider what opportunities might exist - in co-operation with 14-19 consortia, school improvement partnerships or new groupings with Children’s Trusts - to take forward the idea of using IiC in a wider context, and to accredit the work of a consortium or network of organisations who are seeking collaboratively to improve CEG/IAG provision and to enhance progression.

8. Undertake further development work to support the more effective evaluation of work done in IiC organisations, in particular in respect to baselining and tracking learner outcomes from CEG/IAG programmes.
9. Share research findings with DfES in the context of its consultation concerning the ‘Youth Matters’ Green Paper, and review relevant aspects of the development plan, with DfES/Government Office South West, and other relevant bodies.
10. Encourage IiC organisations to share their experience with DfES in response to the ‘Youth Matters’ Green Paper.

### **Acknowledgments**

CeGS would like to thank all those who contributed to, and otherwise supported the research, including:

- Sue Eynon, Shaun Newman and colleagues at Connexions Cornwall and Devon;
- IiC Licensees for their co-operation in providing necessary contact information for Sample A and B, and where appropriate for their further involvement in the research;
- IiC Assessors for their input respectively in focus groups and through telephone interviews, and other colleagues who co-operated in being involved in telephone interviews;
- David Andrews, CEG Consultant, for sharing the results of his largely self-funded review of CEG Quality Awards;
- Liz Reece, CeGS Associate, for her helpful comments on earlier versions of the questionnaires and information relating to Career Mark; and
- All schools, colleges and other organisations which co-operated by responding so fully to the postal surveys.

### **Feedback**

CeGS would be happy to receive feedback on the research and this report. CeGS would hope the findings prove helpful to respective parties in planning the way forward:

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# Chapter One: Introduction

## Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been written by the Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby on the basis of research commissioned by Cornwall and Devon Connexions which was undertaken between March and August 2005.
- 1.2 The research team which undertook the project consisted of: Simon Bysshe (Senior Associate); Lindsey Bowes (Senior Researcher); and Hayley Reynolds (Research Assistant). Contract management was undertaken by Jo Hutchinson (Deputy Director).
- 1.3 The report has been written not only to provide a critical appraisal of the current operation and effectiveness of Investor in Careers (IiC), but also to provide - in the context of the wider policy debate regarding the development of national standards to underpin the quality of careers education and guidance (CEG) - recommendations about its future development.

## Background

- 1.4 The government has long recognised the importance of careers education and guidance and the impact it can have on young people's progression. Based on research evidence it asserted in 2002 that, 'young people who have received an effective careers education programme delivered through the curriculum, alongside impartial advice and guidance from external guidance specialists, make the best transitions at age 16 and are less likely to switch or drop out of courses in Year 12<sup>3</sup>'.
- 1.5 Section 43 of the Education Act 1997 introduced careers education as a statutory part of the school curriculum for years 9, 10, and 11 in secondary schools from September 1998. More recently the government has extended the statutory duty to the first two years of secondary schools, namely years 7 and 8. As a consequence since September 2004, all maintained schools in England have been required to provide a planned programme of careers education within the curriculum in years 7 and 11. In addition, there are statutory requirements for all maintained schools, including special schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) to provide:
  - access for pupils to guidance materials and a wide range of up to date reference materials; and
  - access to careers/personal advisers in order that the Connexions service can fulfil its duty to provide career guidance to all pupils aged 13-19.
- 1.6 Although part of the statutory curriculum, careers education stands outside the national curriculum and there is at present no prescribed Programme of Study that schools/colleges must follow. As a consequence schools/colleges are free to design their careers education programme to meet the particular aspirations, interests and needs of their pupils as they see them, and to decide the amount of teaching time to allocate to this aspect of the curriculum in each of the five designated years.

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<sup>3</sup> DfES (2002) *14-19: Extending Opportunities and Raising Standards*. London: HMSO

- 1.7 To support schools, colleges and work-based learning providers in England to develop effective programmes of careers education and guidance the government in 2003 launched its non-statutory ‘Framework for Careers Education and Guidance 11-19’<sup>4</sup>. The Framework recommended learning outcomes<sup>5</sup> and suggested content for careers education programmes for young people; provided advice on how young people can gain maximum benefits from guidance provided by different parties; and gave advice on how to quality assure careers education and guidance programmes, and develop a process of continuous improvement.
- 1.8 The Framework points out that, ‘quality standards aid self-evaluation - a process recommended by both Ofsted and ALI - support internal quality assurance systems’. Whilst indicating that there was ‘no plan to introduce a national quality award’, the Framework indicates that, ‘organisations gaining local awards should be well placed when their careers provision is inspected’, and recognises, ‘for some the availability of a quality award provides an added incentive to address and develop (CEG) provision’<sup>6</sup>.
- 1.9 A range of research has been undertaken in the past into the quality and effectiveness of careers education and guidance programmes in schools and colleges<sup>7</sup>. For example:
- The National Audit Office’s 2004 survey of schools found, ‘that the majority feel that they do not have the capacity to provide appropriate levels of careers education and guidance for young people’, citing factors such as that, ‘at around two-thirds of schools, careers education and guidance is delivered by staff without formal qualifications in the field’, and, ‘around a third of schools reported that staff are unable to identify and refer young people in need of specialist support’.
  - The Working Group on 14-19 Reform<sup>8</sup> (The Tomlinson Group) indicated that there is an urgent need to develop the ‘information, advice and guidance (IAG infrastructure’ to ensure that personal review, planning and guidance forms part of ‘core learning for all 14-19 programmes’.

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<sup>4</sup> Department for Education and Skills (2003) *Careers Education and Guidance in England – A National Framework 11-19* DfES: 0163/2003. Sheffield: DfES

<sup>5</sup> The Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) has developed guidance for schools and colleges concerning, ‘new opportunities to accredit young people’s learning through CEG and work-related learning programmes’. For further information see ([www.qca.org.uk/14-19](http://www.qca.org.uk/14-19)).

<sup>6</sup> The benefits of taking-up local quality schemes have also been highlighted by Ofsted. ‘Local quality award schemes promoted by careers service companies have provided a useful incentive for schools to gain accreditation and recognition for the quality of their CEG programmes’ Ofsted (1998) *National Survey of Careers Education and Guidance in Schools - Secondary Schools*. London: DfEE/Ofsted

<sup>7</sup> Barnes A, Donoghue J, Sadler J (2003) *Improving Careers Education – An analysis of recent research and inspection findings*. ([www.cegnet.co.uk](http://www.cegnet.co.uk))

<sup>8</sup> Working Group on 14-19 Reform (2004) *14-19 Curriculum and Qualification Reform. The Final Report of the Working Group on 14-19 Reform*. London.

- 1.10 CEG has been the subject of an ‘end to end review’<sup>9</sup>, which was published<sup>10</sup> alongside the ‘Youth Matters’ Green Paper. The Review’s key findings in regard to the current delivery of CEG were that:
- ‘insufficient priority is given to CEG in many Connexions Partnerships, schools, colleges, and work-based learning providers, in Ofsted inspections and in policy-making’;
  - ‘Connexions has made good progress with targeted services for young people in the “not in employment, education and training” group, or at risk of becoming part of it; but that, ‘Connexions Partnerships do not have the resources to deliver both targeted support and CEG’; and
  - ‘the significant flaws in the current arrangements for delivery of CEG mean that they are not sustainable’.
- 1.11 The Review concluded that, ‘the greatest potential for improving CEG delivery lies in driving up the quality and relevance of careers education in schools’. Critics of this conclusion have pointed out that, the ‘notion of looking solely at schools rather than to the partnership with Connexions as the means of improving CEG is not supported by any cogent arguments or evidence, and is contradicted by arguments and evidence cited within the review itself’<sup>11</sup>.
- 1.12 The Review does recommend that, ‘schools should be encouraged to adopt a “whole school” approach, incorporating CEG, student support, and progression issues, starting in year 7’, and that, ‘DfES should publish examples of good practice’. The Review also acknowledges the role of local quality awards for CEG. It indicates that, ‘many of these have been successful in raising the profile of CEG work and increasing standards’ (albeit in a minority of schools), and goes on to recommend that, ‘local quality awards for schools should be encouraged’<sup>12</sup>.
- 1.13 The IiC award is, ‘a quality standard for the management of CEG in schools, FE colleges, training providers, and PRUs. It was developed originally in 1994 by Cornwall and Devon Careers, and in 1995 the former Careers Company began to offer licenses to other parts of the country to implement the Award. Connexions Cornwall and Devon owns the brand and copyright to *Investor in Careers*, and operates the Award through a trading company Investor in Careers UK Ltd.
- 1.14 Alongside its use in Cornwall and Devon, the IiC Award is currently operated by IiC Licensees in 23 other areas across the country. Schools and colleges outside these areas are able to apply for accreditation.

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<sup>9</sup> Some critics have emphasised the limitations implicit in the terms of reference of ‘end to end reviews’ - of which the CEG was one - highlighting that such reviews: focus on the effectiveness of the ‘delivery chain’; do not evaluate the underlying policy (though they can ‘identify aspects of policy that inhibit or promote effective delivery’. In the case of the CEG, the review too took as the default assumption that, ‘there will be no increase in the budget for CEG in the future’.

<sup>10</sup> Department for Education and Skills (2005) *Report of the End to End Review of Careers Education and Guidance*. Sheffield: DfES

<sup>11</sup> Watts AG (2005) ‘The Youth Green Paper and the End-to-End Review: A Critical Analysis’ (Forthcoming) article in the September edition of ‘Newscheck’.

<sup>12</sup> Investor in Careers is noted as an example of a local quality award in the Review.

- 1.15 Currently 384 organisations in England<sup>13</sup> (schools, FE colleges, primary schools, and work based learning providers) either hold the Award, or are working towards it.
- 1.16 The Assessment Handbook for the Award indicates, ‘it is based on the Investor in People model, and includes in its structure the key features of the quality assurance cycle’. This QA cycle is structured around the ‘four key elements of IiC’ (known by the acronym CODE), with the need to demonstrate: Commitment; Organisation; Delivery and Evaluation in the management of CEG programmes.
- 1.17 Each ‘key element’ is divided into a series of outcomes. In the case of schools there are *twelve outcomes* each containing criteria against which schools measure their performance. In the case of FE colleges and work-based learning providers there are *fourteen outcomes*.
- 1.18 The assessment process<sup>14</sup> for IiC involves organisations demonstrating they meet the designated criteria by:
- building a portfolio of evidence to satisfy the performance indicators for the standards<sup>15</sup>;
  - receiving two visits from an independent external assessor (Interim and Final Assessments); and
  - giving a short presentation to - and discussing their submission with - an independent panel.
- 1.19 As highlighted in the ‘end to end review’, IiC is one of a number of quality awards available across the country. Key findings from recent research undertaken by David Andrews, CEG Consultant, in regard to the current availability and uptake of these awards, included:
- That a total of 25 different quality awards are offered across England in *41*<sup>16</sup> of the 47 Connexions Partnership areas. The majority of the awards were developed in the period 1994-9, although a few have been developed subsequently.
  - That 24 of these awards are offered by Connexions Partnerships, or in areas operating a sub-contracting model for the delivery of Connexions, by careers companies providing CEG services to Connexions<sup>17</sup>.
  - Most of the awards are only available in local areas. Two of the awards - Investor in Careers and Career Mark<sup>18</sup> - are available under license outside of the area/s which launched them.

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<sup>13</sup> Additionally, one FE college in Wales holds the Award.

<sup>14</sup> Investor in Careers UK (2003) *Investor in Careers Assessment Handbook*. Launceston: IiC UK

<sup>15</sup> Further information about Investor in Careers, the assessment process, quality standards, and criteria for schools, colleges and other organizations is available on the Investor in Careers pages within Connexions Cornwall and Devon web-site ([www.connexions-cd.org.uk](http://www.connexions-cd.org.uk))

<sup>16</sup> 26 of the 41 are organised on the ‘direct delivery’ model. In 25 of these the same award is offered across the partnership area. In the remaining area, covering two LEAs, one quality award is offered by one LEA and a different one – offered by an EBP - by the other.

<sup>17</sup> The remaining six partnerships, all operating on a direct delivery model, do not offer quality awards. The reasons for them not doing so are explored in David Andrews’ report.

<sup>18</sup> Career Mark was developed originally by the five former Careers Services in the East Midlands. It continues to be available there, and a variant has been produced for use within independent schools by ISCO.

- In areas that offer quality awards, the proportion of schools that have achieved the award is commonly somewhere between *20 and 30 per cent*. In only three areas have more than *50 per cent* of schools have achieved the award.

1.20 The Green Paper ‘Youth Matters’<sup>19</sup> sets out (in paragraph 179) the Government’s desire, ‘to explore how we might give further impetus to the quality and impartiality of CEG through the use of quality standards for the provision or commissioning of IAG through children’s trusts, schools and standards’, and within this indicates that, ‘we will look at how we might build on existing standards for careers education and guidance....to provide standards against which Ofsted could inspect’.

### **Aim**

1.21 The aim of the research is to review the impact of both the *process* of seeking accreditation and the *achievement* of the IiC standard on the planning, management and delivery of CEG in schools, FE colleges, and other organisations, and to make recommendations.

### **Methodology**

1.22 The project was undertaken in three inter-related stages:

*Stage One - Preparation and Initial Review*

*March-May*

Tasks included:

- holding preliminary discussions with Connexions Cornwall and Devon regarding the research;
- briefing IiC Licensees and Assessors about the research and conducting focus group discussions;
- obtaining agreed contact information from IiC Licensees in respect of *Sample A* - organisations in their areas which had achieved, or were actively seeking IiC accreditation, and *Sample B* - a matched sample of non-accredited organisations in their area; and
- designing questionnaires for both accredited and non-accredited organisations, including consulting with agreed parties concerning key question areas to be included.

*Stage Two - Postal Surveys and Telephone Interviews*

*May-July*

Tasks included:

- sending a total of 719 postal questionnaires/letters to 379 organisations in *Sample A* and 340 organisations in *Sample B*, in both cases enclosing reply paid SAEs. This work involved the research team making particular efforts to maximise the extent to which research could generate comparative data including monitoring responses, and sending reminder letters to non-respondents; and

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<sup>19</sup> DfES (2005) *Youth Matters* (Cm 6629). London : HMSO

- conducting 15 telephone interviews with stakeholders suggested by Connexions Cornwall and Devon, and those nominated by stakeholders themselves.

*Stage Three - Summative Reporting*

*July-September*

Tasks included:

- creating a research database, and subsequently undertaking a multi-variate analysis of survey responses using specialist research software (SPSS);
- collating and analysing all qualitative and quantitative data from the research, reviewing the outcomes of desk research, and producing a draft research report; and
- presenting and reviewing the draft final research findings with Connexions Cornwall and Devon and providing agreed summary reports.

### **Report Structure**

1.23 Following this introduction, the report is set out in four chapters:

- Chapter Two: Key Survey Findings considers: the quantitative findings from the postal surveys of both IiC accredited and non-accredited organisations; the key issues arising from the extensive qualitative comments provided by respondent organisations to both surveys. It also provides a summary overview.
- Chapter Three: Supporting IiC - Stakeholder Views considers: the views of IiC Licensees and Assessors on their work and role; the views of consultees on the strengths of IiC; the views of consultees on the current impact of IiC and key areas for future development. It also provides a summary overview
- Chapter Four: Conclusions and Recommendations considers the key findings of the research and provides recommendations.

1.24 Following these chapters, an appendix is attached:

- Appendix One: Stakeholder Telephone Interviews contains details of those individuals who kindly agreed to be involved in telephone interviews concerning their views and experience of IiC;

### **Acknowledgments**

1.25 CeGS would like to thank all those who contributed to, and otherwise supported the research, including:

- Sue Eynon, Shaun Newman and colleagues, at Connexions Cornwall and Devon;
- IiC Licensees for their co-operation in providing necessary contact information for Sample A and B, and where appropriate for their further involvement in the research;

- IiC Assessors for their input respectively in focus groups and through telephone interviews, and other colleagues who co-operated in being involved in telephone interviews;
- David Andrews, CEG Consultant, for sharing the results of his largely self-funded review of CEG Quality Awards;
- Liz Reece, CeGS Associate, for her helpful comments on earlier versions of the questionnaires and information relating to Career Mark; and
- All schools, colleges and other organisations which co-operated by responding so fully to the postal surveys.

### **Feedback**

- 1.26 CeGS would be happy to receive feedback on the research and this report. CeGS would hope the findings prove helpful to respective parties in planning the way forward:

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## Chapter Two: Key Survey Findings

2.1 In this chapter we consider:

- the quantitative findings from the postal surveys of both IiC accredited and non-accredited organisations;
- the key issues arising from the extensive qualitative feedback provided by respondent organisations in both surveys; and
- a summary overview.

### Survey Response

2.2 As indicated, to devise the sample for the postal surveys, IiC Licensees were asked to provide details of organisations that are IiC accredited (or are in the process of seeking accreditation), and - drawing on the working knowledge of local organisations - a comparable sample of other organisations that have not achieved, or sought, IiC accreditation.

#### *Accredited Survey*

2.3 A total of 117 organisations (a 30.9 per cent response rate) responded to the postal survey which was conducted with the sample of organisations that CeGS understood from Licensees: were actively seeking accreditation; were accredited; or had been re-accredited as IiC<sup>20</sup>. There is no evidence of a non-response bias in the survey.

2.4 In terms of these respondents, just over *four in five* (81.2 per cent) of the respondents were currently IiC accredited or were seeking accreditation, and a further eight respondents (6.8 per cent) indicated they had been accredited in the past<sup>21</sup>, but were not at present. Research data in this chapter is presented (where appropriate) under these three headings. In respect to those ‘actively seeking’ accreditation, these are organisations that are understood to have registered and commenced on the process of accreditation.

#### *Non-Accredited Survey*

2.5 A total of 100 organisations responded to the non-accredited sample (a 29 per cent response rate). The level of response here was particularly heartening granted that organisations had not taken-up the offer from their local Connexions, and/or their previous Careers Service provider, to seek IiC accreditation.

2.6 In order to maximise the comparability of the ‘accredited’ and ‘non-accredited’ research groups, following initial mailings, the research team contacted additional

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<sup>20</sup> The sample includes: 25 accredited organisations; 52 re-accredited organisations; and 18 organisations which are currently seeking accreditation. It also includes 8 organisations that have been accredited in the past but not now and 14 that have never been accredited.

<sup>21</sup> The balance (12 per cent) of the sample indicated they had never been IiC accredited. A review of these responses indicated that this data had been provided by five separate IiC Licensees, indicating a problem in regard to the currency of local the IiC database in these areas. Relevant quantitative data from these 14 *Sample A* respondents has been merged with data from Sample B, giving a total of 114 of ‘non-accredited’ respondents.

organisations from within the non-accredited samples provided by IiC Licensees to seek to ‘balance-up’ responses from accredited bodies, once received.

## Overall Survey Responses

- 2.7 IiC is available in variant forms to a wide range of organisations - including primary and secondary schools, FE colleges, work-based learning providers, and other organisations, and Licensees provided details of all these types of organisations in the samples provided.
- 2.8 In regard to respondent organisations, these are set out in detail in Figure One, under respective sub-headings: 11-16 schools (single sex), 11-16 schools (mixed), primary schools, PRUs, special schools, training (work-based learning) providers, 11-18 schools (single sex), 11-18 schools (mixed), sixth form colleges, FE colleges, and others. The largest groupings are 11-16 and 11-18 (mixed) schools, with relatively smaller numbers of other respondents, although there are significant numbers of special schools (mainly non-accredited), and some FE colleges (with a balance of accredited and non-accredited)

**Figure One: Type of Organisation**

	11-16 S		11-16 M		Primary		PRU		Special	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Never accredited	3	2.7	32	28.3	0	0.0	2	1.8	26	23.0
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	2	25.0	1	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Currently seeking/accredited	2	2.1	20	21.1	3	3.2	0	0.0	7	7.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>15.3</b>

	TP		11-18 S		11-18 M		6th Form		FEC		Other	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Never accredited	2	1.8	6	5.3	28	24.8	1	0.9	7	6.2	6	5.3
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	50.0	0	0.0	1	12.5	0	0.0
Currently seeking/accredited	0	0.0	9	9.5	36	37.9	5	5.3	8	8.4	5	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5.1</b>

Missing = 1

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited and non-accredited organisations, 2005

- 2.9 Organisations were asked to assess the current status of CEG in their organisations on a one to five scale - very low to very high. Overall, (Figure Two) the *highest status* was attributed by organisations which were IiC accredited, or were seeking accreditation, with over *four in five* (83 per cent) assessing the current status of CEG to be at the highest two levels (4/5).
- 2.10 By contrast, those who have not been accredited were less confident overall of the status of CEG, with *just under half* of respondents (49.1 per cent) assessing the current status<sup>22</sup> of CEG at comparable levels, and 10 per cent assessing it at the lowest levels (1/2).

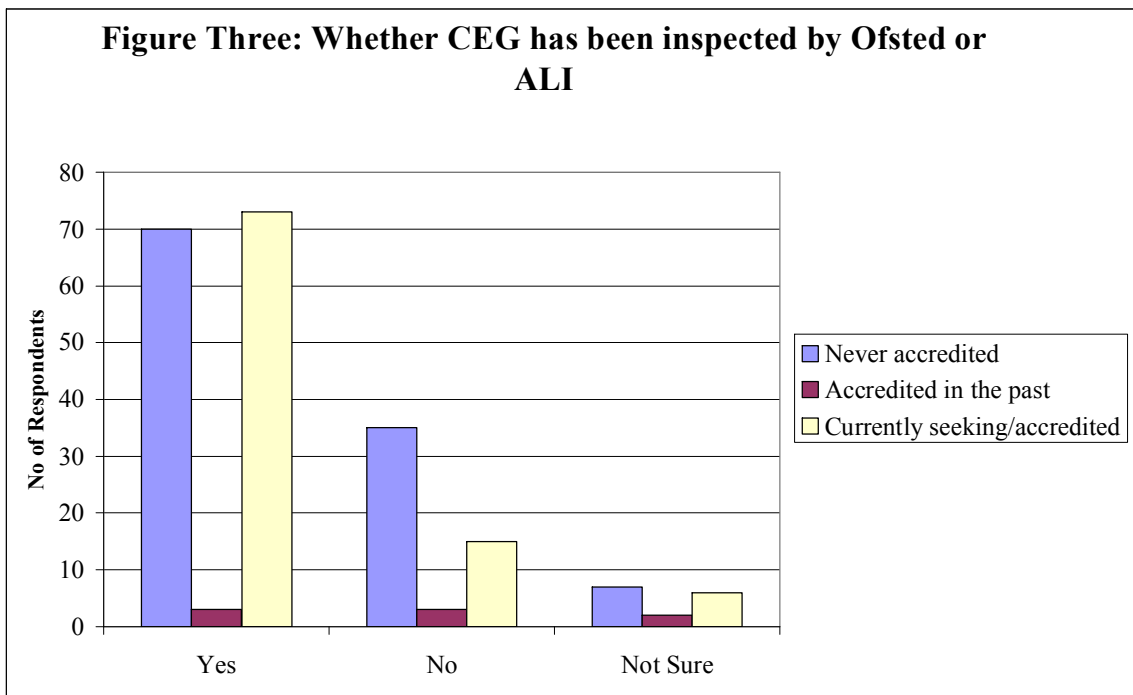
<sup>22</sup> It is important to note: 1. That these were the perceptions of respondents and may, or may not, reflect the views of others in their organisations. 2. Current perceived status should not be taken as a proxy for quality of provision.

**Figure Two: Current Status of CEG**

	Very High					Very Low					Not sure		Total	Mean
	5		4		3		2		1					
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
Never accredited	14	12.5	41	36.6	45	40.2	6	5.4	4	3.6	2	1.8	112	3.50
Accredited in the past	1	12.5	3	37.5	1	12.5	3	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	3.25
Currently seeking/accredited	29	30.5	50	52.6	15	15.8	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	95	4.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>215</b>	

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited and non-accredited organisations, 2005

- 2.11 In terms of *quality of provision* as demonstrated by external inspection evidence, the majority (Figure Three) indicated that they had been inspected in the past, with a few being unsure.
- 2.12 In terms of those who have been inspected (and/or who could provide some indication of the outcome in respect to CEG) - as with current status of CEG - the *mean scores* (Figure Four) for those seeking accreditation/accredited - as opposed to those accredited in the past (but not now), and those never accredited - are higher.
- 2.13 This finding supports Ofsted’s assessment of the generally positive impact of CEG quality awards. However, the findings also show clearly that a number of schools, and other bodies, have achieved Ofsted ratings of ‘satisfactory’, or above, without holding quality awards, which indicates that there are bound to be a range of factors in play in regard to securing adequate CEG provision.



Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited and non-accredited organisations, 2005.

**Figure Four: Ofsted / ALI Assessment of CEG**

	Excellent		Very good		Good		Satisfactory	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Never accredited	7	10.3	24	35.3	26	38.2	5	7.4
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	2	66.7	0	0.0	1	33.3
Currently seeking/accredited	15	21.0	36	50.7	16	22.5	2	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5.6</b>

	Very poor		Not sure		Total	Mean
	No	%	No	%		
Never accredited	0	0.0	6	8.8	68	3.36
Accredited in the past	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.33
Currently seeking/accredited	1	1.4	1	1.4	71	3.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>142</b>	

Missing = 75

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited and non-accredited organisations, 2005

### Accredited Sample

- 2.14 A wide range of areas were explored through the postal survey concerning both the process of securing IiC accreditation, and its perceived impact on CEG provision and wider outcomes.
- 2.15 The findings highlight the importance of the Careers Co-ordinator (or person in charge of CEG) in regard to *making the decision* to seek IiC accreditation. They are indicated as the person who made the decision in *just under a half* of all cases (46.8 per cent), with this being seen a *joint decision* with the Senior Management Team (SMT) in a further 23.4 per cent of cases. In just over *one in five cases* (20.2 per cent) the decision was made by the SMT alone, which could of course include the Careers Co-ordinator, or their line manager.

**Figure Five: Who made decision to seek accreditation**

	Governing Body		MST		CEG Person		CEG/SMT Person		Other		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Accredited in past	0	0.0	1	16.7	3	50.0	2	33.3	0	0.0	6
Currently seeking/ accredited	1	1.1	19	20.2	44	46.8	22	23.4	8	8.5	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47.0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>100</b>

Missing = 3

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

- 2.16 The *role of Connexions* in promoting IiC to schools is highlighted by the finding that in over *six out of ten cases* (61.3 per cent) they were cited as the reason why IiC was selected as the most appropriate CEG quality award, although the importance of recommendations from others (23.7 per cent) is noteworthy.

**Figure Six: Why IiC was Selected**

	Recommend by CNX		Recommend by others		Not aware of other quality awards		Other Reason		Other		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Accredited in past	4	80.0	0	0.0	2	40.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6
Currently seeking/ accredited	57	61.3	22	23.2	20	21.5	14	15.1	14	15.1	113
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>51.3</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>119</b>

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

2.17 A critical area for the research was to assess the extent to which organisations which have *achieved accreditation* felt that the *expected* (or potential) benefits of IiC were achieved *in practice*.

2.18 The findings in this respect are very encouraging, in that in the view of those organisations that have actually been accredited, including those who have been re-accredited, *the actual benefits of achieving IiC broadly match the expected benefits* (Figure Seven).

For example, 55 respondents indicated that they expected the introduction of IiC to improve the management of CEG within their organisation, and 53 organisations indicated it had done so.

Similarly, 56 organisations said that they hoped accreditation would provide additional information for inspections, and 65 indicated it had done so. In terms of CEG delivery, 60 organisations indicated that they expected IiC accreditation to improve CEG delivery, and 58 indicated it had done so.

**Figure Seven: Views on IiC Expected and Actual Benefits (Accredited & Reaccredited only)**

	Expected Benefits					Total	Actual Benefits				
	Yes		No		Yes		No				
	N	%	N	%	N		%	N	%		
Public recognition for CEG provision	57	87.7	8	12.3	65	59	85.5	10	14.5	69	
Improve the status of CEG within the organisation	64	95.5	3	4.5	67	67	90.5	7	9.5	74	
Improve the management of CEG within the organisation	55	84.6	10	15.4	65	53	74.6	18	25.4	71	
Provide additional information for inspections	56	86.2	9	13.8	65	65	90.3	7	9.7	72	
Improve CEG delivery for students	60	93.8	4	6.3	64	58	81.7	13	18.3	71	
Assess the current status of CEG provision	58	89.2	7	9.1	65	66	90.4	7	9.6	73	
Gain additional support to develop CEG	47	75.8	15	24.2	62	47	68.1	22	31.9	69	
<b>Total</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>499</b>	

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

2.19 The views of those who are *seeking accreditation* about the expected benefits of doing were broadly similar (Figure Eight) to those which have achieved accreditation, with the public recognition of CEG provision, assessing the current status of CEG

provision, and improving the management and delivery of CEG being particularly emphasised.

**Figure Eight: Views on IiC Expected Benefits (Organisations seeking accreditation only)**

	Expected Benefits				Total
	Yes		No		
	N	%	N	%	
Public recognition for CEG provision	16	100.0	0	0.0	16
Improve the status of CEG within the organisation	13	86.7	2	13.3	15
Improve the management of CEG within the organisation	14	93.3	1	6.7	15
Provide additional information for inspections	13	81.3	3	18.8	16
Improve CEG delivery for students	15	93.8	1	6.3	16
Assess the current status of CEG provision	16	94.1	1	5.9	17
Gain additional support to develop CEG	11	68.8	5	31.3	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>88.3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>111</b>

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

2.20 In terms of views of the accreditation process, and its impact, *almost all respondent organisations* indicated that: the criteria for IiC accreditation are clear (91 ex 95); the process of reviewing CEG against IiC was straightforward; and the process of IiC highlighted areas for improvement (92 ex 95). There was slightly less agreement (although a clear majority) on issues such as the usefulness of the assessment report, and the extent to which the whole school benefited from the IiC process.

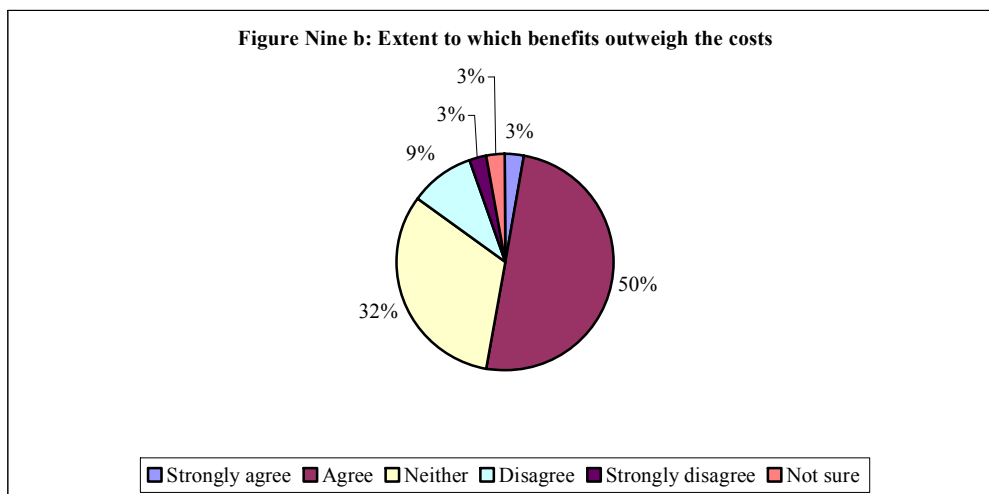
**Figure Nine a: Impact of Accreditation**

	Accredited in the past		Seeking/ accredited	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Criteria for IiC are clear	5	3.80	92	3.95
Process of reviewing CEG against IiC highlighted improvement areas	4	4.25	92	4.21
Process of reviewing CEG against IiC was supported by Connexions	5	3.60	91	3.98
Process of reviewing CEG against IiC was straight forward	5	2.80	92	3.26
Accreditation process was fair	5	3.80	88	4.09
Assessment report was useful	5	3.80	88	4.16
Benefits outweigh the costs	5	3.40	88	3.77
IiC has benefitted the whole school	5	3.00	86	3.56

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

Accredited in the past - n=8; Seeking/Accredited - n=95.

2.21 Overall, (Figure Nine b) the majority of those organisations which have achieved IiC accreditation or are currently seeking IiC accreditation indicated in their response to the survey that the *benefits* of achieving IiC accreditation outweigh the *costs*. This must be seen not just in terms of the registration fee, and accreditation costs, but also the wider ‘opportunity costs’ of staff time and other resources, necessary to achieve accreditation.



2.22 In terms of the perceived effect of IiC on CEG provision, *significant impact* was noted by respondent organisations in areas such as: staff views and awareness of CEG (78 ex 95 respondents); staff participation in CEG delivery and training (79 ex 95 respondents); and evaluation of CEG provision (79 ex 95 respondents), as well as - as previously noted - on the management and delivery of CEG.

**Figure Ten a: Affects of IiC on CEG**

	Accredited in the past		Seeking/ accredited	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Improvements in public awareness of CEG	5	3.00	69	3.38
Improvements in its stakeholder participation in CEG	5	3.40	69	3.33
Improvements in staff awareness of CEG	5	3.60	78	3.85
Improvements in staff view of CEG	5	3.40	78	3.74
Improvements in staff participation in CEG delivery	5	3.80	78	3.44
Improvements in staff participation in CEG training	5	3.00	79	3.28
Improvements in planning and management of CEG	5	4.20	79	3.84
Improvements in preparation for inspection	5	4.20	76	4.04
Improvements in evaluation of CEG	5	4.20	79	4.13
Improvements in delivery of CEG	5	4.00	79	3.61

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

Accredited in the past – n=8; Seeking/Accredited – n= 95.

2.23 As indicated in Table 10b, IiC was reported to have had an impact on young people, for example in regard to improvements in their views of CEG, and their capacity to make both choices and transitions. The degree of perceived impact varied, and might

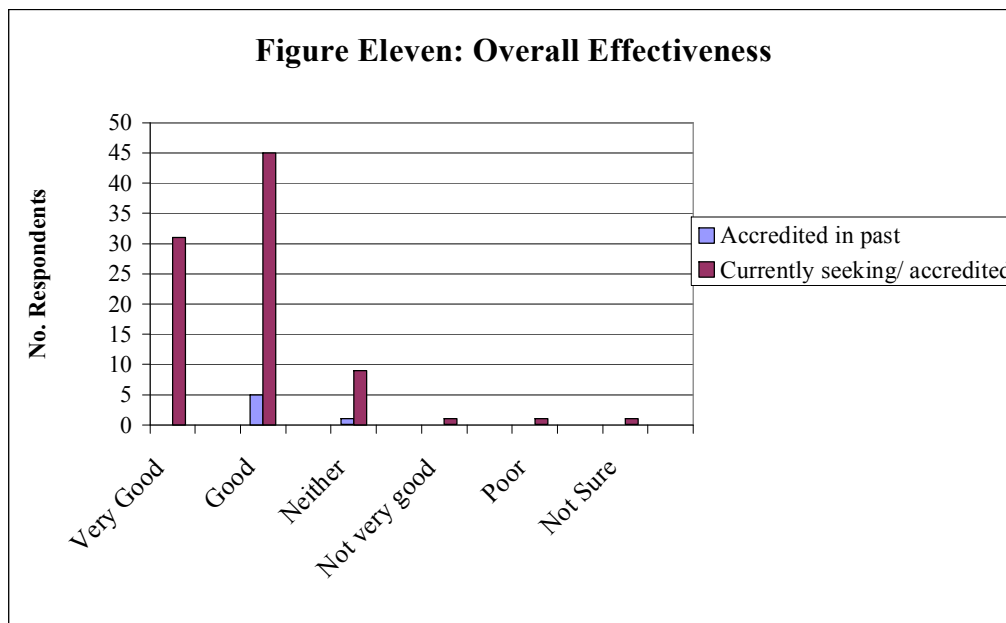
prove problematic in terms of providing direct casual evidence. Follow-up case study, or related work, would be required to validate such attributions, but the overall picture (reflecting the majority of respondents' views on the impact on CEG delivery) is that there are directly attributable learning, and other outcomes, which have flowed from schools improving CEG provision through IiC accreditation.

**Figure Ten b: Affects if IiC on Young people**

	Accredited in the past		Seeking/ accredited	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Improvements in young people's views of CEG	5	3.60	75	3.36
Improvements in young people's attendance rates	5	2.60	60	2.22
Improvements in young people's capacity to make choices	5	3.60	74	3.23
Improvements in young people's capacity to make transitions	5	3.60	74	3.26
Improvements in young people's confidence	5	3.60	70	3.20
Improvements in young people's motivation	5	3.60	68	3.07
Improvements in young people's exam results	6	3.20	60	2.47

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC accredited organisations, 2005

2.24 A clear majority of organisations who have achieved, or which are seeking accreditation, assessed the overall effectiveness of IiC as good or very good.



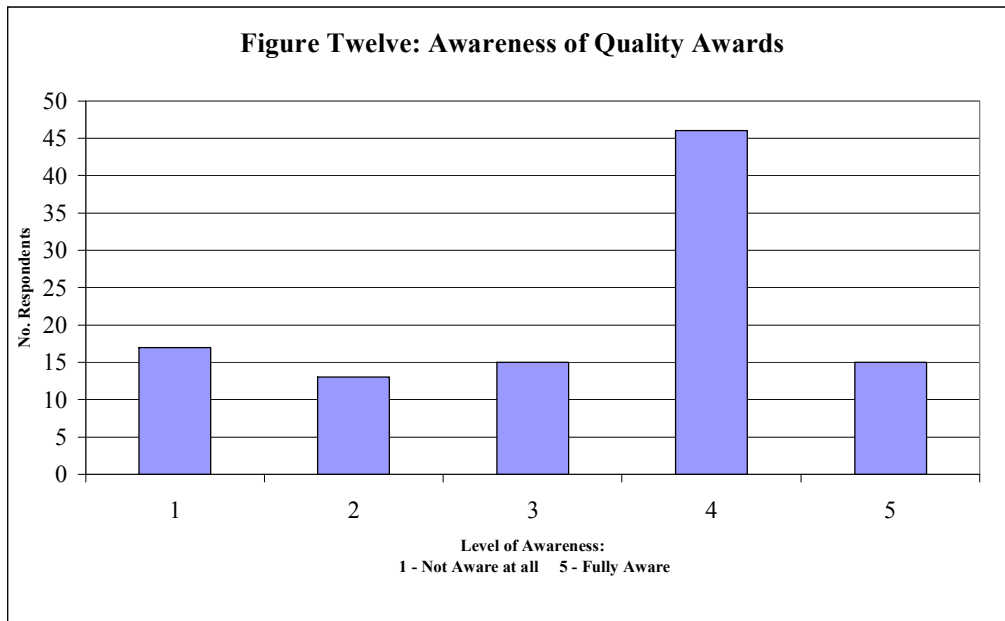
2.25 Over two thirds of organisations which responded<sup>23</sup> (67 per cent) said they would recommend IiC accreditation to others, and significantly over three-quarters of organisations which responded<sup>24</sup> (79 per cent) indicated that they are likely to seek re-accreditation.

<sup>23</sup> 78 ex 95, with 15 saying they were 'not sure' and 2 indicating they would not recommend IiC.

<sup>24</sup> 62 ex 78, with the balance being 'not sure'.

## Non-Accredited Sample

2.26 As indicated, 100 organisations in IiC Licensee areas which do not hold accreditation responded to the survey<sup>25</sup>.



2.27 The majority of these organisations (Figure Twelve) indicated that they have a *high level of awareness* of quality awards in CEG, although there was no opportunity in the research to test out the extent of their knowledge/understanding.

2.28 The survey group were asked subsequently for their views on the *likely impact* of IiC accreditation in regard to the same areas as explored with the accredited group. The most significant potential impact indicated by respondents - as evidenced by them indicating the two highest levels of agreement (4/5) - were as follows: 74 respondents (79.6 per cent) indicated that they felt IiC would enable an assessment of the current state of CEG; 68 respondents (72.3 per cent) indicated they felt it would improve the status of CEG, with a similar number indicating that they felt it would provide additional information for inspections. There was slightly less agreement on the potential of accreditation to improve the management and delivery of CEG, with 58.5 per cent, and 62.4 per cent respectively giving these the highest levels of agreement.

**Figure 13: Views on IiC**

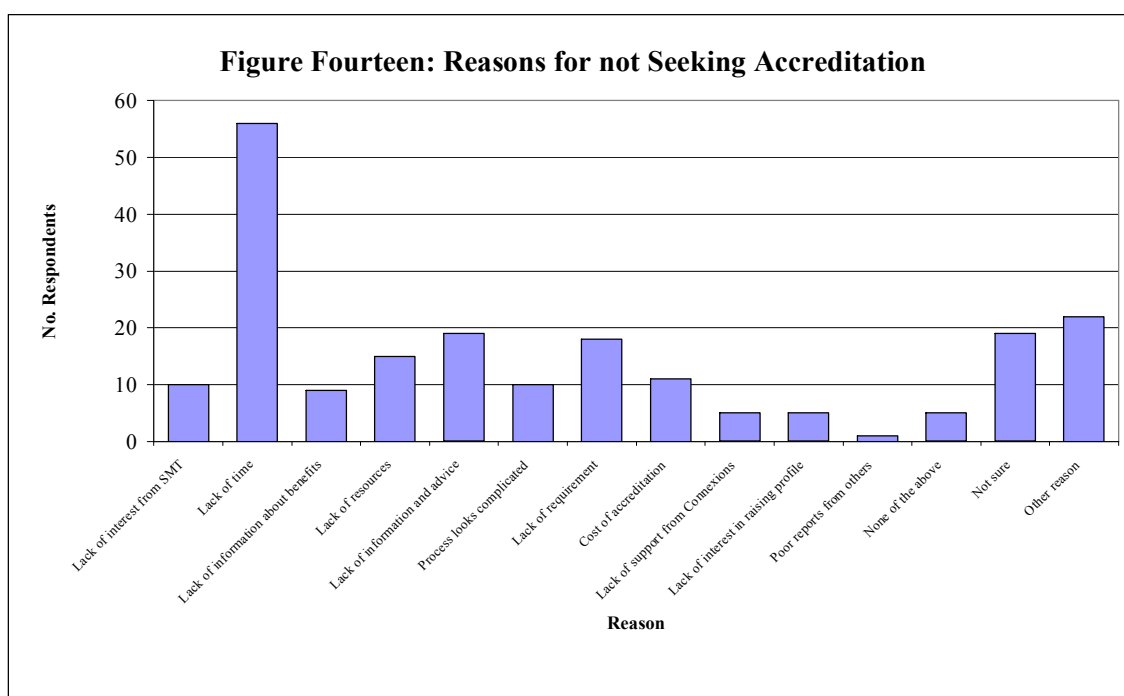
	Strongly Agree					Strongly Disagree					Total	Mean
	5		4		3		2		1			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
IiC would lead to public recognition for CEG	21	22.8	47	51.1	17	18.5	7	7.6	0	0.0	92	3.89
IiC would improve the status of CEG	24	25.5	44	46.8	18	19.1	7	7.4	1	1.1	94	3.88
IiC would improve the management of CEG	18	19.1	37	39.4	25	26.6	13	13.8	1	1.1	94	3.62
IiC would provide additional information for inspections	19	20.0	49	51.6	20	21.1	7	7.4	0	0.0	95	3.84
IiC would improve CEG delivery	25	26.9	33	35.5	19	20.4	13	14.0	3	3.2	93	3.69
IiC would assess current state of CEG	25	26.9	49	52.7	15	16.1	3	3.2	1	1.1	93	4.01
IiC would gain support to develop CEG	16	17.4	47	51.1	21	22.8	6	6.5	2	2.2	92	3.75

Missing = 7

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC non - accredited organisations, 2005

<sup>25</sup> A breakdown in terms of their status compared with the accredited sample respondents is set out in Figure One.

- 2.29 Given the widespread recognition amongst the respondent organisations of the *potential* benefits of accreditation, respondents provided information about why their organisations had not sought accreditation.
- 2.30 The largest *single reason* given by the majority (56 per cent) of respondents was ‘lack of time’. It was not possible within the restricted scope of the research to test out whose time is required, and/or to further unpack the wider issues that are likely to be behind this assessment. However, it is clear from the accredited survey that as the most frequent instigator of the process is the person with *operational* responsibility for CEG that the lack of time being referred to relates probably to the Careers Co-ordinator, or person in charge of CEG. This potential finding is supported by evidence from a range of previous CEG surveys, which have highlighted the lack of time, and other resources (quoted by 15 per cent of respondents), available for such staff to fulfil their roles.
- 2.31 Significantly, there is limited evidence from the quantitative results (Figure Fourteen) that a ‘lack of interest in raising CEG profile’ (5 per cent), a ‘lack of support from Connexions’ (5 per cent), or a ‘lack of interest from senior management’ (10 per cent), are significant factors in respondent organisations’ not seeking IiC accreditation. However, there is a need to explore more fully the issues of a perceived ‘lack of information and advice’ (19 per cent), and a ‘lack of requirement to achieve a quality standard’ (18 per cent).



- 2.32 The level of *latent interest* in IiC amongst respondent organisations is significant (Figure Fifteen), in that less than *one in five* indicated they were *not interested* in pursuing IiC accreditation. In respect of this, only 5 respondents (5.2 per cent) indicated that they had no information about IiC and were not interested in accreditation, and a further 12 (12.5 per cent) indicating they have information, but are not interested.

- 2.33 Over *four in five* responding organisations indicated that - in principle at least - they are interested in IiC accreditation - 51 (53.1per cent) having had information, and a more concerning 28 (29.2 per cent) indicating they have no (or possibly in some cases insufficient) information to proceed <sup>26</sup>.

**Figure Fifteen: Organisational Position Regarding IiC**

	N	%
No Information and Not Interested	5	5.2
No Information but Interested	28	29.2
Have Information and Interested	51	53.1
Have Information but Not Interested	12	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Missing 4

Source: CeGS Survey of IiC non - accredited organisations, 2005

### Commentary

- 2.34 A number of key issues/concerns were highlighted in the extensive written feedback provided with the surveys. Supportive/positive comments have been summarised under the following four headings:

- *Usefulness of IiC*

Investor in Careers was generally found to be useful by respondents, with typical comments including the following:

‘Staff are now looking to enhance CEG provision in their own areas’

‘CEG was already a component of the Y10 & 11 PHSE programmes - accreditation meant that the programme was reviewed and updated’

‘Particularly useful to see where we were after first accreditation, develop our 3-year plan and then seeing the progress made for the 2nd accreditation. It encouraged evaluation to support CEG development’

‘The IiC process made more explicit the good CEG work that was already going on in the college’

‘CEG had a fairly high status, but had got lost as one of many initiatives - IiC made it more distinctive again’

- *Desire to set and maintain standards*

There was a common interest demonstrated by a significant number of respondents in regard to the use of IiC in both *determining* what the appropriate standard for CEG management should be, and *ensuring* that this was then met.

Having established this way of working, there was evidence too of it establishing a *benchmark* standard below which organisations would not wish to fall, and one

<sup>26</sup> These findings have implications for IiC Licensees which are explored later in the report.

that enabled them to gain (or maintain) a competitive position/edge. Typical comments included:

‘This is an important benchmark to have achieved (a personal goal for me as well). I hope that the tradition will be carried on’

‘Had 3 assessments - but probably will continue, just to keep title mark on school headed paper’

‘We would want to ensure that we keep up this standard and are seen to be doing so’

‘On-going process of self-evaluation and improvement....As more schools in locality should gain award soon, we should not be seen to fall behind’

‘We have held the award since its inception. We value it as accreditation of our CEG and will continue to re-accredit as a matter of course’

- *Link to Ofsted*

A number of respondents pointed to the way that IiC accreditation had supported and complemented the Ofsted inspection process. Typical comments included:

‘Excellent evidence base for Ofsted.....Very good evaluative tool’

‘We had Ofsted a year after IiC accreditation. All major work was already completed and filed’

‘Key to establishing CEG as part of whole school development plan’

- *Support from Connexions*<sup>27</sup>

It is clear that the support received by respondees from Connexions Services that take a pro-active approach to promoting and supporting IiC accreditation is appreciated by organisations that have received *appropriately tailored support*.

It is clear that where *inter-organisational development work* - linked to initial or subsequent accreditation - has taken place, that this has provided a context for *self-assessment* (both in terms of *organisational* continuous quality improvement (CQI), and *individual* continuous professional development (CPD)).

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<sup>27</sup> The generally positive response to Connexions Services in regard to their support for IiC was not universal. For example, one responded indicated that, the ‘Local Connexions office gave no support at all....’

Typical comments included:

‘The IiC workshops, working support groups and regular review meeting put in place by Connexions are a vital input to the success of the area’

‘Connexions were very supportive throughout the process. The portfolio compilation was fairly straightforward. Areas for development were quickly identified’

‘I found one of the most valuable meetings to be when schools in various stages met to share experiences’

2.35 Key concerns indicated by respondents, included the following:

- *Need for help*

It is clear that a number of schools would have welcomed more support in regard to seeking IiC accreditation, both in terms of *professional* and in regard to *financial support*. Typical comments included:

‘It is an extremely time-consuming process which requires a great deal of commitment. There is a need for a larger advising team to work with regular personnel in schools on a more frequent basis’

‘In seeking accreditation it would be helpful to have financial support in order to put certain aspects of the evidence together. The financial support would be used to release staff from lessons in order to carry out meetings, collect evidence etc. Worthwhile as the accreditation is, the time required is large especially when teaching is also a priority’

- *Overlap/duplication between standards*

Similarly although most organisations indicated in the quantitative responses that they felt IiC criteria are ‘clear’, some respondents expressed a concern about *overlap* and *duplication* between criteria, and expressed a desire for *simplification*, where this was possible. Typical comments included:

‘We found the criteria too wordy and in cases not very clear about what evidence was the best to include. Also it is not clear where there is an overlap of evidence from one section to another, what to include where. It could be more user-friendly’

‘Some of the criteria overlap requiring duplication of paperwork or cross referencing - time consuming’

‘Reassessment outcome 3 is cumbersome; it could be reorganised into smaller categories’

- *Lack of contact*

Some concerns were expressed about a *lack of contact*<sup>28</sup> in some areas between IiC Licensees and organisations which may be interested in *taking-up* or *building-on* IiC accreditation. Typical comments here included:

‘Previous person who set up IiC has now left - not personally aware of present status of IiC at our school. Would like to achieve accreditation, but don't know who to contact to proceed’

‘I have heard nothing at all about Investor in Careers since we achieved the award in 2002. An update about re-awarding processes/ procedures would be welcome’

‘We sense a lack of commitment to Primary IiC. No-one contacts us re any aspect of re-accreditation’

In regard to the latter issue regarding Primary Schools, it has been pointed that funding is an issue here, although there have been isolated examples (as recently in Plymouth) of LEAs providing specific support.

- *Length of Assessment Process*

There were some comments about the length of assessment process, and the necessity of the final *presentation* in front of the panel (e.g. ‘It’s a bridge too far’).

The general view gained during the research was that the presentation was seen as an opportunity ‘to celebrate success’, to ‘involve young people’, and ‘to showcase particular activities of which schools and others were proud’.

The counter view to this was expressed as follows:

‘The final presentation in front of a panel is difficult to arrange (students had to miss a half day’s college at an important time) and was not a positive experience for students, as they were made to feel uncomfortable by the panel. This needs to change. Students commented that they found one member of the panel to be extremely rude. This is not acceptable’

‘The 'end' process was rather lengthy - my interim and final evaluations were very close and then a final presentation as well - this might put people off. I think the two assessments would be sufficient’

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<sup>28</sup> This issue is recognised by Cornwall and Devon Connexions. One possible solution is the creation of a specific web-site for Award holders to update them on developments.

## Summary Overview

- 2.36 The postal surveys proved a rich source of data about the value and impact of IiC as assessed by the organisations that have invested in seeking accreditation. The overall response to IiC in the accredited surveys is very positive, with the majority of respondents giving high ratings to its overall effectiveness, the extent to which benefits exceed costs.

There is clear evidence of impact in regard to both improvements in the management of CEG and its delivery.

- 2.37 Similarly, the recognition indicated by non-accredited organisations of the potential benefits of accreditation, and the interest demonstrated ('in principle' at least) in seeking accreditation is significant.
- 2.38 It is noteworthy that the principal stated barrier to take-up is not a lack of interest, but rather practical constraints caused by the lack of internal resource (and in some cases sufficient external support) to take this forward.
- 2.39 It is clear that without movement on either - or both of these fronts - that there will be a lack of further applications and in many areas accreditation rates could as a consequence have 'plateaued'.



## Chapter Three: Supporting IiC - Stakeholder Views

3.1 In this chapter we consider:

- the views of IiC Licensees and Assessors on their work and role;
- the views of consultees on the strengths of IiC;
- the views of consultees on current impact of IiC, and key areas for its development; and
- a summary overview.

3.2 As indicated, the consultation process was undertaken in two main ways. First, focus group discussions were held with IiC Licensees and Assessors, and secondly telephone interviews were conducted with a wide range of stakeholders (see Appendix One).

### IiC Licensees

3.3 Telephone discussions with senior managers of Connexions Partnerships which had become IiC Licensees ('bought into Investor in Careers') did so for two main stated reasons. First, there was a growing recognition in the field in the 90s of value of the IiC award. Secondly, there was an unwillingness 'to re-invent the wheel by developing a further set of standards' and a related desire not to incur the consequent development costs.

3.4 During focus group, and subsequent telephone discussions, there was broad agreement concerning the roles and responsibilities of Licensees. These were seen as:

- *Promoting and supporting IiC*: Some consultees highlighted the challenge of doing this and indicated that the extent to which it happened in practice depended on 'competing pressures and priorities' (e.g. One senior manager indicated, 'we have taken our eye off the ball in recent years');
- Acting as a '*critical friend*' to those going through the IiC process. This was reported as consisting of 'responding to queries' and, 'breaking the process down into manageable sections as schools can "panic" when they see it all at the start'. Additionally, as Licensees' have 'an in-depth knowledge of the standard', they indicated that they are in the position to suggest, 'an appropriate place for institutions to start', as, 'schools and colleges are all at very different stages of development in regard to CEG'; and
- *Evaluating the progress* of schools, colleges and other bodies, and 'helping them to develop CEG by *identifying training/opportunities* to address their needs'<sup>29</sup>.

3.5 There was less agreement surrounding the *amount of time* required for this role. One view was, 'you provide as much time as you have resource'. However, others commented that, 'there's no simple formula', adding, 'some schools/colleges require extensive support, whilst others are more advanced and require much less'.

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<sup>29</sup> A number of organisations were very complimentary in written responses in regard to training/ development and other support they had received from IiC licensees (e.g. Cornwall and Devon, Cheshire and Warrington and Coventry and Warwickshire). Without local fieldwork it is difficult to assess if these views were shared by all.

Several consultees reported *changes in personnel* as a significant factor affecting the amount of time/effort required (e.g. ‘if Heads and Career Co-ordinators change, previous work is lost and you often have start from the beginning’).

A number of Licensees reported that they occasionally ‘refer schools/colleges to other Licensees’, as, they do not ‘want to turn away any that are interested because they themselves have insufficient time when help is needed’.

- 3.6 In regard to support for IiC Licensees, it was indicated that Connexions Cornwall and Devon have a ‘very open relationship’ with Licensees and that they are ‘very responsive’ to enquiries (e.g. ‘you email and they respond’).
- 3.7 Regular meetings held with Licensees were generally considered very useful as a means of ‘raising issues that make you think’ and were widely considered as being, ‘good for professional development’.

### **IiC Assessors**

- 3.8 Since the outset of the programme, Connexions Cornwall and Devon have trained more than twenty external assessors. To help in the choice of assessors, a prospectus with their CVs has been developed and licensees could choose which assessor they wanted. In practice, it was indicated that most of the assessment work is undertaken by a core group of around 8 assessors<sup>30</sup>. In addition, Connexions Cornwall and Devon also have an arrangement with one licensee, Prospects, whereby their own CEG consultants have trained as assessors and do assessments for them.
- 3.9 During focus group, and subsequent telephone discussions, there was broad agreement concerning the roles and responsibilities of Assessors. These were seen broadly as:
- *reviewing available evidence*, at both an interim and final stage, and, ‘making things happen by getting organisations to the point of achieving the standard’; and
  - acting as a *broker* between the institution and Connexions Cornwall and Devon’ in regard to the assessment process and outcomes.
- 3.10 Like Licensees, IiC Assessors felt that they are generally well supported by Connexions Cornwall and Devon. However, some specific concerns arose. These included that:
- There has not been ‘*regular evaluation*’ of the IiC accreditation process. As a consequence there was uncertainty on questions such as, ‘do institutions feel that they’ve been through a fair process?’ As one Assessor commented, ‘we pick up snippets, but it would be fairer to give them, and to have, more formal feedback’;

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<sup>30</sup> Many of the Assessors have been involved with IiC since the outset. One commented, ‘For most of us being an Assessor has been a natural step, but if I was a new person, I wouldn’t know what I would put in the job spec’.

- The meetings held with Assessors were seen as very important, particularly in preventing ‘isolation’. However, it was commented that Assessors, ‘rarely discuss *standardisation*’ which it was felt is ‘critical’ in ensuring common approaches to quality assessment<sup>31</sup>. Additionally, it was indicated that Assessors rarely have the opportunity to attend panel meetings, which some felt would be useful (‘doesn’t happen much because it is not funded’<sup>32</sup>);
- Some individual concerns were raised concerning the *fee rates* for assessors (e.g. ‘they are no longer competitive’) and were leading some, ‘to think twice about whether they wanted to carry on with the work’.

### Strengths of IiC

3.11 The following key strengths were highlighted:

- *Policy agenda*: IiC was widely considered by consultees to be responsive to the broader policy agenda, with comments including, ‘it’s quite adaptive to change’. Those consulted also considered IiC to be useful, ‘in aligning careers education with schools’ broader agenda’.
- *Self-assessment*: Support for organisational self-assessment was identified as a particular strength of IiC, in particular its requirement to build a ‘sound evidence base’ (e.g. some commented that, ‘it forces schools to document something in relation to CEG’).

It was generally felt that IiC encourages schools and other organisations to reflect upon *what they do*, and to identify *good practice*. One consultee commented, ‘it helps schools realise they are quite good at things. Many don’t realise how good their practice is, and simply see it as “doing their job” - but in comparison to others they’re fantastic!’

- *Ofsted*: Further strengths were identified in relation to Ofsted. As one consultee put it, it ‘gives schools confidence to know that if an inspector comes they can look at their IiC portfolio which will cover most of what is required’.

The view was expressed that there is (or could be) a ‘tendency’ for Ofsted not to review CEG fully in schools that have IiC accreditation as they may believe, ‘that’s careers sorted’, although no specific evidence was put forward to substantiate this viewpoint.

- *Robust*: Most consultees stressed the range of work that has been undertaken in seeking accreditation, in terms of: compiling the IiC portfolio; the two stages of

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<sup>31</sup> Assessors are invited to the twice yearly joint meetings. Connexions Cornwall and Devon pay their travel expenses but no fee. It is understood that they have offered them the opportunity to meet separately for part of the day but, they ‘have always wanted to stay with the licensees for the whole meeting’. Connexions Cornwall and Devon have also paid for some assessors to attend the joint IiC/CRAC conference in London as part of their training/updating.

<sup>32</sup> It was pointed out that costs were the difficulty here. A half day for an assessor to attend a panel is £220 and a full day is £335. Most will not pay this much when they feel they can present the assessor’s Award themselves in about 10/15 minutes per institution.

assessment with the IiC Assessor, and presentation to the independent panel; and the fact that it involves discussions with Governors, Heads/Principals/senior managers, Careers Co-ordinators, teaching staff, and young people.

It was felt that the emphasis throughout is on ensuring that ‘what is being described actually happens on the ground’. As one consultee said, ‘the process is substantive and worthwhile’, and another added that, ‘schools and colleges do feel they’ve had a thorough “going over”, and on the whole appreciate this’.

- *Driver for change:* It was appreciated that there are a *range of motivations* for organisations wanting to be accredited as an IiC.

For a minority (described by one consultee as ‘trophy hunters’) the idea of ‘having the badge in reception and on the letterhead’ is clearly a factor, and ‘keeping it there’ provides an ongoing incentive. However, for most it appears to be seen as either a method of demonstrating commitment in this often underlooked area of work (‘we’re good at CEG and we want to be able to demonstrate it’) and/or ‘a way of developing capacity through continuous quality improvement. In this sense, IiC was thought by many to be a ‘driver for change’.

- *Young People:* A number of consultees highlighted the fact that IiC actively involves and ‘gives a voice to young people’, in the accreditation process, and that this was a significant feature.

### **Evidence of Impact**

- 3.12 The postal surveys provided a range of evidence regarding the current impact of IiC. Overall, consultees shared the view that IiC was effective in most of its current applications in achieving its stated aim, and most were able to provide anecdotal evidence regarding the impact of the Award, with some indicating - in some institutions - that there had been ‘huge improvements in both the status of CEG and its delivery’.
- 3.13 Most of the evidence provided related to secondary schools, although the view commonly was that the process had been beneficial in other organisations covered. For example, one college representative discussed the impact of IiC in a college consortium in the South West. Here an IiC review group of college representatives from different sites regularly share good practice in regard to CEG, which is said to have led to a range of improvements in both accreditation processes and in CEG delivery across the consortium.
- 3.14 A number of consultees highlighted the problem of providing clear evidence of *causal links* between IiC accreditation and specific improvements. In this the lack of *formative evaluation* evidence, especially baseline data, means that it is problematic, although the broad consensus on positive impact (particularly from the organisations themselves) provides a strong *prima facie* indicator.

## Key Areas for Development

3.15 A number of areas<sup>33</sup> were highlighted by consultees. These included:

- *Entry level awards:* A number of consultees felt that more could be done to make IiC more ‘accessible’, particularly to schools to whom at present it looked ‘too complex’. As one consultee put it, ‘some aspects of achieving IiC are time consuming, and simplification would help attract more candidates’.

There was some agreement in focus group, and some telephone discussions, that a lower level award should be created from which individual schools and colleges could then progress to a higher award (or awards).

- *Link to other quality awards:* There was a concern too to get the ‘positioning’ of the IiC right (e.g. ‘We need to be able to describe better “where it fits” with Ofsted/self-evaluation<sup>34</sup>, the matrix<sup>35</sup> quality standard and healthy schools’).

There was wide agreement that the benefits of IiC require exploration in many FE colleges, as the achievement of matrix is increasingly seen as a *requirement* for them (particularly in the context of their work as nextstep contractors), and a number of consultees saw the two awards, as ‘being complementary’ and ‘addressing different issues’;

- *Reassessment:* A number of consultees expressed concern about the reassessment process, which one described as ‘something of a treadmill’. This contrasts with the results of the postal survey which indicated potentially high levels of interest in re-accreditation.

The view was gained from Assessors that some organisations readily accept IiC as part of a continuous quality improvement process (CQI) for CEG. These organisations are characterised by their systematic assessment of strengths and development areas; having clear systems and procedures in place; and having up to date information and sources of advice/support.

The extent to which CQI procedures are put in place following IiC appears variable (‘some do it better than others’). Assessors reported that a few try to seek re-assessment having not progressed matters much in the intervening two/three years (i.e. ‘simply try to dust-off their original IiC portfolios’).

However, again this is another area where further research is required to gain a clearer understanding of the *circumstances* that lead organisations to seek re-accreditation, and the perceived lack of ongoing support by IiC noted by a minority of postal survey respondents in this regard is a concern;

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<sup>33</sup> One school provided the following helpful suggestions: ‘Issue all schools contemplating IiC with folder containing criteria to enable gradual build up of materials. 2. Develop ‘Buddy’ system to give schools support/ share good practise. 3. Encourage support staff to work in consortia groups to broaden participation. 4. Issue training/ funding ‘credits’ for school at a) interim assessment stage b) final award’.

<sup>34</sup> Department for Education and Skills (2004) *A New Relationship with Schools: Improving Schools through Self Evaluation*. London: DfES

<sup>35</sup> Further information about the quality standard is available on [www.matrix-quality-standard.com](http://www.matrix-quality-standard.com)

- *Consortium planning and networking*: There seems - in the context of School Improvement Partnerships, and the wider context of professional learning communities<sup>36</sup> (PLC) - the opportunity to build and develop both *curriculum* and *organisational development* and *practitioner competence/CPD* in the context of IiC.

A number of consultees discussed how this could be achieved ‘vertically’ - in terms of reviewing arrangements for *progression* between primary and secondary, within Key Stages 3/4, and into post-16/further education<sup>37</sup>, on a joint basis using IiC as a framework, as well as ‘horizontally’ through joint training and development activities (as is already clearly happening in a number of areas).

- *Opportunity for accreditation*: In regard to CPD, the view was expressed that given the work, and learning, that engagement in the IiC process generated that it should provide ‘opportunities for accreditation for teachers, and others involved, as part of their CPD’, for as one senior manager put it ‘IiC is a great motivator for good Careers Co-ordinators who want to become better’.
- *Web-based approaches*: The view was expressed that more information on IiC should be made available electronically – ‘we should move with the technology that is available’ (e.g. register an interest on line). Whilst this was generally considered desirable, issues were raised concerning portals.

### Summary Overview

- 3.16 The support and interest of key stakeholders, particularly IiC Assessors and some Licensees was noteworthy in the research. The research indicated that there was generally a strong commitment to IiC, and a desire to see it develop further.
- 3.17 Most of the comment and feedback provided validated the broad support for IiC which came through the postal surveys. The stakeholders did highlight some weakness in terms of the extent to which there was effective formative evaluation of CEG activities at organisational level (e.g. in regard to evidencing learning outcome set out in the CEG 11-19 Framework).
- 3.18 The lack of evaluation data - on key areas such as learning outcomes - is a weakness that needs to be addressed if the impact of CEG programmes – and quality systems designed to support them – are ever going to be adequately evidenced.

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<sup>36</sup> Bolam R, McMahon A, Stoll L et al (2005) *Creating and sustaining professional learning communities*. DfES Research Report: RR637. Sheffield

<sup>37</sup> There is the potential to link this concept to the proposal in the ‘Youth Matters’ Green Paper regarding schools (particularly 11-16 schools) taking responsibility for the further progression of their pupils.

## Chapter Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 In this chapter we:

- consider the key findings of the research;
- provide a brief summary overview, particularly related to current policy developments; and
- provide our recommendations.

### Key Findings

- 4.2 The IiC quality standard for the management of the careers education was initiated just over ten years ago in Cornwall and Devon, and is now the most widely used local quality award for CEG<sup>38</sup> in England.
- 4.3 This research is the first external evaluation that has taken place of the impact and effectiveness of the IiC award and has been largely conducted from the viewpoint of the schools, colleges and other organisations, and from key stakeholders, especially IiC Licensees and Assessors. The views of the ‘matched sample’ of schools, colleges and other organisations from IiC Licensee that could - but have not chosen - to seek IiC accreditation has provided useful comparative data.
- 4.4 As indicated, the views of those organisations that have achieved IiC accreditation (including those actively seeking accreditation, or having been re-accredited) is generally very positive, including amongst sub-groups represented in the sample such as FE colleges, and primary schools. Overall, they indicated that: the benefits of IiC outweighed costs; the general effectiveness of IiC was good or better; the actual benefits matched the expected benefits of taking part; and they would recommend that others take-up the award.
- 4.5 The impact on young people, although harder to evidence is noteworthy, in regard to reported improvements in young people’s views of CEG, and arguably most importantly their capacity to make both choices and transitions.
- 4.6 A number of consultees commented that IiC has found its ‘natural home’ amongst ‘schools and other organisations that are already interested in CEG, and in many cases have successful programmes they want to improve’. Despite working with them on a regular basis (including agreeing Annual Partnership Agreements) IiC Licensees indicated that it has been harder to ‘convert’ schools and other bodies without a clear and existing interest in CEG, and that this had most frequently occurred when a ‘window of opportunity’ had been created by the appointment of a new Headteacher/Principal, and/or a new Careers Co-ordinator.
- 4.7 The survey of non-accredited schools and other organisations has shown that the lack of take-up may not necessarily reflect a lack of interest in the idea of taking-up IiC, or indeed in enhancing CEG, but more frequently a lack of *internal resource* and/or *encouragement/incentive*. The number of those organisations that indicated they might

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<sup>38</sup> It is understood that there have been 80 first time assessments, 43 revalidations and 13 second revalidations for the Career Mark award since 1997.

be interested in IiC, but indicated had ‘no’ information, was revealing, and could indicate the need for more pro-active marketing of the both the existence and the benefits of accreditation, which this research will help inform.

- 4.8 Overall, it is noteworthy - as indicated in David Andrews’ recent research on local CEG quality awards - that even where more integrated and systematic attempts have been made to encourage take-up of existing awards, that the *maximum* penetration rate is 50 per cent, and elsewhere more typically 20-30 per cent.
- 4.9 In light of this, and other factors, his research posed questions including: whether (and how) local quality awards could be developed further; whether it was sensible to continue with a ‘free market’ of 25 local quality awards, move to a more regulated market, or adopt a single, national award.

### **Development Themes**

- 4.10 In discussions with consultees three inter-related themes for the future development of Investor in Careers emerged, as follows:

#### *Theme A - Accessibility and Modularisation*

It was felt that it would be timely to review the existing standards, and related performance criteria, and to see if it might be possible to:

- Identify any gaps or overlaps in criteria, and where possible to simplify them;
- Consider ways in which portfolio completion could be improved, including the idea of providing a *standard file* so in the words of one consultee, ‘the filing and tabulation of evidence against criteria is less time-consuming’;
- Identify elements that could be part of an *entry-level award* that could come naturally out of work undertaken in drawing up Annual Partnership Agreements, and related activity. This could involve the external assessment/validation of statutory requirements related (e.g. the availability of *appropriate information* to facilitate progression, including in schools the full range of available post-16 options and opportunities);
- The work that IiC Licensees currently undertake in planning ‘pathways to accreditation’ be built on so that schools and other organisations could see how this could be undertaken in a *sustainable way*, with appropriate and timely support; and
- Sources of funding be identified (where practical) to address the barriers identified by interested - but currently non-participating – organisations (e.g. in terms of issues such as ‘supply cover’ for training and/or profile completion, assessments).

*Theme B - Organisational Engagement /User Group*

Engagement with IiC accredited organisations is mainly through Licensees, and the support they receive currently appears variable. Whilst not wanting to weaken the link between organisations and their local Licensees, it might be helpful if:

- Details of IiC organisations were held on a central customer relationship management (CRM) database, and procedures agreed regarding such matters as updating contact information, tracking progress on accreditation etc;
- Events (e.g. regional workshops and/or an annual conference) could be offered to enable them as a group to network and learn from each other as a ‘user group’ or ‘community of practice’; and
- Opportunities for consortium working be developed further so that issues such as 14-19 progression could be addressed collaboratively through IiC.

### Theme C - Progression

A number of consultees highlighted that it might be timely to consider what could be considered as a ‘step-change’ or even ‘paradigm shift’ in regard to IiC. The argument here was that simply focusing on the management of CEG, without seeing it in the wider context of both:

a) the *learning outcomes* that flow from it for young people (leading to *informed choice*); and

b) the wider *whole school approaches* in regard to learner support and progression;

was too limiting, and did not encourage engagement, particular of those schools/colleges seeking to develop new approaches both within their own organisations, and within wider consortia.

The counter view to this was expressed by those who wanted to ensure that the *unique contribution* CEG makes was not lost (as it has risked being in developments such as PSHE and the wider pastoral curricula).

However, it was felt that - with relevant external support - it would be worth exploring the desirability and feasibility of a *wider award* looking at whole school/college approaches to learner support and progression (an ‘*Investor in Progression award*’ as one consultee put it), which might encourage schools/colleges - particularly those working on leading edge developments to become involved.

Viewed in this way, and pulling the three development themes together, the potential exists to create a *Three Level Award* system (‘bronze, silver and gold’) whereby:

- the first (bronze) level could be an entry level quality award to ensure that ‘the basics’ (i.e. statutory entitlements) were in place;
- the intermediate (silver) level would be based on the full requirements of the current IiC award (following the suggested review), and
- the highest level (gold) would involve consideration of a developing range of standards related to learner support and progression, designed to underpin development work arising out of 14-19 agenda and other current policy agendas.

Proponents of this way forward argued that this would be a more inclusive approach, and enable schools/colleges – and other organisations such as work-based learning providers and PRUs - to engage in developing their practice in line with what could become nationally agreed/validated standards.

## Summary Overview

- 4.11 The development options provide a potentially exciting and challenging agenda for change for Cornwall and Devon Connexions, IiC Licensees, and other colleagues in the field, and there is much to be done to ensure that the benefits of IiC accreditation are more widely shared and available.
- 4.12 The ‘Youth Matters’ Green Paper, which the Government has put out for consultation, has recognised the contribution that quality standards might make in providing further impetus to the quality and impartiality of CEG (and developing ‘IAG’ provision for young people), and this is to be welcomed, as is the idea of disseminating examples of good practice.
- 4.13 However, this research does provide some cautions in this approach (particularly in the context of the New Relationship with Schools<sup>39</sup> (NRws) in respect to ensuring that there is the necessary *infrastructure and support* both to encourage those already using self-assessment mechanisms to enhance CEG to continue to develop their work, and to identify those who do not, and take necessary corrective action.
- 4.14 Furthermore, it is clear that the availability and use of quality standards (and their more rigorous inspection) is not *in itself* likely to be sufficient to tackle the long-standing difficulties related to CEG/IAG, which have been so effectively diagnosed in a range of recent research reports, including Tomlinson Report and the ‘end to end’ review of CEG.
- 4.15 Many of the features of what is currently ‘best practice’ in respect of CEG are likely to be found in those organisations that have accredited their practice against IiC, and similar quality standards, where crucially they are working in partnership with colleagues in Connexions Partnerships on tackling identified individual issues, and organisational development needs.
- 4.16 Those seeking to develop new ‘IAG provision’ for young people would do well to ensure that they have identified those elements which are most effective in current provision, as identified in this research and elsewhere, and to ensure they are built on within the emerging new local arrangements.

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<sup>39</sup> Department for Education and Skills (2004) *A New Relationship with Schools: Improving Performance through School Self-Evaluation*. Nottingham: DfES.

## Recommendations

- 4.17 In light of these findings, CeGS would like to make the following ten recommendations, which are that Connexions Cornwall and Devon, should:
1. Circulate the main report to all those involved in the research, seek feedback at a forthcoming IiC Licensees/Assessors meeting, and local licence holders should send the Executive Summary to all local, schools and other eligible organisations.
  2. Devise a development plan based on the report, and feedback received from stakeholders, concerning actions that they feel they wish to take.
  3. As part of this, consider with necessary parties, taking forward work addressing the development themes set out in Chapter 4.
  4. Consider with IiC Licensees what opportunities there may be to share the results of this research with eligible organisations which may be interested, including updating appropriate marketing and other promotional materials.
  5. Consider with IiC Assessors the concerns raised as part of the research, including improving approaches to norming/standardising assessments.
  6. Consider what opportunities there might be undertake follow-up research to explore areas highlighted in this research, such as to seek more detailed views on re-accreditation, and to compile good practice case studies.
  7. Consider what opportunities might exist – in co-operation with 14-19 consortia, school improvement partnerships or new groupings with Children’s Trusts – to take forward the idea of using Investor in Careers in a wider context, and to accredit the work of a consortium or network of organisations who are seeking collaboratively to improve CEG/IAG provision and to enhance progression.
  8. Undertake further development work to support the more effective evaluation of work done in IiC organisations, in particular in respect to baselining and tracking learner outcomes from CEG/IAG programmes.
  9. Share research findings with DfES in the context of its consultation concerning the ‘Youth Matters’ Green Paper, and review relevant aspects of the development plan, with DfES/Government Office South West, and other relevant bodies.
  10. Encourage IiC organisations to share their experience with DfES in response to the ‘Youth Matters’ Green Paper.

## Stakeholder Telephone Interviews

## Appendix 1

Ruth Anders	Great Sankey High School, Warrington
David Andrews	CEG Consultant and Trainer
Rob Bourne	Government Office South West (GOSW)
Steve Brooking	Independent Consultant
Geoff Buck	DML Limited
Derek Craze	Independent Consultant
Sue Eynon	Cornwall and Devon Connexions
Steve Hoy	Connexions Cheshire and Warrington
Danny McGregor	Independent Consultant
Liz Reece	Career Matters
Peter Sampson	Cornwall College
Steve Stewart	Connexions Coventry and Warwickshire
Sally Sutherland	Connexions Cheshire and Warrington
Helen Tudor	Connexions Coventry and Warwickshire