



Association for Careers Education and Guidance

TEACHERS' NOTES – BASIC GUIDELINES FOR USING CAREERS4U RESOURCES IN CAREER PLANNING

(April 2011)

These notes are designed to be used alongside the Careers4u film clips, and accompanying Teacher notes on each film clip. The notes include advice on planning routes through learning, qualifications and into a career, and signpost sources of further information.

It is important to note that the Careers4u film clips and related documents will:

- give general career inspiration from great role models who talk about their qualifications and routes to their current job
- give a flavour of each individual's job – it is not necessarily complete and is not necessarily true of everyone doing this job
- require students to follow up from the film clips any which interest them with further research using websites and other sources

Introduction

Careers4u provides inspiring film clips on a wide range of careers, which are all the more believable because they are drawn from real life young career professionals. All of the individuals who feature on the film clips have their own story to tell, and have worked their own way through stages of learning, qualifications and work to reach their current situation. Some have followed a route planned and chosen during their mid teens, and others have taken more unpredictable ways in.

Though there is no hard and fast rule about entry routes to many careers, some have very definite qualification requirements, and many others state preferred qualifications and entry routes. In the competitive labour market of today and tomorrow, young people who have thoroughly researched entry to their chosen career can make informed decisions about further and higher education, and experiences of work with greater chance of success. It is therefore vital that careers education and careers information and advice effectively equips young people with the skills they need to carry out this research, and the knowledge and understanding they need of qualifications and progression routes.

Levels of qualification

Qualifications are grouped according to levels, which group different qualifications at the same academic level together.

At level 1 can be found NVQ1 qualifications in vocational subjects, Foundation Diploma, Foundation Learning qualifications and these equate to GCSE grades D-G.

At level 2 can be found NVQ2 qualifications in vocational subjects, Higher Diploma and BTEC First qualifications, and these equate to GCSE grades A*-C. Apprenticeships are offered at level 2.

At level 3 can be found NVQ3 qualifications in vocational subjects, Advanced Diploma and BTEC National qualifications, and AS and A levels. Advanced apprenticeships are offered at level 3.

Level 4 qualifications include NVQ4 vocational qualifications, Higher National Certificates (HNC). Higher apprenticeships will be offered at level 4.

Level 5 includes Diploma in Higher Education, Foundation degrees, and Higher National Diplomas (HND)

Level 6 includes Bachelor degrees, graduate diplomas and certificates.

Levels 7 and 8 include post graduate diplomas, masters degrees, and doctoral degrees.

The two main points are:-

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- qualifications represent different ways of learning, to accommodate both individual learner preferred learning styles, and differences in the way professions train new entrants
- it is possible to move from one type of qualification to another, and to progress from all types of qualification to a degree and higher study.

So, when working with young people to help them choose their own route through learning and qualifications, it is important to provide them with learning experiences which:-

- identify their own preferred learning style – do they like to learn in an active work-based way, or are they happier concentrating on a more academic style of learning?
- give them an understanding of progression routes so that they can plan short and long term, and see the relevance of learning at different stages towards their overall career aim

Researching Career Ideas

Career decisions, like all life changing decisions, should be properly researched and checked out, so that the individual understands what the career involves and what they need to do to enter it. Careers information databases contain up to date information on thousands of careers, and provide information under standard headings, such as job content, type of employer/work place, entry qualifications and training, working conditions, career progression within the job area, salary levels, and where to get further information. By grouping information under standard headings it is possible to compare features of different careers.

The careers database on the Next Steps website is free to access, and can be found at <https://nextstep.direct.gov.uk/planningyourcareer/jobprofiles/Pages/default.aspx>

Researching higher education opportunities is an important subset of researching career ideas. Many professions require entrants to have a degree in a specific subject, and some degree courses give exemption from some professional qualifications. Certain higher education institutions have strong links with a sector/profession, and are more successful in supporting graduates directly into employment in that sector. Some higher education institutions have very demanding entry requirements for undergraduate courses, and young people who set their sights on these competitive courses are well advised to research entry requirements before committing themselves to specific level 3 courses.

For information about university entry requirements go to <http://www.ucas.ac.uk/>

When working with young people to help them research further a career idea, it is important to provide them with learning experiences which:-

- introduce them to careers information databases, and help them research and compare different careers against their own preferences
- help them to learn to plan, and produce a career/learning plan which shows how they will reach their chosen career, through various stages of learning and qualifications.

Important Note: Careers and course information dates rapidly. It is recommended that all information is checked for its currency before finalising plans.

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