



**Oide**

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim  
Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí  
Scoile agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional  
Learning of School Leaders  
and Teachers

# Junior Cycle Guidance *Document Study*

2023-2024



## Document 1:

### Indecon Review of Career Guidance Extract

Indecon International Economic Consultants, 2019,  
*Indecon Review of Career Guidance*

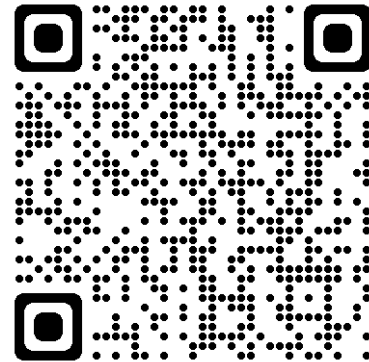
Extract: *Section 3*

*When Learners Form Opinions on Career Choices*

*Pages 36 - 44*

Live Link: [Indecon Report](#)

URL: <https://tinyurl.com/mtpe93yj>



Indecon International Economic Consultants, 2019, *Indecon Review of Career Guidance* Extract: *Section 3 When Learners Form Opinions on Career Choices*  
Pages 36 - 44

### 3 How and When Learners Form their Career Opinions

#### 3.1 Introduction

Understanding the timing and formation of, and influences on, learners' career choices is important in designing policy to maximise the impact of career guidance supports. This section presents Indecon's findings in relation to learners' career choice formation including: when learners form their career opinions and who are the key influencers.

#### 3.2 When Learners Form Opinions on Career Choice

In considering when learners form their opinions in Ireland, Indecon notes that in Ireland "guidance has been largely based in the post-primary sector, providing educational and career guidance to students and applying a personal counselling approach."<sup>23</sup> There are also significant supports provided in higher and further education and training. Given the recognition that guidance is lifelong, it is of note that even in younger age cohorts, the development of knowledge, skills and competencies is critical to future career development. New Indecon primary research with guidance counsellors presented in the next table suggests that initial consideration of careers choices usually occurs during the Junior Cycle and Transition Years. While best practice suggests that early intervention is merited for many students it appears that career information is first provided in Transition Year or in Fifth Year.

There is an extensive research literature that highlights the way in which children begin to form their career ideas and identities in early childhood and that these develop throughout their time in primary school.<sup>24-25</sup> Gottfredson describes how children develop career ideas and then adjust and abandon these in response to what they see in the world around them.<sup>26</sup> Such ideas are often strongly influenced by family histories and the media.<sup>27</sup> Such compromise and circumscription of career ideas can often result in the uncritical reproduction of social norms e.g. 'girls don't become engineers'. Having limited aspirations can influence academic attainment,<sup>28</sup> subject choice,<sup>29-30</sup> and career outcomes.<sup>31-32</sup> Because of this it is important to intervene to broaden children's career thinking and ensure that they understand the possibilities that are open to them. A recent review of the literature has set out the importance of offering career related learning in primary education and has drawn together the evidence around what makes such interventions in primary effective.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>23</sup> National Guidance Forum Report 2007, p.14.

<sup>24</sup> Bandura, A., Barbaranelli, C., Caprara, G. V., and Pastorelli, C. (2001). Self-efficacy beliefs as shapers of children's aspirations and career trajectories. *Child Development*, 72(2), 187–206.

<sup>25</sup> Gutman, L. and Akerman, R. (2008). *Determinants of Aspirations*. London: Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning.

<sup>26</sup> Gottfredson, L. S. (2002). Gottfredson's theory of circumscription, compromise, and self creation. In Brown, D., and Brooks, L. (Eds.) *Career Choice and Development*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, pp. 85-148.

<sup>27</sup> Chambers, N., Rehill, J., Kashefpakdel, E. T., and Percy, C. (2018). Drawing the Future: Exploring the Career Aspirations of Primary School Children from Around the World. London: Education and Employers.

<sup>28</sup> Flouri, E. and Pangouria, C. (2012). *Do Primary School Children's Career Aspirations Matter? The Relationship Between Family Poverty, Career Aspirations and Emotional and Behavioural Problems*. London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies.

<sup>29</sup> Kelly, P. (2004). Children's experiences of mathematics. *Research in Mathematics Education*, 6(1), 37-57.

<sup>30</sup> Archer, L., Osbourne, J., DeWitt, J., Dillon, J. & Wong, B. (2013). *ASPIRES: Young People's Science and Career Aspirations, Age 10-14*. London: King's College.

<sup>31</sup> Akerlof, G. A., and Kranton, R. E. (2000). Economics and identity. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 115(3), 715-753.

<sup>32</sup> Breen, R., and Garcia-Penalosa, C. (2002). Bayesian learning and gender segregation. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 20(4), 899–922.

<sup>33</sup> Kashefpakdel, K., Rehill, J. & Hughes, D. (2018). *Career-related learning in primary*. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.



While specific recommendations on this issue is outside the scope of the current review this may merit consideration in the context of the development of a longer-term strategy.

**Table 3.1: Guidance Counsellors Estimates of Timing of Initial Consideration of Career Choice and Receipt of Career Information**

Percentage of Guidance Counsellors/Practitioners	Timing of <u>Initial Consideration</u> of Career Choice	Timing of <u>Initial Receipt</u> of Career Information
In Primary School	17.4%	0.3%
In Junior Cycle – First, Second or Third Year	31.7%	26.3%
During Transition Year	30.4%	47.8%
During Fifth Year	8.7%	14.7%
During Sixth Year	5.1%	5.6%
Post Leaving Cert	3.3%	2.0%
FET	3.3%	3.3%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Indecon analysis of Confidential Survey of Guidance Counsellors*

The significance of the post-primary school phase in the consideration of career choices was also highlighted by Indecon research with second-level students. The fact that some learners first started thinking about what they would do in primary school is also of note. This suggests the need for early action in career guidance.

**Table 3.2: When Second-level Student Respondents First Started Thinking about What to Do Upon Leaving School/Education**

Age at which you first started thinking about what to do upon leaving school/education	Percentage of <u>Second-level Students</u>
In Primary School	24.8%
In Junior Cycle – First, Second or Third Year	37.2%
During Transition Year	30.3%
Other	7.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Indecon analysis of Confidential Survey of Second-level and Higher-level Students*

In considering when students first start thinking about what to do, of note is the recommendation to Indecon from the Union of Students in Ireland, who suggested that “reform should include specific focus on early intervention, and measures should be tailored for students well in advance of the Junior Certificate.”<sup>34</sup> This view of the need for early action is aligned with International evidence on best practice. The importance of early intervention was highlighted by guidance counsellors and also by enterprise representatives. For example, the Construction Industry Federation suggested that early intervention/guidance regarding careers directions would seem to be prudent and options can be limited by poor subject selection<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> Submission to Indecon from Union of Students in Ireland  
<sup>35</sup> Submission to Indecon from Construction Industry Federation



The fact that a percentage of higher-level students only started thinking about careers during college is of interest as indicated in the table below.

Table 3.3: When Higher Level Student Respondents First Started Thinking about What to Do Upon Leaving School/Education	
Age at which you first started thinking about what to do upon leaving school/education	Percentage of Higher-level Students
In Primary School	14.4%
In Junior Cycle – First, Second or Third Year	20.0%
During Transition Year	19.9%
Final Year in School	17.7%
During College	21.3%
Other	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Indecon analysis of Confidential Survey of Second-level and Higher-level Students*

The views of students on when they first obtained career information indicates that most students first obtained information about possible career choices when they were in the 14 – 17-year age group. This is broadly consistent with the findings from Indecon’s survey of guidance counsellors.

Table 3.4: Age at which Respondents First Obtained Information about Possible Career Choices		
Age at which you first obtained career information	Percentage of Second-level Students	Percentage of Higher-level Students
Younger than 10	3.7%	1.4%
10-11	3.9%	1.0%
12	4.6%	1.0%
13	7.7%	1.6%
14	10.7%	2.8%
15	27.8%	10.6%
16	31.1%	26.7%
17	8.2%	20.2%
18-19	2.1%	18.0%
20-21	0.2%	10.1%
22-25	0.1%	4.9%
26-30	0.0%	1.6%
Over 30	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

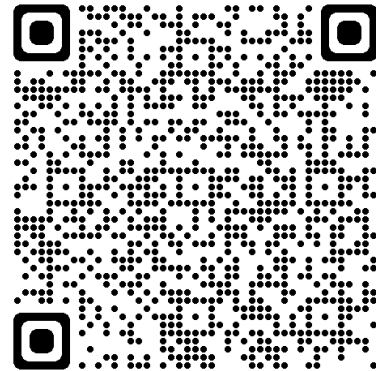
*Source: Indecon analysis of Confidential Survey of Students in Second-level and Higher Education*



## Document 2:

### OECD Dream Jobs? Teenagers Career Aspirations and the future of Work

Mann, A., Denis, V., Schleicher, A., Ekhtiari, H., Forsyth, T., Liu, E. and Chambers, N., 2020. *Dream Jobs? Teenagers' career aspirations and the future of work*. Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)



Extract: *Concentration of Occupational expectations by Gender*

Pages 11-22

Live Link: [Dream Jobs? Teenagers' Career Aspirations and the Future of Work - OECD](#)

URL: <https://tinyurl.com/ycknmpzs>



## Document 2

Mann, A., Denis, V., Schleicher, A., Ekhtiari, H., Forsyth, T., Liu, E. and Chambers, N., 2020. Dream Jobs? Teenagers' career aspirations and the future of work.

Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Extract:  
Concentration of Occupational expectations by Gender Pages 11-14



## Career concentration: Have teenagers' career expectations changed since the start of the century?

The career aspirations of young people matter. A series of longitudinal studies have shown that teenage career aspirations are a good predictor of the jobs that students go on to occupy as adults. Notable studies by Ingrid Schoon and Zena Mello have shown that, even after controlling for social background and exam success, young people with high career aspirations are more likely to enter a professional career in adulthood. The OECD PISA database provides a unique mechanism for understanding the career aspirations of 15-year-olds and how these have changed over time.

Since 2000, through PISA, large representative samples of young people in multiple countries have been asked about the job they expect to be doing at age 30. The question is deliberately phrased. It seeks to understand young people's considered expectation, not simply their dreams for the future, at a time when important decisions are being made about curriculum specialisation, education progression and even whether to stay in school or not. Because the same question has been consistently asked, the PISA database

allows for tracking how young people's occupational expectations have changed since the turn of the century. Data is available from 41 countries that took part in PISA studies in both 2000 and 2018 (Box 1.1).

Figure 1.1 shows how career expectations have become more concentrated over time. Career concentration is an indicator of teenagers' occupational thinking. It sets out the percentage of 15-year-olds who name one of the ten most common career expectations in their country. Table 1.1 lists the top ten expectations for boys and girls in 2000 and 2018 across the 41 countries taking part in both studies. The list includes some modest grouping of similar occupations. For example, the interests of young people in both "specialist medicine" and "general medicine" are grouped in one category – "doctor". This is to allow for a meaningful comparison with the 2000 sample, which was undertaken using the 1988 International Standard Classification of Occupations, a structure for the organisation of jobs that was significantly updated and internationally adopted in 2008.



As seen in Figure 1.2 and in Table 1.1, the aspirations of boys and girls are very different. Only by looking at them separately is it possible to gauge the true extent of how concentrated their career interests have become. Across 41 countries, 53% of girls and 47% of boys who expressed an opinion anticipate entering one of just ten jobs by the age of 30.

Since 2000, the increasing concentration of career expectations has been driven by the changing thinking of boys (Table 1.1), young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds (Table 1.2) and lower performers on the PISA tests (Table 1.3). The following explores evidence of how these changing aspirations are related to fluctuations in labour market demand. The tables show how little career expectations have changed since 2000, an era before social media, 3D printing and the rapid acceleration of the use of artificial intelligence in the workplace. Overwhelmingly, it is 20th-, and even 19th-century, occupations that capture the imaginations of today's young people.

Table 1.4 sets out the level of concentration for boys and girls across 31 countries. It shows that considerable variation is hidden beneath the overall averages. In 20 countries, levels of concentration have increased since 2000 – by more than five

percentage points in Canada, Norway, Sweden and Thailand. Other education systems, led by Hong Kong (China) (12 percentage points) and Korea (10 percentage points) have seen decreases in the level of concentration. A striking finding in such comparative data is the consistently lower levels of concentration found in countries with strong and established systems of vocational education and training for teenagers. In countries such as Germany and Switzerland, fewer than four in ten young people express an interest in just ten jobs. At the other end of the spectrum, it is in lower income, developing countries, such as Brazil, Indonesia and Thailand, where levels of concentration are greatest. Here, up to three in four young people expect to work in one of just ten jobs. Table 1.5 provides a direct comparison of the occupational expectations of boys and girls in Germany and Indonesia. In Indonesia, 52% of girls and 42% of boys anticipate following one of just three careers. By contrast, German youth express interests that are much broader, better reflecting actual patterns of labour market demand.

The comparison of national data highlights the strong influence of gender on career aspirations, but warns too against fatalism. Figures 1.4 and 1.5 show strongly gendered patterns of interest in careers related to science and engineering, and the healthcare professions among

### Box 1.1 – Countries participating in PISA in 2000 and 2018

- Albania
- Argentina
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Brazil
- Canada
- Chile
- Czech Republic
- Germany
- Denmark
- Spain
- Finland
- France
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Greece
- Hong Kong (China)
- Hungary
- Indonesia
- Ireland
- Iceland
- Israel
- Italy
- Republic of Korea
- Luxembourg
- Latvia
- Mexico
- Republic of North Macedonia
- Netherlands
- Norway
- New Zealand
- Peru
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Thailand
- United States of America

Note. Japan also took part in PISA in both 2000 and 2018, but due to discrepancies in classification of occupational categories, it is excluded from the analysis presented in this publication.





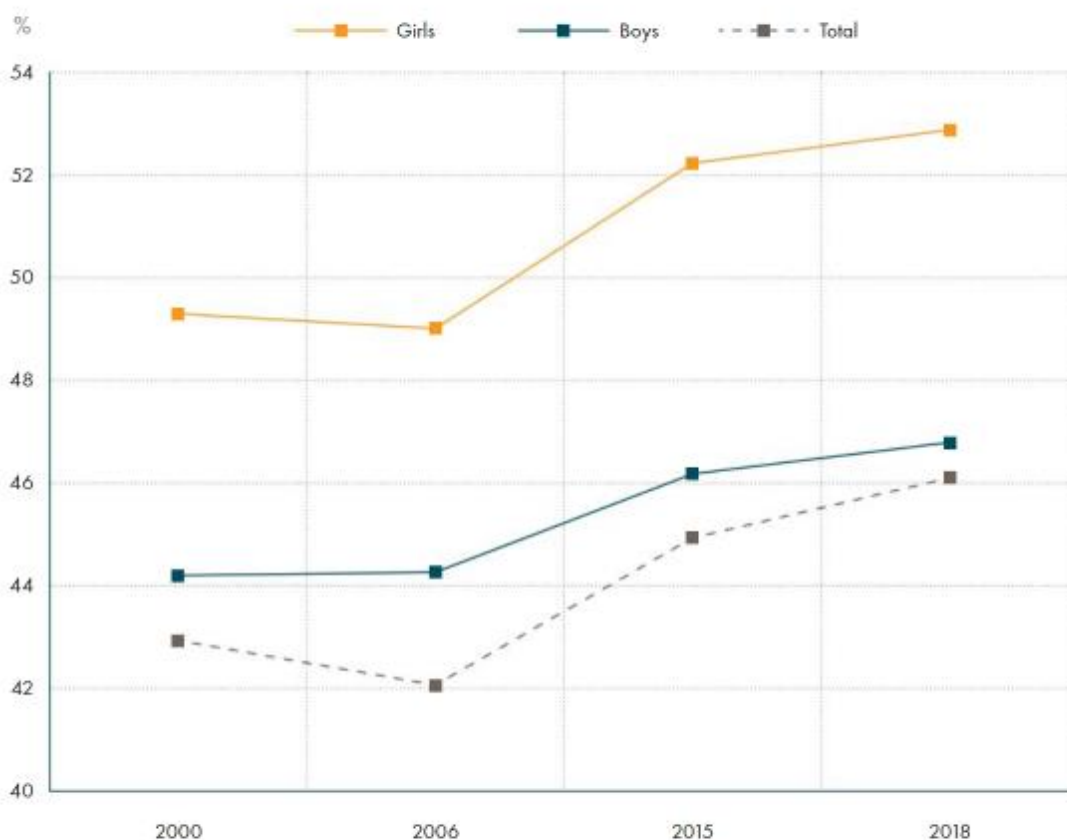
## Document 2: OECD Dream Jobs? Teenage Career Aspirations and the future of work

students with high scores on the PISA assessments. Overwhelmingly, it is more often boys who expect to work in science and engineering than girls, even when boys and girls perform similarly on the PISA science test, but this is not always the case. In many countries, moreover, the level of girls' interest in these professions is higher than that of boys in other countries.

The analysis provides new insight into just how concentrated the career expectations of 15-year-olds have become. This is a matter of concern. For countries, it offers a simple indication of the weakness of labour market signalling at an important time in the education

and training journeys of young people. It suggests, moreover, that increasingly the expectations of young people may be out of date and unrealistic. Over the period of the greatest accumulation of human capital during a lifetime, the data indicate that many young people are intent on pursuing jobs that they have little chance of securing.

**Figure 1.1** – Concentration of occupational expectations, 2000 to 2018  
Percentage of students expecting to work in one of the ten most commonly cited jobs at age 30



**Note.** International occupational classification codes were changed in 2011. Japan is excluded due to anomalies in reporting occupational data.

**Source:** PISA databases. Countries reporting career expectations in PISA 2000, 2003, 2006, 2015 and 2018.



## Document 2: OECD Dream Jobs? Teenage Career Aspirations and the future of work

**Table 1.1** – Concentration of occupational expectations, by gender, 2000 and 2018

Percentage of students expecting to work in one of the ten most commonly cited jobs at age 30

Source: PISA 2000 and 2018 databases. Countries reporting career expectations in PISA 2000 and 2018.

Top 10 occupations cited by girls			
2000		2018	
Occupation	%	Occupation	%
1 Teachers	11.1	Doctors	15.6
2 Doctors	11.0	Teachers	9.4
3 Lawyers	6.2	Business managers	5.0
4 Psychologists	3.9	Lawyers	4.6
5 Nursing and midwives	3.2	Nursing and midwives	4.5
6 Business managers	3.0	Psychologists	3.7
7 Veterinarians	2.9	Designers	3.0
8 Writers/journalists	2.6	Veterinarians	2.8
9 Secretaries	2.6	Police officers	2.3
10 Hairdressers	2.5	Architects	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.0</b>		<b>52.9</b>

Top 10 occupations cited by boys			
2000		2018	
Occupation	%	Occupation	%
1 Business managers	6.8	Engineers	7.7
2 ICT professionals	6.1	Business managers	6.7
3 Engineers	4.9	Doctors	6.0
4 Doctors	4.5	ICT professionals	5.5
5 Sportspeople	4.0	Sportspeople	4.9
6 Teachers	3.9	Teachers	4.6
7 Lawyers	2.7	Police officers	4.0
8 Motor vehicle mechanics	1.9	Motor vehicle mechanics	2.8
9 Architects	1.9	Lawyers	2.4
10 Police officers	1.9	Architects	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.4</b>		<b>46.8</b>



## Document 3:

### Guidelines for Second Level Schools on the Implication of Section 9 c of the Education Act 1998

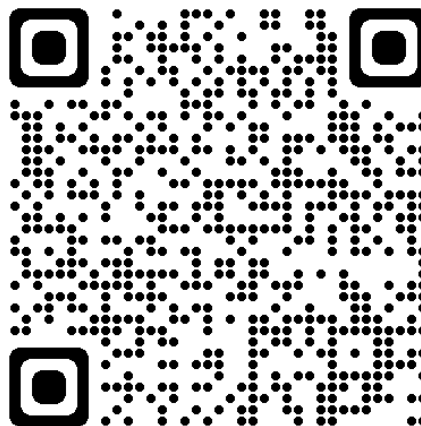
Department of Education and Science.  
(2005a). *Guidelines for second level schools on the implications of Section 9 (c) of the Education Act 1998, relating to students' access to appropriate guidance.*

Extract: *Guidance in Junior Cycle*

Pages 14-15

Live Link: [Guidelines for PP on 9c](#)

URL: <https://tinyurl.com/ye46w8jj>



## Document 3

Department of Education and Science. (2005a). *Guidelines for second level schools on the implications of Section 9 (c) of the Education Act 1998, relating to students' access to appropriate guidance*. Extract: *Guidance in Junior Cycle Pages 14-15*

### Guidance in Junior Cycle

The early years of second level education are critically important ones for young people. There are transitions to be undertaken and many choices and decisions to be made by the student. The school guidance programme can facilitate this decision-making process, and make it an exciting and positive experience. The main challenges and choices for junior cycle students are likely to relate to:

- the transition from primary to second level school
- the choice of JC or JCSP (where available)
- choice of subjects
- the levels at which JC examination subjects are to be taken
- participation in TYP
- which Leaving Certificate programme to pursue (LC (Established), LCA or LCVP, as available)
- subject choice for senior cycle.

### Making the transition from primary to second level education

Most students need time and support in order to adjust to the second level school environment, involving as it does a variety of teachers, new subjects and teaching methods as well as a changed social context. Some students may need individual help, and possibly counselling, in order to complete this transition successfully.

### Links between primary and second level schools

In order to facilitate the smooth transition of students to second level school, it is recommended that there should be a formal communication structure established between second level schools and their main feeder schools. This should include structures to support students with special educational needs. The guidance counsellor/s should participate in the development of links with schools from which their students come and, in co-operation with other relevant members of staff, should develop a guidance programme for incoming students and their parents. This programme should include information about subject choices available, levels of study, the choice of programmes at junior cycle and support services provision.

It is recommended that schools consider formalising their support activities for the transition from primary to second level education into a defined set of measures within the school plan. Such activities could include orientation days, information sessions for parents and meetings with principals from feeder schools. These measures should start before students enter the school and extend at least until the end of the first term of the school year. In order for transition programmes to facilitate the students' successful transition to second level, the co-operation and input of the primary schools are essential.

### Support Services within the school

Students and their parents/guardians are entitled to be informed of the support services available in the school. It is recommended that first year students be given a clear outline of the roles of the personnel involved in the support structures e.g. guidance counsellor, chaplain, HSCL co-ordinator, learning support teachers, care team, year heads, class tutors and others as appropriate. In the context of the school guidance programme, each first year student should have access to individual support from a member of this staff team, in order to assist with his/her integration into the school.

### Progressing through the Junior Cycle

Students in junior cycle must prepare for State examinations for the first time. They are also faced with making subject and programme choices that will have implications for their career choice. In addition to the activities outlined in the section of this document on *Guidance in Second Level Schools* (pages 8/9), the guidance programme should aim to give junior cycle students the opportunity to acquire the following:

- understanding of their strengths and weaknesses
- study skills, including time management
- examination techniques (in 3rd year)
- awareness of the implications of subject selection and levels therein for career choice
- awareness of the need to consider all subject options including non-traditional subjects
- knowledge of the potential benefits of TYP (where it is available)
- knowledge of senior cycle options - LCA, LCVP and the LC (Established), as applicable.



The school guidance programme throughout junior cycle should enable students to begin their exploration of career options. The programme should encourage consideration of a wide range of educational, training and career choices, not bounded by traditional considerations of gender or social stereotyping.

The guidance programme should begin the process of linking students' aptitudes, achievements and interests to career options. Activities to support this could include:

- the encouragement of students in first and second year to explore a range of educational and career areas including non-traditional careers
- project work and team work as a means towards group discussion on career opportunities
- information on the competencies and skills required for the working world, including employability skills
- objective assessment of students' aptitudes and consideration of their achievements, interests and subject choices and how these link to career paths.

During the junior cycle, students and their parents need to be assisted to understand the implications of choices of specific subjects and levels taken, on the range of further study and career options available to them in the future. Ideally, such information should be incorporated into the teaching of these subjects. Where the level of provision by the school of certain subjects or timetable constraints limit a student's options, it is essential that parents and students should be informed of the possible implications as early as possible. For example, under current conditions students should know that:

- higher level Gaelige is a requirement for entry to the colleges of education for primary teaching
- higher level mathematics is a requirement for most honours degree courses in engineering
- a laboratory science subject is a requirement for all medical and most paramedical courses and higher level chemistry is a requirement for some specific medical and paramedical courses in a number of third level institutions.

Students not wishing to progress to senior cycle or to TYP should be provided with opportunities (with their parents) to meet with the guidance counsellor to discuss possible progression routes and training options, such as Youthreach. This vocational programme offers education and training opportunities for 16-21 year olds in local

community settings. Those wishing to enter the labour force should be encouraged to contact FÁS and access local employment support agencies to secure viable employment opportunities.

### Guidance in Senior Cycle

#### The Transition Year Programme

Students in TY often sample the full range of subject options available at senior cycle and gain vocational skills and competencies by undertaking work experience and/or work shadowing. In TY, students are encouraged to develop their full range of intelligences through a greater variety of activities than is available in the other years of second level education. Students undertake a variety of new roles and responsibilities and they engage in new means of personal development, e.g. work experience or mini-companies. These features are an integral part of the TYP.

As part of the TY guidance programme, students should be facilitated in developing and progressing their career plans. Through ongoing exploration and feedback they should develop a growing understanding of their skills, aptitudes and achievements. The work experience/shadowing module should provide each student with the opportunity to participate in a structured work experience/shadowing programme, and in structured and detailed debriefing sessions.

#### Leaving Certificate Programmes

Currently, there are three programmes available at senior cycle: the LC (Established), LCA and LCVP. The guidance programme at senior cycle aims to assist the full development of each student's potential, to help the student grow in self-knowledge and self-esteem and to prepare him/her for higher or further education, training and/or employment. In addition to the guidance activities outlined in the section of this document on *Guidance in Second Level Schools* (pages 8/9) students have additional guidance requirements in senior cycle. The guidance programme should endeavour to provide students with opportunities to:

- prepare to manage their successful transition from second level to further or higher education, training or employment
- identify their own key motivating factors
- prepare for successful transition into adulthood
- learn about job search and job retention skills



## Document 4:

### Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines

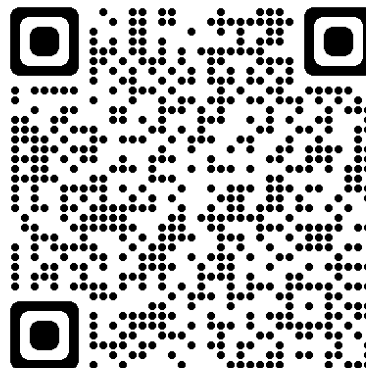
Curriculum and Assessment, 2021, *Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines*

Extract: Section 4.3 Guidance

Pages 46-47

Live Link: [Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines](#)

URL: <https://tinyurl.com/mw3puvzn>



## Document 4:

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 2021, *Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines* Extract: Section 4.3 Guidance Pages 46-47

### 4.3

#### **GUIDANCE**

Guidance in schools refers to:

A range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence, that assist students to develop self-management skills which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses the three separate, but interlinked, areas of personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance.<sup>5</sup>

Schools are managing their guidance resource hours to comply with the requirement in section 9(c) of the *Education Act* (1998) that a school shall use its available resources to 'ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices'. Guidance education must be included in the school's junior cycle programme. The *Framework for Junior Cycle* (2015) states that guidance provision may be included in the hours available for Wellbeing 'in recognition of the unique contribution that guidance can make to the promotion of students' wellbeing'.<sup>6</sup>

The guidance counsellor has an important role in both the design and delivery of elements of the school's Wellbeing programme. Collaboration

between guidance counsellors and subject coordinators is key to the success of a comprehensive and effective Wellbeing programme. In particular, coordination and communication between the SPHE teachers and the guidance counsellor is critical to identify potential overlap of learning between SPHE and learning in junior cycle guidance, and to ensure that they complement each other and avoid unhelpful duplication.

Schools are best placed to decide how they can include guidance in their junior cycle Wellbeing programme within the context of their whole-school guidance plan. Provision can be made in a variety of ways. Many schools are providing guidance-related units of learning which address students' personal, social, educational and vocational needs. These units of learning vary from four to six weeks in length and tend to be provided on a modular basis to class groups to ensure that all students in the year group are engaging with the same units of learning.

The kinds of knowledge and skills that can be developed within guidance units of learning are set out in Table 3.

5 DES. (2005). *Guidelines for second level schools on the implications of section 9(c) of the Education Act 1998, relating to students' access to appropriate guidance*. p4. [https://www.ncge.ie/sites/default/files/ncge/uploads/pp\\_guidelines\\_second\\_level\\_schools\\_9c.pdf](https://www.ncge.ie/sites/default/files/ncge/uploads/pp_guidelines_second_level_schools_9c.pdf)

6 DES. (2015). *Framework for Junior Cycle*. p22. <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-reports/Framework-for-Junior-Cycle-2015.pdf>



**Table 4: Sample guidance-related learning within Wellbeing**

1 <sup>ST</sup> YEAR	2 <sup>ND</sup> YEAR	3 <sup>RD</sup> YEAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making the transition to 1<sup>st</sup> year</li> <li>• Learning to learn</li> <li>• Awareness of personal strengths and interests</li> <li>• Setting personal and learning goals</li> <li>• Self-management and time management skills</li> <li>• Knowing where to go for help</li> <li>• Subject selection (where taster programmes exist)</li> <li>• Student mentor/buddies programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning to learn</li> <li>• Reflecting on myself as a learner</li> <li>• Self-regulation for learning strategies</li> <li>• Setting personal and learning goals</li> <li>• Motivation</li> <li>• Developing skills for coping with the normal stresses of life</li> <li>• Career awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study skills</li> <li>• Organisational, planning and time management skills</li> <li>• Coping strategies in times of stress</li> <li>• Managing exam stress</li> <li>• Managing to maintain a balanced life</li> <li>• Identifying my values, strengths and interests and possible career pathways</li> <li>• Subject choice</li> <li>• Thinking about the right job for me</li> </ul>

See Section 4.7 of these guidelines for a sample guidance-related unit of learning





## Document 5:

### OECD Career Readiness Project Study: Indicators of Teenage Career Readiness

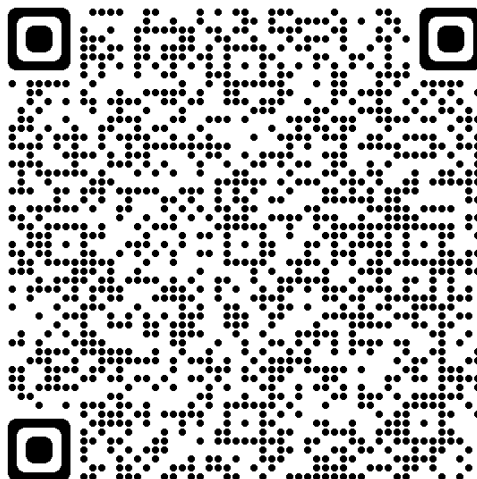
Covacevich, C., Mann, A., Santos, C. and Champaud, J., 2021. *Indicators of teenage career readiness: An analysis of longitudinal data from eight countries*, Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Extract: Section 6

Discussion Pages 66-70

Live Link: [OECD Career Readiness Project](#)

URL: <https://tinyurl.com/39kc2bps>



## Document 5:

Covacevich, C., Mann, A., Santos, C. and Champaud, J., 2021. Indicators of teenage career readiness: An analysis of longitudinal data from eight countries, Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Extract: Section 6 Discussion Pages 66-70

### What the paper set out to do

This paper is the third of three working papers that are focused on identifying generic teenage career-related indicators of positive adult employment outcomes. The OECD Career Readiness project draws on the best available international evidence to understand how schools can reduce student risk of unemployment and poor school-to-work transitions, bringing relevant evidence of 'what works' to the attention of practitioners and policy makers during a period of global economic turbulence.

The paper builds on and further develops the analysis presented in two previous working papers: "Career Ready? How schools can better prepare young people for working life in the era of COVID-19" (Mann, Denis and Percy, 2020<sup>[2]</sup>) and "Thinking about the future: Career readiness insights from national longitudinal surveys and from practice" (Covacevich et al., 2021<sup>[3]</sup>).

These two working papers reviewed evidence respectively from national longitudinal datasets from the existing academic literature and conducted new analyses using data from three countries. The papers concluded that better adult employment outcomes can often be associated with teenage indicators of career readiness. "Career Ready?" identified nine teenage career-related attitudes, activities or experiences which are frequently linked in previously published analyses of longitudinal studies with three adult positive employment outcomes in adulthood (earnings, likelihood of being in education, employment or training and satisfaction with career progression). Nine initial indicators were grouped in that paper into three areas: i) the extent to which teenagers actively explore potential futures through their school; ii) whether teenagers gain workplace experience while still in school and iii) how teenagers think about their futures in work. "Thinking about the future" reviewed datasets in Australia, Denmark and Switzerland and focused specifically on the last of the three thematic areas, identifying two further potential new indicators.

The current working paper looks for further evidence that these indicators can be considered applicable across a wide range of countries, by extending the analysis to ten new datasets from longitudinal surveys from eight countries: Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Korea, the United Kingdom (two surveys), the United States (two surveys) and Uruguay. The paper extends the 11 potential indicators identified earlier, by adding three more. In order to confirm indicators of cross-national relevance, this paper looks for longitudinal evidence that indicators can be associated with positive employment outcomes in at least three countries.

### What the paper found

In all, also taking into consideration the evidence collected in the two previous working papers, this paper found evidence of beneficial outcomes in three or more countries linked to 11 of the 14 potential indicators assessed. The new analysis presented in this paper aligns with the clustering of indicators across three thematic areas: how students explore, experience and think about their potential futures in work.



### *Exploring the future*

The exploring the future category relates to activities that teenagers engage in to investigate potential futures in work. This category includes many activities that are often provided by secondary schools. Six indicators were considered part of exploring the future.

#### *School-based career reflection activities*

School-based career reflection activities were divided into career questionnaires and career classes. Three datasets had available data on career questionnaires that are associated with positive outcomes in Canada, and with negative ones in Uruguay. Six datasets had available data on career classes that are associated with positive outcomes in Canada and Uruguay but with negative ones in United Kingdom (BCS70).

Hence, these results, together with the lack of conclusive evidence from the previous studies identified in the two previous working papers do not allow to identify school-based career reflection activities as a confirmed indicator of career readiness.

However, this should not be interpreted as proof that these activities are not effective. The analysed data has some limitations that must be taken into account. Information on career questionnaires was only available in the analyses of three datasets. And while information on career classes was available in the analyses of six datasets, in one study the question referred to timetabled career classes, while in the others it referred to school provision of information or career-orientated classes; hence the content and approach of these career classes varied between (and possibly within) countries. In addition, the assignment of career questionnaires and career classes to students may not have been random, but based on student characteristics such as educational disengagement. Furthermore, the way in which these indicators were measured only allowed to identification if students had had these activities or not, without taking into account their frequency. Further research would be needed to be able to confirm or refute school-based career reflection activities as a confirmed indicator of career readiness.

#### *Career conversations*

Information on career conversations was available in six of the ten new datasets analysed. This indicator was broken down into three categories: conversations with: i) teachers, ii) career guidance counsellors, and iii) family and peers. While Australia and Canada had information on career conversations with all three categories of people, United Kingdom (BCS70) had information for two categories and Germany, Korea, and the United States (ELS) only had information for one category.

Career conversations with teachers are associated with positive adult employment outcomes in the three datasets with available data: Australia, Canada and United Kingdom (BCS70). Career conversations with career guidance counsellors are associated with positive adult employment outcomes in one of the three datasets with available data: Canada. Career conversations with family and peers are associated with positive adult employment outcomes in three of the four datasets with available data: Australia, Canada, and United States (ELS). In relative terms, the Canadian dataset presented the highest incidence of positive associations between all career conversation types and adult employment outcomes. Aggregated measures of having conversations with different types of people can be expected to have even more of an impact than having conversations only with certain categories of people. Finding associations between having conversations with specific categories of people and adult employment outcomes highlights the impact that these conversations can have. How schools can optimise the benefits of career conversations is the subject of a forthcoming policy brief from the Career Readiness project.

These results further confirm the evidence collected by in a small number of previous studies described in “Career Ready?” that identify career conversations as an indicator of career readiness.



### *Engaging with people in work through career talks or job fairs*

Engaging with people in work through career talks or job fairs is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in three out of the six datasets with available data: Australia, Canada, and Uruguay. While there is limited evidence from longitudinal data outside of the analyses conducted for this paper, these new results, together with the available research, confirm that engaging with people in work through career talks or job fairs as an indicator of career readiness.

### *Workplace visits or job shadowing*

Workplace visits or job shadowing is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in four of the six datasets with available data: Australia, Canada, Korea and the United States (ELS).

The data from Canada and Australia focus only on workplace visits and the data from Korea and the United States (ELS) analysed workplace visits and job shadowing under the same variable.

These results confirm that there is evidence from more than three countries to be able to consider workplace visits or job shadowing as an indicator of career readiness.

### *Application and interview skills development activities*

This study represents the first occasion on which longitudinal data has been examined for evidence of long-term beneficial impacts linked to the teenage development of skills needed for recruitment. The reporting of this indicator was subdivided into activities related to ‘applying for jobs’ and those related to ‘interviewing for a job’. Activities that develop skills related with applying for jobs are associated with positive adult employment outcomes in three of the four datasets with available data: Australia, Canada and United Kingdom (BCS70). Activities that develop skills related to interviewing for jobs are associated with positive adult employment outcomes in the two datasets with available data: Canada and United Kingdom (BCS70).

These results confirm that there is evidence from three countries that support application and interview skills development activities as an indicator of career readiness.

### *Occupationally-focused short programmes*

Occupationally-focused short programmes are associated with positive adult employment outcomes in the two datasets with available data: Canada and the United States (ELS). A limitation of the analyses presented here is that there is only evidence available from two datasets. This is probably due to these programmes being more common in specific countries, such as Australia, Canada, and the United States. However, taking into account the evidence collected by previous studies (notably in Australia), these new results further confirm occupationally-focused short programmes as an indicator of career readiness.

## ***Experiencing the future***

The experiencing the future category relates with first-hand experience of the world of work during teenage years that can be associated with positive employment outcomes in adulthood. Three indicators were considered part of experiencing the future.

### *Part-time work*

Part-time work is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in three out of the seven datasets with available data: Canada, United Kingdom (BCS70) and United States (NLSY97). However, part-time work is associated with negative adult employment outcomes in the case of Germany, specifically with lower work satisfaction. Overall, these results further confirm the evidence collected by previous studies that identify part-time work as an indicator



### *Work placements*

Work placements are associated with positive adult employment outcomes in one of the four datasets with available data: Germany. As well as only having data for four datasets, the available information may have limitations as work placements can mean different things in different settings. In most countries considered, work placements are likely to be undertaken within general education, rather than dedicated programmes of vocational study where earlier OECD analysis has highlighted the strong value of work-based learning (Musset, 2019<sup>[65]</sup>). There are very few previous longitudinal assessments (based on the British data) that look at the effect on adult employment outcomes of work placements. Further research would be needed to be able to confirm work placements as an indicator of career readiness, exploring in greater depth impacts experienced by students who may not have been randomly allocated to the provision.

### *Volunteering*

Volunteering is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in two of the three datasets with available data: Germany and United Kingdom (BCS70). As with part-time work, there is a lot of variation in the distribution of volunteering between countries and the forms that it takes in different countries also varies. Despite these limitations, when this data is considered together with previous studies of longitudinal data (from Australia and the United States), it confirms volunteering as an indicator of career readiness.

While part-time work, work placements and volunteering provide evidence of varying strength as indicators of career readiness, these activities are quite context specific and more than individual indicators in themselves they can perhaps be better considered examples of how teenage experience of the world of work while still in secondary education can be seen to provide long-term benefits.

### *Intensity and student perceptions of workplace engagement*

The above indicators focus only on whether students had participated in those activities or not. But elements such as frequency and perception of the experience can make a difference on adult employment outcomes (Mann, Kashefpakdel and Percy, 2018<sup>[96]</sup>). To better understand the experiences that students had with part-time work, work placements and volunteering, this paper analysed the relationship between work-related outcomes and perceived usefulness of the experience of work, frequency of the work or volunteering experience, and whether instrumental motivation was a reason for engaging with the work or volunteering experience.

Higher perceived usefulness of the experience of work is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in one of the two datasets with available data: Germany. Greater frequency of working or volunteering is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in two of the four datasets with available data (United Kingdom BCS70 and United States NLSY97) and with negative adult employment outcomes in Germany, specifically with an increased likelihood of being NEET. Instrumental motivation as a reason for working or volunteering is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in the two datasets with available data: Australia and Germany.

While the available data was limited, these results seem to confirm that characteristics of the work experience as well as how it is perceived by the students matter.

### ***Thinking about the future***

Perhaps the most powerful finding from this study is the strong association across multiple countries between teenage thoughts and attitudes about their imagined futures in work and positive employment outcomes in adulthood. Five indicators were considered as part of thinking about the future.



### *Career certainty*

Career certainty ambition is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in three out of the six datasets with available data: Canada, United Kingdom (BCS70) and United States (ELS). However, in one of the datasets – Korea – career certainty is associated with a negative outcome (lower salary). A possible explanation for this is the late entry of males into the labour market due to military service.

Overall, these new analyses can be considered to further confirm the evidence from previous studies (in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States) that identify career certainty as an indicator of teenage career readiness.

### *Career ambition*

Career ambition is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in two out of the five datasets with available data: Korea and China. These new analyses further confirm career ambition as an indicator of career readiness in other countries beyond the evidence already collected in previous studies from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Switzerland.

### *Career alignment*

Career alignment is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in four out of the five datasets with available data: Australia, Canada, China and Korea. The results build on evidence of beneficial outcomes identified in previous research literature related to Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States). These new analyses further confirm career alignment as an indicator of career readiness, and in three of the cases, this is in countries for which there was no previous data.

### *Instrumental motivation towards school*

Different studies and datasets use different names to refer to what is here called ‘instrumental motivation towards school’. It is a variable that presents challenges in comparing between datasets, as the questions used to collect the information focus on different elements of instrumental motivation towards school, some questions are phrased positively (school will help me get a good job) while others are phrased negatively (school is a waste of time), and some analyses used composite variables while others used answers to individual items. Despite these difficulties, instrumental motivation towards school is associated with positive adult employment outcomes in six out of the seven datasets with available data (Australia, Canada, Denmark, the United Kingdom and the United States). Only in Uruguay it was associated with negative outcomes, specifically with an increased likelihood of being NEET. Together with the previous available analyses (from the United Kingdom and the United States), these new analyses further confirm instrumental motivation towards school as an indicator of career readiness.

### *Career originality*

Career originality was an indicator explored for the first time in “Thinking about the future” (where it was referred to as “career concentration”) as there were no previous analyses of national datasets found about this potential indicator. In “Thinking about the future”, career originality was associated with positive adult employment outcomes in two of the three datasets (Australia and Denmark). In the new datasets analysed in this paper, analyses on career originality were only available for Canada, and the results show negative associations with adult employment outcomes. Thus, further research would be needed to be able to confirm career originality as an indicator of career readiness. Forthcoming longitudinal research from the United Kingdom is expected soon add to this collective knowledge. Once published, this new research may allow the confirmation of career originality as an indicator of career readiness.

