

ACEG

Supporting careers work in schools and colleges

The Association for Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG) is the professional subject association for careers education and guidance (CEG) in schools and colleges in England and Wales. Its members are careers practitioners in schools and colleges and those working in Connexions partnerships and local authorities who support these practitioners.

Aims and activities

ACEG's range of services to its members includes regular journals and newsletters. Other publications include *Better Practice: A guide to delivering effective career learning 11-19*, *What Do Careers Co-ordinators Do?*, *Essential Reading* and other occasional papers. It also has a website – www.aceg.org.uk which includes a members' only section. The website is soon to be upgraded.

The Association is committed to promoting the highest standards in CEG for all young people through excellence and innovation in careers work. It has close, ongoing links with the Supporting Children and Young People Group at the Department for Children, Schools and Families and with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, as well as campaigning on appropriate matters through those and other non-government organisations. Current lobbying topics include continuing professional development for the careers education and IAG (CEIAG) workforce, especially in the context of PSHE education and the other demands of the 14-19 reforms, such as the Area Wide Prospectus and the Common Application Process.

ACEG is a partner with VT Enterprise and Youth Access (supported by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust and the Economics, Business and Enterprise Association) in the CEIAG Support Programme (including the *cegnet* website). It also works closely with other stakeholders in the development of the PSHE education curriculum, where careers education sits as part of the Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability programmes of study at key stages 3 and 4.

History of the Association

The Association is 40 years old and is celebrating its ruby anniversary at the annual conference in Cambridge on 2 – 3 July 2009. The venue is Fitzwilliam College, which was also the scene of the meeting that led to the formation of the Association, as the National Association of Careers Teachers in 1969. The impetus then was to raise the profile of careers work in schools and to lobby for more adequate provision: in those far-off times, access to a telephone and clerical help was still a rarity for the Head of Careers.

The inaugural conference took place in 1969 and one of the early outcomes was the McIntyre report (1970) which established the case for minimum facilities and led to some strong lobbying at the then Department for Education and Science. An in-house Journal soon became a regular fixture and, under the enthusiastic leadership of the late Harry Dowson (Founder Chairman) and Ray Heppell (Founder Secretary and still Elections Officer of the Association), a Council and sub-committee structure was established and links made with other leading bodies in the guidance sector.

In 1974, the name of the Association changed – to the National Association of Careers & Guidance Teachers. Another name change came in 2006, when it was acknowledged that ACEG was not a UK-wide organisation, but rather one serving the needs of practitioners in England and Wales, although we continue to work closely with sister organisations in Northern Ireland and Scotland, as well as with other international organisations. The change also acknowledged our wish to serve the increasing number of careers staff who do not come into the profession as teachers, but as librarians, administrators or in a co-ordinating role.

And now

Today the Association continues to thrive. It has over 1600 members and, as in the past, benefits greatly from the commitment of a largely volunteer workforce, although there is now a small professional secretariat. Through the work of its Executive and a larger Consultative Council (made up of members) ACEG enjoys high credibility with Government departments and other agencies and has a productive relationship with colleague associations. Its publications are well received by the membership and its annual conference provides excellent professional development opportunities in the friendliest of environments.

You can find out more about ACEG at www.aceg.org.uk or inquire about Membership by e-mailing membsec@aceg.org.uk.

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