

## September Guarantee

### Guidance for local authorities and partners (including schools, colleges, training providers, Connexions providers, and the Learning and Skills Council)

#### Introduction

1. The transition from compulsory education to further education or work-based training is a critical time for young people. Staying in learning not only supports them to get a better job; it also improves their life chances and equips them with the personal and social skills they need to thrive throughout their lives.
2. The majority of young people make a successful transition with nearly 9 out of 10 16 year olds continuing in education and training in 2006. But the remainder is at greater risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training). That is why the 14-19 Implementation Plan (2005) made a commitment to offer, by the end of September, a suitable place in post-16 learning to all young people completing compulsory education. This is known as the September Guarantee.
3. The proportion of young people in education and training falls by around 10 percent between ages 16 and 17. The September Guarantee is therefore being extended to 17 year olds in 2008 to give those who enroll on 1 year or short courses, or who leave the activity they chose when leaving school, further opportunities to engage in learning. This means that all young people who reached the statutory school leaving age in 2007 and 2008 will be entitled to an offer under the Guarantee.
4. Implementation of the Guarantee means that there is a clear process in place for ensuring young people have an offer to at least 2 years further education when they leave compulsory education. This is crucial to continuing to raise level 2 and 3 attainment levels as well as overall participation rates in the local authority area. These are key elements of 14-19 progress checks and performance, and will also form part of the progression measure being developed for schools. Delivery of the Guarantee will also help local authorities to prepare for raising the participation age in 2013 (subject to the passage of legislation currently before Parliament).
5. The Guarantee is measured on the basis of an offer of learning, and not on the take up of a learning place. This is because it is about galvanizing the whole system – schools, colleges, training providers, Connexions providers and the LSC - to work together to prepare, support and enable young people to make the transition. This must start early; waiting until it is known who has not engaged in post-16 learning happens too late to influence key decisions and young people may already have become disengaged.
6. Local Authorities – through their Children’s Trusts and 14-19 Partnerships – have the lead strategic role in ensuring the Guarantee is delivered to all young people completing compulsory education in their area. They should work with schools, colleges, Connexions Services and the LSC area partnership team to

ensure that the relevant processes are in place, and that each has a clear understanding of its responsibilities.

7. The guarantee was first implemented nationally in 2007, and early indications are that it has enabled more young people to remain in learning. However, discussions with local authorities and delivery partners have identified areas that need to be strengthened in 2008, including communication and the role of schools. These are addressed in this guidance.

### **Delivery of the Guarantee**

8. The foundations for successful transition will be laid throughout a young person's secondary education, and intensify from Year 9. More targeted action to deliver the September Guarantee will take place during Years 11 and 12 (i.e. the last year of compulsory education, and the first year of post-compulsory education). It is important that this begins early and that the majority of activity takes place before young people leave school or college. This leaves the summer period to work intensively with those still without an offer and gives enough time for additional provision to be put in place where necessary.

9. A review of the delivery of the 16 year old Guarantee in 2007, and discussions about how this can be extended to 17 year olds, identified the following key stages:

#### Year 11 (September – February):

- i) ensuring that all young people have the information, advice and guidance they need to make choices about their future pathway, and establishing their intended destinations;
- ii) collecting and recording on CCIS information about young people's plans post-16. There is a stencil at annex 2 that could be used for this purpose, or adapted to suit local needs;
- iii) aggregating the 'intended destinations' data above, and sharing it with partners so that provision can be planned and commissioned that meets the needs of all young people.

#### February – May (i.e. pre GCSE study leave)

- iv) commissioning learning provision that takes account of intended destinations and labour market needs;
- v) ongoing IAG to give young people the information they need to apply for post-16 opportunities;
- vi) notification by schools, colleges and training providers of offers of post-16 learning made to young people;
- vii) tracking the applications and offers of learning made to young people so that those who have yet to apply for learning, or who have yet to receive an offer, or who change their minds can be identified and given additional support.

### May – September

- viii) ongoing tracking with those who had not received an offer before leaving school so that intensive support can be given during the summer, with “clearing house” arrangements proving successful in many areas;
- ix) notification by schools, colleges and training providers of offers of post-16 learning made to young people;
- x) action following GCSE results day to confirm provisional offers, and offer IAG to those wishing to change direction in light of their results.

### Year 12 – September onwards

- xi) notification by schools, colleges and independent learning providers of young people leaving learning so that the young person can be contacted and helped to re-engage;
- xii) undertaking the annual activity survey (November) to confirm that young people have settled into their chosen post-16 activity;
- xiii) identification of young people enrolled on 1 year (or short) courses, and establishing their intentions on completion;
- xiv) notification by schools, colleges and training providers of offers of post-16 learning made to young people.

Annex 1 sets out an at-a-glance timetable which local authorities could use as a basis for local planning, and to agree accountabilities and key dates with their LSC area partnership team and other partners.

10. Whilst this guidance is primarily about making and recording offers of learning to young people, this has to be done as part of the wider package of support if the Guarantee is to be delivered effectively. Local authorities are also encouraged to consider establishing a Common Application Process, linked to their 14-19 area prospectus. Not only does this simplify the process for young people, but also offers an effective and timely means of tracking applications and offers made.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

11. Local Authorities – through their Children’s Trusts and 14-19 Partnerships – have the lead strategic role in ensuring the Guarantee is delivered to all young people completing compulsory education in their area. They should work with schools, colleges, Connexions Services and the LSC area partnership team to ensure that the relevant processes are in place, and that each has a clear understanding of its responsibilities. The 14-19 Prospectus will also help to ensure that young people and those supporting them are aware of the opportunities available in the local area.

12. Responsibilities include:

**Local Authority** (including the 14-19 Partnership and Children's Trust):

- Ensuring that delivery partners are clear about their role in delivering the Guarantee and that key dates have been identified;
- Keeping the area prospectus up to date and monitoring its use effectively;
- Monitoring the availability of learning provision and ensuring, with the LSC, that gaps are identified and action taken to address them;
- Sharing information on offers made to young people in schools maintained by the authority;
- Monitoring implementation, challenging performance, and taking action to resolve issues arising;
- Mobilising targeted youth support services to respond to those needing more intensive support.

**Y11 Schools:**

- Ensuring that Connexions providers have a complete list of young people throughout Year 11, including current contact details;
- Promoting the September Guarantee to staff working with Year 11 students, young people and their parents/carers;
- Working with Connexions providers to give impartial IAG to Year 11 students and establishing intended destinations;
- Providing predicted GCSE results to local authorities/Connexions providers to help plan the level of post-16 provision required;
- Supporting post-16 applications, monitoring offers received by young people and sharing information with Connexions;
- Identifying early young people at risk of not having an offer, with ongoing support provided in conjunction with Connexions;
- Action on GCSE results days to confirm offers, and to offer additional support to those wishing to choose an alternative route in light of their results;
- Supporting the Connexions annual survey to confirm the destinations of young people;
- Notifying Connexions of young people leaving during, or at the end of, Y12;
- Responding to 'intended destinations' data in the construction of their 14-19 offer.

**Connexions Providers:**

- Ensuring that all Year 11 students (including those not on school rolls) are recorded on CCIS, and that contact details are current;
- Working with schools to provide impartial IAG to all Year 11 leavers;
- With the help of schools, establishing and recording intended destinations;

- Reporting intended destinations to the local authority and LSC;
- Identification of young people without an offer so that intensive support can be given or provision sought;
- Recording offers made on CCIS;
- Action on GCSE results days to confirm provisional offers, and to give additional support to those who want or need to choose an alternative route in light of their results;
- Confirming young people's destinations (activity on 1<sup>st</sup> November) to record in the annual activity survey;
- Ongoing tracking of young people undertaking a personal development opportunity so further provision can be offered when appropriate.

#### ***Learning and Skills Council:***

- Ensuring that learning providers understand the Guarantee and the importance of passing information on offers to Connexions as soon as they can;
- Working with Connexions and LAs to ensure that in every area of the country the supply of provision (in relation to type and level of learning) matches demand from young people;
- Ongoing collaboration with Connexions providers to find suitable provision for young people yet to receive an offer learning;
- Ensuring that learning opportunities are available from January onwards for those who did not engage in September, or who initially undertook a personal development opportunity.

#### ***Post-16 schools, colleges and independent training providers:***

- Informing Connexions as soon as possible of offers they make to young people;
- Informing Connexions of young people who do not turn up for enrolments or interviews or who refuse places;
- Informing Connexions of young people who leave learning;
- Ensuring that up-to-date details of their current offer are available through the area prospectus.

#### **The offer for 2008**

13. The Guarantee is of an offer, by the end of September 2008, of an appropriate place in learning. The agreed start date can be after the end of September, but should be no later than the beginning of the January 2009 term.

14. The offer must be of one of the following:

- full or part-time education in school, sixth form college or FE college;
- an apprenticeship or programme led apprenticeship. This **must** include both the training element and a job or work placement;

- Entry to Employment (E2E);
- employment with training to NVQ level 2.

The offer must include an agreed start date. A place on a waiting list does not count as an offer.

15. The offer must be appropriate for the young person's individual needs. That means it must be at the right level; geographical location; occupational sector and learning method. There should be a particular focus on young people who have additional needs, for example, those who:

- are disengaged from education, missing school or home educated;
- face significant barriers, such as learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) or teenage parenthood;
- have low aspirations and little support from family.

16. Responsibility for ensuring there is sufficient formal learning provision to meet the Guarantee lies with the LSC. Information on young people's intended destinations, together with labour market information, should form the basis for planning and commissioning learning provision. The 14-19 prospectus should also be used to identify any gaps in provision.

17. There will be a small proportion of young people who are not yet ready for one of the routes in paragraph 14 above, and for whom informal learning or personal development activities would be more appropriate. These young people should be referred to such activities, but should be recorded separately (see annex 3). However, these activities are likely to be of relatively short duration, and the young person remains entitled to an offer as soon as they complete to help them progress into formal learning.

### **Tracking offers made**

18. Delivery of the Guarantee will be monitored using the CCIS system maintained by Connexions providers. For this to be effective, local authorities, schools, colleges, training providers, LSC area teams and Connexions must share information on Year 11 and 12 students. Schools, for example, will need to let their Connexions provider know of young people who have been offered a 6<sup>th</sup> form place whilst the LSC must ensure that FE colleges and training providers inform Connexions as soon as offers are made to young people. The review of implementation in 2007 highlighted a delay in the notification of offers made and this hampered Connexions' ability to track which young people were still to receive an offer.

19. The CCIS specification is being updated for 2008 to enable the Guarantee to be monitored more robustly. The fields that will be available, both for 16 and 17 year olds, are set out in Annex 3.

### Year 11 (16 year old) students

20. CCIS should already hold details of young people due to reach the statutory school leaving age in 2008, and who are educated in the authority area. It is good practice to ensure that these records are up to date – particularly contact details – so that services can get in touch with young people during this critical year. There were far too many young people in 2007 who could not be contacted once they had left school, and this is an area that local authorities will want to monitor closely in 2008.

21. The authority in which the young person was attending school in May 2008 (May PLASC) is responsible for ensuring that they receive an offer, regardless of where the young person lives. This is a change from 2007, and has been made both to ease the need for records to be passed between authority areas, and to bring the Guarantee into line with the annual activity survey and school progression measure. For this to be effective:

- schools and Connexions providers must ensure students who live in one area and are educated in another are given a coordinated package of support. This should include agreement on who leads on giving that support – the school, Connexions in the school area, or Connexions in the home area once the young person has left school.
- information about young people planning to apply for learning opportunities in a neighboring authority area must be shared with the relevant local authority and LSC. Connexions providers in areas where cross border traffic is commonplace may want to agree protocols for doing this.

22. Young people of Year 11 age who are not on a school roll, or educated at home are also entitled to an offer and should be recorded in the authority area where they are resident.

23. The local authority, LSC and Connexions must monitor the number of Year 11 students still to receive an offer on a regular basis. They should jointly establish the reason why young people are without an offer. The local authority will need to take the lead on working with its partners to address any barriers identified.

### Year 12 (17 year old) students

24. The majority of young people who take up learning opportunities at the start of Year 12 will remain in learning for 2 years. However, around 10% leave learning during or at the end of Y12. These young people, as well as those who did not engage in post-16 learning after Year 11 but now wish to do so, are entitled to an offer, by the end of September, of a place in learning.

25. The annual activity survey will identify those who failed to take up offers, and the notification arrangements put in place in September 2007 should ensure that young people leaving learning are brought to the attention of Connexions providers. Connexions providers are expected to contact all young people leaving

learning as soon as possible to offer appropriate support to re-engage. The LSC has been asked to make enrolment arrangements more flexible in 2008/09 so that opportunities will be available for young people to engage in learning throughout the year. This is essential if young people completing personal development opportunities, voluntary sector provision or E2E have the opportunity to progress.

26. However, those who leave towards the end of Year 12, or who are enrolled on one year courses, are less likely to re-engage in learning before September. So, whilst all young people reaching the statutory school leaving age in 2007 (ie those of academic age 17) are entitled to an offer, the two groups that will be monitored through CCIS are:

- young people in year 12 who are enrolled on 1 year (or short) courses, or who have returned to school or college to retake GCSEs. 'A' level courses should be deemed as 2 year courses unless a young person has made it clear that they intend only to complete AS level;
- young people of academic age 17 who were NEET at the end of April, May or June 2008. This includes those who have 'dropped out' of learning, and those whose original intention was employment.

27. The process for identifying young people's needs, sharing of information and commissioning provision should follow broadly the same arrangements as for the Y11 Guarantee. That includes responsibility for making an offer lying with the area in which the young person is being educated post-16. This should include establishing the "next steps" of young people undertaking one year or short courses. Offers of learning should also be recorded in the same way, using the framework set out in annex 3.

28. 2008 is the first year of delivery of the 17 year old September Guarantee. We will review implementation towards the end of this year with a view to making any necessary amendments to the process in 2009.

### **Monitoring delivery of the Guarantee**

29. CCIS data is provided to DCSF on a monthly basis. Because of the importance of the Guarantee and its links to raising the participation age, DCSF will monitor delivery closely throughout 2008. This includes the wider process including the collection of intended destinations. Information will be shared with the LSC national office, and will be included in the monthly MI tables placed on the NCCIS website so that it can be used in the 14-19 progress check process, and by Government Offices as part of the regular performance management arrangements.

30. The impact of the Guarantee on numbers in learning will be assessed towards the end of February 2008 when the 2007 annual activity survey is complete, and in the annual NEET figures.



**Suggested timetable (Y11 Guarantee)**

	Schools	Connexions providers	Post -16 schools and learning providers	Learning and Skills Council	Local authority
September	Ensure Y11 students and know about the September Guarantee and the importance of remaining in learning post-16				
October	Young people given the information, advice and guidance they need to make decisions and apply for post-16 learning				
November	Establish Y11 'intended destinations' and record on CCIS				
December	Identification of young people at risk of not having an offer, and/or who might require targeted support				Ensures that all partners are aware of their roles and responsibilities
January	Collate information on intended destinations and share with the local authority and Learning and Skills Council (including those in neighboring areas where appropriate)				
February			Ensure the Learning prospectus reflects accurately the provision being offered  Inform Connexions of offers made to young people  Inform Connexions of offers refused by young people	LSC and local authority review intended destinations, and plan and commission provision accordingly  Learning prospectus updated  Ongoing review of young people without offers, with additional provision commissioned where necessary	
March		Identify young people without an offer when they leave school			
April		Agree who gives continued support throughout the summer			
May		Ongoing exchange of information with LSC re young people without offers			
June					
July					
August	Schools and Connexions providers review offers in light of GCSE results				
September					
October				Notify Connexions of young people failing to start or who leave learning	
November	Conduct annual destinations survey				
December					

Example of stencil for collecting and recording information about young people's plans post-16

### What next?

Connexions wants to make sure that you have something to do when you leave school. This information will enable us to keep in contact with you and to understand your needs.

Name	Date of Birth
Address	
Post code	Email address
Home telephone number:	Mobile phone number
Present school:	

1. What do you think you would like to do when you finish Year 11? We know that you may not have made up your mind yet, but please tick the box below to show which option you would most like to take. The information you give us will help us to make sure that there are suitable opportunities for you to take up in September.

	✓
Staying in 6 <sup>th</sup> form in this school	
Moving to another school 6 <sup>th</sup> form	
Going to 6 <sup>th</sup> form college	
Further education college	
Apprenticeship or work based training	
Job (I have a definite job arranged)	
Job (I have not yet found a job)	
Other (please see question 5)	
I have not yet made up my mind	

2. If you have already been offered a place at school, college or with an employer, please state:

Name of college/training provider/employer

Type of course or job

3. If you are planning to stay at school or college to study for further qualifications, please tell us:

Name of school or college you would like to attend

Course name

4. If you are hoping to find an apprenticeship, training opportunity or job, please tell us which occupational area you would like to work in (for example, engineering, clerical).

5. If you plan to do something that isn't covered above, please tell us about it

## Recording young people's Guarantee status on CCIS

<b>Offer made</b>	
Appropriate offer made and start date confirmed	<p>The young person has an offer of a place in: full or part-time education, LSC funded training, or employment with training to NVQ 2, and has been given a start date. Start date should be recorded on CCIS.</p> <p>Offers that are conditional on GCSE attainment should also be counted here, but should be reviewed once GCSE results are known.</p> <p>Do <b>not</b> include offers that are conditional on the young person finding a job or employer placement.</p>
<b>Not ready for formal learning at this time</b>	
Planning to go into Employment without training to Level 2	This category will include locally recognised good quality training as well as jobs without training. Temporary or part-time employment would also be included here.
Not ready for formal learning	Other opportunity more appropriate; eg personal development opportunity, access course, work tasters. Young people taking this path are entitled to an offer of mainstream learning once they are ready.
Personal circumstances mean that learning is not currently appropriate	Other issues to solve before in a position to take up learning e.g. homelessness, custodial sentence, illness, pregnancy, caring responsibilities etc.
Other reason	None of the above (eg young people undertaking voluntary work, traveling abroad)
<b>No offer made</b>	
No appropriate provision	<p>Include here young people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cannot find a suitable option to apply for,</li> <li>- have had their application rejected;</li> <li>- have been offered an apprenticeship place, but have still to find a job/work placement;</li> <li>- are on a waiting list or who do not have a start date.</li> </ul>
Not applied for learning	The young person is undecided about their options, and/or has not yet applied for a learning place.
Application awaiting outcome	The young person has applied for a place in learning but the result is not yet known.
Unable to Contact	
<b>Guarantee Status Not Yet Recorded</b>	CCIS systems should default blank entries to this code to ensure that all Y11 leavers are included in the return.
<b>Total</b>	This should match the number of Y11 students reported in the May cohort figure.