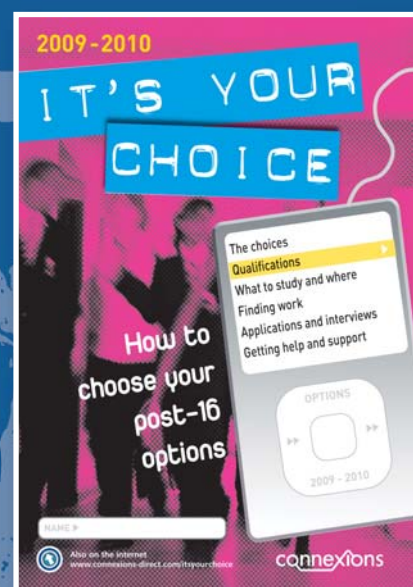
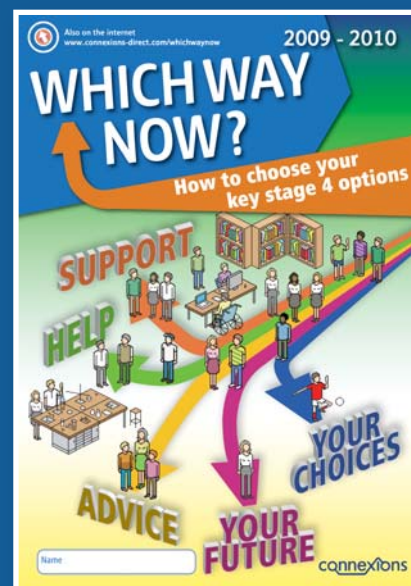


# Practitioners' guide

Using **Which way now?**  
and **It's your choice**  
in the classroom



2009-  
2010

# Introduction



## About this guide

This guide offers suggestions on how to use the Connexions magazines **Which way now?** and **It's your choice** in the classroom with young people who are choosing their key stage 4 or post-16 options. It is a response to requests from practitioners for materials to support the use of these magazines in tutorial and careers education sessions.

## Options programmes

Changes in education and training give young people more choices than ever before. A good options programme is a vital element in helping them to choose well. Such programmes:

- enhance young people's self-efficacy and self-management skills
- raise their aspirations and challenge unrealistic expectations
- motivate them to make the most of their opportunities
- improve their participation, achievement and progression
- reduce the risk of floundering and 'trial and error' choices
- help to overcome decision and transition anxiety.

Schools deliver options programmes in many different ways. The best are characterised by:

- transparency – young people understand why they must make decisions that affect their future
- impartiality – young people receive information, advice and guidance that is accurate, comprehensive, fair and puts their interests before organisational ones
- timeliness – the programme starts sufficiently early and keeps to the published timetable
- challenge – the programme empowers young people to challenge stereotyped and traditional thinking and other barriers to participation, achievement and progression
- partnership working – the school and other partners work together to improve young people's options and ensure they understand what each option involves, where it leads and how it can help them in the future
- learning outcomes – in addition to choosing their options, young people learn how to prepare for and manage future decisions and transitions
- effective monitoring – so that no young person slips through the net.

## Getting the most from **Which way now?** and **It's your choice**

**Which way now?** is for young people choosing their key stage 4 options. **It's your choice** is for those choosing post-16 ones.

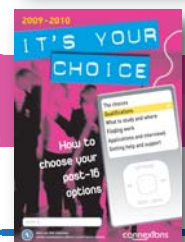
- Use the sessions in this guide, preferably as part of your options programmes, to introduce the magazines before letting young people take them home.
- Draw young people's attention to the centre page pull-out in the magazines and ask them to give it to their parents/carers. Encourage them to use this as an opportunity to discuss the options process with their parents/carers and share their thoughts and ideas.
- Use the magazines as a workbook. Ask young people to write their names in the box on the front cover, work through the action points and browse the websites listed. Emphasise that the more they get involved, the more control they have over what happens.
- Help young people to make the links between the work done with the magazines and other parts of the careers programme – for instance, ensure they use the results of any self-assessments and career interest questionnaires.
- Provide any follow-up support required – for example, dealing with queries, checking progress, referring individuals for specialist help or advocating on their behalf.

## Content

### Page 1 – What's changing?

### Page 3 – Using **Which way now?** in the classroom

### Page 9 – Using **It's your choice** in the classroom



# What's changing?



The options process involves helping young people to choose well so they stay in learning for longer, achieve more and improve their life chances. 14-19 and other reforms are extending young people's options and changing the nature of the support they receive to help them with their decision-making. Find out more here.

## **Comprehensive, impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG)**

As young people's choices grow, so does their need for good quality, comprehensive and impartial IAG. Under the Education and Skills Act 2008, schools have a duty to provide young people with impartial IAG that covers all their options and promotes their best interests.

## **The local online 14-19 prospectus**

All areas now have an online 14-19 prospectus and associated post-16 Common Application Process (CAP). The prospectus gives young people, parents and carers easy access to good quality, comprehensive and impartial information about local learning opportunities. Use of the prospectus should be an integral part of the options process. To support this both **Which way now?** and **It's your choice** have action points to help young people use their local prospectus in this way (Action point 9, page 19 and Action point 6, page 13 respectively). You can find your local online prospectus at [www.direct.gov.uk/14-19prospectus](http://www.direct.gov.uk/14-19prospectus)

## **Qualification levels**

All qualifications fit into a nine-level national framework. Entry level is at the bottom and level 8 at the top. Qualifications at the same level require the same degree of skill, knowledge and understanding. They place similar demands on learners although the type of study and subject matter may differ. Courses leading to the different qualifications vary in content, learning styles and assessment methods.

Young people need to understand qualification levels so that they:

- can make sense of the information about qualifications provided by schools and local online 14-19 prospectuses
- can work out precisely what qualifications and grades they need to meet the entry requirements for a course, training programme, job or career that interests them

- know how to plot their way through the framework, moving across qualification types and levels to plan their progression in learning, now and during their working lives.

To support this, pages 8 and 9 in **Which way now?** and pages 5 and 6 in **It's your choice** describe the national framework in some detail and explain why qualifications are important.

## **Functional skills**

These are the practical skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). You use them in everyday life, in learning and at work. Everyone needs good functional skills. That is why they are part of the Diploma and, from September 2010, GCSEs and Apprenticeships. Schools and colleges are being encouraged to enter students for separate functional skills assessments to make sure that they have the best possible preparation for progression to further study and work.

## **Foundation Learning Progression Pathways**

These are for individuals aged 14 and over who are working below level 2. Learning providers use national frameworks to create personalised programmes in response to individual needs. The aim is to provide small stepping stones to achievement, enabling individuals to progress at their own pace and gain nationally recognised qualifications that will support their further progression. Key stage 4 programmes include the compulsory subjects. All individuals receive extensive IAG before, during and on exit from a programme. **Which way now?** refers to these as personalised learning programmes (see page 11). **It's your choice** refers to them as personalised pathways (see page 8).

## **GCSEs/A Levels**

Changes to these qualifications aim to ensure that they remain high quality and meet current needs. GCSEs, for example, have updated content, a unitised structure and controlled assessments rather than coursework. A Levels have updated content, limited coursework and greater stretch and challenge. Students who perform exceptionally well in a full A Level can now achieve an A\* grade. A new qualification, the Extended Project, is

# What's changing?



available to help students develop the communication, planning, time management, research and independent working skills that higher education institutions (HEIs) and employers value. (This qualification is part of the Advanced and Progression Diplomas.) Pages 12 and 13 of **Which way now?** describe the GCSE with an action point encouraging students to find out more about them. Page 9 in **It's your choice** describes the range of general qualifications available post-16.

## **The Diploma**

Nationally from September 2010, this qualification is available in fourteen subjects at three levels. Local provision varies. All staff supporting young people with the options process should:

- understand that the Diploma is a composite qualification that suits individuals of all abilities and aspirations
- recognise that the Diploma offers a fully-rounded education that supports progression to a wide range of opportunities in learning and work, but that does not qualify an individual to do a specific job
- know which Diploma subjects young people can study locally, what each subject involves and where it might lead
- understand local delivery arrangements – such as timetables, teaching locations, teaching staff and transport
- appreciate the importance of ensuring that young people receive good support when choosing the optional elements of a Diploma (the Additional and Specialist Learning) as this may affect their future plans.

Pages 14 and 15 of **Which way now?** describe the Diploma with an action point encouraging students to find out more about it. Page 10 of **It's your choice** includes details of level 3 Diplomas.

## **Apprenticeships**

Page 16 of **Which way now?** describes Young Apprenticeships at key stage 4 and page 11 of **It's your choice** describes post-16 Apprenticeships. The intention is that Apprenticeships will become a mainstream option post-16 and provision is expanding steadily. Young people's choices will depend on their experience and

what is available locally. It is important that those who opt for this route are committed to their chosen occupation. They may face stiff competition as Apprenticeships are open to anyone over 16 whether they are just leaving school, have been working for years or are seeking to change career direction.

## **Vocational qualifications**

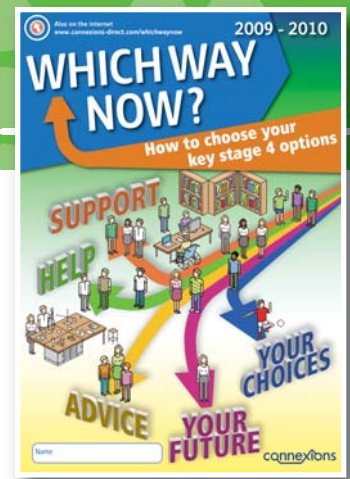
It is anticipated that young people will increasingly study for vocational qualifications as part of one of the five new publicly funded learning routes: Foundation Learning Progression Pathways, GCSEs/A Levels (general qualifications), the Diploma, Apprenticeships and Employment with Accredited Training.

## **The September Guarantee**

The September Guarantee entitles 16 and 17 year olds to an offer of appropriate learning and the IAG they need to choose well. Staff supporting young people with the options process should:

- ensure that all young people and their parents/carers know about the Guarantee
- work with Connexions providers to establish Year 11 students' intended destinations
- encourage young people to make post-16 applications and monitor the offers they receive
- identify young people at risk of not having an offer at an early stage and work in partnership with Connexions to provide ongoing support.

# Using Which way now? in the classroom



## About Which way now?

This magazine is for young people who are choosing their key stage 4 options. It:

- signposts what they need to think about and who can help
- provides information on topics such as qualifications, learning pathways and future considerations
- has case studies illustrating what other young people have done
- provides action points to help them organise their ideas and take control of their decision-making.

## Classroom sessions

These offer ideas on how to use **Which way now?** in short tutorial sessions. You can combine them for use in longer time slots.

The sessions follow the basic career planning process. This has three stages, through which individuals move backwards and forwards as they build their careers. The stages are:

### Where am I now?

Individuals gain the self-knowledge they need to choose well

### Where do I want to be?

Individuals explore, research, assess and choose options

### How will I get there?

Individuals make an action plan to turn their ideas into reality

## Resources required

- Copies of **Which way now?**
- Details of your school's key stage 4 offer
- The website address of your local online 14-19 prospectus
- The name and contact details of your school's Connexions personal adviser(s)
- The website address of your local Connexions service and the address of the nearest centre
- Copies of the quiz on **page 7** of this guide for **session five**.

Internet access is desirable so that students can look at the online interactive version of the magazine (available at [www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow](http://www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow)), the local online 14-19 prospectus, the local Connexions website and websites signposted in the magazine.

## Session content

- 1 **The options process**
- 2 **Where am I now?**
- 3 **What could I do?**
- 4 **How will these options help me?**
- 5 **Do I know enough?**
- 6 **Actions and decisions**

# Using Which way now? in the classroom

## Session 1:

### The options process

#### Aim

Students understand what the options process involves, what they should be doing and how **Which way now?** can help.

#### Steps

- 1 Introduce the options process and discuss the possible impact of key stage 4 choices on options at age 16 and beyond.
- 2 Ask for and record students' ideas on what they should consider when choosing their key stage 4 options. Their suggestions may include:
  - what they enjoy or might enjoy
  - what they dislike or might dislike
  - what they are or might be good at
  - what interests or does not interest them
  - how they learn best
  - the type of assessment methods they prefer
  - how an option may help them in the future
  - what options are available and where
  - what their friends think and choose
  - the teachers involved
  - the places involved
  - any extra costs – for example for field trips, visits and learning materials.
- 3 Confirm that students should consider all these factors when choosing their options. Describe the support they will receive from school and others to help them choose well.
- 4 Give out copies of **Which way now?** and ask students to write their names in the box on the front cover. Explain that the magazine is to help them with the options process. Draw their attention to the online interactive version available at [www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow](http://www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow)

- 5 Go through the magazine with students, highlighting how they can use it:

- as a source of information – for example, by reading about qualifications, learning pathways, the world of work and the labour market
- to help them organise their ideas – by using the action points and hot tips
- to find out what other young people have done – by looking at the case studies
- to help their parents/carers understand what they are doing – by giving them the centre page pull-out and sharing the content of the magazine with them.

- 6 Explain that students will be working on different parts of **Which way now?** in the next few sessions. Suggest they prepare for this by talking to their parents/carers about their choices. Encourage them to use the following questions to help them identify other people who could help them.

- Who knows me really well?
- Who knows what I need to know?
- Who can give me unbiased information?

## Session 2:

### Where am I now?

#### Aim

Students use **Which way now?** to update their self-knowledge and see how they can use it to inform their option choices.

#### Steps

- 1 Ask students for ideas on what they need to know about themselves in order to choose key stage 4 options that suit them. Remind them that they have a better chance of success if they choose options that interest and motivate them.
- 2 Introduce Action point 1 on page 2 of **Which way now?** and ask students to complete it individually.
- 3 Allow students working in pairs to discuss their results. For example:
  - How do they feel about what the statements say about their main areas of interest?

# Using Which way now? in the classroom

- How do they feel about the subject ideas linked to their main areas of interest? Have they prompted any new ideas about possible options?
- Which subjects interest them most and why? What evidence do they have to demonstrate that they have a real interest in the subject?

**4** Take feedback.

**5** Ask students for examples of other activities that can add to their self-knowledge. These could include voluntary, sporting, leisure and other activities done in or out of school. They could also include work on identifying preferred learning styles, and career and self-assessments completed in tutorial, PSHE education and other learning programmes.

**6** Conclude by asking students to complete the 'Me' section of Action point 2 on page 4 of the magazine.

## Session 3:

### What could I do?

#### Aim

Students use **Which way now?** to identify the information they need to help them make successful option choices.

#### Steps

**1** Remind students that research is an important part of the options process. Ask for and record their ideas on the information they will need about their options in order to choose well. Encourage each student so that they are not limited by their background, low aspirations, gender and ethnicity in the decisions they take. Responses could include:

- which subjects are compulsory and why
- course content
- teaching and assessment methods
- study location
- workload
- costs for activities such as materials, field trips and visits
- the qualifications they will gain and how these will help them in the future
- entry requirements, application methods and deadlines.

**2** Confirm that students should consider all these things when choosing their options.

**3** Guide students through pages 10 to 18 of **Which way now?**, making the links with your key stage 4 offer, highlighting the differences between the various courses and drawing attention to the hot tips and action points. Discuss any issues arising.

**4** Ask students to turn to page 4 and complete the 'My options' part of Action point 2.

**5** Conclude the session by telling students that they will look at qualifications in the next session. Encourage them to prepare for this by making a list of any questions they have.

## Session 4:

### How will these options help me?

#### Aim

Students use **Which way now?** to find out about the qualifications system and the long-term value of gaining qualifications.

#### Steps

**1** Ask students to explain why qualifications are important. Compare the reasons they give with those on page 8 of **Which way now?**

**2** Guide students through the information on the qualifications system presented on pages 8 and 9 of the magazine.

**3** Ask students in pairs to answer one or more of the following questions, using the information in the magazine to help them.

- A job advert says that applicants must have five good GCSEs or equivalent. What subjects, grades and qualifications is the employer likely to accept?
- The entry requirements for a course are four GCSE passes or equivalent. What subjects, grades and qualifications are admissions staff likely to accept?
- The entry requirements for a HE course are five good GCSEs and three A Levels or equivalent. What grades and qualifications are admissions staff likely to accept?

# Using Which way now? in the classroom

- 4 Take feedback and correct any misunderstandings. Ensure that students understand that:
  - most opportunity providers expect applicants to have GCSEs in English and mathematics
  - the phrase 'or equivalent' usually means that an opportunity provider will accept a qualification at the same level, but students should always double check and find out precisely what qualifications, subjects and grades an opportunity provider will accept
  - they can get advice on what course (including HE) and job entry requirements mean from their teachers, careers co-ordinator and Connexions personal adviser.
- 5 Ask students to complete the 'My future' and 'My questions' sections of Action point 2 on page 5 of the magazine.
- 6 Conclude by reminding students that gaining qualifications at key stage 4 is the start of their qualifications journey. Encourage them to read the 'Thinking ahead' section of the magazine (pages 24 to 26). If they have a career in mind, encourage them to investigate what qualifications they will need to do it by completing Action point 4 on page 8.

## Session 5:

### Do I know enough?

#### Aim

Students check that they know their way around **Which way now?** and understand how to use it to help them with the options process.

#### Steps

- 1 Ask students in small groups to do the **Which way now?** quiz (see **page 7** of this guide), setting a time limit if appropriate.
- 2 Review students' answers using **page 8** of this guide. Discuss any issues arising.
- 3 Conclude by telling students that the next session will be the final time they use **Which way now?** in school.

## Session 6:

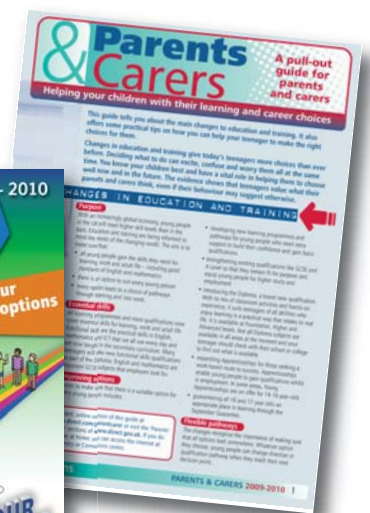
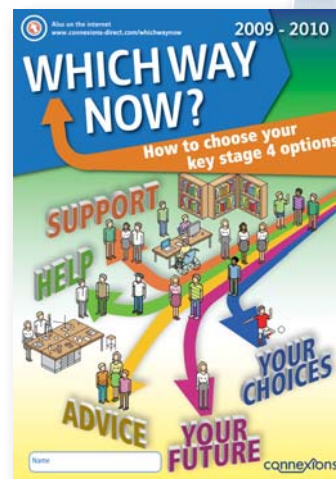
### Actions and decisions

#### Aim

Students use **Which way now?** to help them organise their ideas about their option choices.

#### Steps

- 1 Ask students to look at the Action plan on page 29 of the magazine. Encourage them to use it as a 'to do' list to guide them through the options process. Remind them of the dates of options events and the deadlines for completing options forms. If appropriate, ask them to record this information in the 'What I need to do and when' box in the Action plan.
- 2 Remind students that choosing their key stage 4 options involves making the best possible match between what they would like and what is available. Explain how the Action points on page 23 can help them to do this.
- 3 Conclude the session by encouraging students to take the magazine home, go through it more thoroughly, and use it to help them organise their ideas and choose options that will help them succeed in the future. Remind them to give the centre page pull-out to their parents/carers.



# Which way now? – quiz

**1** Where can you find the online interactive version of **Which way now?**

**2** What type of options and what subjects might an enterprising person enjoy?

**3** What are functional skills and why are they important?

**4** How many days will you spend working with an employer if you do the Diploma?

**5** What types of assessment are you likely to come across at key stage 4?

**6** What is labour market information and why is it important?

**7** How can you find out about your local 14-19 choices?

**8** Give:

**a)** two good reasons for choosing an option

**b)** two bad reasons for choosing an option

**9** Who can give you practical help if you have trouble deciding which options to choose?

**10** Why is it important to check the information you find before you use it?

# Which way now? – quiz answers

**1. Where can you find the online interactive version of Which way now?**

At [www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow](http://www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow)

**2. What type of options and what subjects might an enterprising person enjoy? (page 3)**

Options that allow them to use their energy, communication, number and thinking skills to test their ideas about how to improve the world. Subjects such as: business studies, citizenship studies, economics, information technology (IT), law, modern foreign languages, psychology, retail business, sociology.

**3. What are functional skills and why are they important? (page 10)**

These are the practical skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). You use them in everyday life, in learning and at work. Everyone needs good functional skills. That is why they are part of the Diploma and, from September 2010, GCSEs and Apprenticeships.

**4. How many days will you spend working with an employer if you do the Diploma? (page 14)**

You will spend at least ten days working with an employer.

**5. What types of assessment are you likely to come across at key stage 4? (pages 17-18)**

You will come across three main types of assessment:

- internal assessment – often called coursework; includes research and other projects
- portfolios of evidence – collecting evidence that demonstrates your knowledge and skills
- examinations – tests that take place at a set time and assess how much you know about a subject.

**6. What is labour market information and why is it important? (page 26)**

Labour market information is data, statistics and research about the world of work and the job market. You can use it to check that you have realistic career ideas and plans.

**7. How can you find out about your local 14-19 choices? (page 19)**

Read the options information received from school. Talk to teachers, the careers co-ordinator and Connexions personal adviser. Attend options events, information sessions and taster activities. Look at your local online 14-19 prospectus.

**8. Give:**

**a) two good reasons for choosing an option (page 22)**

Because you are good at and think you will enjoy it, it links to a career idea, it goes well with your other choices, it helps to give you plenty of choice post-16, you may like to study it in the future, your research suggests it will interest and motivate you.

**b) two bad reasons for choosing an option (page 22)**

Your friends have chosen it, you think it will be easy, you think it is a good course for a boy/girl to do, someone else thinks it is a good idea, you like the teacher you have now, you didn't have time to research your options properly.

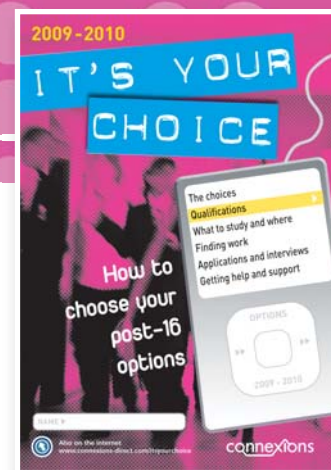
**9. Who can give you practical help if you have trouble deciding which options to choose? (page 6)**

Your careers co-ordinator, a Connexions personal adviser, a Connexions Direct adviser.

**10. Why is it important to check the information you find before you use it? (page 21)**

To make sure that it is trustworthy, unbiased, accurate and up to date.

# Using **It's your choice** in the classroom



## About **It's your choice**

This magazine is for young people who are choosing their post-16 options. It:

- signposts what they need to think about and who can help
- provides information on topics such as qualifications, learning pathways and future considerations
- has case studies illustrating what other young people have done
- provides action points to help them organise their ideas and take control of their decision-making.

## Classroom sessions

These offer ideas on how to use **It's your choice** in short tutorial sessions. You can combine them for use in longer time slots.

The sessions follow the basic career planning process. This has three stages, through which individuals move backwards and forwards as they build their careers. The stages are:

### Where am I now?

Individuals gain the self-knowledge they need to choose well

### Where do I want to be?

Individuals explore, research, assess and choose options

### How will I get there?

Individuals make an action plan to turn their ideas into reality

## Resources required

- Copies of **It's your choice**
- The website address of your local online 14-19 prospectus
- The name and contact details of your school's Connexions personal adviser(s)
- The website address of your local Connexions service and the address of the nearest centre
- Copies of the quiz on **page 13** of this guide for **session seven**.

Internet access is desirable so that students can look at the online interactive version of the magazine (available at [www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice](http://www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice)), the local online 14-19 prospectus, the local Connexions website and websites signposted in the magazine.

## Session content

- 1 **Where am I now?**
- 2 **What are my choices?**
- 3 **What qualifications could I get?**
- 4 **How do I get selected?**
- 5 **What are my priorities?**
- 6 **How will I manage for money?**
- 7 **Do I know enough?**

## Supporting students

After introducing **It's your choice** to students, continue to offer them support through the year. Answer their queries, keep their plans under review and refer them to sources of specialist help. You may have to write references for your students. If so, check that you know how quickly you have to turn them round so that you do not let your students down.

Discussing students' ideas and plans with them is an integral part of the options process. When doing this, it is useful to mirror the basic career planning approach outlined above. The stages in a typical discussion are:

- getting started – putting students at their ease, checking what they want to discuss and agreeing what is possible in the time available
- exploring the issues – talking through the issues identified
- prioritising options – agreeing next steps
- planning and recording next steps – identifying what needs to be done, agreeing who is going to do what and planning to meet again if necessary.

# Using *It's your choice* in the classroom

## Session 1:

### Where am I now?

#### Aim

Students understand what choosing post-16 options involves, what they should be doing and how *It's your choice* can help.

#### Steps

- 1 Discuss the significance of post-16 options. Remind students to draw on lessons learned from the key stage 4 options process.
- 2 Ask for and record students' concerns about choosing post-16 options. These may include:
  - how to keep future options open
  - what happens if they do better or worse in exams than expected
  - financial concerns
  - coping with learning in a different location or in multiple locations
  - coping with different styles of learning and assessment
  - not having enough responsibility or freedom
  - failing to get onto their chosen course or into employment or training
  - losing touch with friends
  - not having a clear idea of what they want to do
  - disagreeing with others about their choices (for example parents/carers, teachers, friends)
  - not knowing or understanding their options.
- 3 Explain that good preparation and research can help to overcome these concerns. Describe the support that students will receive from school and others to help them choose well.
- 4 Give out copies of *It's your choice* and ask students to write their names in the box on the front cover. Explain that the magazine is to help them with the options process. Draw their attention to the online interactive version available at [www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice](http://www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice)
- 5 Go through the magazine with students, highlighting how they can use it:
  - as a source of information – for example, by reading about qualifications, learning pathways, labour market information and what employers are looking for

- to help them organise their ideas – by using the action points and hot tips
- to find out what other young people have done – by looking at the case studies
- to help their parents/carers understand what they are doing – by giving them the centre page pull-out and sharing the content of the magazine with them.

- 6 Conclude the session by asking students to complete the first box of the Action plan headed 'Where I am now', on page 29 of the magazine.

## Session 2:

### What are my choices?

#### Aim

Students use *It's your choice* to gain a broad understanding of post-16 options.

#### Steps

- 1 Ask students to complete Action point 1 on page 2 of *It's your choice*. Encourage each student so that they are not limited by their background, low aspirations, gender and ethnicity in the decisions they take.
- 2 Using a show of hands, ask students to indicate whether they were mostly As (full-time learning), Bs (earning and learning) or Cs (don't know). Invite volunteers from each group to share their feelings about the accuracy of their scores. If appropriate, point out that most young people choose to continue in some form of learning post-16.
- 3 Remind students that whatever their scores, they need to know what options they have. Guide students through pages 8 to 13 of the magazine, making the links with local options, and drawing attention to the action points and hot tips.
- 4 If time permits, ask students to complete Action point 2 on page 3.

## Session 3:

### What qualifications could I get?

#### Aim

Students use *It's your choice* to consolidate their understanding of the qualifications system and how qualifications can help them in the longer term.

#### Steps

- 1 Discuss with students how gaining or failing to gain qualifications could affect their future lifestyles.

# Using *It's your choice* in the classroom

**2** Ask students in pairs or small groups to answer the following questions and then check their answers using pages 5 and 6 of *It's your choice*.

- Give two examples of level 1 qualifications
- Give two examples of level 2 qualifications
- Give two examples of level 3 qualifications
- Do most employers ask first-time job applicants for qualifications at level 1, 2 or 3?
- Do universities ask most applicants for qualifications at level 1, 2 or 3?
- Do you need qualifications at level 1, 2 or 3 to get a technical, skilled or supervisory job?
- Do you need qualifications at level 1, 2, 3, 4 or above to get a specialist or professional job?

**3** Take feedback, discussing any issues arising. Remind students that entry requirements often contain the phrase 'or equivalent' and that this usually means that an opportunity provider will accept a qualification at the same level. Stress that they should always double check and find out precisely what qualifications, subjects and grades the provider will accept. Discuss who they could ask for help (for example teachers, careers co-ordinator or a Connexions personal adviser).

**4** Ask students to review what they have put in the Action plan on page 29 and decide if they can add anything to the 'Where I am now' box. Point out the 'What I need to do and when' box and ask them to think of one action they will need to take.

**5** Conclude by directing students to the personal calendar on page 4. Encourage them to use it as they work through the process of choosing their post-16 options.

## Session 4:

### *How do I get selected?*

#### **Aim**

Students use *It's your choice* to help them consider how they can maximise their chances of an opportunity provider selecting them.

#### **Steps**

**1** Ask students for, and record, their ideas on how to find out what skills and qualifications employers and universities are looking for.

**2** Direct them to the labour market information on page 7 of the magazine and the HE fact file on pages 20 and 21. Ask them to compare their responses with the information on these pages, including that contained in the 'hot tips'.

**3** Take feedback, discussing any issues arising.

**4** Explain to students that thinking ahead will help them maximise their chances of an opportunity provider selecting them. Draw their attention to:

- page 18 which highlights the value of gaining experience and a track record to help them stand out from other candidates
- page 19 which underlines the importance of collecting evidence of their employability and committing to continuous learning and self-improvement
- pages 22-23 which emphasise the importance of good self-presentation in applications and interviews.

**5** Encourage students to use the online interactive version of *It's your choice* to create a draft CV and application letter.

## Session 5:

### *What are my priorities?*

#### **Aim**

Students use *It's your choice* to consider their personal priorities in relation to their preferred post-16 option.

#### **Steps**

**1** Organise students into small groups using their preferred destinations as an organising principle.

**2** Ask students who are considering full-time learning to complete Action point 7 on page 14 and read the 'Make your choices' advice on page 15. Ask those who are considering a work-based pathway to complete Action points 9 and 10 on pages 16 and 17.

**3** Take feedback, discussing any issues arising including the general rewards, risks and lifestyle effects of both broad pathways.

**4** Conclude by reminding students to update the Action plan on page 29.

# Using It's your choice in the classroom

## It's your choice – quiz answers

### Session 6:

#### How will I manage for money?

##### Aim

Students use **It's your choice** to consider financial issues linked to post-16 choices.

##### Steps

- 1 Briefly go through the 'Money matters' information on pages 24 and 25. Outline school procedures for supporting EMA applications.
- 2 Remind students that most of them will need a bank account next year if they do not have one already. Using a show of hands, ask students to indicate if they have a bank account. Invite volunteers to say why they chose that account, if they receive a good service, and any advice they have for people who do not yet have an account.
- 3 If internet access is available, allow students to look at the websites listed. Otherwise ask them to complete Action point 13 on page 26 and use the websites later to get the information they need.

### Session 7:

#### Do I know enough?

##### Aim

Students check that they know their way around **It's your choice** and can use it to help them choose their post-16 options.

##### Steps

- 1 Ask students in small groups to do the **It's your choice** quiz (see **page 13** of this guide), setting a time limit if appropriate.
- 2 Review students' answers using **page 12** of this guide. Discuss any issues arising.
- 3 Encourage students to take the magazine home, go through it more thoroughly, and use it to help them organise their ideas and choose options that will help them succeed in the future. Remind them to:
  - give the centre page pull-out to their parents/carers and discuss their ideas and plans with them
  - look at the online interactive version of the magazine at [www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice](http://www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice)
  - use the Action plan on page 29 as a 'to do' list.

1. Where can you find the online interactive version of **It's your choice**?  
At [www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice](http://www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice)
2. When can you get your GCSE results? (page 4)  
Online on 25 August 2010 otherwise on 26 August 2010.
3. What are functional skills and why are they important? (page 8)  
These are the practical skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). You use them in everyday life, in learning and at work. Everyone needs good functional skills. That is why they are part of the Diploma and, from September 2010, GCSEs and Apprenticeships.
4. What is an EMA? (page 24)  
An Education Maintenance Allowance is a weekly payment of £10, £20 or £30 a week to help with day-to-day expenses. The amount you get depends on your personal circumstances and does not affect any benefits that your parents/carers receive.
5. How many A Levels is an Advanced Diploma equivalent to? (page 10)  
An Advanced Diploma is equivalent to 3.5 A Levels.
6. What is labour market information and why is it important? (page 7)  
Labour market information is data, statistics and research about the world of work and the job market. You can use it to check that you have realistic career ideas and plans.
7. Give two ways of organising training if you get a job without it (page 12)  
You could use the Time off for Study and Training (TfST) scheme, learn from more experienced employees or negotiate some training with your employer.
8. What age group can apply for an Apprenticeship? (page 11)  
You must be 16 or over to apply for an Apprenticeship.
9. Who can help you if you cannot decide what to do post-16? (page 27)  
People who know you really well like your family, friends, tutor and subject teachers. People who know what you need to know like those running the options and those doing them. People like careers co-ordinators, Connexions personal advisers and Connexions Direct advisers who have special training to help you tackle career issues.
10. What is the September Guarantee? (page 3)  
The September Guarantee entitles you to an offer of post-16 learning that meets your needs and guarantees you information, advice and guidance so you choose well.

# It's your choice – quiz

**1** Where can you find the online interactive version of **It's your choice**?

**2** When can you get your GCSE results?

**3** What are functional skills and why are they important?

**4** What is an EMA?

**5** How many A Levels is an Advanced Diploma equivalent to?

**6** What is labour market information and why is it important?

**7** Give two ways of organising training if you get a job without it.

**8** What age group can apply for an Apprenticeship?

**9** Who can help you if you cannot decide what to do post-16?

**10** What is the September Guarantee?

# Practitioners' guide 2009-2010

## Further help

### For school staff

- **Cegnet** at [www.egnet.co.uk](http://www.egnet.co.uk) – this is the website of the national careers education and IAG support programme and is a one-stop shop for practitioners. It has briefings on how to help young people with option choices, an online guide for the IAG workforce, which can also be viewed directly at [www.iagworkforce.co.uk](http://www.iagworkforce.co.uk), access to a regularly updated 14-19 Choices online guide, and links to other useful sites such as the IAG network facilitated by the Diploma Support Programme.
- **Directgov** at [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) – this is a one-stop shop for information about public services, including young people's choices, financial support for learning and sources of help.
- **DCSF** at [www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19) – this website covers everything to do with the 14-19 reforms.

### For parents/carers

- **Connexions Direct** at [www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com) or on **080 800 13 2 19** – this service offers quick access to information and advice on a wide range of issues that concern teenagers and their parents and carers. It also has a guide for parents/carers at [www.connexions-direct.com/parentcarer](http://www.connexions-direct.com/parentcarer)
- **Directgov** at [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) – this is a one-stop shop for information about public services, including young people's choices, financial support for learning and sources of help.
- **Parentline Plus** at [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk) or on **0808 800 2222** – this offers free advice and guidance to parents on anything to do with parenting.
- **Parent Know How** at [www.dcsf.gov.uk/parentknowhow](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/parentknowhow) – this offers information and support for parents and carers on a wide range of issues.

Further copies of this booklet are available from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) at:

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PDF, interactive and text only versions of the following are available online at:

- [www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow](http://www.connexions-direct.com/whichwaynow)
- [www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice](http://www.connexions-direct.com/itsyourchoice)
- [www.connexions-direct.com/parentcarer](http://www.connexions-direct.com/parentcarer)

You will be able to use your PC to enlarge the text. They are also available in Braille and audio CD.

### Feedback

This publication has been produced on behalf of the DCSF by VT Careers Management.

We welcome feedback on this guide for practitioners. If you have any thoughts on the content of this booklet, or how it is presented, please contact VT Careers Management at email: [vtcm.publications@vtplc.com](mailto:vtcm.publications@vtplc.com)