



Navigating the system and embracing change

Adult Guidance and Life Long Learning

Local Employment Services

- ▶ Established in areas of high unemployment/social disadvantage.
- ▶ To work with local people/communities. Through intensive, engagement + mediation to support education, training and employment progression and improve **employment outcomes**.
- ▶ LES clients - majority SW recipients (activated/walk-in/outreach): Pre-defined SW categories/status associated with particular entitlements, conditions and obligations. LTU/STU: U25/O25/O62, SWA, DA, IB, LP, Carers, Refugees, Migrants, ESL, women returners, ex offenders.
- ▶ SW category/status impacts progression options, to training, FE/HE, employment.

Challenges/obstacles to progression to/through FE/HE arising from:

- ▶ Education/learning deficits/difficulties: ltd work skills/qualifications, esteem/confidence issues, ltd FE/HE role models/frame of reference, uncertainty re purpose/value of ed, fear based prejudice, 'people like me' attitude.
- ▶ Life-skills deficits: critical reflection/problem solving/planning, studying, self-care.
- ▶ Lack of information and guidance on FE/HE options/pathways/supports.
- ▶ Lack of practical supports (financial, childcare, transport etc).
- ▶ Family concerns, health, addiction/recovery, and accommodation issues, criminal convictions.
- ▶ Social welfare status, dependence on social welfare system.

Navigating the System:

- ▶ **Social Welfare system** (the various social services provided by the state). Large, complex, bureaucratic, increasingly automated. Administered by DEASP (mostly).
- ▶ The System ‘The prevailing political or social order, especially regarded as oppressive and intransigent’.
- ▶ ‘I Daniel Blake’ - 2016 drama about what is portrayed as the inherent unfairness, deliberate inefficiency, and challenges involved in navigating the UK welfare benefit system.
- ▶ **Some basics to consider re SW dependence + FE/HE progression:** Payment type & duration, secondary benefits, age, existing ed/NFQ level, PT/FT course, private/public college, re-estab sw claim for subsequent study years, study+pt work, other individual factors, PPP.
- ▶ Navigating multiple systems (SW, Education/SUSI, Health, Local Authorities, Justice, and others).

Adult learning approach to guidance

- ▶ Aimed at empowering (respecting autonomy, client-centred/collaborative, strengths-based/problem solving approach, honest/transparent, supporting reflective learning, informed choice, personal goal setting, and skill development (critical thinking, research, planning, navigation), encouragement.
- ▶ Reviewing previous ed/learning experiences. Using critical reflection to uncover fears + question beliefs + assumptions about ability, education, employment.
- ▶ Identifying needs and embracing change
- ▶ Imagining, exploring, researching.
- ▶ Identifying potential challenges and obstacles, and what is possible.
- ▶ Career choice and opportunity structures
- ▶ Advocating and working collaboratively with other agencies, services, units/depts. as required.
- ▶ Learning Knowledge Power Choice

Career choice & opportunity structures (Ken Roberts)

Careers are not about choosing a future (a myth) but adjusting to the opportunities available.

Opportunity structures formed through the inter-relationships between family background, education, labour market processes and employers' recruitment practices ***structuring agents**



Guidance should concentrate on helping people adjust successfully within the opportunity structures open to them, not on raising unrealistic expectations. **This in effect is what occurs at present through**

Education? Training? Employment? Job/Career?
What opportunities available? What opportunities am I eligible for?
What do I need to do to take advantage of them?
What if I want to do something else/other?

Learning = Knowledge = Power