



Department
for Education



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

Andrew Dismore AM
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London
SE1 2AA

Minister for Skills

1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E enquiries@bis.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/bis
www.education.gov.uk

Our ref: MCB2013/05999

27 September 2013

Thank you very much for your letter of 28 June, enclosing a copy of the London Assembly Economic Committee's report on adult careers services in London.

I was interested to read the Committee's views on how the careers offer in London could be improved. I understand that Kim Thorneywork wrote to you on 5th August, providing the Skills Funding Agency's response to recommendations relating to the National Careers Service (NCS). I am pleased by the Skills Funding Agency's commitment to work more closely with the GLA and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to identify the specific needs of client groups in London and consider how these will be addressed via the current procurement of the local NCS. I am confident that the partnership working approach that Kim set out will help the new careers service to be reshaped and reprioritised to better meet the needs of Londoners and London employers.

In terms of seeking my personal support for the Committee's recommendations I would like to point you towards my recent response to Ofsted's thematic review of careers guidance in schools and the National Careers Council's report. My Inspiration Vision Statement and Careers Guidance Action Plan were published on 10th September and can be accessed online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-inspiration-vision-statement> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-action-plan>. The Vision document sets out my personal commitment to provide young people and adults with inspirational careers advice throughout their lives. Building upon its existing local networks I want the NCS to connect employers with schools and colleges to give young people more contact with the world of work and raise their aspirations. But I recognise that adults need help to make the right decisions when faced with change too. The NCS will therefore continue to provide adults with impartial careers advice, tailored to their specific circumstances. People sometimes need a little motivation to consider how to get the skills they need to improve their life chances, how to juggle learning or work around bringing up a family or how to handle redundancy or a mid-life career change.

The joint action plan, published alongside the Vision Statement, highlights the importance of LEPs, employers and other strategic partners in developing good quality labour market information to inform those choices. I am pleased that Kim has offered Skills Funding Agency staff to work with the GLA, LEP, Jobcentre Plus staff and the NCS Prime Contractor to consider how to develop more granular London labour market information.

I hope that this has assured you that we both support the Committee's desire to improve the careers offer for adults in London. I would encourage you to continue working directly with regional Skills Funding Agency colleagues to achieve the step change you are seeking.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Kim', written in a cursive style.A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Matthew', written in a cursive style.

MATTHEW HANCOCK MP