

Final Report

An Investigation into the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) provided for Year Eleven Students regarding their Post 16 Options.

By

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Introduction

Good Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), supported by good careers education, is seen as fundamental to improving student achievement and increasing course completion rates. In addition, IAG is also considered as an effective means by which to address broader issues that relate to concerns over barriers to educational attainment and participation. As a result IAG is considered an important aspect of students' post-16 decision making process and is now firmly fixed in the current curriculum framework.

As well as a focus on IAG, there have also been significant developments in 14-19 education and training. Most notable has been the introduction of the Diploma, a new qualification for 14 to 19 year-olds. The Diploma combines practical 'hands on' and classroom based applied learning in programmes relevant to particular kinds of employment. In 2009 there are 10 Diploma subjects and by 2011 there will be 17. Designed in partnership with employers and universities, the Diploma aims to lead on to either further study or to work.

This report outlines the key findings from a recent study exploring year eleven students' perspectives of IAG provision, as well as attitudes to the Diploma and vocational education and training. The research was carried out by the Institute of Education at The University of Reading, on behalf of Progress South Central.

Method

Data is based on a survey questionnaire of year eleven students in the South East of England; carried out in two waves, and on focus group interviews with a sub-sample of these. The first wave questionnaire collected data from 412 students in eleven schools and was carried out at the beginning of the academic year, 2008. Wave two collected data from 212 students in seven schools prior to the start of the GCSE examination period in 2009. The students and schools included in wave two are the same as those who participated in wave one¹. The sample of schools reflects a range of attainment at Key Stage four. Of those schools included, three were higher than the national average for five A* - C attainment at GCSE, three were average and five were below average attainment in the first wave. In the second wave, two schools were higher than the national average, one was average and four were lower than the

¹ Some schools and students were lost from the second wave of data collection due to some schools allowing students to remain at home on study leave, in preparation for GCSE examinations.

national average. Five focus groups were also carried out in three of these schools, with a total of twenty three students.

The survey questionnaire collected data on students post-16 intentions, how informed students felt they were in making their post-16 decisions, who they spoke to for IAG as well as their attitudes to IAG provision and various post-16 routes more generally (see Appendix 1 for wave 1 and 2 questionnaires). Data collection, over two waves, was designed to allow for an examination of how attitudes and intentions may change in relation to IAG, by surveying students pre and post IAG provision. Focus groups were then carried out to explore some of the survey questions in more depth (see Appendix 2 for semi structured interview schedule). For example, focus groups explored reasons behind students post-16 intentions as well as their views on vocational versus academic routes. Focus groups also explored IAG received, including the strengths and weaknesses of IAG provision in students' own schools. Data from the survey questionnaire was analysed using SPSS whilst data from focus groups was hand coded and explored in terms of emergent patterns and themes. Parental occupation was coded using the standard occupation classification scheme and then collapsed into two broad categories: professional and skilled non-manual and skilled and unskilled manual.

This research complied with the ethical standards for research as laid out by the British Education Research Association and was approved by The University of Reading's Research Ethics Committee.

Results

Post-16 Intentions

Data from the first and second wave questionnaire suggests that the majority of young people intend to remain in education post-16, opting to continue on into the traditional A level route. In the second wave, 61% of students intended to do AS/A level study, whilst 20²% planned to do a diploma, an apprenticeship or some form of vocational training. Focus groups discussions allowed us to explore the dominance of A levels as the preferred post-16 route. Largely, A levels were preferable simply because they are seen as *'better'*. Alternative non-A level routes were viewed by some as *'going off track'* and something that was better suited *'to a different type of learner'*.

² Data presented does not equal 100% as all other responses are not described here – for example, 2% who wanted to do more GCSEs, those that did not know what they wanted to do etc.

Information, Advice and Guidance

Of those surveyed, almost 70% of students felt they had received enough information to make good post-16 choices, with 60% stating that the IAG provision in school had been 'quite helpful' in their decision making process. Interestingly however, 12% of students did not feel they knew enough to make good post-16 choices, with a further 20% feeling that school IAG had not been helpful to them at all. The highest proportion of students, almost a quarter, who felt that the IAG they had received had not been helpful were from 'below average' attaining schools. However, slightly more students at lower attaining schools than higher attaining schools felt school IAG had also been 'very helpful'.

It is worth noting that some of the dissatisfaction with school IAG provision may in fact relate to the Connexions service rather than schools per se. From focus group discussions it became clear that students viewed Connexions as either 'very helpful' or 'not very helpful at all'. Disparity appears to centre on those students who saw a Connexions advisor and knew what they wanted to do post-16 and those that were confused or as yet had no future plans. For students with only a vague post-16 trajectory, Connexions was seen as '*not doing enough*':

Girl 1 - I didn't find Connexions helpful at all. Originally I wanted to be a dancer so I asked about opportunities to go to dance college and she said she'd research into it and get back to me but she never did so I've had to make up my own plans. I tried to look into what colleges were around here but there weren't any.

Girl 2 - ...they help you while you are there but then it just stops.

Boy - ...I don't think we do enough of it. You don't know enough about anything so you don't know where to go for help.

For students who knew what post-16 pathway they wanted to take, Connexions was considered as helpful:

"...when I went there they got booklets out and leaflets about Universities, then showed me about all of the different jobs and salary and the requirements I would need to get into University, where it all is on the thing and how you can get into it and they gave you a lot of information and then if they find out more they will send it home to you so I think they were quite good".

In considering IAG provision, students were asked to consider the IAG they felt they needed prior to receiving it and then comment on the best aspect of their IAG afterward. To allow students to comment in their own words, both questionnaires included a cartoon character with a blank speech bubble in which to write open ended responses. Of those that responded, how to get good exams grades at GCSE and IAG that was personalised and specific to the needs of the student were the top responses in the first wave. In response to statements relating to personal IAG specific to students needs, the second questionnaire asked students if this is what they had then received. Of those that responded, only 44% of students felt that they had personalised guidance.

Who Gives IAG?

In the first wave questionnaire students were asked to tick from a list of options as to who they had spoken to for IAG. The question produced multiple responses, with parents, siblings and friends ranked most highly. However, whilst results suggested that students were talking to a variety of people, it was not possible to establish the relative importance of those spoken to. To address this, in the second wave questionnaire we asked students to scale each of the options in terms of usefulness, from 'very helpful' to 'not very helpful at all'. We then asked students to select the one option who had given the best IAG. In terms of the top 3 responses parents still ranked as the best source of IAG with 45% of students, whilst 26% of students listed Connexions and 16% teaching staff. Interestingly siblings and friends were the least significant, suggesting that whilst students may talk to siblings and friends, they are not as important as other sources for IAG.

How Can Schools Improve IAG?

In the second questionnaire students were given a list of ways that schools could improve their IAG. Options included taster sessions; information sheets with all the different post-16 routes on; IAG on courses needed for university etc. Students were asked to select the one option they considered most important. Of those that responded, just under a third thought that offering taster sessions would be the most important way that IAG in schools could be improved, followed by 22% of students who again wanted IAG personal to their own needs and 16% of students who wanted IAG on what courses were needed for different types of jobs. Offering taster sessions was selected as the most important way that schools could improve their IAG by students regardless of school attainment and socio-economic status.

The Diploma

Lack of knowledge about the diploma

The majority of young people included in this research had little or no knowledge of what the Diploma is. At the start of the academic year 37% of the pupils knew nothing about the Diploma. This improved slightly over the course of the year but even by the time they had almost completed year 11, a quarter of the pupils still knew nothing about the qualification. This compares poorly with the pupils' knowledge of the other qualifications available to them. They knew most about A levels with 94% knowing something- either a lot or a little - compared with just 62% claiming to know something of the Diploma. What pupils did know about the Diploma was limited and in some cases incorrect. At the start of the academic year the most that pupils knew was that it was 'some sort of qualification'. 1% thought that it had a practical component and 4% thought that it had a vocational orientation. Almost one in ten mistakenly thought that the Diploma is a degree level qualification.

In describing what the Diploma is, its equivalence to 3.5 A levels was often cited. In exploring pupils' knowledge of the Diploma further in the focus group interviews, it became clear that while the equivalence of the qualification to A levels was widely known, the Diploma was seen as an academically less demanding alternative. Asked to describe the key differences between the Diploma and A levels one pupil's response, that typified this view was that the '*Diploma is easier isn't it?*' while another confidently stated that '*basically if you can't do A Levels you just do like a diploma*'.

The main reason pupils gave for knowing so little about the Diploma was a lack of IAG. By the end of year eleven 58% of pupils did not feel that their school had given them good IAG about the Diploma. Unable to identify any difference between A levels and the Diploma one student in a focus group discussion concluded: '*We don't really get told anything about it*'. The pupil's knowledge of the Diploma and their perceptions of the IAG that they received did not vary significantly between different types of educational setting.

The results of the final questionnaire indicated that 9% of the pupils from academically high attaining schools claimed to know a lot about the Diplomas, while 64% claimed to know a bit. In comparison, 11% of pupils in schools with below average attainment said that they knew a lot about the Diploma and 63% claimed to know a bit. However, 13% of pupils from

higher attaining schools thought that their school had given them good IAG about the Diploma in comparison with 11% of pupils in the lower attaining schools. While little difference was apparent in relation to knowledge of the Diploma between educational settings, there was a disparity between the level of knowledge of A levels between different settings. Nearly three quarters of pupils in the higher attaining schools claimed to know a lot about A levels in comparison to only half in the lower attaining schools.

Some difference in knowledge and understanding of the Diploma were also apparent between pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds. Pupils whose parents were in professional or skilled non manual occupations knew slightly less about the Diploma than those whose parents were in skilled and unskilled manual occupations. The former were more likely to see the qualification as a practical one yet three fifths of both groups agreed that they were not given good IAG about the Diplomas.

Lack of consideration of the Diploma as a qualification option

Neither pupils in higher attaining schools nor those in schools attaining below the national average were keen to do a Diploma: only 23%, said that they would consider doing a Diploma. This is, perhaps, not unsurprising considering the lack of knowledge about this qualification. The main reason given was that, for 41% of them, they didn't know enough about it. 30% of the pupils in the higher attaining schools and 22% of the pupils in the lower attaining schools indicated that they would not consider doing the Diploma. When asked to indicate why they would not consider doing the Diploma 19% of the pupils indicated that it was because the Diploma did not suit academic pupils. Pupils from both groups did not feel that they had received good IAG about the Diploma and that not knowing enough about the Diploma was one of the main reasons for their lack of interest:

“I don't really know what they are or what they are worth so I guess it makes it hard to know whether to do one or not”.

An academic vocational divide

Results suggest that students perceive an academic vocational divide in the programmes on offer to them at age 16 and that they characterised the Diploma as a vocational qualification.

Whilst most of the pupils valued vocational education, with 81% thinking that vocational qualifications are important, further analysis revealed that they also thought that vocational qualifications were important for other people, but not for them. Some of the reasons given on the questionnaires for the importance of vocational qualifications include: '*they provide an alternative to school for those who are less interested in academic education*' they are for those '*not suited to school*' or '*people who do not want to do A Levels*'.

Only a quarter of the pupils surveyed would consider doing a vocational qualification themselves. The main reasons given for preferring not to, given by 21% of the pupils, related to a perceived greater value of academic qualifications. Only 34% of pupils thought that vocational qualifications were as good as academic ones. Some of the reasons given for not wanting to do a vocational qualification included: '*I would rather do an academic qualification*' and '*I want to go to University*'. Vocational education was seen as '*important for certain fields of employment*', but not recognised as a secure route to university. Vocational qualifications were perceived as being more job specific and therefore as narrowing the possibility of careers.

While pupils in both high attaining and below average attainment schools agreed that vocational qualifications are as important, pupils in higher attainment schools were less likely to consider doing a vocational course with only 17% saying that they would consider this route compared to 33% of pupils in below average attaining schools. Pupils whose parents are in skilled and unskilled manual work were more likely to consider a vocational course, with 33% considering this option in comparison to only 20% of pupils who have parents in professional and skilled non manual occupations.

Exploring these issues further in the focus group interviews it became clear that pupils were characterising the Diploma as a practical, vocational qualification more suited to pupils who do not want, or are not able to follow what was perceived to be a more acceptable, traditional, academic route. This is illustrated by one excerpt from a focus group interview:

Would you consider doing a diploma instead of what you've chosen to do?

- *I think you need to be more academic... it's good to have practical skills but if I want them I can do voluntary work... it's better to stay on the academic side*
- *I agree it's better to stay on the academic route*

Why do you think the academic route is better for you?

- *I like practical coz then you get a lot of experience but I want to take the normal route, the academic one*
- *I just wanna go straight, I don't wanna do diploma*
So you don't see diplomas as going straight?
- *No, for some reason I see them as going off track... it's not normal, the way it has always been*

The Diploma was seen as a narrower, more job specific qualification.

What do you know about diplomas?

- *I think A Levels are more flexible. Diplomas only qualify you for a few jobs*
- *A levels are better because you might change your mind*
- *Yes. If you did one in PE then broke your leg you wouldn't be able to do anything. It would be hard to change to something else.*

There was also concern that the Diploma would not enable them to make the necessary progress to university, and a sense that universities valued academic qualifications more highly. One pupil in a focus group commented that the choice of qualification would be determined by aspiration for higher education and the university they wanted to go to, as different universities will accept different courses, for example, *'some universities, if you want to study law say, tell you not to do the law A level... they advise you to take stuff like history and that instead'*.

Discussion

Data clearly indicates that the majority of young people intend to remain in education post-16. Whilst this is positive, results also indicate that AS and A levels remain the preferred route. From focus groups this preference is suggested as reflecting broader ideas associated with perceptions of the tradition and academic credibility associated with A levels. Alternative routes, whilst seen as having value, were largely viewed as options for the less academic students.

In terms of IAG provision, students appeared to be largely confident that they had enough information to make an informed decision, with school viewed as being quite helpful in this process by more than half of students. However, a significant minority did not feel they knew enough or that school had not given enough help and guidance. Whilst not explicit, it may well be that some of this dissatisfaction is due to student frustrations with the current Connexions service delivered in school. In part, dissatisfaction with Connexions related to the fact that Connexions was unable to offer the personalised support that some students felt they needed. As pointed out in focus groups, the Connexions service was helpful for those students who knew what they wanted to do but was not so for those that were unsure. The majority of students in the higher than average attaining schools had clear post-16 trajectories i.e. A levels then university. Whilst only speculative, it is likely that for those students for whom this academic route is neither desirable nor suitable, more direction as to alternatives is needed.

The concept of personalised IAG was a recurrent theme both in the open ended comments in the questionnaire survey and in focus groups. Personalised guidance related to the desire of students to be supported and guided through the post-16 decision making process by someone who was aware of the student's strengths and weakness and had a sense of what pathway a student might be suitable for. Both explicitly and implicitly, students want directing towards what they are good at. A desire for personalised IAG may in part explain why parents rank so highly in terms of their usefulness in providing IAG. Parents at least have some knowledge of a student's areas of strength and weakness as well as their career ambitions. However more information and support will need to be offered to support parents in this role, particularly in terms of promoting an understanding that will enable families to navigate the very many options available. Many of the post-16 options now available will not have been available to parents previously and will not therefore be familiar. It is therefore important that all families have enough information to give appropriate guidance, with this being a particularly relevant consideration for those families that are harder to reach.

In terms of the Diploma, in this study, students view the Diploma as neither of equal value to A levels nor as a particularly viable pathway to higher education or employment. While pupils had clearly taken on board issues of equivalence and were aware that the advanced Diploma is equivalent to 3.5 A levels, A levels were nonetheless seen as a safer option, more likely to be accepted by employers and as a proven route into higher education. At a time of

economic recession and rising unemployment, when greater participation rates in higher education have led to many professions that did not previously require graduate entry now doing so, the Diploma must therefore be seen by young people to offer them realistic opportunities to progress to work and to higher education if it is to become a successful option.

At present many of the pupils surveyed are deterred from the Diploma as a qualification because they perceive it to be specifically related to particular jobs rather than more broadly to certain types of careers. This is a disincentive to some pupils who feel that choosing to study for the Diploma would narrow the career options available to them or require them to make decisions to specialise in certain areas too early. The introduction of diplomas in Humanities, Languages and Science however, may go some way towards emphasising the relevance of diploma study to a wider range of occupations.

Pupils knowledge about and perspectives of the Diploma suggest further implications for IAG provision. The pupils in this study did not fully understand how they would learn on the Diploma and how its applied and ‘hands on’ learning might be distinct from programmes that develop practical skills. This led to a perception amongst pupils that rather than providing greater breadth of learning in more balanced programmes, the Diploma is in fact a narrow qualification offering less choice than A levels. This lack of knowledge may be the result of the targeting of information towards pupils in year 9 in order to ensure uptake of the Foundation and Higher Diplomas at Key Stage 4. It may be that this area has been prioritised because of the need to make a new type of qualification, and the new consortiums set up for its delivery, work in this age phase. There may have been less information about the Advanced Diploma because a range of qualifications at Post 16 already exist and there is less imperative to ensure uptake of an alternative route. The potential problem with this approach is that the Diploma becomes characterised as a new type of vocational qualification in, competition with established vocational qualifications and is not therefore considered an option by pupils considering an ‘academic’ pathway.

If the 14-19 phase is to be more inclusive then disparities in knowledge of and attitudes towards the Diploma that relate to socio-economic status and the educational attainment of schools need to be addressed. All pupils need to know more about the Diplomas. In higher attaining schools the Diploma needs to be presented as a viable alternative to A levels for all

pupils, including the most academically able. Better IAG on the Diploma may go some way to addressing a lack of knowledge about the Diploma amongst the children of parents with professional and skilled non manual occupations and their characterization of the Diploma as a practical qualification not suited to academic pupils. This IAG needs to be targeted at all pupils presenting the Diploma as a feasible alternative to all pupils regardless of the aspirations for further work or study including those intending to stay on at sixth form. Whatever the way forward, the perspectives of the year 11 pupils included here reveal that some of the key messages about Diplomas are not getting through so some of those who most need to hear them. This needs to be addressed and IAG improved if the Diploma is going to contribute to key government targets for young people.

Recommendations

The data from this research suggest several recommendations for IAG and IAG specific to the Diploma. These are outlined below:

- In terms of current IAG provision, students are clear that what is currently offered is not always helpful nor is it personalised to reflect the needs, interests and strengths of the student. Whilst current IAG provision is considered as satisfactory to those with clear post-16 pathways, this is not so for students who are unsure which route to take or what is most appropriate for them. For students in need of greater direction, it may be that the onus for IAG will need to shift onto tutors /teachers in school. This is because it is tutors who are best placed to deliver the personalised IAG that some students feel they need due to their knowledge of the student. However, a dependency on teachers in schools for IAG will raise issues in terms of teachers' skills and training needs.
- Our results suggest that parents are the primary source for student IAG. Therefore, it is crucial that parents have access to sources of information that will enable them to offer informed advice, utilizing Parents Evenings to inform parents / carers about the Diploma will be necessary. However, issues will remain in terms of those families that are traditionally harder to reach. As many of the post-16 options now available will not be familiar to most parents, information sheets specifically written for parents may be one way of providing an overview of the many routes now available. This is likely to be a key short term challenge of particular importance if government

is to achieve its targets on participation rates for the new diplomas and apprenticeships.

- Results suggest that many misconceptions exist as to what the Diploma actually is. If the Diploma is to be seen as a credible post-16 route then much work needs to be done in terms of informing young people and their parents as to both the course content and its higher education and work related benefits. For example, students in this study were not clear about what Diploma study involved, seeing it as job specific, as opposed to being linked to careers more broadly. Based on results from this study, bringing students currently studying [and in the future, those that have completed and have gone on into university] the Diploma into schools would be useful in terms of positive role models as would offering students taster sessions.

- In order to prevent an academic divide in terms of different post-16 routes, better IAG regarding Diplomas needs to be targeted at all students and parents, regardless of their family background. As A level study is the accepted route in to higher education, it is likely that only when the Diploma is collectively acknowledged as a good alternative route to university, will the Diploma achieve parity with other, more traditional post-16 routes.

Appendix 1 – First Wave Questionnaire



The University of Reading

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE ON POST 16 OPTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. Please read the questions and put a tick next to the answer that is right for you where appropriate. There are no right or wrong answers so please answer all the questions as honestly as you can.

SECTION 1: About you

Full name Are you: Male / Female (circle one)

Date of birth Tutor Group

1. What do you intend to do at the end of Year 11?

Get a job	
Get an apprenticeship	
Stay at school sixth form	
Go to different sixth form	
Go to college	
Don't know	

2 How certain are you about this choice? (circle one)

Very sure pretty sure sure quite sure not sure

3 If you plan to go to sixth form or college, what do you intend to do after that?

Get a job	
Get an apprenticeship	
Go to university	
Don't know	

4 What job do you want to do?

.....

5 . Do you think you will get a job like this?

Yes	No	Not sure
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6 How important do you think qualifications will be to your future in work? (circle one)

Very important	Quite important	Not very important
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7. Have you talked to any of the following about what you will do after year 11? (Put a tick for yes, next to all those that apply)

Form Tutor	
An individual subject teacher	
Head of year	
School Careers department	
Connexions	
Parents / Carer	
Friend/s	
Brother or sister	
Other ? e.g. Media; internet	

8. Do you think you know enough to make good choices about your future? (circle one only)

Yes No Not sure

9. How much you know about the following qualifications

	A lot	A bit	Nothing
Diplomas			
AS levels			
A levels			
BTEC courses			
International Baccalaureate			
NVQ Courses			
GU Higher Award			

10. How important do you think vocational qualifications are? (circle one)

Very important

Important

Not very important

11. Do you think vocational qualifications (e.g. BTEC; NVQ) are as good as academic qualifications (e.g. A levels)? (circle one)

Yes

No

Not sure

12. What is a diploma?

.....

.....

.....

.....

13. Please complete the caption below in terms of year 11 information, advice and guidance. (please do not be constrained by the size of the speech bubble - write over it)

'What I think I need is.....'



14. We will be interviewing some students about this project. Would you be willing to be interviewed? Yes / No (circle one)

Second Wave Questionnaire



The University of Reading

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE ON POST 16 OPTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey. Please read the questions and put a tick next to the answer that is right for you where appropriate. There are no right or wrong answers so please answer all the questions as honestly as you can.

About you

Full name Are you: Male / Female (circle one)

Date of birth Tutor Group

1. What do you intend to do at the end of Year 11? (please tick more than one if appropriate)

Get a job	
Get an apprenticeship	
Do a vocational qualification (e.g. NVQ; BTEC)	
Do more GCSEs	
Do AS/A Levels	
Do a Diploma	
Don't know yet	
Nothing (Please tell us why?)	

2. In your GCSE exams, how many A* - C are you predicted to get? (please tick)

7 or more	
Approx 5 - 6	
1 - 4	
None	
Don't know/not sure	

3. Have you heard of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)? (circle one)

Yes No Not Sure

4. What job do you want to do?

.....

5. What job does your father/carer do?

.....

7 What job does your mother/carer do?

.....

7. In terms of *who* you have talked to about what you will do after year 11, how important were the following?

	Very Important	Quite Important	Not Sure	Not Important
Form Tutor				
An individual subject teacher				
Head of year				
School Careers department				
Connexions				
Parents / Carer				
Friend/s				
Brother or sister				
Other ? e.g. Media; internet				

8. From the list above, who has given you the best advice? (please choose one)

.....

9. How helpful has the Information, Advice and Guidance that you have had from school been? (circle one)

Very helpful Quite helpful Not very helpful Not sure

10. Have you received advice and guidance in school that is personal to you and your needs? (circle one)

Yes No Not sure

11. Do you think you now know enough to make good choices about your future? (circle one)

Yes No Not sure

12. Did you receive information, advice and guidance at the right time for you to make good choices? (circle one)

Yes, it was about right No, it was too soon No, it was too late Not sure

13. How much do you know now about the following qualifications:

	A lot	A bit	Nothing
Diplomas			
AS levels			
A levels			
BTEC courses			
International Baccalaureate			
NVQ Courses			

14. How important do you think vocational qualifications are? (circle one)

Very important Important Not very important

15. Please tell us why?

.....
.....

16. Do you think vocational qualifications (e.g. BTEC; NVQ) are as good as academic qualifications (e.g. A levels)? (circle one)

Yes No Not sure

17. Please tell us why?

.....
.....

18. Would you consider doing a vocational qualification? (circle one)

Yes No Not sure

19. Please tell us why?

.....
.....

20. What is a diploma?

.....
.....
.....

21. Would you consider doing a diploma? (circle one)

Yes No Not sure

22. Please tell us why?

.....
.....

23. Has your school given you good information and advice about diplomas? (please circle)

Yes No Not sure

24. How could your school improve the Information, Advice and Guidance it gives students?
(Please tick)

1	Provide Information sheets that have all the different options on	
2	Give advice and guidance that is more personal to me and my needs	
3	Give advice and guidance earlier than we get it at the moment	
4	Bring in some students to talk to us about what they are doing	
5	Give advice on what courses you should do for different jobs	
6	Give advice on what courses you should do for different universities	
7	Offer taster sessions (where you can try something before you decide to do it)	
8	Something else? Please tell us what:	

25. From question 24, please tell us which one you think would be the most important to you

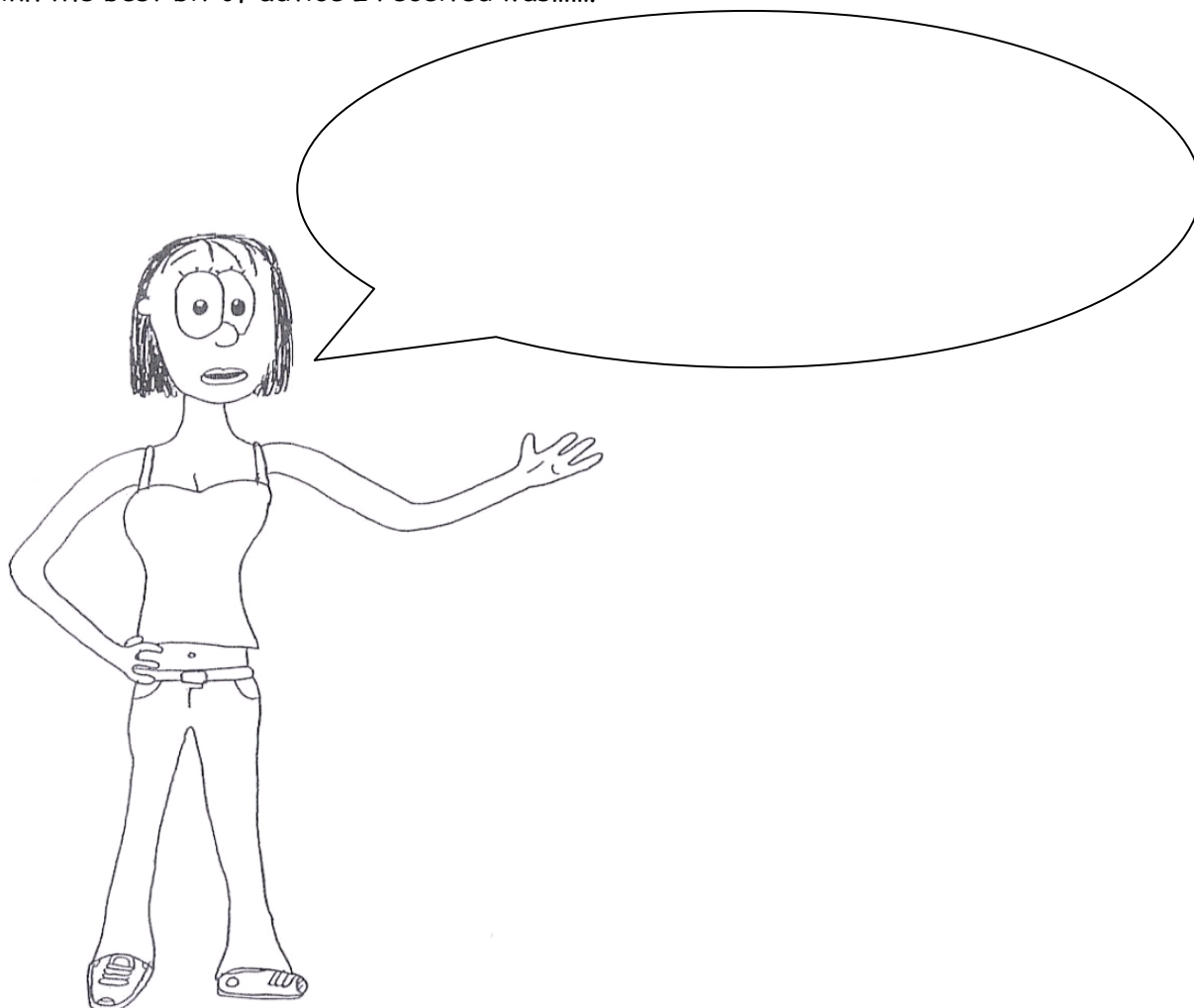
.....

26. Please tick which of the following best describes you:

White		Black - Caribbean	
Black - African		Black - Other	
Asian Indian		Asian Pakistani	
Asian Bangladeshi		Asian Chinese	
Mixed background (please give details)			

27. Please complete the caption below in terms of what you think the best bit of advice you actually got about your post 16 options was (please write over the speech bubble if you need more room)

'I think the best bit of advice I received was.....'



Thank you so much for your help with this research.

Appendix 2 – Focus Group Interview Schedule

Year 11 IAG Focus Group Questions

<p>Question 1 What are you planning to do at the end of year 11? Why have you chosen to do that? What are your longer term plans?</p>
<p>Question 2 Tell me about the IAG you have had. Was it.....</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>Helpful?</p> <p>Impartial? (WHY?)</p> <p>Who or where from?</p> <p>When did you get it?</p> <p>Has the IAG influenced your plans at all? (e.g. work experience?)</p> <p>Anything else?</p>
<p>Question 3 What do you know about academic (e.g. A level) and work related (vocational) qualifications?</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>Which ones do you think are better?</p> <p>Why do you think that?</p>
<p>Question 4 Do you know anything about diplomas?</p> <p>Prompts:</p> <p>Would you consider doing one?</p> <p>Why?</p>