
Synthesis of Findings

**Report on the key findings of
the teacher panel and
student panel questionnaire
sessions in AT, BE, DE, ES, FI,
NL, PL, UK**

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Career Learning as a Success Factor for Lifelong Learning

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Theme 1 Making Choices

	Students	Teachers
Feelings	<p>Happy to be leaving school</p> <p>Adult, sense of growing independence</p> <p>Excited and curious about course</p> <p>Empowered, enterprising</p> <p>Relax, confident about making good choices</p> <p>Confident of success on course</p> <p>Nervous about meeting new people</p> <p>Worried about not making friends</p> <p>Confused/paralysed by range and number of options</p> <p>Concerned about the uncertainty of the job market</p> <p>Stressed, under pressure to make good choices</p> <p>Unsure of ability to make good choices</p> <p>Fearful of making wrong choices</p> <p>Uncertain of own aptitudes</p>	<p>They are young and can struggle to think long-term</p> <p>Often looking for self-fulfilment - something they can be good at</p> <p>Can be confused/paralysed by range and number of options</p> <p>Can succumb to parental pressure</p> <p>Can be seduced by some course titles without really understanding what's involved</p> <p>Often don't have much idea of their own competences/aptitudes</p>
Comments	<p>Across all the partners, young people experienced a range of emotions when making choices about their future career direction. At one end of the spectrum were those who were very sure of what they wanted to do and totally relaxed about making their choice of course; at the other, those who had little idea what they wanted to do felt overwhelmed and confused. Most felt a mix of excitement and apprehension, not just about the new learning, but about the new environment. The social dimension of vocational education - making friends, meeting new people, 'fitting in' – are just as significant to young people as the choice of course.</p> <p>Some Belgian students reported feelings of disempowerment. This relates to the so-called 'waterfall' system whereby the 'better' students are filtered out to general, then technical education, and those remaining are left with no choice but to come to vocational education.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Motivation	<p>To earn money To be occupied, avoid boredom</p> <p>To pursue subject interest/talent</p> <p>To do something I'll enjoy, have fun</p> <p>To have good job prospects</p> <p>To have future security, lifelong career</p> <p>To make a better life for family</p> <p>To do better than parents/older siblings/friends</p> <p>To gain prestige, respect</p> <p>To have a good social life</p> <p>To help others</p> <p>To avoid risk: staying in a 'safe' subject where they know they can cope Convenience: school/college is local and friends are going there To avoid unemployment, dependence on State/others</p>	<p>To earn money To conform with wishes of family, friends To pursue own interests</p> <p>To keep their options open by choosing a general course so that they have time to work out what they really want to do To gain steady, well-paid job that they enjoy To do something they see as glamorous without understanding the hard work it involves To support a family</p> <p>To gain prestige, respect</p> <p>Social relationships are paramount</p> <p>Based on grades and what they think they can achieve To avoid moving to another school/college</p>
Comments	<p>Students were motivated by a mix of both extrinsic and intrinsic factors. While some were concerned to maximise earnings and prestige, most prioritised subject interest and self fulfilment and were not interested in earning money beyond the level they would need in order to be economically secure and live the kind of life they wanted. Again, the importance of the social dimension was highlighted.</p> <p>Teachers from Belgium echoed their students in their concerns that vocational education was a 'forced' choice for some students under the 'waterfall' system and that they therefore lacked motivation.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Sources of advice		Student counsellors Guidance staff Careers advisors Teachers Friends Family
What qualifications do I need? How do I apply? What jobs can it lead to?	Student counsellors, guidance staff, careers advisors, teachers	
What's the course like?	Current/past students	
What's it like to be a student?	Current/past students, friends, family members	
What are the job/conditions/prospects really like?	People doing the job Careers advisors	
Should I do this?	Family Friends	Seeking trust, objectivity, honesty
Comments	Our young people made it clear that they look to different people for different kinds of advice. Students want those advising them to be honest and objective, to see things from their point of view and to allow them to make their own decisions. It's also important to them to have reassurance that they are making a good decision. Their teachers recognised this.	
What was important in these conversations?	What jobs will be available to me? Will I find it interesting? Trust in the advisor Feeling valued Hearing others' first-hand experiences Reassurance, validation	Is it feasible for me? Hearing about wider/global possibilities Being listened to Being able to reason and rationalise decision Sincerity
What was missing?	Time for full, individual discussion Equal, impartial information about all options Being able to visit alternatives Open, honest dialogue Honest assessment of competences	Time Active listening, empathy: seeing things from their point of view Commitment: some students don't take it seriously

	Students	Teachers
Can you make a wrong choice?		
YES	<p>If you're not mature enough to take the decision seriously and reflect on your own skills and interests</p> <p>If you have no clear ambition</p> <p>If you have inadequate information</p> <p>If you feel under pressure to make a decision before you're ready</p> <p>If you choose for poor reasons (e.g. to be with friends, because it seems 'trendy')</p> <p>If you allow others to over-influence you so that it's not really your own choice</p> <p>If you choose something you can't cope with</p> <p>If the reality doesn't match the 'hype'</p> <p>You can only really know what something is like by experiencing it</p> <p>It may be right for you but wrong for the labour market</p>	<p>May not have maturity to think through options</p> <p>May not have enough information</p> <p>May just want to be with their friends</p> <p>May succumb to parental pressure</p> <p>May pick something that sounds 'cool' without really knowing what it is</p>
NO	<p>It's right if it's what you want to do at the time</p> <p>What seems like a 'wrong' choice can lead you towards what you really want to do</p> <p>You learn from every educational experience</p> <p>It's not forever – it can be changed</p>	
Comments	<p>Both students and teachers speculated on whether a choice of course can ever be 'wrong' if learning takes place and the experience moves the learner closer to the 'right' choice. However, there was recognition that the decision can be flawed for a variety of reasons.</p> <p>Students showed awareness of the 'selling' of courses and are irritated when the reality is not what the marketing has led them to expect.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Consequences of wrong choice	Poor performance on course	Can lead to drop out
	Time wasted	Waste of time, money, funding
	Qualifications in wrong field	
	Need to retrain	It can be difficult to change course – may have to wait months
	Unemployed or in job you don't like	Cost to society of drop out
	Delayed independence	
	Loss of sense of direction – easy to drift	Loss of confidence, motivation
	Lack of personal fulfilment, boredom	
	Negative emotions: unhappiness, frustration, regret Negative impact on relationships	Frustration
		Can be positive – can learn better decision-making skills and persistence Can learn to balance 'dream' with reality of job market
Comments	<p>Some students spoke about the negative impact on their own study experiences of classmates who had made a poor choice and who were disinterested and sometimes disruptive. They identified a number of negative extrinsic and intrinsic consequences of choosing the wrong course. Teachers pointed out that there is a cost not just in terms of time wasted, but possibly in terms of funding available for future study. Pre application visits/practical experiences would help minimise the risk of a student starting a course only to discover after a few weeks that they were not suited to it.</p> <p>Nonetheless, teachers highlighted the potential benefits of making a 'wrong' choice if it is used as a learning and growing experience.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
How can school/college support young people in making their vocational choices?		
At school	More practical content in school curriculum	More seamless transition between secondary and vocational education
	More school-college interactivity	Better information flow between schools/agencies
	Start early to identify competences/ interests	Tools/methods to support more intensive and individualised support for students.
Pre-application	Pre application visits, sitting in on lessons Talks from people working in different professions	
	Accurate, up-to-date websites, prospecti	Accurate, up-to-date information is a pre-requisite for student responsibility
	More information about courses/alternatives, including unusual ones	Structured, logical 'chunks' of information about options to avoid feelings of being swamped
	Variety of taster courses – opportunities to try things you might not have thought of doing	Some young people would benefit from an introductory/ transition year which offered a wide range of taster experiences
	Examples of real assignments, experiences of lessons	Examples of former students and what they have achieved
	More information about possible jobs post-course, not just the course itself	
	Career diagnostic/aptitude tests	Diagnostic tests + talking to them
	Personalised rather than general advice	Find out what their hobbies/ interests/passions are and explore with them what jobs that might lead to
On course	More practical information about accommodation, financial support, student life, etc	
	Good resources for independent investigation	
	Reassurance: there are always other possibilities if a plan doesn't work out	
	Teachers who inspire, share experiences	Opportunities for staff to keep up-to-date in their professional field
		Give specific feedback that makes clear to students where they've done well so that they become more aware of their own potential

		<p>Monitor students closely in first weeks of course so that if a change of course is necessary it can be done quickly</p> <p>Make explicit links between course work and labour market</p> <p>Teachers who have first-hand knowledge of related jobs</p> <p>More listening: more dialogue, less monologue</p> <p>Individualised advice</p> <p>Make links with parents</p> <p>Keep up-to-date with newly-emerging jobs</p> <p>Find the right courses for young people rather than pushing weak students through</p>
Integrity	<p>Learning by doing: more practice, less theory</p> <p>Job orientation integrated with lessons</p> <p>Staff who can see wider opportunities beyond the obvious vertical route through courses</p> <p>Individualised support, career plan</p> <p>Involve parents so that they can give support</p> <p>Help to link with past students</p> <p>Help to make contact with professionals in the field</p> <p>Better publicising of sources of advice/support</p> <p>More on-the-job training</p> <p>More, better, accredited work placements/ internships</p> <p>Opportunities for international experiences</p> <p>Honest feedback on competences/aptitudes</p> <p>Staff giving information about the full range of options, not just selling their own course.</p> <p>Tasters/summer schools that are a true reflection of course – not just the most attractive bits</p> <p>Careers guidance that isn't just 'ticking the boxes' but taking time to find out what I'm really interested in</p> <p>College experience that matches the expectations that have been built</p>	<p>Deal honestly with students</p> <p>Make students' needs the first priority, not the requirements of administrative systems</p> <p>Provide a clear structure of the course so that students know what to expect</p> <p>Make a long term commitment to careers counselling. It should be a process, not a one-off event, and students should be followed up regularly</p> <p>Allow students to experience setbacks so that they learn how to cope with failure as well as success and to learn from mistakes</p> <p>Embed discussion of values, employability skills</p>
Comments	<p>Across the partnership, there was widespread agreement among students about what they would like to see in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • links between schools and vocational training providers • the kind of information provided about courses and jobs • the teachers who teach them and their teaching approaches 	

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- practical experiences, industry links

Teachers are keen to help students towards an understanding that they are not choosing a job or profession but a trajectory – a road with many junctions leading off in different directions. They stressed the need to help students become adaptable in an ever-changing environment and would welcome tools to help them with this.

Students also made a number of points which have been categorised under the heading of 'Integrity'. They want those who advise and teach them to deal with them honestly and to have genuine concern for them as individuals and for their future success. Teachers also stressed the importance of honesty in dealings with students.

For teachers, integrity is also about taking responsibility for helping young people to develop not just vocational skills and knowledge, but the values and employability skills they will need for their future well-being.

They also pointed out the role of social capital here. Within their home environment, some young people are able to access high quality information, advice and support; others have no such resources.

Theme 2 Working Identity

	Students	Teachers
Meaning of work in/for life	<p>Self fulfilment: doing what I want to do, doing it well</p> <p>Being occupied, having a daily routine, avoiding boredom Learning new things, being challenged Feelings of success, achievement, confidence Having a social circle: meeting new people, making friends</p> <p>Being independent: not relying on others or the State Social acceptance Having a good standard of living, no money worries Being able to take care of family</p> <p>Having responsibility, being adult Being capable of sustained effort, perseverance Helping others Contributing to the common good</p>	<p>Doing what they enjoy</p> <p>Protection from unemployment Personal development</p> <p>Being more attractive to potential boyfriends /girlfriends</p> <p>Route to autonomy, financial independence</p> <p>Making money</p> <p>Making provision for retirement Independence from parents</p> <p>Conforming: it's what you're expected to do</p>
Comments	<p>Our young people and their teachers see work as having both extrinsic and intrinsic meaning. Extrinsic in terms of financial security; intrinsic in terms of personal development, self fulfilment and self worth. Only a few mentioned making a contribution to the wider society.</p> <p>Some teachers stressed that work means something very far away for younger students. They have not yet developed a sense of professional identity and tend to see work in a very utilitarian way: a means of earning money.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Important that work has meaning for others?		
Yes	<p>It is important to help others through work It's important to see meaning in your work Demonstrating skills and qualities to others</p>	<p>For some this is important</p>

No	brings fulfilment Everyone needs to feel appreciated Every job has impact on other people in some way If you help others, they will help you	
	Satisfaction comes through the work itself The opinions/approval of others are unimportant	For others, doing what they enjoy is the most important thing Those with dependants are often motivated by a desire to make a better life for them
Comments	Those students who had selected courses in areas such as Care or Education feel a need to do work that directly benefits others. Others, for example those pursuing Creative Arts, or Technology studies, claimed that, while this might be an indirect outcome of their work, it was not a prime motive for them and that their job satisfaction would lie solely in the execution of good work. Teachers see it as part of their role to facilitate social learning as well as professional learning	

	Students	Teachers
Dream job	A job I enjoy, that lets me go home happy Being my own boss, entrepreneur Secure Varied Well paid Scope for progression Doing something meaningful, that others appreciate Opportunities to travel Flexible hours Good social dimension, friends	Having a clear vision of their ideal job helps students to set and achieve personal goals But many young people don't have a dream of a particular job, they just know they want to train in Area X as opposed to Area Y. They still have to learn what the many options are within that area.
Comments	Some students were able to describe a specific ideal job in their chosen field; others were less specific but were able to describe the general characteristics of an ideal job. Few students gave high earnings as an essential of a dream	

	<p>job. They tended to prioritise job satisfaction, quality of life and relationships over material gain.</p> <p>Teachers felt that, while having a clear vision of their ideal job can help students to set and achieve personal goals, they need to come to an awareness that the labour market can change very quickly and that they may need to adapt their dream. Some felt that the emphasis should not be constantly on jobs and the labour market but that younger students should be allowed time and space to work out what they feel passionate about before focusing on jobs.</p>
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	Students	Teachers
Experience of labour market exploration?		
YES	<p>To plan alternative paths</p> <p>To investigate salaries To satisfy curiosity</p>	<p>Some do want to know about possible future careers</p>
NO	<p>Don't know how to. Not sure what that means</p> <p>It's not relevant to me at the moment; it's too far away You can't do anything without a qualification so you should concentrate on that first and worry about jobs later I was very focused on a specific course for a specific job</p> <p>There's no point; there are so few jobs in the current economic climate</p>	<p>Many don't realise the significance of the labour market and the impact it will have on their lives Others don't think about the future; it seems too far away</p> <p>Some are very parochial in their thinking and don't look beyond their local job market Many lack self confidence</p>
Comments	<p>Although some students said they had sought labour market information independently (mainly through the Internet), others had not; indeed, some were unsure what the term meant. Some felt they had no reason to seek information because they were sure of what they wanted to do and were optimistic about job prospects. Others felt pessimistic about job opportunities in the current economic climate and this discouraged them from seeking information, preferring to concentrate on their course and 'wait and see what happens'.</p> <p>This perception that thinking about possible jobs could wait was supported by teachers. They felt that age was a factor here; to 16/17 year-olds embarking on a course of study, the world of work can seem a lifetime away. They need to be helped to understand the significance of labour market trends for their future and to broaden their horizons.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Is LM exploration important? YES	<p>You need to investigate what jobs are available before deciding on a qualification If you can't get a job, there's no point in doing the education</p> <p>You need to be prepared for the unexpected You might discover something exciting that you hadn't thought of doing</p>	<p>It helps them to develop a critical mindset But it should be part of a wider job orientation component of the curriculum It helps them to define and structure their goals It helps them understand the full range of possibilities It gives them a more realistic picture of the job and what is expected of them It helps them to understand that jobs are constantly evolving and that learning does not stop on completion of their course</p>
NO	<p>There's no point when labour market forecasts are changing every day If you persevere and apply for lots of jobs, you're bound to get one eventually You should do what you want to do and not let lack of job opportunities stop you</p>	
Comments	<p>Although they had not undertaken much by way of labour market exploration, some students were able to articulate reasons why that might be helpful and that it might broaden their ideas of possibilities.</p> <p>Teachers highlighted the developmental benefits and the transferable skills associated with labour market exploitation. They felt they can be major influencers in helping students to exploit labour market information.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Important to be prepared to start new things? YES	<p>Change is constant; need to be prepared to do different things, take up new opportunities You may lose your job and have to change direction You need always to expand your horizons, to avoid becoming 'trapped'</p>	<p>Broadening experience develops confidence</p> <p>It's important to have choice in life</p>

Comments	It gives you fresh insights; you see things from a new perspective It's good to be challenged	New challenges help us all to grow
	You can discover new talents, find out more about yourself; you learn by doing You gain experience which may help you to get a job or change jobs	Learning new things increases employability and readiness to change path
	Students do seem aware that the days of a 'job for life' are over and that they will need to be prepared to change direction. They are also concerned to be challenged and to expand their horizons.	
	Teachers emphasise the developmental benefits and the notion of lifelong learning. They also point out that constantly hopping from one new thing to another is not good and that repetition, deepening learning is also important	

	Students	Teachers
Important to be prepared to interact with new people? YES	It's part of life Your job may involve dealing with customers	The ability to start a conversation is an important life skill
	You have to get on with people you work with, even those you don't like You need to network to get ahead It builds your confidence	It is preparation for job interviews Students need to build their own networks It builds confidence and develops interpersonal skills
NO	You make new friends You develop and grow as a human being You develop empathy	It develops personal maturity It helps young people to be open-minded and to value others
	You can manage without being social	Some people are naturally more sociable than others and individual difference should be respected – social confidence is sometimes over-valued
Comments	Although they had earlier expressed feelings of anxiety about meeting new people, the majority of students view this as an inevitable and desirable aspect of working life.	
	Teachers stressed the citizenship aspect of respecting diversity and also the importance of networking skills in the modern job market.	

	Students	Teachers
Important to be prepared to see new possibilities?		
YES	<p>The economy changes and people have to</p> <p>You should always look ahead and anticipate new opportunities</p> <p>It can open up new career paths</p> <p>New technologies are presenting new challenges</p> <p>You may end up earning more and/or being happier</p>	<p>We all need be adaptive in the face of rapid change</p> <p>Teachers need to challenge perceptions of a 'set path'</p> <p>Students need to learn to fight the fear of change</p>
NO	<p>You should stick to what you like, live the way you want to live</p>	
Comments	<p>A few students felt that a path, once chosen, should always be followed. However, most felt this was a desirable quality. Teacher stressed that awareness is not enough; education is about developing ability, confidence and awareness of possibilities.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Act first or reflect first?		
Act	<p>You can over-analyse and become paralysed</p> <p>There's always competition so it's better to act quickly, spontaneously and intuitively or you may miss an opportunity</p> <p>Sometimes you have to take risks</p> <p>Risk takers get noticed</p> <p>It's better to 'go with the flow' and see what happens</p>	<p>Younger students are perhaps more inclined to act first</p>
Think	<p>You are more likely to come to a reasoned decision and less likely to make mistakes</p> <p>Rushing into things can be costly</p> <p>Your performance will be better in the long run</p>	
Comments	<p>While appreciating the pitfalls associated with rushed decisions, students are aware of the dangers of over-analysing situations and the need to take risks on occasions. Students displayed a measure of self reflection in that they realised that, while they believe it's usually better to think first, they tended not to do this in practice!</p>	

Teachers, too, are reluctant to generalise and point out that personality types and learning styles play a role here.

	Students	Teachers
How can school/college support young people in developing working identity?		
	Provide real encounters with professionals	Help students to develop behaviours appropriate to the workplace, social skills
		Use part-time staff who are still employed in the profession. Staff can be powerful role models
	Make LMI available in school/college	Help students to develop proactive, entrepreneurial attitudes
		Give clarity about course/job requirements so that students know what will be expected of them
	Provide one-to-one careers counselling	Help staff to develop career coaching skills
	Organise 'jobs fairs' events, 'taster' opportunities	Develop partnerships between schools/colleges and companies
	Integrate work placements in more courses	Placements give 'real world' experience, as do 'live' projects
	Make lessons more job-related	Ensure curriculum development is informed by LMI
	Teach appropriate behaviours	Develop mentoring, 'buddying' systems
	Individual counselling	Introduce volunteering/ community projects
		Create time and space for personal development planning which can be effective if it is integrated with the curriculum and contextualised
Comments	Again, students stressed the need for more integration of the world of work with their studies. Teachers recognised their own developmental needs and their responsibility for the development of workplace attitudes and behaviours as well as skills.	

Theme 3 Self Efficacy

	Students	Teachers
Dreams Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To pass course and move on to job or further education To learn workplace skills To gain an internship To get the best possible education To study abroad To grow as a person 	
Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be self-employed To work in a big organisation To be successful in job To have variety and enjoyment To have a happy working environment To be creative, innovative To achieve a good standard of living To have independence To have mobility, work internationally To have possibilities opened up for me To balance career with family, life outside work To work long and be healthy To bring joy to others 	
Comments	<p>Students saw their current education as the pathway to employment in their chosen field and their dreams were generally no more ambitious than passing their course and moving on to the next stage of education or a job. They did not speak of education in terms of intellectual development or lifelong learning.</p> <p>Their dreams with regard to their careers are also modest. There was little talk of high earnings or status; although they want to earn enough to have a comfortable life, they are equally concerned with achieving a healthy work/life balance.</p> <p>Teachers felt that being able to visualise a dream which is grounded in reality can be helpful if it motivates students to achieve their goal. However, they pointed out that it is not necessary for success; many students who start out with no clear ambition are nonetheless successful in the end. Some felt that there is scope for talking to students more about their dreams as sometimes they don't make the link between something that is a passion or hobby outside school and it's potential for a career.</p>	
	Students	Teachers
Are dreams likely to		

come true?		
Very likely or quite likely	<p>If you work hard and are good at what you do</p> <p>If you have some luck too</p> <p>If you create networks</p>	<p>If they engage with their learning</p> <p>If they accept the pace of change, that dreams can change and they may end up in a different place</p> <p>If they are realistic about their abilities</p>
Less likely	<p>If you have to worry about money</p> <p>If you don't have the aptitude for your dream job</p> <p>If demand for your skills is limited</p> <p>If the economic situation doesn't improve</p>	<p>If not grounded in reality – and students are just as likely to set their sights too low as too high</p> <p>If constrained by family, geography, etc</p> <p>If they lack confidence</p>
Comments	<p>Our students' ambitions are fairly modest and they are generally optimistic that they can be achieved – if they work hard, have some luck and make the right contacts. They are very aware of the effect national economic conditions are having on the jobs market.</p> <p>Teachers pointed out that there can be constraining factors that inhibit young people's dreams. They may not be able to travel to for employment or the next stage of their education, or they may have family commitments that restrict their options. They see part of their role as helping young people to develop deeper understanding of all the possibilities and to be prepared to change their dreams. They also think it is important for young people to develop resilience, to learn how to cope with disappointment and failure as well as success.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Mastery YES ...	<p>It gives you satisfaction and confidence</p> <p>It drives you to learn more</p>	<p>Confidence increases in small steps; not necessary to have full mastery</p> <p>Success is the biggest motivator</p>
... but	<p>It's better to be really good in one area than average in several</p> <p>It's important to set realistic goals</p> <p>You don't have to be perfect</p> <p>It's not 'once and for all' – you need to move on</p> <p>Having some experience in several fields</p>	<p>Not mastery at this stage, but young people need to feel they are on their way to being the 'finished product'</p>

Comments	<p>may make you more employable than being expert in one</p> <p>Students and teachers felt that complete mastery of an area, in the sense of being fully competent, is not necessary for the development of confidence and motivation but that experiencing success is. Both stressed the importance of setting achievable goals, of mastering small 'chunks' of learning which gradually build to fuller competence.</p>
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	Students	Teachers
Observing others succeed		
YES	<p>It motivates you</p> <p>It reassures you that it is possible It gives you a challenge</p> <p>If there's no envy, frustration</p>	<p>Students often imitate those they admire</p> <p>It can help students to see their own areas of weakness, where they need to improve If they don't feel it's a competition</p>
NO	<p>Motivation comes from within, not from wanting to imitate others I'm disturbed when others are better than me</p>	<p>It can be demotivating for students with low confidence: "I could never do that".</p>
Comments	<p>Generally, both students and teachers felt that seeing others perform successfully can be inspiring and motivating, but that role models need to be presented sensitively so that it does not feel like a competition or reinforce feelings of inadequacy.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
Effects of positive feedback	<p>Encouraging</p> <p>Can help to overcome insecurity But it must come from a respected source And it must be honest, not just flattery</p>	<p>Students need to feel valued</p> <p>It must be honest, not patronising</p>
Effects of negative feedback	<p>Discouraging if taken to heart</p> <p>Can be positive if it makes you reflect and work harder</p>	<p>They can be very sensitive and take criticism of work as personal criticism</p>

Comments	<p>Can make you want to prove them wrong</p> <p>The message from both students and teachers was that positive feedback is encouraging, but only if it is honest. Students recognise unjustified praise and find it patronising. They feel that negative feedback can have positive effects, and teachers understand that this has to be given sensitively.</p>
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	Students	Teachers
Effects of positive mood	Aids clear thinking You feel able to do more	
Effects of negative mood	More difficult to concentrate, think straight	
Comments	<p>But negative emotions can produce good work (e.g. in art and music) And if you have problems outside school/college, work can make you feel better</p> <p>Students generally think that they perform better when their own mood and that of the class are positive. But they also acknowledge that negative emotions can inspire good work, particularly in artistic fields.</p> <p>Teachers stressed that these students are still young and subject to mood swings. It takes time for them to develop maturity and perspective and teachers feel it is part of their role to help them to do this. They feel the more adult environment of vocational training should make it easier for students to be open and say, "I'm not having a very good day today".</p> <p>Teachers are aware that their mood has an impact too.</p>	

	Students	Teachers
'Good' –v- 'hard-working' labels		
Good	<p>It is confidence-boosting</p> <p>It is motivating But only if it's honest and deserved</p>	For some, results are more important than the process
Worked hard	I know I have made an effort and it has been recognised and appreciated	Patronising if not true - it may have been an easy task

Comments	<p>It makes you want to achieve more It makes it feel OK to make mistakes and keep trying It makes me feel good about myself But I want to know how I could have done better</p>	<p>for them</p> <p>It's also important for students to hear that they can learn and improve</p>
	<p>Students do like to be told they are good at something, but not so much in the sense of being labelled as naturally 'clever' or talented, as an acknowledgement that they have achieved something.,</p> <p>They are encouraged when effort is acknowledged but again stressed honest feedback.</p> <p>Both students and teachers stressed the importance of feedback which clearly tells students how they can improve.</p>	

Students	Teachers
How can school/college help young people to develop self efficacy?	
Provide high quality education training	Encourage high but achievable expectations
Show clear pathways	Make progression routes clear so students can adopt a step-by-step approach
Talk about unconventional as well as conventional pathways	Help students to become aware of all the possibilities
Talk more about post-course possibilities; don't regard successful completion of course as end point	
Give the reality of the course and possible jobs – including the unglamorous, difficult aspects	
Recruit the right people to the right courses (and remove disruptive/disinterested elements)	Help students to correct inappropriate attitudes, behaviours
Encourage students to take responsibility for their own progress	Help students to develop capacity for self reflection, self awareness
Maximise practical, hands-on experiences	Offer live projects, work experience, industry links
Make use of role models, guest speakers	Be a role model: "I was you"
Be honest about how competitive some fields are	
Give broad, career-related advice – e.g. about networking - not just about grades	Give ongoing support and reassurance
Involve parents	
Include student exchanges	Provide peer group discussion opportunities with students from other vocational areas
They can't do more. Students should take responsibility and show initiative themselves	

Comments

Both students and teachers stressed that young people need to have a very clear picture at the outset of the steps and pathways to their goal and also awareness of other possible routes they might take.

Students again stressed honesty. They want to base their decisions on knowledge of what courses and jobs are really like – the good and the not so good aspects.

The role of peers is important here. Students become frustrated when the progress of the group is undermined by peers who have perhaps made a wrong choice and are disinterested or disruptive. Teachers also stress the importance of appropriate attitudes and behaviours.

Some teachers would like to see time created within the curriculum for students to discuss these important issues and feel that cross-curricular peer group discussion forums, perhaps facilitated by staff, would be helpful.

Students and teachers both feel that integrating practical, realistic, job-related experiences in courses helps to develop students' self efficacy – the belief that they can achieve specific goals in life.
