Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) SOP

SOP Number:
124-04-2014

Academic Year:
2026/27 Onwards

Date Of This Issue:
June 2026

Responsible Owner:
Head of Quality, Excellence and Development

Summary of Contents
This SOP outlines the College's procedures to educate, inform, guide and advise learners on CEIAG and individuals who avail of the service.

Review Information (Responsible Owner):
First Created: November 2016
Last Reviewed: June 2026
Next Review: June 2027

Change Type at last Review: Minor (delete as appropriate)

Approval/Noting By:
CMT: 23 June 2026

Previous Reference (for control purposes):
Supersedes CEIAG Policy and SOP

Date of Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations Screening (Section 75):
December 2016

Date of Last Accessibility Screening:
July 2025

Contents

1.0 CHANGE HISTORY 1

2.0 SUMMARY 2

2.1 AIM 2
2.2 BACKGROUND 2

3.0 SCOPE 2

4.0 PROCEDURE 2

5.0 SERC'S CAREERS SERVICE 2

5.1 SERC CAREERS SERVICE RESOURCES 3
5.2 SERC'S CAREERS SERVICE PROVISION 3
5.3 CORE VALUES AND SERVICE PROVISION: 4

6.0 ON COURSE CAREERS EXPERIENCE 5

7.0 REFERRAL TO THE CAREERS SERVICE WITHIN SERC 5

7.1 SELF-REFERRAL 5
7.2 COURSE TEAM REFERRAL 5
7.3 SERC SUPPORT SERVICES REFERRAL 6

8.0 RESPONSIBLE OWNER 6

9.0 COMMUNICATION PLAN 6

10.0 REVIEW 6

APPENDIX 1: DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY 7

1.0 Change History

Changes to this SOP are documented in Appendix 1 of this document. When reading electronic copies of this document, you can click here to view the change history.

2.0 Summary

2.1 Aim

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) within SERC is an important mechanism that supports individuals to choose the most appropriate career or education pathway, helping them to fulfil their personal, social, educational and employment ambitions.

2.2 Background

CEIAG makes a major contribution to preparing individuals for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. An individual's career reflects the progress they make in learning and work. It is part of the vision and mission of careers at SERC that all individuals will experience a planned programme of activities, delivered by careers, curriculum and training organisation staff, to help them choose options and career pathways that are right for them.

3.0 Scope

This Standard Operating Procedure applies to all staff who educate, inform, advise and guide learners on CEIAG and individuals who avail of the service.

4.0 Procedure

The SOP is divided into the following sections:

5.0 SERC's Careers Service

6.0 On Course Careers Experience

7.0 Referral to the Careers Service within SERC

5.0 SERC's Careers Service

Objectives of the Service

The main objectives of SERC's Careers Service are to ensure that all users have access to a client-centred, impartial and confidential service that helps them to:

- Develop a clear awareness of their interests and abilities and acquire a broad understanding of the range of opportunities available to them with regard to education, employment and training;
- Make informed decisions or choices in their career progression and life plans;
- Participate in careers organised activities which contribute to the College vision and objectives.

The College Management Team has prioritised the following objectives for the SERC Careers Service to include:

- Providing CEIAG that is accessible to all, impartial, client-focused, confidential and collaborative and in accordance with established legislative guidelines and Code of Ethics as developed by the Careers Development Institute (CDI);

- Ensuring that SERC's careers service is continually reviewed and updated on a regular basis through internal and external quality assurance procedures, and that all careers staff have the necessary skills, knowledge and training appropriate to the role they are undertaking;
- Collaborating closely with curriculum areas within the college to ensure that the service continues to meet the diverse needs of the ever-changing student population and taking any relevant actions needed to ensure that all course and careers information relates to each curriculum area and are up-to-date and relevant. In addition, curriculum areas should keep careers staff fully informed about changes in courses, new courses and course developments;
- Contributing to the College Social Inclusion Strategy through engagement with community groups and individuals in the SERC's catchment areas to help adults return to education;
- Developing links with external agencies, Higher Education Institutions, and employers to ensure that CEIAG provision takes account of developments in the labour market.

5.1 SERC Careers Service Resources

The SERC Careers Service has dedicated Careers Officers on each main campus who are available for careers needs of all potential users of the service, internal and external. Learners can contact careers by emailing careers@serc.ac.uk or calling into the careers office on campus - Bangor A27b, Ards Careers Hub, Downpatrick B2-8 and Lisburn 1-B7.

5.2 SERC's Careers Service Provision

Any user of the Careers Service within SERC can expect:

- Accessible and impartial careers guidance, which is confidential, client-centred, up-to-date and consistent with relevant legislation, and that also follows the CDI Code of Ethics;
- Access to additional support services within SERC should the individual need them;
- Access to up-to-date and relevant information on careers and course progression opportunities through a variety of media sources, and in a format that meets their needs;
- Support throughout the process of applying to a Higher Education Institute, whether through UCAS or CAO;
- Access to up-to-date employment, work placement/experience and volunteering opportunities via the Online Careers Hub on Teams;
- Use of on-line careers resources to support individuals in making informed decisions about course and career progression routes;
- Access to individual online careers support including telephone, video call and email guidance;
- Access to online career related events throughout the year via the Online Careers Hub.

The Careers Service offers a wide range of services to individuals and can help them to:

- Access information about opportunities in learning and work;

- Explore appropriate career options;
- Plan their career development;
- Complete job applications and CVs;
- Prepare for interviews for jobs and Higher Education courses;
- Make applications for further study;
- Contact other agencies and organisations.

The Careers Service will offer learners a programme of activities which will include:

- The opportunity for a 1-1 career guidance interview;
- A careers induction talk with information on the careers service and how to contact careers staff;
- A UCAS talk for those who are completing applications for university;
- The opportunity to attend a range of careers events in the college;
- Information on progression opportunities through class talks and/or 1-1 guidance.
- Support with completion of a career plan;
- Support with job searching, CVs and interview preparation.

5.3 Core Values and Service Provision:

Careers Advice & Guidance

At the start of career guidance interviews (normally lasting 30 minutes) the careers officer and learner should agree what can be reasonably expected from the discussion. The careers officer's role is to help the learner reflect on their own current situation, identify and evaluate career options. At the end of the interview the careers officer will summarise and agree action points with the learner.

Careers Activities & Events

Learners are encouraged to develop their career management skills by getting involved in careers related activities and events. Each academic year the careers service organises a series of careers events which are advertised on the Intranet, social media, plasma screens, careers bulletins, careers notice boards and other communications methods across SERC.

Careers Information Online

The Online Careers Hub on MS Teams contains important information for learners, including careers resources, weblinks, videos and guides. It also has recordings of presentations by the careers team, which learners can refer to.

The career libraries hold a range of books and guides about jobs, study and training. They also have a range of university prospectuses for the UK and Ireland. These are located at:

- Ards: Careers Hub and Learning Resource Centre
- Bangor: Careers office and Learning Resource Centre
- Downpatrick: Careers office and Learning Resource Centre
- Lisburn: Learning Resource Centre and Student Services Office

Careers Education

The Careers Education activities at SERC enable learners to develop the necessary skills, knowledge, understanding and experience of opportunities, to help make informed career choices.

Work-Related Learning Opportunities

The careers service will support work-related learning through the organisation of internal events, promotion of external careers events, identifying volunteering opportunities and by advertising any opportunities via college email, weekly bulletins and social media.

6.0 On Course Careers Experience

In addition to the support provided by SERC's Careers Service, course teams will design the programme curriculum to ensure that learners have the opportunity to experience an insight into specific careers and progression opportunities during their programme of study. This experience could include:

- Opportunities to engage in work placement and industry-led projects
- Vocational specific project-based learning activities
- Tutorials dedicated to careers and progression planning
- Competitions
- Employability skills development
- Site visits and study trips
- Guest speakers
- International cultural visits, study trips and work placements
- Entrepreneurship and enterprise
- Student companies

7.0 Referral to the Careers Service within SERC

Referrals to the Careers Service can be made in various manners depending on the situation in relation to the individual.

7.1 Self-Referral

Individuals can self-refer to the SERC careers service to get help for any of the above services, and an individual can contact the careers officer in their particular campus either by phone, email, Teams or by calling into the careers office.

7.2 Course Team Referral

A course team may refer an individual learner or a class for careers guidance and information depending on the situation. The careers staff will be able to facilitate full class advice on course and career progression routes. An individual learner can be referred to access any of the services offered by a member of the course team, and this referral can be facilitated in their respective campus by phone, email, Teams or by calling into the careers office.

7.3 SERC Support Services Referral

SERC Support Services can make a referral at any time to the Careers Service. The Careers Service will help the individual to access the correct information to make the correct career choice for them.

8.0 Responsible Owner

The Head of Quality, Excellence and Development is responsible for ensuring that this SOP is implemented, adhered to and reviewed..

9.0 Communication Plan

This SOP will be uploaded to the College intranet and referred to in staff induction and training.

10.0 Review

This SOP will be reviewed annually, or when the need for change has been identified.

Appendix 1: Document Change History

Version	Date	Change Detail
1.0	July 2023	Transferred to new Accessibility Template
1.1	September 2024	Responsible Owner updated to “Head of Quality, Excellence and Development”
1.2	June 2025	Page 4 - Careers Information Online updated to “The Online Careers Hub on MS Teams” “site Your Careers Service – Student” – deleted Review changed to “annually”.
1.3	June 2025	Aim 2.1. Page 4 wording of aim amended.
1.4	June 2026	Minor updates made to improve terminology consistency, update learner references, clarify procedure section numbering, amend Responsible Owner wording, and update communication and review wording.