



National Centre for Guidance in Education  

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Lárionad Náisiúnta um Threoir san Oideachas

**NCGE**

**Adult Educational Guidance Initiative**

Guidelines on the Provision of Adult Educational Guidance Services  
to clients aged 16 and 17 years old

*March 2014*

## Acronyms and Preamble

### Acronyms

Adult Educational Guidance Initiative	AEGI
Adult Educational Guidance Service(s)	AEGS
Department of Education and Skills	DES
Directors of Studies of Guidance Counselling	DSGC
Education and Training Board	ETB
Education and Training Boards Ireland	ETBI
Institute of Guidance Counsellors	IGC
National Centre for Guidance in Education	NCGE
National Educational Psychological Service	NEPS
Waterford Institute of Technology	WIT

## Introduction

The National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) is an agency of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) whose role is to develop and support quality guidance provision in the education sector as part of lifelong learning in accordance with national and international best practice. NCGE develops guidance materials, provides advice on good practice, supports innovation and pilot projects, disseminates information and organises Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for guidance practitioners. NCGE works in collaboration with relevant national agencies, experts and stakeholders.

The Department of Education and Skills requested the NCGE to develop Guidelines on the Provision of Adult Educational Guidance Services to 16 and 17 year olds to support the *DES AEGI Operational Guidelines 2012*<sup>1</sup>. These Guidelines are intended to support the Adult Educational Guidance Services (AEGS) nationally and should also be useful in informing their managing agencies, the Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT).

The provision of guidance to young people, who have left school, with low or no formal qualifications, requires specific guidance interventions. Such interventions should be cognisant of the age of the individual and the legal requirements for the provision of services to children. The AEGS have traditionally worked with adults who are at least 18 years of age. Therefore, working with this new age cohort requires the development of policy, conducive to the needs and requirements of young people aged between 16 and 18 years of age.

NCGE wishes to acknowledge that these guidelines were developed in consultation with the Adult Educational Guidance Association of Ireland (AEGAI), DES Inspectorate, the Directors of Studies of Guidance Counselling (DSGC), the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC), the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), and the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI). NCGE engaged legal training consultants to provide legal training to AEGI services to inform and support the development of these guidelines. NCGE is grateful to all of these organisations for their co-operation, collaboration, advice and information.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ncge.ie/uploads/AEGI\\_Operational\\_Guidelines\\_2012\\_\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ncge.ie/uploads/AEGI_Operational_Guidelines_2012__FINAL.pdf)

## Definitions

### Definition of a child

In Ireland, The Child Care Act, 1991<sup>2</sup> defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years, excluding a person who is or who has been married. The legislation governing school attendance in Ireland is the Education (Welfare) Act 2000<sup>3</sup>. Under the Act, the minimum school leaving age is 16 years, or the completion of three years of post-primary education, whichever is the later.

### Definitions of Guidance

**Guidance** refers to a range of activities designed to assist people to make choices and to make transitions consequent upon these choices. In the context of adult education these activities include: information; assessment; advice; counselling; teaching/careers education; placement; advocacy; feedback; follow-up; networking; managing and innovating systems change. *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education DES (2000)*<sup>4</sup>

**Guidance in schools** refers to a range of learning experiences provided in a developmental sequence that assist students to develop self-management skills which will lead to effective choices and decisions about their lives. It encompasses the three separate but interlinked areas of personal and social development, educational guidance and career guidance. (pg. 4 Department Guidelines, 2005) 5

**Guidance** facilitates people throughout their lives to manage their own educational, training, occupational, personal, social and life choices so that they reach their full potential and contribute to the development of a better society” *National Guidance Forum 2007*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1991/en/act/pub/0017/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2000/en/act/pub/0022/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/fe\\_aduled\\_wp.pdf](http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/fe_aduled_wp.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.ncge.ie/uploads/pp\\_guidelines\\_second\\_level\\_schools\\_9c.pdf](http://www.ncge.ie/uploads/pp_guidelines_second_level_schools_9c.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/documents/NGF\\_Guidance\\_for\\_Life%20final.pdf](http://www.nationalguidanceforum.ie/documents/NGF_Guidance_for_Life%20final.pdf)

## The Adult Educational Guidance Initiative (AEGI)

- The Adult Educational Guidance Initiative (AEGI) provides quality information and guidance to adults (i.e. those who are at least 18 years of age). Adults may access their local Adult Educational Guidance Service (AEGS) for the purposes of up-to-date impartial adult educational and other relevant information.
- The Department of Education and Skills' *AEGI OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES 2012* clarify the cohort of adults and young people who are also eligible for one-to-one guidance and group guidance as follows:-
  - Adults and young people aged over 16 who left school with low or no formal qualifications or low literacy levels <sup>7</sup>;
  - The unemployed, particularly the priority groups identified as part of the Government's activation agenda;
  - The long-term unemployed and those at risk of becoming long-term unemployed, especially those in the older age groups;
  - Those not in work but not eligible to be on the Live Register;
  - Those in the workplace with basic skills needs;
  - Disadvantaged women who have particular experience of barriers to participation;
  - Disadvantaged men, including those experiencing rural isolation;
  - Lone Parents and others with caring responsibilities that may prohibit their participation in full time courses.
- The AEGI provides a model of adult educational guidance which is inclusive of: pre-entry, entry, ongoing and pre-exit stages; personal, educational and vocational guidance; working in partnership at local level, meeting a spectrum of guidance needs of the target groups, employing a range of methodologies including information provision, one-to-one guidance, group guidance and outreach provision;
- Any client, who is 18 years of age and over is considered an adult for the purposes of AEGI service provision;
- A person who is aged 16 or 17 years of age and is no longer in full time education may access the AEGS, in particular, those young people aged over 16 who left school with low or no formal qualifications or low literacy levels;
- The Department of Education and Skills supports and encourages the completion of upper second level education by all students. However, young people are legally entitled to disengage from second level education at the age of 16;

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<sup>7</sup> Young people aged over 16 years of age are eligible to participate in educational programmes under the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) and adult literacy programmes. (Community education programmes are open to those over 18 years of age. The Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) is available for unemployed people over 21 years of age.)

- It is *not* envisaged that the provision of information and guidance by the AEGS will replace the provision of guidance in post primary schools for this age cohort. In some circumstances, a referral back to the original school may be an appropriate course of action.

### **Guidelines for AEGI services on the Provision of Adult Educational Guidance Services to 16 and 17 year olds**

These Guidelines aim to support the provision of quality AEGS guidance and information services to those young people aged 16 and 17 years of age. Those young people aged 18 and over are considered adults for the purposes of AEGS provision.

***The Adult Educational Guidance Services should develop local policy, in consultation with their managing agencies, the ETBs and WIT, on their provision of service to 16 and 17 year olds. The AEGS Co-ordinator should work with ETB/WIT management (CEO/EO/AEO as appropriate) to develop such local policy.***

The following should be considered in the development of such local policy:

#### **1. Engagement**

Where a young person aged 16 or 17 years of age presents, AEGS staff should engage with the young person appropriately and in line with the managing ETB/WIT child protection policy ;

#### **2. Provision**

Adult Educational Guidance Services may provide adult educational guidance and information to 16 and 17 year olds in both:-

- group work and
- 1-1 basis (with particular reference to the AEGI remit as outlined previously);

#### **3. Children First and Duty of Care**

Given that a person aged 16 or 17 years of age is legally defined as ‘a child’, the AEGS should refer to ***Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children:*** published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.<sup>8</sup>

And also to

***Our Duty to Care: the Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People (Factsheets)*** published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs;<sup>9</sup>

The AEGS Co-ordinator should establish appropriate contact and referral procedures with the appropriate ETB/WIT designated “liaison person” for the Children First guidelines;

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child\\_welfare\\_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf](http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/child_welfare_protection/ChildrenFirst.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/ODTC\\_FactSheets\\_Eng.pdf](http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/ODTC_FactSheets_Eng.pdf)

#### 4. ETB/WIT Policy

The AEGS Co-ordinator should , in collaboration with local management, incorporate the ETB/WIT policy into the policy of the AEGS provision to 16 and 17 year olds;

#### 5. Links and Referral

AEGS Co-ordinator should make links to and liaise with their nearest local Youth Information Centre/ Youth Services as appropriate. Clarification of roles of these services will support appropriate referral protocols;

AEGS Co-ordinator should make links to and liaise with the guidance counsellor in the local Post primary schools to ensure clarification of roles and referral back to the schools where appropriate;

#### 6. Form of Consent

AEGS should establish a Form of Consent for provision of 1-1 guidance to *16 and 17 year olds* (to be signed by the Parent/Guardian/Young person as appropriate);

This form of consent should consider the following:-

- Request for Parent/Guardian consent to attend 1-1 guidance session/s where possible;
- This Consent Form should outline the AEGS local policy on provision of updates or feedback to Parent/Guardian of the young person's work/progress with the Guidance Service where appropriate;
- Where parent/guardian consent is *not* available, the guidance counsellor should clarify to the young person:-
  - the nature of giving and withdrawing *their own* consent to attendance at 1-1 guidance counselling session/s;

The Guidance Counsellor should also ensure that the young person is made aware of the following:-

- the boundaries of guidance provision;
- AEGS policy on referral to appropriate services;
- AEGS legal requirements under Children First Guidelines;
- the boundaries of confidentiality;
- the guidance counsellor's right to require further parental /legal guardian consent into the future if he/she deems it so necessary;

**7. Appropriate record of the guidance counselling session with 16 and 17 year olds**

In line with usual good practice in record keeping, AEGS should establish a local Client Record Form (*16 – 17 year olds*) to clearly document the agreed next steps/ plans/outcomes of the guidance session. This should be signed by the young person and the guidance counsellor and a copy provided to the young person. Engagement with the young person should be documented as appropriate within the NCGE -AEGI database, the Adult Guidance Management System.

**8. Group Guidance**

AEGS should establish a local policy on the provision of guidance to *16 and 17 year olds* registered on/attending an adult education/community education programme. The AEGS Co-ordinator should collaborate and engage with the course /programme co-ordinator to ensure clarification and exchange of information to ensure the content of the guidance programme is suitable to those under 18 years. Such local policy should consider the following:

- I. The age cohort of the whole group;
- II. The appropriate content of the guidance programme given the age cohort;
- III. Clarification of the requirement for informed consent to attend 1-1 guidance counselling session following the group guidance provision for *16 and 17 year olds*;
- IV. Forming a separate group guidance session if there are sufficient numbers within the group in the age range of 16-18;

**9. Provision of Information to 16 and 17 year olds**

AEGS should establish a protocol for the provision of Information to young people aged 16 and 17 years. Such a protocol should:-

- I. clarify the age of the client as under 18;
- II. explain the AEGS policy on guidance and information provision;
- III. explain the difference between the provision of information and referral to the guidance counsellor;
- IV. develop a local AEGS Information Query sheet specifically for 16 and 17 year olds;
- V. document and record the information provided to the young person;
- VI. liaise with the AEGS Co-ordinator, who is the supervisor, in relation to information provision to this age cohort.



**10. Publication/Public Notice of Local Policy**

The AEGS should ensure that the local policy on provision of guidance and information to 16 and 17 year olds is clearly visible in the AEGS offices;

**11. Staff Briefing and Understanding of Policy Issues**

All AEGS staff should:

- a. understand their own role in relation to working with 16 and 17 year olds;
- b. be aware of their local AEGS policy and how to implement same and
- c. know who to approach if they require help with any area of these Guidelines or their own local policy;
- d. Notify the AEGS Co-ordinator and ETB / WIT management and NCGE if they feel they are not appropriately qualified to provide guidance to this age cohort.
- e. Under the direction of the AEGS Co-ordinator, staff should review and revise the provision of service to this age cohort annually. In line with ETB / WIT management policies, the local policy on the provision of service to 16 and 17 year olds should be reviewed and revised as appropriate.

**12. NCGE support for AEGI provision to 16 and 17 year olds**

NCGE provides CPD to AEGI staff to ensure quality service provision to all clients. Where required, further CPD will be provided to support provision of guidance and information services to this age cohort.

**13.** NCGE will liaise with DES, ETB / WIT management and AEGI services to review the development of these Guidelines as appropriate.

**14.** For further information on these Guidelines or AEGI, contact the National Centre for Guidance in Education ( NCGE) [ncgeinfo@ncge.ie](mailto:ncgeinfo@ncge.ie)

Jennifer McKenzie,  
Director, NCGE,  
Fitzwilliam Court  
Leeson Close  
Dublin 2  
[Jennifer.mckenzie@ncge.ie](mailto:Jennifer.mckenzie@ncge.ie)

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## Appendix One

This Appendix contains sample form templates which may be of use (these Templates are based on those provided to NCGE by Mayo Sligo Leitrim ETB). Such templates will be available for download on the NCGE AEGI web-based handbook from 2014.

### 1. Sample Form of Consent – Parent /Guardian

#### PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION FORM FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE ADULT EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE SERVICE

##### DETAILS OF YOUNG PERSON:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile (of young person): \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone no: \_\_\_\_\_

Email (of young person): \_\_\_\_\_

Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

Other relevant information: *(Please mention any medical condition or special needs)*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

##### PERMISSION:

I/We give the young person named above my permission to attend meetings with the Guidance Counsellor and/or Information Officer of \_\_\_\_\_ AEGS.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (IN CAPITALS): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to young person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mobile (own) \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative contact name & no: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & phone of family doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Sample Form of Consent – Young person Informed Consent

### YOUNG PERSON INFORMED CONSENT FOR ATTENDANCE AT ADULT EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE SERVICE

#### CLIENT (AGED 16 OR 17 YEARS)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile (of young person): \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone no: \_\_\_\_\_

Email (of young person): \_\_\_\_\_

Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

Other relevant information: *(Please mention any medical condition or special needs)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Name of Parent / Guardian / Next of Kin

Name (IN CAPITALS): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to young person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative contact name & no: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & phone of family doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

#### CONSENT

I \_\_\_\_\_ give my own informed consent to attend meetings with the Guidance Counsellor and/or Information Officer of \_\_\_\_\_ AEGS. The AEGS has explained to me their policies and boundaries of confidentiality and their requirements under law of the Children First Guidelines. In understand that the Guidance Counsellor may require further consent from a parent / guardian in the future I understand that I am free to withdraw my own consent to guidance counselling at any time.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

## Appendix Two

### Sample Information or Working with 16 and 17 year olds

#### INFORMATION ABOUT **SAMPLE** ADULT EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE SERVICE

*'Guidance facilitates people throughout their lives to manage their own educational, training, occupational, personal, social and life choices so that they can reach their full potential and contribute to the development of a better society'* National Guidance Forum Report 2007

The **Sample ETB** Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service provides, educational, vocational and personal guidance and information which supports learners to make informed decisions about their future. The service is impartial and takes a person-centered approach. What is discussed is treated with confidentiality unless a situation of danger is revealed or where the law requires the Guidance Counsellor or Information Officer to inform others.

#### WHAT IS INVOLVED FOR THE YOUNG PERSON?

The young person will meet with a qualified Guidance Counsellor for approximately 1 hour. There may be further follow up meetings as agreed with the young person and depending on their individual needs. There may be some small and large group work.

The young person may avail of meetings with a Guidance Information Officer who provides impartial and accurate information on local, regional and national education and training opportunities.

Where possible we request parental / guardian permission to attend the AEGS however we recognise the young person's right to provide his / her own informed consent to guidance.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

If you have any queries about the above or about the work of the Sample ETB AEGS, please contact .....Co-ordinator AEGS at [info@sampleaegs.ie](mailto:info@sampleaegs.ie)

## Appendix Three

### Sample Contacts for the AEGS

#### Important contacts: Child Protection and Supports

Name	Contact details	Notes
Child Protection Social Work Services,		Community Care Office,
Child Protection Social Work Service		Duty Social Worker
Garda Siochana, HSE,		Keeping Safe training
ETB / WIT Designated Liaison person		

## Appendix Four

### Sample Checklist for AEGS policy

To inform our local policy, the AEGS has considered and is informed by:

1	Copy of <i>Children First Guidelines</i>	YES	NO	DATE
2	Copy of <i>Our Duty to Care: the Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People (Factsheets)</i>			
3	Copy of ETB / WIT child protection policy			
4	Contact details of ETB / WIT designated liaison person			
5	Public document on main office describing service to 16 - 17 year olds			
6	Form of consent – parent / guardian			
7	Form of Consent – young person informed			
8	List of referral contacts			
9	Established link with Youth Information Centre			
10	Established link with local post primary school			
11	AEGS Policy established on Date			
12	AEGS Policy for review on Date			
13	AEGS Staff aware of policy			
14	AEGS staff training required for this cohort?			
15	Other relevant information			
16	ETB / WIT management have been involved in development of and provided with a copy of the final Policy document			

## Appendix Five

### Sample Client (age 16 – 17 years) record Sheet

Name:	
Programme:	
Goals for this session	
Actions agreed before next session	
Date of next session	
Client Signature:	
Today's date:	

