

Sorted!



The guide to running a
Connexions resource centre for
Connexions assistants

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What does a Connexions assistant do?

This booklet describes some of the jobs that you may be asked to do. It also explains how you do them.

The most important things about a school or college Connexions Resource Centre are that:

- the information is up-to-date and promotes equality
- there is a good range of information, especially about the most popular jobs
- it is easy to find what you are looking for
- students have regular access to the resources
- it is attractive and inviting
- all users are treated equally

Connexions assistants usually have these jobs:

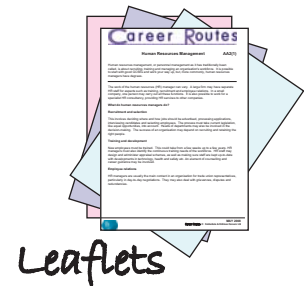
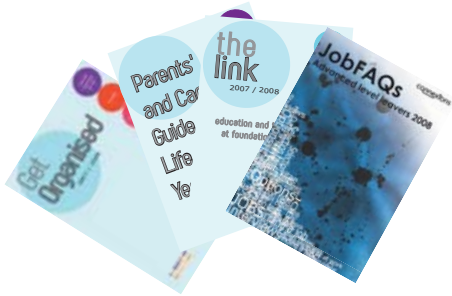
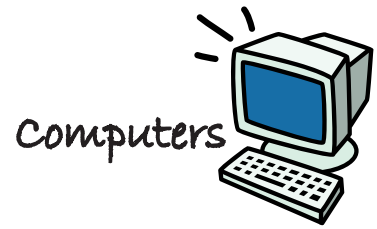
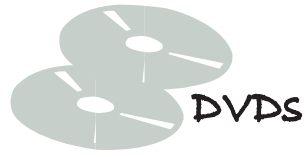
- sending off for new information
- coding and filing new leaflets and books
- tidying up and making sure that things are put back in the right places
- making sure everything is clearly labelled
- helping users of the resources find what they need
- arranging posters and displays
- helping others to use the computers

What's in it for me?

- You will be helping your school or college to provide up-to-date careers and life issue information to all its students
- You will see lots of information so you're likely to make the right choices for you about careers, education, health, free time and so on – and know where to go if you or a friend need help
- It will give you the confidence to understand the needs of other people
- It's a great thing to put on your CV.....it shows initiative, organisational skills, and that you like to get involved

What's in the Connexions Resources Centre?

It is very important that schools and colleges have **good Connexions resources**. Students need information to help them sort out their careers, spare time and personal problems such as health, money and homelessness.



The Connexions Resource Centre Index

Connexions information is coded and filed using a **special classification system** - CRCI (Connexions Resource Centre Index). This system uses icons and codes. It puts information about similar jobs or topics together.

Information about jobs is separated into 'families', so you can find information about similar jobs. To give you an example, all 'health' jobs, (nursing, physiotherapy, dietetics, occupational therapy and so on), are filed in the same place - the 'J' section, identified by the white cross on a red background.















Other useful information such as college and university courses, interview skills, lifestyle issues (budgeting, health etc) is given a code beginning with the letter 'Z'.

Posters and guides to the system should be available.













The major headings are on the next page. If you have lots of information in some sections you may need to give a more detailed code to some of your information.












Connexions Centre Codes

General Information

- ZC  Choices
- ZE  Education
- ZF  Free Time
- ZH  Your Health
- ZJ  Housing
- ZL  Law, Your Rights, Equality and Citizenship
- ZM  Money and Benefits
- ZR  Relationships
- ZT  Travel and Transport
- ZU  Where to Get Help
- ZW  Work and Apprenticeships
- ZX  Abroad






Occupational Areas

- A  Administration, Business and Office Work
- B  Building and Construction
- C  Catering and Hospitality
- D  Computing and IT
- E  Design, Arts and Crafts
- F  Education: childcare, nursery nursing, teaching
- G  Engineering: electrical, electronic, mechanical, motor vehicle
- H  Environment, Animals and Plants
- I  Financial Services
- J  Healthcare
- K  Languages, History, Information
- L  Legal and Political Services

- M  Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- N  Manufacturing and Production
- O  Marketing and Advertising
- P  Media, Print, Publishing, Journalism
- Q  Performing Arts: acting, dance, music
- R  Personal Services: cleaning, hair and beauty, undertaking
- S  Retail Sales and Customer Services
- T  Science, Mathematics and Statistics
- U  Security and Armed Forces
- V  Social Work, Care, Counselling, Youth Work
- W  Transport and Logistics

What's on the computer?

SOUND! PICTURES! VIDEO CLIPS! QUIZZES!

Program	Information on Jobs/Careers	Career/Interest Matching	Information on Courses
JED Job Explorer Database 	✓	✓	
Kudos Kudos Online 	✓	✓	
Odyssey	✓		
Careerscape Careerscape Online 	✓		✓
Higher Ideas 			✓
Pathfinder,  Pathfinder + HE Pathfinder Live	✓	✓	✓

- These programs provide information on jobs or courses and some programs can also help you match your interests and favourite subjects to suitable careers and courses.
- Programs such as *Odyssey*, *Pathfinder* and *Careerscape* also contain lots of general information related to work, learning and life decisions.
- Your school or college may have a special CV program but if not, the other programs give useful guidelines on writing a CV and you can build a CV by logging on to the website of C & K Careers at www.workabout.org.uk and going to 'easy CV'.



Now

- put a cross by the programs you have in school
- try them out - you may be asked to show them to other students

Go online with the Internet - www.workabout.org.uk

Some of your programs will have links to useful websites but try this site now!

The screenshot shows the homepage of workabout.org.uk. The navigation bar includes Home, 11-16, 16-19, 20+, Parents, Businesses, and Practitioners. The main content area features a 'welcome' message, 'focus on Calderdale' and 'focus on Kirklees' buttons, 'easyCV' and 'careers info' buttons, a 'voteabout' poll, 'job vacancies', 'help lines', 'useful links', 'news & events', and 'shoutabout' sections. Callout boxes point to specific elements: 'Help in Years 7-11' points to the 11-16 tab; 'Help beyond Year 11' points to the 16-19 tab; 'easyCV - build and update your CV online' points to the easyCV button; 'Latest job vacancies' points to the job vacancies section; and 'Information on hundreds of different careers' points to the careers info button.

Use the useful links section to find 100s of other helpful websites.

E-mail from the site can be used for careers, education and training enquiries.

You can get promotional materials from the Information Team and you'll find a Workabout quiz and a guide to searching for careers info in the Practitioners section.

Now

- make a list of your favourite careers sites

.....

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Please remember school rules on using the Internet!

What do I do with new information

Most careers teachers or librarians will want to see all information which arrives and will then give it to you to code and file.

Things you will need:

Pen
Labels
Coding book
Coloured icons downloaded from www.cegnet.co.uk (optional)

Date	Code

**Always, always
date and code!**

What to do:

1. Put a **date** on the front cover of everything. Use a label if the book's cover is too shiny to write on.
2. **Code** the information: look up the CRCI code letter(s) and write this on the front cover in the top right corner. If you have a set of small icons stick the correct icon on the front cover.
3. **File** it in the correct place. As well as being out of date, old information may not promote equality. Look carefully to see if there is an old edition of the same leaflet in the box file. If so, throw it away. The covers and titles of new and old versions are not always the same, so you have to check carefully. This is very important.

When you have more experience you should be able to throw out some things yourself, but when you first start working in the resource centre you should check with your careers teacher or librarian.

How else do I keep the information up-to-date?

KEEPING INFORMATION UP-TO-DATE

Keeping everything up-to-date is a big job, especially if you try to do it all at once.

It is usually much easier to do it bit by bit during the year. Every part of the Connexions Resource Centre should be checked at least once a year.

Updating information

Ideally leaflets should be no more than two years old so, if they are, take them out. Give them to your careers teacher or librarian to see whether they want you to send for up-to-date copies.

The Internet is also a huge source of careers and life issues information: our website www.workabout.org.uk, as well as, www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u are good places to start.

When you are sending for information make sure you have the most up-to-date address of the organisation by visiting their website or by looking in a jobs directory such as *Job File*. *Get Organised*, a booklet for Year 11 students, is a good place to find addresses for schools, colleges and training providers.

Ordering free information



Telephoning

Make a list so that your careers teacher or librarian can ring for the information.



Downloading from the Internet

Look into the access you have in your school. Many organisations are only putting information on the web. Check if you need permission to print information out to put in your resource centre.



Emailing

Websites usually encourage you to email for information. If they don't have an online order form send your own message requesting information.

You could use the following as a basis for your own email:

Hello

We have many students who are interested in what you do and would like some more information. Please send any free information which may be of use to our students.

Thank you.

Your name(s)....

Connexions Resource Centre Assistant(s)

Your school/college name and address

How can I publicise our Connexions Resource Centre?

Here are a few ideas to help you promote your resources to other students

In the Connexions Resource Centre

- Make a sign giving the opening times.
- Draw a plan of the library, showing where things are and a list of its contents.
- Make a poster showing how to use the library, find information, use computer packages.
- Display any rules on using the Connexions resources, such as 'Please replace items in their correct places', 'No drinks allowed' (Remember - it's not a good idea to have too many rules!).
- Section information clearly. One way is to colour code sections, for example by putting Employment/Job hunting information (ZW) in red boxes and Education (ZE) in another colour.
- Produce clear, bright, easy to read displays, labels and signs. Think about adding pictures - do them on a computer - they'll look good.
- Connexions and C & K Careers may provide labels and signs. You can also print off the coloured icons for posters, labels and book spines from www.cegnet.co.uk

Around school

Think about...

- Using your school or college intranet or website to keep staff and students up-to-date with what's available to help them.
- Putting posters up around school or college advertising the opening times.
- Announcing any up and coming events, such as talks by invited speakers, in school assembly, registration and on your website.
- Creating a Connexions notice board and displays in popular and busy areas of the school, such as the school canteen, to generate interest and then change the theme from time to time. You could highlight: options, careers events, exams, work experience, further/higher education, CVs and applications, gap year, equal opportunities, a particular job, or free time activities.

Remember...

- To update your notice boards on a regular basis. See if you can get posters and publicity materials from organisations such as C & K Careers – ask your PA.

Your ideas...

There are sure to be other creative ways to publicise your Connexions Resource Centre in school or college. What ideas can you think of that will work well in your school/college?

Action plan to attract 'customers'

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



How can I help students to use our Connexions Resource Centre

Approach them and ask if they need any help.

Ask - "Have you been here before?"
"Do you know how the information is organised?"

If the answer is "No", and you have time, explain how the information is organised, that is, according to the CRCI icons and codes.

If you do not have time, show them the poster.



Ask - "Are you looking for anything in particular?" "Do you know where to find it?"

If they are looking for information about a particular job - show them the A-W section, explain about directories such as 'Jobfile' and point out suitable computer programs and websites.

If they are looking for anything else - such as college prospectuses, information about money whilst studying, or ideas for what they could do in their free time, show them the Z Section and point out suitable computer programs and websites.

Ask - "Would you like me to show you how the programs work and how to print?"

Explain about the programs - would they like to use one?



Ask - "Would you like a copy of that?" "Would you like to borrow it?"

Explain how they can borrow information or how they can get copies.



Remember, don't make assumptions about what job or course a student might be interested in. Most courses and jobs are open to most people.

Maintaining Connexions resources

Here is a simple plan to help you keep your resources up-to-date.

The careers teacher or librarian will do a stock-take once a year and order books, DVDs and programs which need to be renewed or replaced. Most information is fine for two years but prospectuses and directories such as 'The Big Guide - University & College Entrance' need to be replaced annually.



Suggested Maintenance Plan

- Weekly - General tidying. Test that computer programs and printer are working. Sort new information.
- Monthly - Check and re-order or download new/further pieces of 'free' information from relevant bodies. Use a directory such as 'Jobfile' for addresses, or print out information from the Internet.

Autumn Term

September

- renew displays/posters/labels
- check A B C information files

October

- check D E F G information files
- file the new leaflets from C&K Careers

November/ December

- renew displays/posters/labels
- check H I J information files
- file new college prospectuses
- file the new leaflets from C&K Careers

Spring Term

January

- renew displays/posters/labels
- check K L M information files

February March

- check N O P information files
- renew displays/posters/labels
- check Q R information files
- file the new leaflets from C&K Careers

Summer Term

April

- check S T U information files

May

- renew display/labels
- check V W information files

June/July

- check all section 'Z'
- replace all university prospectuses
- file the new leaflets from C&K Careers

So what does a Connexions assistant do?

Now check out your understanding - if you're unsure look back in the guide!

What are the main jobs of a Connexions Assistant?

When would you remove information?

What do you do with new information?

What book(s) and software are like an encyclopaedia of jobs?

What careers software have you got?

What websites are helpful and have hot links?

Why does the classification system put jobs in groups?

Where would you file information about a dental receptionist?

Icon:

Code:

Trapeze artist does not appear by name on the CRCI poster or rolodex. In what section would you find information on it?

Icon:

Code:

What should you think about when making a display or poster?

Looks like you'll have your Connexions Resource Centre SORTED in no time. Well done!

Now complete the log on the back page and let us know how you are doing

Notes

Work log

If you would like to receive recognition for your work in the Connexions Resource Centre, keep a log of what you do. In the summer term cut this out and send it to the Information Manager at the head office address on the back cover.

You do not need to complete all the sections, but try to do something different each term.

Name	Year Group	School
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Activity	Date	Signed (teacher, Personal Adviser)
I obtained information from organisations/from the web		
I put the date and code on material		
I checked some A-W files and removed out of date material		
I checked some Z files (general and lifestyle) and removed out of date material		
I correctly filed items in the A-W section		
I correctly filed items in the Z section		
I helped with labelling		
I helped with displays		
I helped students to use the resources		
Other: I		
.....		




Sorted!

Contact us!

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Calderdale & Kirklees Careers

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