



## **Practitioner-delivered research around NEETs**

**The perspectives of the policy maker, the practitioner and the national agencies involved**

# LSIS Research Strategy – key features

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- dissemination of **research that supports improvement** whether from LSIS or elsewhere
- draw on research from **across UK nations and outside UK and across the public services**
- **using practitioners to** add to the evidence base to ensure the relevance of research and build the appetite for using research – but must be transferable research
- turning research **into practical guidance** for the front line
- only commissioning new research where there **are significant identified gaps** that line up with LSIS objectives

# Delivery of the research strategy



## Building sector appetite and capacity to use and conduct research

- LSIS Research Development Fellowship programme
- research publications such as **Inside Evidence**
- LSIS research conference (1<sup>st</sup> March 2011)
- research procurement requirement for “sector involvement”
- NEETs project model to be replicated where possible; given the reported beneficial impacts on participants and the opportunity for meaningful dialogue with “delivery agents” about how the system does or does not work

# Project legacy for the sector

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- contributed to participants' CPD
- see the seminar report on the Excellence Gateway research site <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/research>
- also available soon on the research site will be:
  - 1) the research tools and support materials used by NIACE
  - 2) a summary report of the project and preliminary findings
- data file available for further analysis

# Understanding and supporting young people and adults not in education, employment and training



**NEET national research project**

# Aims of the project

- Improve understanding of the aspirations, motivations and behaviours of young people and adults who are not in education, employment or training;
- Support providers in the learning and skills sector to secure institution and locality specific evidence to develop their understanding in relation to these issues;
- Inform individual provider strategies to meet the needs of young people and adults in their locality.

# Our approach

- 124 learning providers
- Over 2,000 face to face interviews with young people and adults
- Testimonies – what inspires you?
- Research tools and support materials
- Online survey of providers to assess impact
- Early analysis of 10% interviews
- Coding of all transcripts for future analysis

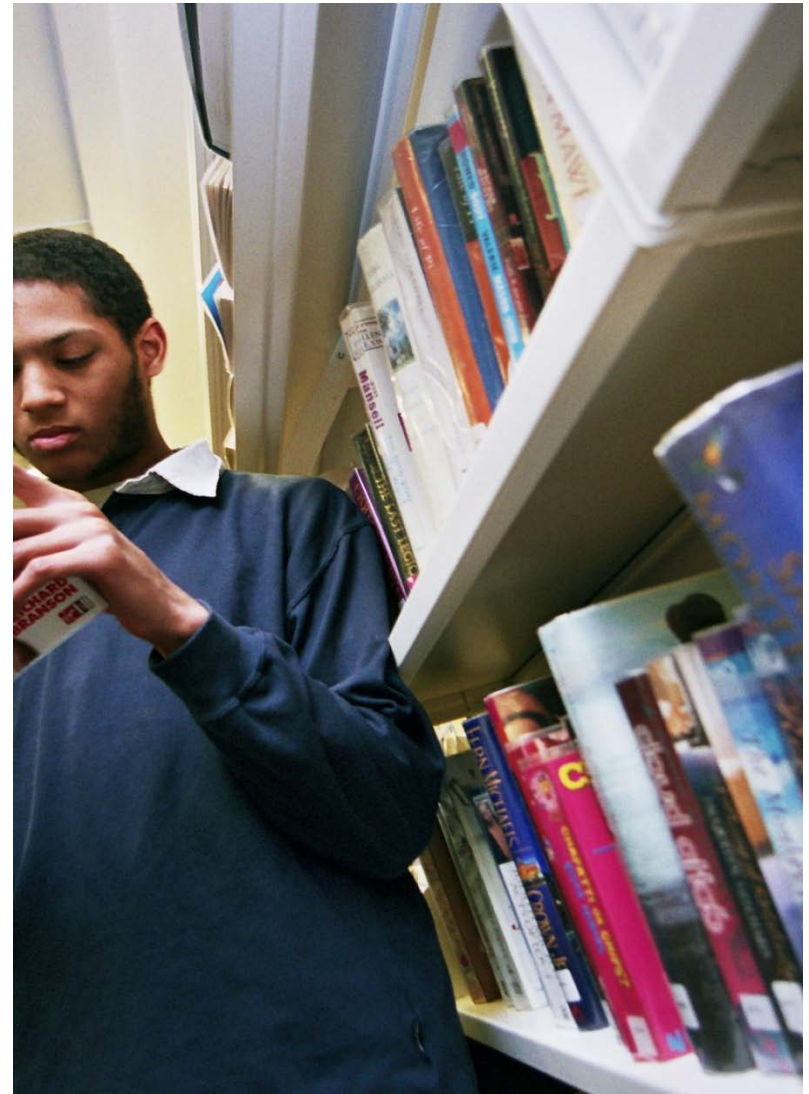
# Provider impact

Much more than just a research project!

- Practitioners developed and utilised research skills
- Providers developed better relationships with local partners
- The project created a community of interest
- The project was a field led innovation addressing a key and challenging social policy
- Providers and practitioners need to be aware of, and understand policy, in order to communicate it well.

‘This is the first time we have participated in this type of research. We have found both the process and methodology easy to use and follow . . . The research has helped us to gain a better understanding of the needs of NEETs.

As these constitute the vast majority of our current clients, this has proved to be invaluable. We will use this information in future planning and funding applications.’





## Who we are:

Third Sector ACL provider

300 users per year

Funded by SFA; EU

## Our research:

Interviewed 30 adult 'NEET's in March 2010

Very diverse circumstances, diverse needs



## NEET needs are not neat....:

- Health
- Mental health
- Children
- Irregular work patterns
- Demand for spaces
- Eligibility
- Cultural
- Negative experiences – JCP interference; poor quality learning

## What works?

- Individual approach
- High quality IAG
- High expectations

## And how?

- Increased confidence
- Motivation
- Communication
- Cultural or attitudinal shift



# Funding and Affordability

- Individual support is expensive
- Complex needs impact on success rates
- Tension between balance of outputs

## What helps?

- 'Flexible outcomes' driven by user need
- Recognition of 'soft' milestones
- Joined-up approach between ACL and DWP programmes



## Next steps

- Build 1:1 support into the timetable
- Focus entry level courses on wider skills
- Provide time to achieve
- Reach the next tier of the Adult NEET 'community of interest'
- Identify funding opportunities to do this

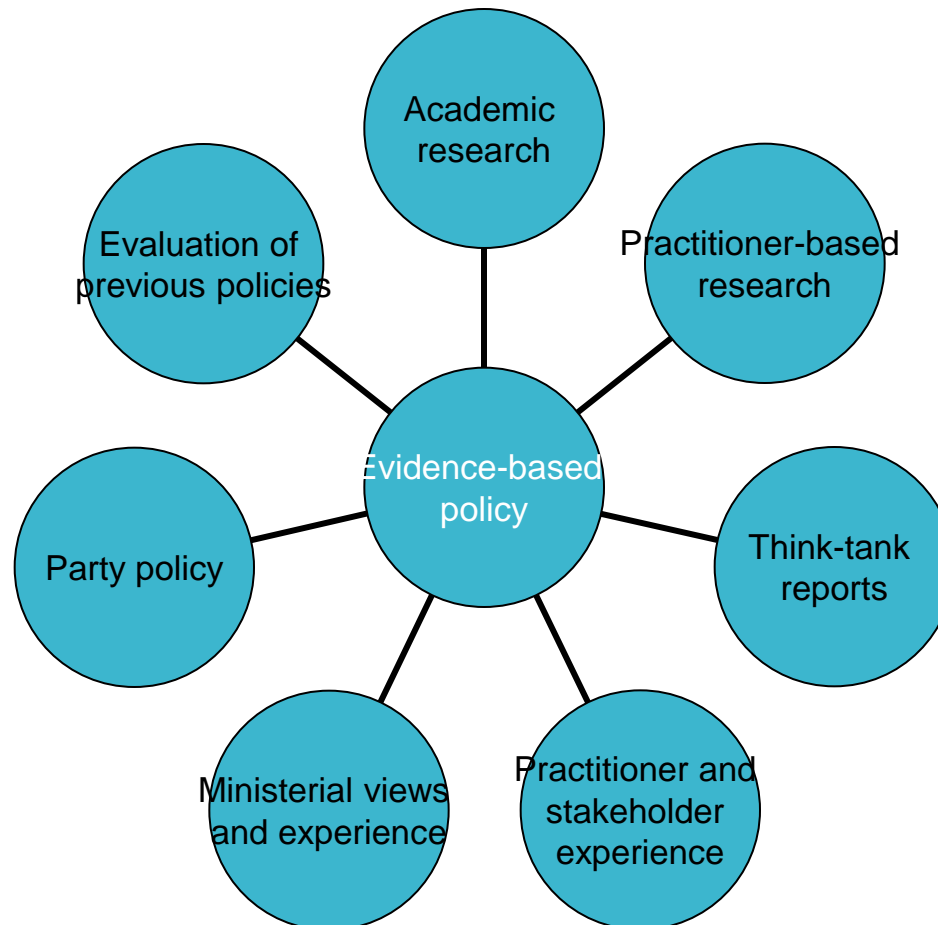


Working in  
Government can  
sometimes feel  
like being in an  
ivory tower:

Everything is  
macro – 55 million  
people;  $\frac{3}{4}$  million  
young people  
NEET....

And we need to  
be objective.

**Authoritative research is a very important part of what we use to build up our understanding of an issue and an essential element of evidence-based policy making.**



## **The LSIS/NIACE research on people who are NEET is being used in a number of ways:**

- To inform the minister of the nature of the problem and ways of tackling it.
- To let the minister know about who is working with people who are NEET and who is looking at the issue.
- As the focus for an expert seminar.
- As a source of information about the issues.
- Combined with other information, as the basis for emerging policy initiatives.