

The Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit for Schools

Practical information and guidance for schools

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Foreword

The fast-changing world of work puts an ever-greater demand on all of us to support young people in making a successful transition from education to employment, helping them to identify and choose career opportunities that are right for them.

The government's Careers Strategy, published in 2017, and statutory guidance for school leaders and school staff, published in 2018, set out the plan for building a high- quality careers system that will help young people to achieve.

Thanks to Sir John Holman and The Gatsby Charitable Foundation, we have a clear blueprint of what good careers provision looks like. The eight Gatsby Benchmarks are based on best national and international research and define all the elements of an excellent careers programme.

The Gatsby Benchmarks have now been put at the heart of the Careers Strategy, with an expectation that all schools will begin working toward the Benchmarks.

This practical toolkit from The Careers & Enterprise Company focuses on the Gatsby Benchmarks. It is designed to help schools identify what 'good' looks like across all eight benchmarks. It includes case studies of best practice as well as tips and practical suggestions for putting the benchmarks into practice.

I hope that the toolkit will assist teachers and Career Leaders in understanding how the benchmarks can help all young people to reach their full potential.

Oli De Botton, CEO,
The Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company

Set up by government in 2015, our mission is to help every young person to find their best next step. We are the national body for careers education in England, delivering support to schools and colleges to deliver modern, 21st century careers education.

What we do:

1. Support schools and colleges to deliver excellence – through information, resources, tools, training, our network of Careers Hubs and communities of best practice.
2. Support employers to engage with purpose – by making it easy for them to connect into schools and colleges as one of our 4000 senior business volunteers working with Careers Leaders on their careers programmes, or as part of our 300 strong ‘Cornerstone Employer’ community working to transform careers education across multiple schools and colleges in their local areas.
3. Include all young people in careers education – through our digital tools for Careers Leaders enabling them to target and tailor their careers interventions across years and cohorts, our specialist networks and resources to support young people with SEND, those in Alternative Provision settings and those in Independent Training Providers.

Introduction

Gatsby Benchmark for Good Careers Guidance

In 2014, Lord Sainsbury's Gatsby Charitable Foundation published a report by Professor Sir John Holman, Adviser in Education at the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, titled "Good Career Guidance."

The report identified eight benchmarks that are the core dimensions of good careers and enterprise provision in schools.

The eight benchmarks are:



Benchmark 1 – A stable careers programme



Benchmark 2 – Learning from career and labour market information



Benchmark 3 – Addressing the needs of each pupil



Benchmark 4 – Linking curriculum learning to careers



Benchmark 5 – Encounters with employers and employees



Benchmark 6 – Experiences of workplaces



Benchmark 7 – Encounters with further and higher education



Benchmark 8 – Personal guidance

You can find more information about the Gatsby Benchmarks and download the original report from the Gatsby Website [here](#).

Why the Gatsby Benchmarks are important

The Gatsby Benchmarks have a key role in:

- raising young people's aspirations and promoting access to all career pathways;
- enabling all young people to develop the skills and outlook they need to achieve career wellbeing, including adaptability and resilience;
- underpinning the Department for Education guidance to schools on meeting their statutory responsibility for careers guidance.

The Gatsby Benchmark framework was piloted in the North East and now sits at the heart of the government's [Careers Strategy](#).

Who is the toolkit for?

This toolkit has been written for schools.

You can access the Colleges and SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkits [here](#).

How to read this toolkit

Each benchmark is broken down into the following key sections:

- **What good looks like:** contains the definition of the individual benchmark as laid out in The Gatsby;
- **Benchmarks for Good Career Guidance;**
- **Why this matters:** outlines why this benchmark should be a focus and how it contributes to outstanding careers provision;
- **What this means in practice:** guidance and steps that schools can follow to meet the benchmark;
- **Top tips for schools:** actionable tips on how to start to deliver the benchmark;
- **Top tips for employers:** actionable tips for your employer partners in supporting benchmark delivery;
- **Example resources:** these are example only and will be updated annually. Continue to check online.

It would also be useful to review this document alongside [The Careers & Enterprise report](#) which describes the careers and enterprise provision in secondary schools in England.

Compass and Tracker digital tools

To help schools meet the Gatsby Benchmarks, we have developed the Compass evaluation tool. Compass is a fundamental building block of a stable careers programme and helps schools to:

- evaluate their careers activity in around 30 minutes;
- compare their school to the eight Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance;
- identify strengths and areas for improvement;
- get relevant online resources to help them improve on their score;
- easily share their results with their Enterprise Coordinator and Adviser, along with other colleagues, or their central Academy team if they choose.

Once the Compass evaluation has been completed, schools can then use Tracker, a planning tool designed to help:

- build and manage their annual development plan to improve benchmark scores;
- easily record events, classes and all careers activities in one place;
- evaluate completed careers activities;
- access, download and share the careers plan in Word or Excel format with their Leadership Team, Governors, Enterprise Coordinator, Enterprise Adviser, Colleagues, Ofsted, etc.

Compass+ will enable Careers Leaders to benchmark, manage, track and report on your school's careers provision at individual student level. You can track destinations, plan and track careers activities and download reports for analysis and reporting.

The '**Find an activity provider**' directory, can help schools find programmes we fund, or free offers from providers, is generally focused on employer engagements in schools.

Key recommendations to improve school guidance in your school

- **Careers Leader** - Every school should appoint a named person to the role of Careers Leader to lead the careers programme and the strategic careers plan.
- **Understand** - Read and understand the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#).
- **Guidance** - Read and understand [Career Strategy \(2017\)](#) and related [Statutory Guidance](#).
- **Support** - Refer to the [School Roadmap](#) and other Careers Leader resources to help build a careers programme and a strategic careers plan.
- **Training** - Complete our [free online learning module: 'Careers Leaders: Induction'](#).
- **Training** - [Apply for free face to face training with bursary for Level 6/7 qualification in Careers Leadership](#).
- **Intent** - Audit, map and plan a careers programme with clear career learning outcomes and create a strategic careers plan for students in all year groups and for any specific cohorts.
- **Implementation** - Ensure careers programme and strategic careers plan is embedded within and supports whole school values and priorities and that it supports and links to other key strategic plans and department development plans.
- **Network** - [Access our network](#), which connects schools and colleges with employers and careers programme providers and supports them to work together to provide young people with effective and high-quality encounters with the world of work.

- **Impact** - Consider in advance what impact you want from career programme and strategic career plan and how impact will be measured (consider destination data, exclusion data, attendance and progress, etc).
- **Track** - Complete Compass to evaluate your careers programme and strategic careers plan.

Statutory Requirements:

Every school must ensure that there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access all pupils in Year 8 to Year 13 for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships (legal duty came into force on 2 January 2018).

Every school must publish a policy statement setting out their arrangements for provider access and ensure that it is followed. [Example policy statement on provider access on page 40.](#)

Every school must ensure that pupils are provided with independent careers guidance from Year 8 to Year 13. (legal duty came into force in September 2012).

The updated guidance in July 2021 places greater emphasis on compliance of the 'Baker clause'. Additionally, following the government's proposed reforms to technical education and skills and the impact of the pandemic on the labour market, there will be an increasing need for schools and colleges to work in partnerships with employers, careers advisers, local authorities and other education and training providers to support students to prepare for the workplace and to make informed decisions about the next step in their education or training.

The appointment of a Careers Leader

From September 2018, schools are expected to have appointed a dedicated Careers Leader to lead a careers programme underpinned by the Gatsby Benchmarks. The statutory guidance requires SLT, Headteacher and the Governing Body to give "explicit backing" to the Careers Leader to ensure there is strong strategic leadership to develop a progressive and impactful careers programme.

Further information about the role of the Careers Leader can be found [here](#).

Compliance with the Baker Clause

From January 2018, a new duty to provide opportunities for "a range of technical education and apprenticeships to access pupils and inform them about technical qualifications and apprenticeships" was established. Every school is expected to publish a provider access policy which sets out their arrangements for education and training provider access to pupils and the access policy should be signed off in agreement with the governing board.

The latest guidance 2021 outlines the need for schools and colleges to "correct the imbalance in careers education" through greater adherence to the 'Baker Clause' and highlighting technical choices as well as academic routes so all pupils are aware of the benefits of apprenticeships, T Levels and other approved technical education qualifications and can consider them, alongside academic options, when making decisions about their next steps.

Gatsby Benchmark 1

A stable careers programme

What good looks like

Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors, employers and other agencies.

- Every school and college should have a stable structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team and has an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it.
- The careers programme should be published on the school's or college's website in a way that enables students, parents, school/college staff and employers to access and understand it.
- The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from students, parents, school/college staff and employers as part of the evaluation process. Schools must give providers of technical education and apprenticeships the opportunity to talk to all pupils.
- Providers of technical (including higher technical) education, vocational education and apprenticeships should be given the opportunity to engage with students and their parents so that all routes at 16 and 18 are fully understood and so that students can make informed decisions at key transition points.

Why this matters

- Benchmark 1 provides the foundation for careers provision across your school, special school or college and supports you to link careers provision to your vision, priorities and to school or college improvement.
- Developing a progressive careers programme shaped and driven by a strategic careers plan, enables your students to make well informed decisions about education, training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities and supports them to cope with challenging labour market conditions.
- Research, entitled 'Motivated to achieve' shows that participation in career talks with volunteers from the world of work can change the attitudes of Key Stage 4 (14-16 years old) pupils to their education. This can influence their future plans and subject choices, motivate them to study harder and supports an improvement in academic attainment.
- Delivering social mobility and justice relies on opening doors for all young people. The government has endorsed the fact that "great careers guidance provides the first rung on the ladder of opportunity, helping everyone to achieve their full potential" (DfE, 2017, p. 3).
- A stable careers programme can play a part in promoting social mobility for the benefit of young people, their families and wider society.
- From recent research, 94% of Careers Leaders believe that the Gatsby Benchmarks have helped improve careers guidance.

What this means in practice

- The careers programme has strong backing from the Headteacher or Principal, senior leaders and Governing Body. Through the development of a strategic careers plan, it needs to be embedded. This means the programme can continue to be developed to meet the needs of students. It is not entirely dependent on the goodwill of individuals or vulnerable to competing education priorities.
- The careers programme is coordinated and led by an appropriately trained and supported Careers Leader. A Careers Leader is responsible and accountable for the delivery of their allocated school's programme of careers advice and guidance within a strategic careers plan. It is a senior role that requires the person doing it to have a clear overview of the school's careers provision and to make sure that the school meets the Gatsby Benchmarks by the end of 2020. See ['Understanding the role of the Careers Leader'](#) for full details.
- Students, parents, teachers and employers know what is in the careers programme. The careers programme is set out clearly on the school's website and promoted through the school's social media accounts and newsletters and local media outlets. Students should discuss the careers programme in the school council, where one exists, and parents should know what to expect in the meetings arranged for them throughout the year. Messages for teachers are reinforced through the staff handbook, meetings and curriculum guidelines. Employers invited to participate in the careers programme know clearly what to expect, how their contributions fit in and how they will benefit.
- A plan for how the careers programme will be implemented is included in an annual careers plan that includes priorities from the overall school development plan. This makes it easier to evaluate the achievements of the careers programme at the end of each year.
- Students, parents, teachers and employers provide regular and systematic evaluative feedback on their participation in activities via questionnaires, surveys and focus groups. Key stakeholders are also involved in overall evaluation of the careers programme and strategic careers plan. This feedback is then used to inform decisions about the future development of the careers programme and feeds into the whole-school process of evaluation.

Top tips for schools

Plan

- Encourage all relevant staff and stakeholders to complete the free online training '[Careers Leaders: Induction](#)' modules via The Careers & Enterprise Company's website.
- For more intensive Careers Leader professional development, sign up to fully funded place on a [Careers Leader training course](#), with a range of non-accredited and Level 6/7 accredited options.
- Join the [Enterprise Adviser Network](#) and gain access to an Enterprise Coordinator and an Enterprise Adviser.
- Read The Careers & Enterprise Company's publication: [Understanding the Role of Careers Leader](#).
- Develop a careers programme based on identified and agreed career learning outcomes. Consider using the [CDI Framework](#) to help shape your Career Learning Outcomes within your programme.
- Work with SLT, governors and Enterprise Adviser to develop a strategic careers plan showing how you will implement the programme and how you will measure the impact of the programme.
- Understand and plan for how careers guidance features in the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and in the Ofsted School Inspection Handbook/Oftsed Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook.

Deliver

- Publish your careers programme on your website and commit to making all stakeholders aware of it and keeping it up to date.
- Promote the importance of the careers programme to students, parents/carers, staff and employers so that they know what to expect and how they can contribute to its success.
- When planning staff CPD make sure that staff are aware of Careers Strategy and the benchmarks and what that looks like for your school. Highlight that careers guidance is a shared responsibility.

Measure

- Complete [Compass](#) to evaluate your current provision. Evidence suggests that progress is enhanced when schools complete Compass more than once as part of a regular process of self-assessment.
- Undertake regular evaluation of the careers programme with a clear intended purpose, for example, reports for the senior leadership team and the Governing Body should be used to inform future decisions about the careers programme.
- Consider completing the [Quality in Careers Standard CEAIG Quality Award](#).

Top tips for employers

- If you are an Enterprise Adviser, review the intent and specific career learning outcomes within the school's careers programme. Support the Careers Leader in building a strategic careers plan to be able to implement and measure the impact of the careers programme.
- Ask the school for their careers programme and see where your expertise will count most.
- Be a critical friend – support and challenge the school to develop a stable careers programme.
- Be prepared to build a long-term relationship and to contribute to all aspects of school life.
- Make sure your staff are briefed before taking part in activities.
- Contribute to the school's evaluation and act on feedback to do things differently or better next time.
- Help schools develop a programme that takes into account the trends in your business, your sector and the wider economy.
- Use your networks to encourage others to contribute to the careers programme and to take on key supporting roles.
- Review all existing employer engagement and make sure that it has maximum impact and streamline where appropriate.

Useful resources

Practical guides to developing a stable careers programme:

- [Department for Education Careers Strategy, 2017](#)
- [Department for Education careers guidance and access for education and training providers Statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff](#)
- [Gatsby Good Career Guidance](#)
- [Understanding the Role of Careers Leader \(School\)](#)
- [Understanding the Role of Careers Leader \(College\)](#)
- [Link to free online course supporting Careers Leadership](#)
- [CDI Careers Framework](#)
- [Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and Handbooks](#)

Your careers programme will inform everyone (students, teachers, parents, employers and other agencies) what each student can expect in terms of their careers learning, in each year at your school.

Your strategic careers plan is a working document, to inspire and inform all stakeholders of your vision for the future so that they buy-in and support you to achieve everything that is set out in it.

The following gives a brief overview of what is covered in more depth and with more support in the free online training modules and in the funded face to face Careers Leader Training.

Building a stable careers programme

Plan

- Identify and record your intended career learning outcomes for your careers programme. Use CDI Framework and Skills Builder to set career learning outcomes.
- Engage with senior leadership colleagues, Link Governor and your Enterprise Adviser to review career learning outcomes.
- Work with teaching and learning, PSHE, literacy leads, etc. to make sure that your careers programme is aligned to their programmes and vision.
- Identify staff CPD and parental engagement that will support delivery of your careers programme.
- Ensure that your careers programme is written down and has the approval of SLT and governors and that it has sufficient resource to be delivered.

Deliver

- Work with colleagues to audit current provision and champion where career learning outcomes are already being delivered.
- Consider where and how to deliver interventions to cover gaps in your careers programme.
- Work with colleagues to agree how careers programme will be delivered through assemblies, tutorials, drop down days, activity days and curriculum time.
- Ensure that your careers programme is published on the school's website.
- Include information on website specifically for students, teachers, employers and parents/carers.

Measure

- Make sure your careers programme is progressive and has a logical flow in terms of identified career learning outcomes and outputs for each key stage and specific cohorts.
- Complete 'Entitlement Statements' for all year groups so that all students and parents can see, for each year, what they will have experienced and completed, e.g. 'By the end of Year 7, I will have...'. .
- Complete Compass self-evaluation tool to identify gaps in the programme to be addressed in your careers programme and/or strategic careers plan.
- Plan regular monitoring of the careers programme using data tracking and stakeholder voice.
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback on a regular basis to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.

Building a strategic careers plan

Plan

When building a strategic careers plan, work with colleagues from senior leadership team, governors and your Enterprise Adviser to consider the following[†]:

- Vision;
- Current provision;
- Key strategic objectives linked to school priorities;
- Action plan to achieve objectives.

Plan with 'intent'. This means deciding on the outcomes you want young people to achieve through a progressive careers programme. You can use learning outcomes frameworks to help you pinpoint what is appropriate for each age and stage and how to help students to progress over time.

[†]For step by step support and guidance with building a strategic careers plan, complete The Careers & Enterprise Company's free online training modules and register for funded face to face Careers Leader training to support in building a stable careers programme and a strategic careers plan.

The Enterprise Adviser acts as a critical friend and is helping the ongoing development of a programme that has a high impact on students. The school has completed the Compass evaluation and is using it to drive improvement. They have contracts with an external guidance provider to offer information, advice and guidance. They have also completed the Kirkland Rowell survey with parents, who rated the school as outstanding for:

- developing young people's confidence;
- explaining how to help their children;
- providing post-16 careers advice.

Deliver

- Communicate your vision and strategic careers plan to all stakeholders.

Measure

- Share successes from strategic careers plan around progress against benchmarks and key strategic objectives.
- Work with senior leaders, governors and Enterprise Adviser to review strategic action plan to inform future planning and delivery.

In practice:

Lilian Baylis Technology, an 11-19 school in South-East London, has created a programme that aims to transform the life chances of all students by supporting the development of healthy, confident and independent young adults. The Governing Body supports the programme through a designated Link Governor and the commitment of the senior leadership team is reflected in the school development plan. The school's careers plan clearly sets out the roles of key staff involved in planning and delivery of the careers programme and strategic careers plan. The programme includes activities for all students from Years 7 to 13 that are delivered through:

- assemblies;
- enrichment activities;
- tutor time;
- the personal, social and health education programme (PSHE);
- employer encounters;
- workplace experiences.

Gatsby Benchmark 2

Learning from career and labour market information

What good looks like

Every student and their parents should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make the best use of available information.

- By the age of 14, all students should have accessed and used information about all career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.
- Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support for their children.

Career and Labour Market Information (LMI) includes information on:

- skills, career pathways and progression routes in the local labour market;
- job applications and interviews;
- educational institutions, courses, qualifications, entry requirements and costs;
- professional bodies;
- employment sectors, employers, jobs, salaries and employment trends;
- jobs, training and apprenticeships;
- job demands and working life;
- financial planning.

What this means in practice

- Students have access to accurate and up-to-date information, which plays a key role in raising aspirations and promoting social mobility. This information challenges stereotypes with regional and national LMI and support from Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).
- Students are taught how to find and process information from Year 7 onwards. They use objective information about the local and national labour market to make decisions that improve their careers and transitions into work.
- Information is adapted to meet the needs of different learners. Special schools, for example, make good use of Makaton signs and symbols to support understanding of careers and employability for students with severe learning and communication difficulties.
- The careers information area is attractive, highly visible and contains carefully-selected resources that meet the needs of different groups. The area should be properly maintained, well-used and include a mix of printed information (careers books, posters, prospectuses), online resources (dedicated careers pages on the website and/or Virtual Learning Environment VLE) and in-house information (options booklets, alumni profiles, projects) to help students understand the range of different opportunities.
- Your school arranges for students to gain information first-hand through encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces. Staff organise follow up activities in the classroom to help students to personalise and maximise the benefits of these encounters.
- Local Enterprise Partnerships produce local labour market information to help students, parents and staff understand the changing labour market in their area. These resources are actively promoted by schools on their websites and at events, such as parents' evenings.
- Your school tracks destination data to inform careers programme and strategic careers plan development.

Why this matters

- Access to up-to-date career and labour market information is important for social mobility. Information about pathways, opportunities, growth areas and alumni's successful transitions helps to connect students to a positive future.
- Providing detailed information about all pathways, relevant courses, opportunities, labour market understanding and supporting students to make useful networks strengthens students' capacity to make informed decision and positive transitions.

Top tips for schools

Plan

- Make sure you are compliant with [statutory guidance](#) and review your website and resources to ensure you cover all routes and engage the interests of students.
- Check that you are making good use of resources available through your Local Enterprise Partnership, via the [Enterprise Adviser Network](#).

Deliver

- Start early so that young people and their parents have a good amount of time to explore opportunities and build full and realistic pictures of the job market.
- Ensure events and parents' evenings explain and promote the full range of opportunities in an impartial way, including vocational and technical pathways (instead of emerging technical levels).
- This should also include information about local University Technical Colleges and studio schools to support decisions at the 14+ level.
- Draw on JobCentre Plus schools advisers to come in to talk to pupils, parents and staff about local LMI and apprenticeships. Your Enterprise Adviser and Enterprise Coordinator will provide local contact details.
- Train older students to support younger colleagues to make use of key careers information resources.
- Make use of a wide range of media to encourage students in their career exploration including social media, posters, websites and physical resources.
- Develop a careers assembly plan that identifies careers information topics appropriate for each year group.

Measure

- Plan regular monitoring of the programme using data tracking and stakeholder voice.
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback on a regular basis to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.





Top tips for employers

- Provide references to good sources of information as part of employer engagement events.
- Encourage students to undertake follow-up research so that they can find out more and start to put plans into action.
- Provide practical examples of how different subjects are used within the workplace so that students value the skills and knowledge they are developing at school.
- Illustrate your talks with film clips or job profiles from free careers resources, such as I Could or the National Careers Service.
- Bring talks to life with concrete case studies that show diverse pathways and job opportunities in your organisation. You should also provide your organisation's websites with details of entry requirements.
- Share your insights into trends in the labour market as part of your contribution but encourage students to do their own research too.
- Contribute to the training of teachers and Careers Advisers about changes in the labour market to ensure those working directly with students on a day-to-day basis are up-to-date.
- Listen to what young people say about careers information and share these insights with schools and the Enterprise Adviser Network to support ongoing improvement in the impact of careers messaging.
- When planning staff CPD, make sure that LMI is shared with staff in a way that they can understand and embed through curriculum learning.

Useful resources

- Connect with your Enterprise Adviser or Enterprise Coordinator to access local information including encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces.
- See how some of the 800 job profiles on the [National Careers Service](#) site can help illustrate careers activities and offer online guidance for young people.
- [LMI for All](#) is an online data portal that connects and standardises existing sources of high-quality, reliable LMI. You can make use of the customisable Careerometer Widget for your school website.
- [I Could](#) provides 1,000 different video clips of LMI and personal career stories to help students explore.
- [Amazing Apprenticeships](#) provides ideas from Apprenticeship Champions on how to promote apprenticeships. The site also provides free talks and guidance to schools via the Apprenticeship Support Knowledge service (ASK).
- Obtain the [labour market summaries for your LEP area](#). These will provide useful information on major employers and sectors and developing trends.
- [Uni Connect directory](#) helps you identify the Single Points of Contact in your Higher Education Networks, along with local outreach events such as summer schools and advice and information on progression.
- [National Careers Week](#) provides a range of posters, inspirational quotes and links to the Royal Bank of Scotland Kickstart resources.
- [Federation for Industry Sector Skills & Standards](#) provides free, sector-specific careers information for young people through the network of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs).
- [Career Companion](#) is an independent and impartial guide to careers information on the internet (subscription required).
- [Prospects Education Resources](#) keeps you up to date on new and popular costed careers resources, posters and software.

The government's website 'LMI for All' is a useful starting point and also has a Careerometer widget which you can embed into your own school careers website. The National Careers Service's website includes LMI on all job profiles. Your Local Enterprise Partnership will be able to provide LMI tailored for the region you are based in. There is also a range of websites and resources listed in this Gatsby Benchmark toolkit.

For additional support, complete The Careers and Enterprise Company's free [online learning module: 'Careers leaders: Induction'](#)

LMI supporting options process

Consider how LMI can be shared with staff, students and parents as part of a progressive careers programme, particularly at key transition points*

*For step by step support and guidance in accessing and sharing LMI, complete The Careers & Enterprise Company's free [online training modules](#) and register for funded face to face [Careers Leader training](#) to support in building a stable careers programme and a strategic careers plan.

Plan

- Work with Careers Adviser, Enterprise Coordinator and Enterprise Adviser to be clear about key LMI messages for the relevant cohort and parents.
- Consider and plan how LMI will be covered, for example, through social media, newsletter, etc.
- Consider and plan involvement of employers, FE colleges, universities, Sixth Form staff and training providers, etc.
- In advance, make use of staff CPD/briefings to make sure that staff understand the range of routes available to students post 16 and post 18 and that they are confident talking about all routes with objectivity.
- Share key LMI messages with staff, especially tutors and relevant pastoral leads.

Deliver

- Coordinate sharing of key LMI messages with communications about options events.
- Make use of school social media and feature key LMI messages.
- Include targeted LMI information on website specifically for students, teachers, employers and parents/carers.
- Oversee and coordinate, displays, presentations/ workshops at events, stands at events, etc. at the event as applicable.

Measure

- Track progress with Benchmark 2 via the Compass/ Compass+ tool.
- Regularly review destination data and compare with key LMI information.
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.

Business Safaris

A Business Safari is a visit for staff, students and/or parents to showcase labour market in a specific sector or geographical areas. The safari would involve taking groups of staff, students and/or parents to a range of businesses. Each series of visits ('Safaris') should have clear purpose and intentional outcomes with all participants fully briefed. This links with Benchmark 5 and can be developed to support Benchmark 4 and 6.

Plan

- Consider career learning outcomes for any Business Safaris (i.e. staff CPD, addressing skills shortage, raising aspiration).
- Identify relevant cohorts for a Business Safari: students, parents, staff, students at risk of disengagement, SEND, etc.
- Work with your Enterprise Coordinator and Enterprise Adviser to agree a focus for any Business Safari and to identify and secure relevant employer support.
- Complete risk assessments and planning paperwork and ensure all parties are fully briefed.

Deliver

- Share key LMI information throughout the event and build in opportunities for reflection and to check understanding.
- Ensure that resource for the Business Safari captures intended learning outcomes.
- Allow students and staff to set themselves targets/ action plans from the Business Safari.

Measure

- Track and record intervention using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Collect event feedback from all stakeholders to inform future planning and delivery of the event.
- Review progress against any targets/action planning from the Business Safari.

In practice:

Walker Riverside Academy has a CEAIG section on their website with relevant and up to date information for students, parents and employers. Policies and useful links are also set out clearly for all users.

Gatsby Benchmark 3

Addressing the needs of each pupil

What good looks like

Young people have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each pupil. A school's or college's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

- A school's and college's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations.
- Schools and colleges should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each student and subsequent agreed decisions. All students should have access to these records to support their career development.
- The records of advice given should be integrated with those given at the previous stage of the student's education (including their secondary school) where these are made available. Records should begin to be kept from the first point of contact or from the point of transition.
- Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each student on their education, training or employment destinations for at least three years after they leave school or from the end of key stage 4, whichever is the earlier. This data should be used to review a school or college's careers provision and inform development and continuous improvement.
- Colleges should collect and maintain accurate data for each student on their education, training or employment destinations. This data should be used to review a school or college's careers provision and inform development and continuous improvement.

What this means in practice

- The school has a clear strategic overview of a student's career needs, knowledge and skills at each stage of their learner journey, as well as the decisions they are likely to face. This information sets a progressive framework of learning goals and includes contextual factors, such as parental aspirations and family backgrounds. It recognises the scope of improving social mobility by identifying the student's barriers to overcome and the bridges of support they need to maximise their life chances.
- The school takes regional and national labour market information and destinations patterns into account. It grasps the regional and inter-school differences in the proportion of students securing apprenticeships at both key stage four and key stage five. The school also addresses the significant differences in the take up of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects and higher education progression on both a regional and gender basis.
- Students benefit from provision targeted to their needs. Students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) face additional challenges in progressing from school to further learning and work. In mainstream schools, the needs of vulnerable and at-risk students are met through a specifically designed careers programme and additional support, including mentoring. Employers and other local partners are active in improving these students' chances of developing an independent life and taking their first steps into jobs and courses.

- Well-kept records enable staff and partners to track the consistency and impact of the careers and enterprise programme. Staff know what students' careers education and guidance needs are and where they are in terms of their career planning. This draws on insights from tutors, Careers Advisers, mentors and the students themselves. Teachers and Careers Advisers maintain comprehensive records of individual advice and subsequent decisions, which are then integrated into their information management systems, such as SIMS, GroFar or other products. This helps schools to manage agreed actions and next steps, and to provide students and their parents with ongoing support.
- The school strengthens students' personal agency and self-advocacy skills by encouraging them to access and take ownership of their career development records. Some schools are developing student careers records using Google Classroom or working with initiatives like PixL Edge to help students develop and maintain a journal of their employability skills. Students should be able to draw on careers experiences and employer encounters and turn them into a clear and compelling story for applications and interviews. Deliver your school's careers provision more effectively than ever before with our brand-new careers dashboard, [Compass+](#).
- The school collects and maintains accurate data for each student around their education, training and employment destinations for at least three years after they leave. This information is shared with current students to support ongoing review and evaluation of the careers and enterprise programme.

Why this matters

- Profound inequalities exist across different courses and jobs sectors. These affect national productivity and individual wellbeing. For instance, based on WorldSkills UK figures, 9% of professional engineers are female, 99% of beauty therapists are female and 95% of computer game developers are male. The gender pay gap is further evidence of a need to ensure our careers and enterprise provision tackles underlying inequalities. One analysis by Deloitte estimates that at the current rate, the pay gap will not be eradicated until 2069 – 99 years after the Equal Pay Act.
- The Social Mobility Barometer Poll shows half of people believe that where you end up in society is mainly determined by your background. Four in five believe that there is a large gap between the social classes in Britain with poorer people held back at every stage. 71% say there are significant differences in opportunity depending on where you live in the country. The poll uncovers deep social pessimism amongst students and calls for a coalition of businesses, communities, councils, schools and universities to champion a level playing field.
- According to Mencap, only 6% of people with learning difficulties are currently in paid employment, despite the fact that 60% want to and are able to be.
- Students with SEND are the most likely group to be absent or excluded from school according to recent Ofsted findings. They are also less likely to achieve in terms of their attainment and progression.
- Progression to higher education varies from under 10% in some schools to over 90% in others. This divergence is a focus for and solutions rely in part on more effective careers and enterprise programmes.

Top tips for schools

Plan

- Review the learning outcomes and skills your students need for progression and where these are addressed within a progressive career programme.
- Ensure that all vulnerable groups are identified and monitored to ensure tailored support, particularly at key transition points.

Deliver

- Develop and maintain systems for recording individual advice and careers interventions given to each student.
- Help students to be proactive career managers by maintaining their own records of career development.
- Create systems to collect and maintain accurate data for each student on their education, training and employment destinations after they leave school.
- Help students to record their learning and insights either as part of their student journals, or linked to overall school recording systems, such as PiXL Edge.
- Use your information on student destinations to draw together a list of alumni who can support your careers and enterprise programme.
- When planning staff CPD, share success stories and case studies from school alumni that can be shared through school curriculum.

Measure

- Use the Compass evaluation tool to assess how well existing provision meets the needs of all students.
- Explore destinations figures for key stage four and post-16 students and identify any deficits in take up of pathways, subjects or courses that could be addressed by better tailoring of the careers programme. Make use of local authority destination data.
- Use stakeholder voice to inform career programme 'Identify careers programme providers who, in collaboration with your Careers Adviser, other schools and Enterprise Adviser, can support the enhancement of your programme.'

Top tips for employers

- Consider how you can support students with SEND with employer encounters and work experience. Talk to other employers in your area who have had positive experiences working with SEND students, for example, National Grid and their EmployAbility programme.
- Consider how you can offer mentoring support to more vulnerable students through proven mentoring programmes, for example, Talentino, Young Enterprise or Youth at Risk.
- Draw advice from teachers and specialist agencies, such as the National Autistic Society, on how best to accommodate and support students with SEND.
- Ensure that you agree learning outcomes with the school in advance and commit to delivering on these through any careers activities.
- Work with the school to embed equality and diversity into your programme of support through use of positive role models and other approaches.
- Review how far your support is reaching all students with the school.
- Assess with the school how your contribution provides students with the knowledge and support they need for the next phase of their journey.
- Work with schools to explore the opportunity to talk to parents as well as students about work opportunities to help broaden families' horizons.
- Share personal stories about overcoming barriers and accessing support.
- Support schools to record careers events and activities through systematic evaluation.

Useful resources

- You do not have to undertake the strategic overview of career learning outcome by yourself! Check out the [framework offered by the Career Development Institute \(CDI\)](#) for key stage two to five. The CDI website includes a range of audit tools to help schools take stock of existing provision against these outcomes.
- Make use of the destination data collected by the local authority. Consider how the [Access Toolkit developed by TeachFirst](#) could help teachers know what they can do, every day, to support the post-school progression of students.
- Explore the lessons from the [Aspires project](#), which looked at family influence on science capital.
- Check out [the national guidance for schools on meeting equality law in relation to careers provision and advice on academic options](#).
- Make use of your local authority, as they collect and collate destination data.
- Career programme providers, such as [Career Ready](#), are funded by The Careers & Enterprise Company to work with employer volunteers and targeted students through mentoring and workshops to increase engagement and academic progress.
- The [SEND Gatsby Benchmarks Toolkit](#) can help better understand the career landscape for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).



For additional support with Benchmark 3, complete The Careers & Enterprise Company's free online training Module 3: How do I address the needs of each student in a careers programme?

Challenging stereotypes

Plan

- Refer to the CDI Framework and identify relevant career learning outcomes for challenging stereotypes within a progressive career plan.
- Work with colleagues to audit, track and champion where 'challenging stereotypes' is already being covered through the curriculum.

Deliver

- Ensure all school publications, displays and resources are reviewed so that stereotypes are not enforced unwittingly.
- Work with key colleagues to incorporate challenging stereotypes into staff CDP/briefings, etc.
- Where possible, develop discrete progressive sessions for students addressing the career learning outcomes within a progressive careers programme.
- Be intentional around key speakers, including alumni, and messages to challenge stereotypes.

Measure

- Track and record intervention using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback on a regular basis to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.
- Monitor destination data to track impact of challenging stereotypes on student choices.

Keeping systematic records on each student's experiences of career and enterprise activity (Park Campus PRU, Lambeth)

Plan

- Aims to encourage student attainment and aid re-engagement with education.
- Multi-agency approach to provide students with a 'leavers folder' documenting work completed.

Deliver

Staff support students in maintaining a log of activities participated in and then creating a CV from this record to be kept within a 'leavers folder'.

- Leavers Folder includes:
 - A record of functional skills they have developed;
 - CV;
 - Experiences of work and reflections;
 - A letter from the principal;
 - All certificates and references.

Measure

- Track and record intervention using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.
- Students take part in a leavers' ceremony with parents where they receive their 'leavers folder' documenting learning, reflections and progress.

In practice:

Park Campus PRU in Lambeth keeps systematic records on each student's experiences of career and enterprise activity.

Gatsby Benchmark 4

Linking curriculum learning to careers

What good looks like

All subject staff should link curriculum with careers, even on courses that are not specifically occupation-led. For example, STEM subject staff should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of career paths. Study programmes should also reflect the importance of maths and English as a key expectation from employers.

- By the age of 14, every student should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.
- Throughout their programme of study (and by the end of their course) every student should have had the opportunity to experience how their subjects help people gain entry to (and be more effective workers within) a wide range of occupations.

The curriculum is made up of the formal learning organised by the school. Careers in the curriculum has twin purposes:

- to promote students' career learning, development and wellbeing; and
- to enhance students' subject learning and attainment and their overall personal and social development.

The three main ways of delivering careers in the curriculum are:

- providing career learning as a subject in its own right;
- incorporating career learning within other subjects;
- organising career learning through extra-curricular activities (i.e. enrichment activities strongly connected to the formal curriculum).

Providing career learning as a subject in its own right:

In this approach careers content is delivered as a discrete curriculum, e.g. careers education or as part of PSHE. Clear career learning outcomes are identified with corresponding learner outputs (CVs, mock interviews, etc).

Incorporating career learning within other subjects:

Subject teachers and leaders understand the careers programme and the intended career learning outcomes. They understand where their career learning outcomes are covered in their own curriculum. This is audited and tracked within careers programme and strategic careers plan by the Careers Leader.

Subject teachers and leaders are also supported to identify elements of their curriculum to 'teach through the lens' of careers to support engagement and/or understanding.

Organising career learning through extra-curriculum activities (e.g. enrichment activities strongly connected to the formal curriculum):

In this approach careers content is delivered through informal and voluntary learning activities which have a strong connection to the curriculum e.g. STEM clubs to build on student's interest in science, technology, engineering and maths. All extra-curricular activities are tracked and mapped into careers programme and any gaps addressed through strategic careers plan.

STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering and maths – have received the most support in this area. We can learn a lot from the initiatives to promote careers in STEM through career-relevant subject teaching. The health of our economy depends on the skills and experience and knowledge that our young people develop whilst in education to ensure they can meet the minimum expectations of employers and successfully transition into work.

All subject teachers should emphasise the importance of succeeding in English and maths. Science subject teachers should highlight the relevance of science for a wide range of future career paths. For this reason, linking curriculum learning to careers is relevant to the work of all teachers.

What this means in practice

- The school recognises that the reach of subject teaching is far greater than what can be achieved through a limited amount of careers education sessions. These distinct careers education sessions can be used to pull together and complement everything learned in subjects, encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces to help students understand the skills and knowledge they are developing and the impact this has on their futures.
- The school adopts a strategic approach to linking curriculum learning to careers and develops a coherent rationale for embedding careers in subject learning. This is not about making a subject more popular. It is about making subjects more relatable and relevant to everyday and working life. Real-life contexts and examples from the world of work can make subjects easier to understand and help students feel more engaged in their learning. Above all, linking curriculum learning to careers can boost achievement and help students to progress. Students are less likely to drop out if they know about opportunities for further study and how the subject can be combined with others to give access to different pathways.
- Each department or faculty produces schemes of work and lesson plans which show how career-relevant learning will be embedded in their teaching. They use a variety of approaches, with some schemes of work setting up dedicated careers-related units or modules at the beginning or end of courses. They devise lessons that include career-related learning, inserts, activities and a plenary. Their planning also makes clear how career-related subject learning will be assessed and, where appropriate, accredited.

- Teachers are confident at talking about careers related to their subject matter and understand the routes, pathways and the skills in demand from employers, this might include CPD for subject teachers and the opportunity to visit relevant industries. Subject teachers will understand the school process to access potential employers or alumni and regularly look to increase contact and develop relationships with key local and national employers.
- Creating industry-focused work streams for students is another way of emulating industry within the curriculum. Solving or addressing a real-life problem or project can develop a whole range of employability skills such as communication and team working. Students involved in previous years can become mentors to new cohorts of students and develop their skills even further. These projects can bring numerous subjects, including maths, English and science, to life. They illustrate how each subject helps prepare the students for working life.

Why this matters

- Students feel more engaged in their learning when they perceive the relevance of what they are studying to their own and other people's lives.
- Students become more aspirational, understanding that perceived barriers can be overcome and that there are numerous pathways to success.
- Subject teachers are highly influential – students are 18 times more likely to be motivated to learn if their teachers know their hopes and dreams.
- Staff highlighting the relevance of their subject to future careers and opportunities, creates social capital for young people with more limited networks
- Improving career guidance in secondary schools and colleges can lead to better student outcomes, while also raising aspirations and increasing engagement with education", ICEGS
- Skills Builder – Better Prepared Report 'Strong essential skills such as speaking, listening and staying positive can positively influence young people's employment prospects.'

Top tips for schools

Plan

- The Gatsby report acknowledges that this benchmark is aspirational. Identify the subject areas or teachers that can develop this work and use their success to bring other teachers and curriculum subjects on board. Alternatively, create a working group of Careers Champions from across the curriculum to develop opportunities to cover career related content or to teach through the lens of careers.
- Research case studies and resources highlighting good practice, such as those from the [Gatsby](#) or [Forum Talent Potential](#) websites.
- Refer to The Careers & Enterprise Company's report, '[Careers in the curriculum, what works?](#)', for guidance on the range of interventions which allow students to encounter career learning as part of their everyday school curriculum.
- Identify curriculum hotspots by scanning national curriculum subject specifications and spotting opportunities to develop careers-related content.
- Engage with curriculum leaders and subject teachers by suggesting topics, which students may struggle to engage and/or to understand are taught 'through the lens' of careers. This can be done through developing a resource and can be enhanced through employer encounters and/or experiences of work.
- Staff can also be directed to the [My Learning My Future resources](#) to support.

Deliver

- Take up the offer of Enterprise Advisers and Enterprise Coordinators who are keen to work with you in linking curriculum learning to careers.
- When planning staff CPD, focus on sharing career learning outcomes to support an audit of where these are already covered through curriculum or where there may be opportunities to do so.
- Seek opportunities to embed careers learning within a context for students and avoid over loading career-relevant lessons with too many learning objectives.
- Encourage teachers who have moved into teaching from other jobs to make their previous experience and expertise available to students, try to build a positive culture of applied learning.
- Take advantage of any collaborative arrangements, such as the school's membership with a consortium or multi-academy trust, to develop careers in the curriculum approaches jointly.

Measure

- Track and record progressive and discrete career learning using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback on a regular basis to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.
- Audit outputs and check students are completing CVs, etc.

Top tips for employers

- Meet with heads of curriculum that relate to your industry and network to understand how you might help to bring their specific modules to life. [Visit the education, training and skills section of GOV.UK](#) to find out what you need to know about the curriculum. Sign up for email alerts to stay well-informed.
- Ask your Enterprise Coordinator for relevant reports or resources to provide examples of best practice.
- Take up invitations to participate in activities and events at options time. Students and their parents are particularly receptive to messages about careers around this time.
- Work with subject teachers to develop problem-based challenges. These will show how the perspectives, methods and skills developed through subjects are used in working life to solve real problems.
- Volunteer as a presenter, adviser or judge to help the school or college run curriculum enrichment activities, such as STEM clubs, Young Enterprise, Dragons Den and Apprentice of the Year competitions.
- Actively look for colleagues and individuals in your network that would be relatable role models and inspiring speakers to students and teachers within your school.
- Get in touch with your professional body to find out what resources they have developed to support careers in the curriculum.

We understand the pressures that subject leaders face to ensure high levels of attainment in their curriculum areas, however, it is important to remember that a school's SLT and governors are not only interested in exam outcomes but also student destinations. This has been reinforced in Ofsted's new inspection framework and accompanying handbooks.

It is important that subject teachers are aware of the full range of careers and outcomes for young people. For students to engage in the subject they need to understand the link to progression pathways, careers and outcomes.

Progressive, discrete curriculum learning

Plan

- Identify career learning outcomes from your careers programme that would be best delivered through progressive, discrete career learning sessions.
- Devise session plans to deliver on agreed career learning outcomes for progressive and discrete career learning.
- Plan outputs from your progressive, discrete career learning (i.e. CVs, Mock Interview preparation, etc.).
- Share your definition of careers with staff to help colleagues recognise the value in a whole school approach to Benchmark 4

Deliver

- Identify times and opportunities to deliver progressive, discrete career learning sessions.
- Identify and upskill a relevant team to support delivery of progressive, discrete career learning.
- Consider opportunities to engage employers and potentially develop activities to support Benchmarks 5 and 6.
- Share the [‘My Learning, My Future’ resources](#) (including inspiration guides) with staff to support them in highlighting the relevance of their subjects

Measure

- Track and record progressive and discrete career learning using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback on a regular basis to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.
- Audit outputs and check students are completing CVs, etc.
- Consider an audit and celebration of what staff are already doing

Teaching curriculum learning through the lens of careers

Forum Talent Potential describe six stages to plan and deliver work, which supports Benchmark 4:

- **Step 1. Strategic Commitment and Priorities.**
Gain senior level and strategic commitment.
- **Step 2. Bringing Subject Lessons 'To Life'.** Identify teacher, subject and scheme of work.
- **Step 3. Purposeful Projects and Challenges.** Ensure the project will motivate students.
- **Step 4. Employer Engagement & Partnerships.**
Identify and approach potential partners.
- **Step 5. Student Self-Assessment and Development.**
Impact on motivation, aspirations and skills.
- **Step 6. Celebrate Success and Share Good Practice.**
Showcase work with an expert audience.

In practice:

- Visit the [Forum Talent Potential website](#) to access a range of free CPD and case studies for school staff to access.

Gatsby Benchmark 5

Encounters with employers and employees

What good looks like

- Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes, and should include students' own part time employment where it exists
- Every year, from the age of 11, students should participate in at least one meaningful encounter* with an employer.
- Every year, alongside their study programme, students in colleges should participate in at least two meaningful encounters with an employer.
- At least one encounter should be delivered through their curriculum area.
- Colleges should record and take account of students' own part time employment and the influence this has had on their development.
- Work with your regional [Local Enterprise Partnership \(LEP\)](#) to make sure you are aligning to the strategic economic plan of the region.

Why this matters

- Research from the Education and Employers Taskforce shows that a young person who has four or more meaningful encounters with an employer is 86% less likely to be unemployed or not in education or training and can earn up to 22% more during their career.
- The world of work is changing. Where work was once tangible and tied to a specific place, it is now increasingly conceptual, mobile, and global. The workplace itself is also beginning to look very different, with automation, machine learning, and artificial intelligence set to impact all of us in the years ahead. Meaningful interactions between young people and business are hugely important for [getting young people prepared for work](#), with research showing that four engagements with businesses at school leading a young person to be 5 times less likely to be unemployed as an adult.
- Social background has a profound effect on progression in learning and work. Expanding employer encounters broadens students' horizons for action and fosters community cohesion. [The King's College London's Aspires project](#) found that students with low social capital stand to benefit most from improved careers education and links between education and employers.
- Structuring employer encounters within the school curriculum strengthens aspirations and attainment. It supports students to take action to achieve their full potential.
- New jobs are emerging, many in growing sectors like digital technology. First-hand encounters expand a student's understanding of areas of growth.
- [Motivated to achieve](#) which shows that an additional three meaningful employer encounters can change the attitude of Key Stage 4 students in education. This can influence their future plans and subject choices, motivate them to study harder and support an improvement in academic attainment.

*A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has the opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace.

- The Bank of England estimates up to 15 million jobs in the UK are under threat of automation over the next two decades. It is vital that students have first-hand contact with employers to help their understanding of the skills needed for their futures.
- There are significant ongoing weaknesses in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) talent-base, including under-representation of women and minority groups. Well-planned employer encounters can help address this imbalance.
- Students should participate in at least one meaningful encounter with an employer every year between Years 7-13. In Years 7 and 8, the focus may be on exploring the student's interests and motivations and developing a broad understanding of the world of work. In Year 9, the focus may be on building aspirations and exploring career opportunities in more detail, including challenging stereotypes. Year 10 may be a time to address self-presentation and what employers want, while, in Year 11, there is a practical focus on making plans and applications for post-16 learning. The post-16 study programme should include structured work experience, volunteering and personal development.

What this means in practice

- Employers and schools work together in creative ways to ensure students build a rich picture of the world of work and are well prepared to take up workplace opportunities. Schools plan employer encounters as part of their careers provision to deliver key career learning outcomes and celebrate these links in their prospectuses and on their websites. They build sustainable relationships with large and small employers and plan mentoring, careers talks, mock interviews, enterprise competitions and workplace visits. The encounters are well planned and help to increase student enthusiasm and confidence. The Gatsby Charitable Foundation has defined a meaningful encounter as 'one in which a student has an opportunity to learn about what work is like or what it takes to be successful in the workplace.'
- Schools have strong and lasting links with local businesses, supported by the Enterprise Adviser. In some cases, links are sustained through the Governing Body or fostered through programmes, such as Business Class from Business in the Community. Schools in rural areas or in regions where the local economy is under pressure rise to the challenge of developing a wide range of employer encounters. The contribution of Enterprise Advisers to the network is invaluable, building on the foundation of over 2,000 senior business leaders who have already volunteered to foster employer connections and offer strategic support to Headteachers.
- Schools and employers draw on evidence of what works including The Careers & Enterprise Company's [ongoing study](#) of the evidence base for each activity. They focus on:
 - the different effects for different kinds of activities;
 - the sequencing of these activities to ensure they are age appropriate and progressive;
 - the importance of effective implementation including proper briefing and debriefing.

Top Tips for schools

Plan

- Ensure that encounters with employers and employees are progressive through the key stages and they support delivery of career learning outcomes in the school's career programme.
- Ensure that there is a clear 'ask' of employers and that there is proper preparation and debrief for all stakeholders.
- Use your networks and Enterprise Coordinator to investigate practice in other schools and how careers programme providers and registered careers practitioners can support development.

Deliver

- Refer to the ['what is meaningful checklist'](#) to maximize impact of employer encounters.
- Support the continued professional development of staff through programmes such as [The Careers & Enterprise Company's free online modules](#) or CPD on local LMI.
- Maximise opportunities for staff and parents to engage with and learn from employer and employee encounters.
- Use Compass+ to encourage all staff to refer to and add to the school's database of employer contacts and update the provider details at the same time..

Measure

- Gather feedback from all stakeholders about employer and employee encounters to drive ongoing improvement and respond to the interests of all students.
- Celebrate success through use of alumni in delivering employer and employee encounters.

Top Tips for employers

- Build links with local schools and be prepared to reach out to both special and mainstream schools. Being rooted in local communities helps enhance your business reputation and diversifies your talent pool.
- See this as a long-term investment. Building relationships with local schools will help deliver sustainable high-impact programmes.
- Promote encounters as an exciting new staff development opportunity and a way of aiding retention, increasing motivation and attracting new recruits.
- Ensure that learning outcomes are agreed with the school ahead of all encounters so that interventions support delivery of career learning outcomes from their career programme and ensure that all staff are well briefed about expectations and school protocols.
- Develop a shared approach with the school to plan and judge the general effectiveness of the encounters.
- Explore ways in which both the teachers, students and parents can benefit from the encounters.
- Share approaches and celebrate success within your sector and business networks.
- Accept that success will not look the same to everyone and different routes and technical and academic pathways may be valid.

Useful resources

- The Careers & Enterprise Company funds a range of providers who deliver high-quality employer engagement in schools. Our pilot '[Find an activity provider](#)' directory can help schools find programmes we fund, generally focused on employer engagements in schools.
- Review our [What Works series](#) for further guidance on encouraging encounters with employers.
- Audit what type of employer encounters are available for each year group using the [Compass evaluation tool](#) and identify gaps and objectives for improvement.
- Explore effective employer mentoring exploring the impact that might be anticipated from employer mentoring and knowledge developed around effective practice.
- Access links to employers through your Enterprise Coordinator, who can connect you with the local [National Careers Service Inspiration Agenda providers](#).
- Investigate how to embed career learning and STEM awareness in the KS3 curriculum with [STEM Education Reports](#).
- Investigate how employer contacts make a difference with the [Education and Employers Taskforce research, It's who you meet: Why employer contacts at school make a difference to the employment prospects of young adults](#).
- Explore practical ways to address youth unemployment through increased employer engagement via the [CIPD's Learning to Work campaign](#).
- [Barclays Lifeskills](#) offers comprehensive teaching resources on employability and digital skills to support effective employer engagement.
- Explore the [Career Development Institute's templates](#), including employer engagement requests, checklists on managing partnerships and sample employer evaluation feedback forms.
- [The STEM Ambassador Programme](#) provides inspiring role models to engage students with science and maths careers.
- Volunteers from the world of work including Inspiring Women can be sourced through [Inspiring the Future](#).
- Help level the playing field for state schools by providing access to eminent and influential figures across all industries and backgrounds from [Speakers4Schools](#) and [Founders4Schools](#).
- Create effective and mutually beneficial school-business partnerships through [Business Class](#) and draw on the [good practice case studies](#).
- [WorldSkills UK Champions](#) act as inspirational role models for future generations of apprentices in a range of technical skills as diverse as mechatronics and floristry.

Career speed networking

Inspiring the Future have created a guide to support Careers Leaders in planning and delivering a careers speed networking event. The principle steps are:

Plan:

- Identify date, time, cohort, theme and key career learning outcomes for the event.
- Work with Enterprise Coordinator and Enterprise Adviser to identify and secure employer support for the event.
- Risk assess and plan event and make sure all parties are briefed re: responsibilities and roles.
- Create relevant resources aligned to intended career learning outcomes.

Deliver:

- Follow risk assessment and plan to deliver event.
- Consider opportunities to extend invitation to governors, parents, etc.
- Send thank you communications to employers and volunteers who supported the event to support future support.

Measure:

- Track and record intervention using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Work with students, staff, employers and parents to get recorded feedback to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.

Application cycle (apprenticeships, employment, FE, HE, etc.)

Plan

- Support students throughout their time in school with self-awareness and identifying and articulating their skills.
- Plot a progressive plan to support students through understand application process and what outputs (CVs, application forms etc.) they will have on leaving school.
- Work with Enterprise Coordinator, Enterprise Adviser and NCOP to ensure that the progressive programme reflects up to date application process and formats.

Deliver

- Identify appropriate time slots to deliver progressive sessions on the application cycle (discrete sessions/ embedded in curriculum/mixture).
- Ensure students have fully understood all routes available to them at 16 and at 18 and that they have the tools to make informed and aspirational choices.
- Align any visits within a progressive programme and build reflection into sessions to support students in decision making.
- Consider engagement of employers, governors and parents to support process.
- Align LMI delivery to support students as they develop their understanding of the application cycle (apprenticeships, employment, FE, HE, etc).

Measure

- Track and record intervention using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback on a regular basis to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.
- Monitor destination data to track impact on student choices.

In practice:

St Peter's Catholic School in Surrey, an award-winning school for best practice in engaging employers in career development, offers a progressive programme of employer encounters to students in each year group. Students hear from a range of visiting speakers and visit key careers events, such as the Big Bang Science Fair. At the heart of the school's work is a career and employability week for students in Year 10. The week helps them plan their futures and inspire them to think big. The week includes:

- a Future Options Day;
- a Business Day with a series of visits;
- enterprise and team working activities;
- workshops on topics like personal finance and Future Pathways;
- how to stand out at interview;
- setting up a professional profile on LinkedIn;
- job sites;
- volunteering.

The week relies on over 120 external contributors. Parents are encouraged to support students in reflecting on their experiences and a parents' guide encourages further research on the Year 10 careers information section of the school's virtual learning environment. Each of the strands of the week are supported by engaging and up-to-date student briefing sheets.

Gatsby Benchmark 6

Experiences of workplaces

What good looks like

Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

- By the age of 16, every student should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.
- By the age of 18, or before the end of their study programme, every student should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.

A workplace visit gives students the opportunity to see a work environment first-hand, observe work processes and talk to staff about their roles. They may also use the visit to investigate a topic, issue or problem related to a subject they are studying.

Work shadows see a student follow an employer or employee at work for a day or longer to find out what they do. It allows students to find out about aspects of a particular job they would not have access to through a work experience placement.

Work experience involves students doing real work tasks in a workplace. They may do one day a week over a few months, such as supported internships for college students, doing technical courses or a one or two-week block.

What this means in practice

- Experiences of workplaces are part of a progressive programme of work-related encounters at each stage of a student's course or education, rather than a bolted-on arrangement. Students, parents, teachers and employers fully understand their scope and purpose. Students explore careers and the world of work, relate their learning to the real world and develop their employability skills.
- Students are active participants in the process of choosing workplace experiences that will fulfil their needs, often with the help of their families. The school monitors the quality of placements offered to students from deprived backgrounds to ensure that they are not unfairly disadvantaged.
- Students are prepared well for all experiences of the world of work. This is more than just dealing with organisational matters. It is about framing learning so that students know what they can get from the experience. Schools work closely with employers to make the experiences as positive as possible.
- Students are well-supported during the workplace experience and have opportunities to talk with a trusted and familiar adult about what they are doing and finding out.
- After all experiences of the world of work, students undertake structured reflection in a specially-arranged session and/or in subject lessons to reinforce what they have learned.

Gatsby Benchmark 6 describes experiences of workplaces as: "work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience". It is important to approach this benchmark with the understanding that work experience is not synonymous with experiences of the workplace. Remember that there is no blue print for age/key stage and format for experiences of the workplace. They should be planned for impact and implemented around what students need to know, understand and be able to do linked to a high level aim for the experience.

- Employers provide valuable feedback to the school. They provide information about how well students have performed doing work experience or work shadowing placements. They also evaluate their experience of taking part in activities arranged by the school.

Why this matters

- A 2015 [government report](#) indicates that fewer students are experiencing the world of work through part-time jobs – only 18% of 16 to 17-year-olds, down from 42% in 1996.
- Experiences of work provide students with an opportunity to develop employability skills in context of real work situations. Over 95% of schools identify employability skills and increased self-confidence as key benefits of experiences of work.
- Students can gain important insights into their career interests and values, which will help them with their future decision making.
- Students can develop and apply skills they are learning at school.
- Experiences of work are part of the talent pipeline for businesses looking to recruit school leavers and apprentices.
- Experiences of work give young people a competitive advantage – about 80% of employers think work experience is essential and two-thirds of employers would be more likely to hire a young person with work experience over someone with none.
- 8.2 percent of people aged 16-64 in the UK today (3.4 million people in total) have never had a paid job (besides casual and holiday work).*

Top Tips for schools

Plan

- Ensure that preparation of students goes beyond just spelling out the essential practical arrangements to cover potential learning opportunities. Staff satisfaction tends to be higher when workplace experiences are embedded in curriculum learning.
- Make sure that students and employers are clear about the purpose of the activities you are arranging.
- If you are planning to offer a traditional work experience placement to each student then ensure that students are active participants in the process of securing meaningful experiences. Monitor the quality of placements and ensure that students from vulnerable groups are not at a disadvantage.

Deliver

- Successful schemes depend on building on staff and local contacts to establish strong and sustainable relationships with employers.
- Staff support for students during placements is very important – students want a trusted and familiar adult who they can talk to about their experience.
- Consider alternative models of experiences of work, which potentially link to Benchmark 4 through project based learning and which can link more closely to curriculum and career learning outcomes.
- If you are planning to offer a traditional work experience placement to each student then ensure that students are active participants in the process of securing meaningful experiences. Monitor the quality of placements and ensure that students from vulnerable groups are not at a disadvantage.

* [Never ever report 2020, Resolution Foundation](#)

- Monitor the participation of individual students to ensure a balance between support for their current thinking and challenging them to explore opportunities they have not considered previously.
- Structured opportunities to reflect on their activities is the difference between 'having an experience' and 'learning experientially'.

Measure

- Ensure a full debrief takes place with the student to help them understand the learning outcomes from their placement.
- Assess the impact of your scheme on equality, diversity and inclusion. This means, for example, taking steps to ensure that students without good family connections are not disadvantaged and that experiences of work encourage professionals to support less well-connected students.

Top Tips for employers

- Formulate a policy for your organisation around the links you want to have with schools. It should explain the business and philanthropic case for having links, such as social responsibility and bringing on the next generation, and enable you to prioritise your use of resources.
- See your organisation's links with schools as a training and development opportunity for your staff, especially for newly-appointed staff who can learn valuable skills while supervising students.
- Participate in local collaborative networks such as the local enterprise partnership, local chamber of commerce, Rotary or similar grouping to co-ordinate and plan links with schools.
- Explore different work experience models and get accredited with the [Fair Train work experience quality standard for employers](#).
- Set open-ended and real-life projects to inspire students and develop their enterprise and problem-solving capabilities.
- Schools must decide whether adults working with pre-16 work experience students need to be vetted by the Disclosure Barring Service.

Useful resources

- Your Enterprise Coordinator will have details of all local providers of work experience programmes.
- Read our report, '[Work experience, job shadowing and workplace visits, what works?](#)', to find out more about the effectiveness of these activities, and for examples of best practice.
- Your local Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools Adviser can help with sourcing work experience placements.
- [Founders4Schools](#) helps schools connect to local business leaders in high performing businesses.
- [Barclays LifeSkills](#) produces a guide to organising and managing work experience as well as other resources for students and staff.
- A search on 'work experience diaries and logbooks for schools' will yield many useful examples, including [Barclays LifeSkills work experience log](#).
- [RBS Career KickStart](#) produces careers lessons for teachers to use and resources for students.
- [TeachFirst's Access Toolkit](#) provides schools with ideas and resources to help students make the most of their experiences of work.
- The Career Development Institute has produced, '[Why Does Employer Engagement Matter? A toolkit for managing employer activities in schools and colleges](#)'.
- [DBS checks](#) for pre-16 work experience students may be required.



Experiences of workplaces

For additional support, complete The Careers and Enterprise Company free [online Learning module: 'Careers Leader: Induction'](#)

Consider:

- What is the intent of any experiences of work?
- What are key planned learning outcomes from experiences of work?
- How are experiences of work implemented?
- How are experiences of the work place progressive for students within the careers programme?
- How are students/teachers/employers and parents prepared for experiences of work?
- How are experiences of work evaluated? How is impact measured?
- How do experiences of work fit within a progressive careers programme?

Experiences of work can support:

- Overcoming stereotypes;
- Building knowledge of career and labour market information;
- Linking the curriculum to careers and further study;
- Developing confidence and employability skills;
- Increasing awareness of the range of sectors, industries and roles within them.

Schools should consider the flexible approaches

recommended in the statutory guidance, which include:

- job shadowing;
- work experience in school;
- volunteering;
- work experience (less than one week);
- work experience (one-two week block);
- work experience (regular/weekly commitment);
- workplace visits;
- internships and holiday placements.

In practice:

In an 11-18 school in the East Midlands, Year 9 students take part in a one-day work shadowing day. Year 10 students have a one-week work experience placement for which they are well-prepared in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons. When they return to school, they have dedicated time to discuss their placements in small groups and to produce a mock newspaper article they are learning from their placement.

Year 12 students have a one-week work experience or work shadowing placement in the summer term. It is enquiry and problem-based so that students can gather information and evidence, which can be applied to an extended project qualification (EPQ).

Students draft 100 and 250-word descriptions of what they achieved on their placements for future CVs, personal statements and application forms.

Gatsby Benchmark 7

Encounters with further and higher education

What good looks like

All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both technical and academic routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

- By the age of 16, every student should have had a meaningful encounter* with providers of the full range of educational opportunities, including sixth forms, colleges, universities and apprenticeship providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and students.
- By the age of 18, all students who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and students.
- By the age of 18, or before the end of their programme of study, every student should have had a meaningful encounter with a range of providers of learning and training that may form the next stage of their career. This should include, as appropriate, further education colleges, higher education and apprenticeship and training providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and students.

*A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the student has an opportunity to explore what it is like to learn in that environment. This includes academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and the workplace.

What this means in practice

- Enterprise Advisers and Enterprise Coordinators work closely with local institutions and agencies on a collaborative and strategic approach. All partners – schools, colleges, universities, local authorities, careers guidance providers, parents/carers, employers and the wider community – have a common understanding of local needs and solutions. Co-operative working makes it easier to organise big events, such as careers, skills and higher education fairs.
- Schools have a multi-pronged approach to ensure students are well-supported to choose pathways they value post-18. They start this work long before students reach the point of decision as evidence shows that raising aspirations and building resilience is effective from Year 7 or earlier.
- The school makes maximum use of its flexibility to organise suspended timetable days for different year groups, such as careers and higher education preparation days for Year 12 in the summer term.

Meaningful encounters with providers cover a wide range of ways young people can learn about their post-compulsory school options. They provide off-site visits and direct interactions with key roles, such as lecturers, current students of apprenticeships.

Providers include:

- apprenticeships and other work-based training;
- further and higher education.

- The school ensures encounters with further and higher education are part of an overall approach that encompasses:
 - personalised and small-group information, advice and guidance;
 - carefully selected sources of information, including digital and print-based, which are promoted through the school's website, newsletter and social media;
 - a planned programme of on-site and off-site encounters with further and higher education to strengthen accessibility, outreach and transition-preparedness for targeted groups, such as Pupil Premium, gifted and talented students and students with special educational needs and disabilities;
 - close co-operation with parents, families and carers in recognition of their key influence on children's thinking and decision-making, specifically to develop their capacity to talk about careers with their children and encourage family learning.

Why this matters

- Exposure to higher and further education and to apprenticeships, helps raise aspiration and allows young people to make the right choices for them. At the moment many more young people have encounters with higher than further education.
- The UK's future depends on all of our young people finding the right path for them and fulfilling their potential.
- One in four pupils from poor families make it to university. Nearly double the amount of other children make it. If bright children from poor families had the same support to achieve as others four in ten would go to a top university - today only one in ten make it.

FSM students make up only 16.7% of students in KS5 (16-18 years) academic pathways in comparison to 28% on vocational pathways (Bit report).

1,400 more students were in sustained EET during 2018/19 connected to the level of guidance provision that schools in the sample reported, compared to a scenario in which all schools had reported zero benchmark provision.

Top tips for schools

Plan

- For programmes of support to be successful, they need to start in key stage three. A useful rule of thumb is to inspire students in Years 7-9, reinforce key messages in Years 10-11 and prepare students for making their choices in Years 12-13.
- Avoid making judgements about the prestige and status of different pathways and providers in case you unwittingly influence your students inappropriately.

Deliver

- See how the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (Uni connect) supports target wards in each catchment area to promote higher education to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Consider how encounters with further and higher education can be embedded within suspended timetable days or activities days/weeks.
- When planning staff CPD, consider how key staff can support and help students prepare for and reflect on their personal guidance interviews.

Measure

- Track destinations of leavers over three to five years using a combination of quantitative data (to pick up on trends) and qualitative data (to pick up on stories). This will allow you to plan for the future.

Top Tips for employers

- Outreach activities cannot be left to higher and further education institutions alone – employers can help tackle the deep-seated cultural and social reasons why young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are in danger of being left behind.
- Highlight the significance of advanced further and higher education qualifications, including higher and degree level apprenticeships in your industry or sector.
- Check with your professional body and/or HR department to ensure that you are passing on accurate and up-to-date information about the qualifications that are recognised in your industry and the wide range of entry points and routes.
- Recognise that many parents still have an outmoded view of apprenticeships and may not have been to university or know how they have changed. Use your knowledge to bring them up to date.
- Draw on your experience of applying for courses and jobs to pass on valuable advice to young people about being enterprising, determined and resilient when searching for apprenticeships or choosing higher education.
- Anticipate the kinds of questions students may ask you. Asking direct questions about salary is not unusual so you may want to come armed with generalised information about salary ranges!
- Familiarise yourself with [Statutory Guidance](#) to best support schools you are working with.
- Familiarise yourself with [T-Levels](#) to ensure that support you are offering to schools reflects this change to the Post 16 education offer.

Useful resources

Annual careers-related celebrations can be showcased in school or students can go along to national and local events associated with them. Examples include:

- [the Skills Show](#)
- [the Big Bang Fair](#) (science and engineering)
- [National Careers Week](#)
- [National Apprenticeship Week](#)
- [British Science Week](#)
- [International Women's Day](#)
- [National Mentoring Day](#)

Publicise [the university and college open day directory](#).

The [Higher Education Funding Council for England](#) guide to the national collaborative outreach programme aims to increase the number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in higher education by 2020. Find out about activities in your area, such as mentoring programmes, taster days, summer schools and careers training for staff in schools and colleges.

The Sutton Trust organise summer schools for disadvantaged students.

The Baker Amendment, put forward in February 2017, requires schools to give education and training providers the opportunity to talk directly to students about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships they offer.

This has been enhanced in the latest statutory guidance and in the White Paper ['Skills for Jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth'](#).

Up-to-date information about apprenticeships for students, parents and staff can be found at:

- [GOV.UK Apprenticeships and its resources for teachers and advisers page](#)

- [Jobcentre Plus](#)
- [Amazing Apprenticeships](#)
- [National Apprenticeships](#)
- [Not going to uni](#)
- [Get my first job](#)
- [The guide to apprenticeship frameworks for employers and training providers](#)
- [The guide to apprenticeships from the Education and Skills Funding Agency](#)
- [The parents' guide to apprenticeships from the Education and Skills Funding Agency](#)

Up-to-date information about higher education for students, parents and staff can be found at:

- [UCAS](#)
- [Whatuni?](#)
- [Which? University](#)
- [The complete university guide](#)
- [UK Course Finder](#)
- [The Student Room](#)
- [Student Finance England](#)

Information about Further Education can be found at:

- [Association of Colleges](#)
- [BTEC Qualifications](#)
- [Access to Higher Education](#)



The government introduced a new legal duty from January 2018 which requires all maintained schools and academies to ensure there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access all pupils for the purposes of informing them about approved technical education qualifications. Schools are required to publish a Provider Access Policy on their websites setting out when and how providers can access students through the year.

It is important that all students, whatever their ability, understand the full range of options available to them so they can make an informed choice when making decisions at 16 and 18. This includes the full range of learning locations and qualifications on offer.

Careers Leaders may need to help teaching staff and others across the school understand all the options available to students.

For additional support, complete The Careers and Enterprise Company free [online Learning module: Careers Leader induction Course](#).

University/further education visit

Plan:

- Consider career learning outcomes for any FE/HE visits.
- Start young and ensure that planning accommodates for students' needs.
- Work with staff and visit hosts to agree a focus for the visit and to identify and secure relevant volunteer/alumni support.
- Complete risk assessments and planning paperwork and ensure all parties are fully briefed.

Deliver

- Share key LMI information throughout the event and build in opportunities for reflection and to check understanding.
- Ensure that resource for the visit captures intended learning outcomes.
- Allow students and staff to set themselves targets/ action plans from the visit.

Measure

- Track and record intervention using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Collect event feedback to inform future planning and delivery of the event.

Ensuring staff, students and parents understand all routes available at 16 and 18

- Ensure you meet statutory guidance and that you Access Provider Statement is published on your website.
- Be intentional about covering all routes when planning:
 - Student career programme: pay particular attention to the balance between academic routes and vocational and technical pathways;
 - Staff CPD;
 - Parental Engagement.
- Track and record intervention using The Careers & Enterprise Company's digital tools (Compass, Tracker, Compass+).
- Work with students, staff and parents to get recorded feedback on a regular basis to inform future planning and delivery of careers programme.
- Monitor destination data to track impact on student choices.

In practice:

An academy located on the south coast is working with several charities to establish a network of volunteers and alumni at university or in apprenticeships. The school has a progressive programme helping to inform students about FE/HE:

- Years 7 to 9 experience multi-subject taster days at their local university;
- Years 8 and 9 take part in a welcome day with workshops and an evening graduation linked to choosing their GCSE and other options;
- Years 10 to 13 benefit from conferences, master classes, experience days and residential summer schools at a range of FE colleges and universities.

Gatsby Benchmark 8

Personal guidance

What good looks like

- Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a Careers Adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an **appropriate level***.
- These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all students but should be timed to meet their individual needs.
- Every student should have at least one such interview by the age of 16, and the opportunity for a further interview by the age of 18.

* The benchmark sets a high standard and states that staff giving one-to-one guidance to students should be qualified to an appropriate level. The [CDI](#) also specifies that to be on their register, advisers must be Level 6 or above. The government recommends that schools source their providers of personal guidance from this .

A Careers Adviser can be internal, such as a member of school staff or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level.

To be 'trained to an appropriate level', the Careers Adviser must hold a careers guidance qualification at Level 6 (degree level) or higher, according to the Career Development Institute. Careers Advisers are usually graduates with a recognised postgraduate qualification, although it is also possible to attain a qualification equivalent to graduate level through work-based training. They are qualified in careers guidance practice and theory.

Careers guidance activities include:

- listening to students' initial ideas, qualifications, skills, experiences, circumstances and life aims;
- helping students to identify and explore suitable options and to consider the career implications of subject and course choice that are in their best interests;
- challenging pre-existing assumptions about what they are capable of;
- demystifying learning and labour market systems and helping students understand progression pathways;
- developing practical strategies on how to achieve their goals, including pointing students to information sources of most use to them;
- building students' persistence, motivation and confidence and helping them to see how they could overcome any barriers preventing them from moving forwards;
- referring students to other agencies that can support them.

These activities should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made and it should be expected for all students and timed to meet their individual needs.

What this means in practice

- Schools are compliant with the DfE statutory requirement for students from Year 8-13 to have access to independent and impartial careers guidance.
- Career conversations are an ongoing part of a student's school experience and personal guidance is an integrated part of the overall careers programme.
- The school offers personalised support tailored to students' needs and abilities. The advice is impartial and always in the best interests of the young person. It has an observable impact on their career and progression.
- The personal guidance on careers is closely integrated with the wider pastoral and student support system in the school. Senior staff, including the Headteacher, heads of year, personal tutors, form teachers and learning support staff, consider students' career development as an integral part of their overall personal, social and educational development. Communication between staff is good and underpinned by effective information-sharing and record-keeping. Specialist inputs by Careers Advisers are valued and acted upon.
- Career Advisers can work closely with staff to deliver a range of individual support to students, including:
 - one-to-one guidance at crucial points of decision-making, including Year 8 and 9 option choice and choosing pathways for post-16 and post-18 – this guidance offers students in-depth support to interpret information and apply it to their own situation;
 - group work sessions on particular topics, such as apprenticeships, labour market trends or employability skills;
 - advice to parents and students at careers fairs and parents' evenings;
 - advertised drop-in sessions for students at lunchtimes and other times during the week;
 - support on exam results days.
- Careers Advisers also assist the school on planning provision, training staff and evaluating the programme.
- Schools may commission external support from a specialist careers guidance provider or employ a Careers Adviser directly. In both arrangements, best practice involves Careers Advisers upholding professional standards and continuing their professional development. In England, the Career Development Institute maintains a professional register and members subscribe to a code of ethics, which covers issues like competence, confidentiality, impartiality and equality.
- Students and parents are clear how to access personal guidance and can refer themselves at appropriate times for individual advice and support. The school is proactive in reaching out to parents who find it difficult to support their child's career development. Staff are also proactive in supporting students with complex lives, for example, young carers. Their needs are recognised and resourced with more intensive, wrap-around support, including ongoing mentoring.

Why this matters

- Providing structured personal guidance time within the school enables students to focus on their future dreams and to set goals to achieve them.
- Research shows that students benefit from conversations with familiar and trusted adults who can challenge and support them.
- Access to independent and impartial professional careers guidance is strongly valued by students and parents and is a recurring feature of good provision.
- Personal guidance helps students to consolidate and reflect upon their vocational identity, career decision making and self-efficacy. It is a focal point for making sense of the vital ingredients in the careers programme including encounters with employers and higher education, experiences of workplaces and career learning in subjects.
- Research evidence confirms that personal guidance has an observable.
- Make sure any organisation you are commissioning is high-quality and matrix accredited.
- Choose Careers Advisers who hold a Level 6 or higher careers qualification, such as the Qualification in Careers Development (QCD) or equivalent, or the work- based Diploma in Careers Guidance and Development, who subscribe to the CDI Code of Ethics and have a valid DBS check.

Deliver

- With individual agreement, integrate records from careers interviews into student reporting systems so that tutors can support ongoing career planning.
- Build intensive, wrap-around support for your more vulnerable students through mentoring and other programmes.
- When planning staff CPD, ensure that up to date guidance information is covered and is understood by staff.

Top tips for schools

Plan

- Ensure that you have a clear analysis of the guidance needs of your students and how professional Careers Advisers can support your careers and enterprise programme.
- Ensure you have a sustainable approach to funding careers guidance and a clear ongoing accountability for management and review.
- Compare approaches with other schools in your area and identify any opportunities for collaborative arrangements.

Measure

- Monitor and review the services offered, including gathering feedback from parents and students.
- Manage stakeholder expectations of personal guidance interviews. Ensure that students, staff and parents understand aims and processes for 1:1.

Top tips for employers

- Find out what arrangements the school has put in place for a student's personal guidance.
- Work with the school and the Careers Adviser to ensure personal guidance connects to other careers interventions and forms a meaningful whole.
- Draw on the expertise of the Careers Adviser in getting to grips with the complex educational choices facing students and the destinations they choose. Help the Careers Adviser to work effectively with students by sharing information about employment trends in the organisation or sector you work in.
- Ask the adviser for case studies and examples of students' aspirations to illustrate your talks or activities.
- Work with the school to ensure students are prepared to benefit from employer encounters and experiences of work. Also ensure they have opportunities to reflect on what they have learned and how it relates to their career planning.
- Encourage students to make best use of the personal guidance on offer.

Useful resources

- Check out the [CDI's advice and good practice on commissioning careers guidance services](#).
- Consider how to support teachers and tutors to fulfil the careers informant role set out in the [TeachFirst Careers Education in the Classroom](#).
- The matrix Standard is the quality standard for the guidance sector. The Department for Education (DfE) recommends that schools secure careers guidance from an external provider with matrix accreditation. Check out [the Holders' Directory](#).
- Consider how [the National Careers Service phone, email and webchat service](#) can complement your local offer.
- Find a registered career development professional through [the CDI Register](#).
- Check out the professional behaviour and practice required of all CDI members in its [Code of Ethics](#).
- Support your Careers Adviser to maintain their continuing professional development through [CDI resources](#) and other partners.
- Explore how mentoring and other activities can provide the intensive, wrap around support that some students need through The Careers and Enterprise Company's report: [Evaluation of The Careers and Enterprise Company Mentoring Fund](#).

The key difference between a Careers Leader and a Careers Adviser is that the Careers Leader is the person who is responsible for the strategic plans and delivery of the whole school careers programme, the Careers Adviser delivers personal guidance to students individually or in group. It is possible that the Careers Leader also acts as the Careers Adviser if suitably qualified. However, it is important to remember that the benchmarks outline that every student should have an interview before 16 and one after they are 16. Interviews often last 30 minutes or more. The Careers Leader role, overseeing the whole school careers programme, is a significant task. It therefore may not be realistic for the roles to be combined, particularly for large schools.

Benchmark 8 sets a high standard and states that staff giving one-to-one guidance to students should be qualified to an appropriate level, and the CDI specifies that to be on their register advisers must be Level six or above. The government recommends that schools source their providers of personal guidance from this register.

Please refer to [CDI Careers Guidance in Schools and Colleges: A Guide to Best Practice and Commissioning Independent Career Guidance Services June 2018](#) for further details.

For additional support, complete [The Careers and Enterprise Company free online Learning module: Careers Leader induction Course](#).

For further support in understanding what works for personal Guidance, refer to the resource: [Personal Guidance: What Works?](#)

Commission a qualified and independent Careers Adviser

Qualified Careers Advisers can provide:

- Planning and delivery of discrete careers learning;
- 1:1 personal guidance interviews;
- Drop in Sessions;
- Support at parent and information events;
- Staff CPD.

In practice:

A school in the West Midlands employs a qualified and experienced Careers Adviser. Part of his remit is to ensure the careers curriculum covers all pathways and is completely impartial. He also works to ensure that, by the time students are ready for a formal interview at key points of transition, they are fully aware of all of their options. All students have access to one-to-one interviews with the adviser, with a particular focus on students in Years 11 and 12. An action plan is written by the Careers Adviser with each student and these are shared with parents and tutors. The school works hard to make sure that the Careers Adviser's time is well-used and that their expertise and insights contribute fully to the planning and evaluation of the careers and enterprise programme.

Employ a qualified Careers Adviser

Qualified Careers Advisers can provide:

- Planning and delivery of discrete careers learning;
- 1:1 personal guidance interviews;
- Drop in Sessions;
- Support at parent and information events;
- Staff CPD.

In practice:

Malmesbury School's mission statement is, "To promote an inspirational culture in which everyone feels valued and challenged to reach their potential". All students have access to impartial careers advice from a qualified in-house Careers Adviser and outside agencies. The careers guidance provided is monitored by the Careers Leader and the Careers Adviser, who review action plans and interview statistics. This tailored guidance builds on a programme of careers education, which is provided on a fortnightly basis for Years 7 to 11 and a regular tutorial session for the Sixth Form. Strong efforts are made to gather feedback from students, parents and employers about the effectiveness of the careers guidance. Parents are very happy with the level of careers advice on offer. The Headteacher was delighted to be the first school in the county to receive the Quality in Careers Standard and to be rated gold.

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