

Careers Education

A guide for secondary school governors



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1 | Introduction to The Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company was established in 2015 to help link schools and colleges to employers, in order to increase employer engagement for young people.

During our first five years, we have worked with Local Enterprise Partnerships to build a national network which now links 2,000 schools and colleges to employers. We have also funded 150 programmes to provide high quality employer engagement activities to young people where they are most needed.

Our vision is to make high-quality, 21st century careers education a reality for everyone, everywhere. We do this by:

1. Supporting schools and colleges to deliver excellence: through information, resources, tools, training, our network of Careers Hubs and communities of best practice

2. Supporting 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. Including 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, and our specialist networks and resources to support young people with SEND, those in Alternative Provision settings and Independent Training Providers.



2 | Careers Education Context

Careers Education in secondary schools

In December 2017, government published its [Careers Strategy](#) which 'aims to meet the skills that the country needs by connecting the worlds of education and employment.' In January 2018, then subsequently July 2021, the Department for Education (DfE) expanded on this aim in its [statutory guidance](#) for secondary schools.

Schools are expected to take a strategic approach to the development of their careers provision, appointing a named Careers Leader and should be using the Gatsby Benchmark framework. The Gatsby Benchmarks were first established by Sir John Holman in the Good Careers Guidance report (2014) and are based on extensive national and international evidence

Secondary schools and colleges were expected, by government, to begin using the Gatsby Benchmarks to improve careers provision from January 2018 and to meet them by the end of 2020.

The DfE's guidance outlines that whilst the benchmarks are "not a statutory framework... by adopting them schools can be confident that they are fulfilling their legal duties".

In January 2021, government published the Skills for Jobs White Paper, recognising the positive impact the Careers Strategy and the wide adoption of the Gatsby Benchmarks has had on the quality of careers education across England. The White Paper included:

- Proposal to build careers awareness into every stage of teachers' professional development, from initial training to education leadership.
- The lowering of the age range of the duty on schools to provide careers education so support begins from year seven.
- Plans for Ofsted to undertake a thematic review to assess careers guidance in schools and colleges and provide recommendations to improve practice.
- Plans to align some of the work of The Careers & Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service.
- Commitments to continuing careers infrastructure roll-out including Careers Hubs and the Enterprise Adviser Network
- Further investment in funded and bursary supported Careers Leader training places.

The eight Gatsby Benchmarks are:

- 1 |  A stable careers programme**

Every college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by learners, parents, teachers, employers and other agencies.
- 2 |  Learning from career and labour market information**

Every learner, 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 best use of available information.
- 3 |  Addressing the needs of each learner**

Learners have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each learner. A college's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.
- 4 |  Linking curriculum learning to careers**

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

Every learner 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 learners' own part-time employment where it exists.
- 6 |  Experiences of workplaces**

Every learner 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.
- 7 |  Encounters with further and higher education**

All learners should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available for them. This includes both academic and vocational routes, and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.
- 8 |  Personal guidance**

Every learner should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser who could be internal (a member of college staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level (Level 6). These should be available for all learners whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all learners, but should be timed to meet individual needs.

3 | Statutory Duties & Ofsted Requirements

Governing bodies have a key role in ensuring schools not only meet their legal requirements, but also equipping their pupils with the tools and knowledge to make informed choices about their futures. They can do this by offering strategic support to school leaders and by holding the headteacher to account for the quality of provision of careers education, information advice and guidance.

The Governing Body should ensure that the school complies with its statutory responsibilities:

1. The appointment of a Careers Leader.
2. Compliance with the Baker Clause.
3. The publishing of policy statements on the school's website.
4. Commitment to the delivery of independent and impartial guidance.
5. Schools should track student destinations for 3 years post KS4.

For further information take a look at our ['At a Glance Guide for School Leaders'](#).

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 the governing body and headteacher 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](#).

The most common models of Careers Leadership are:

1. Middle leader

A teacher, or non-teaching member of staff, is appointed to a middle leadership role, with line management support from a senior leader with overall responsibility for careers. The role is combined with other responsibilities, as a teacher, a non-teaching member of staff or careers adviser.

2. Senior leader

A member of the school's senior leadership, who may be a teacher or a non-teaching member of staff, is given direct responsibility for the leadership of careers.

3. Outsourced leadership

The school contracts with an external organisation or individual to provide its careers leadership.

4. Distributed leadership

The tasks of careers leadership are shared between a group of senior and middle leaderships working together as a team.

5. Multi-school leadership

One individual is the careers leader for more than one school. This model is becoming increasingly more common in Multi Academy Trusts.

How a school decides to interpret this new role is down to the discretion of their senior leaders. Careers Leader research shows that the majority of schools are adopting the model of the Careers Leader advocated in the North East pilot which was a member of SLT leading the careers provision across the school, and ensuring the role has the full support of the senior leadership team.

Governors can empower Careers Leaders and keep up-to-date with developments and progress of the school's careers programme by scheduling regular meetings with the school's Careers Leader. The research showed that over a third (36%) of Careers Leaders are engaging with governors about careers at least once a term, but 44 percent only once a year and a fifth of schools are not yet involving governors regularly. By involving governors with the school's work on careers, the governing board can ensure that Careers Leaders are supported and challenged at a senior level.

Compliance with the Baker Clause

In July 2021, the duty to provide opportunities for "a range of technical education and apprenticeships to access pupils and inform them about technical qualifications and apprenticeships" was updated.

Every school is expected to publish a provider access policy statement 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 body. This duty is known as the 'Baker Clause'.

The publishing of careers policy statements on the school's website

The careers policy statement must be published on the school's website and must include:

- Any procedural requirement in relation to requests for access;
- Grounds for granting and refusing requests for access;
- Details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access (DfE statutory guidance for secondary schools, p. 10).

Schools are required to publish the following information about their careers programme online:

- The name, email address and telephone number of the school's Careers Leader;
- A summary of the careers programme, including details of how pupils, parents, teachers and employers may access information about the careers programme;
- How the school measures and assesses the impact of the careers programme on pupils;
- The date of the school's next review of the information published.

Commitment to the delivery of independent and impartial guidance

From September 2012, all state-funded secondary schools (including academies and free schools) have a statutory duty to "secure access to independent careers guidance" for their students aged 13-18.

Schools need to make independent one-to-one guidance available to every student throughout their

secondary education. This can be through an in-house advisor or through buying in external support but the school adviser, who should be qualified to at least Level 6, should be able to demonstrate that all advice is delivered in an impartial manner, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education or occupation.

The Career Development Institute (CDI) has developed a set of professional standards for careers advisers which includes a Professional Register of advisers holding Level 6 or higher qualifications.

Tracking student Destinations

Schools should collect and analyse education, training and employment destinations data for all students. This data may help to identify pathways, subjects or courses with low take-up that could be addressed by changes to the careers programme. Schools should collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their education, training or employment destinations for at least three years after they leave school or from the end of KS4, whichever is sooner.

Destinations data can also help schools to build and maintain alumni networks which will be valuable for giving students encounters with employers and employees (Benchmark 5) and encounters with further and higher education (Benchmark 7). [The Destinations data good practice guide for schools](#) sets out more information on what destinations data is, how it differs from the destination measures accountability tool that the department publishes in performance tables, and how both can be used to help schools improve their careers provision. Government is updating this guide and adding information for colleges.

For more information on how schools can collect Destinations Data, please see page 21 of the [Statutory Guidance for Schools \(2021\)](#).

4 | Support available from The Careers & Enterprise Company

We have a range of training and support available for mainstream schools. We have a dedicated [Governor Page](#) on our Resource Directory including training and resources.

There is a [free online training module](#) designed to support you in your role as Governor.

[Register here](#) to receive latest policy updates and support via our Governor Digest.

1. Access our Network



- Partner with an [Enterprise Adviser and Enterprise Coordinator](#) – we'll partner you with a senior business volunteer and our trained Enterprise Coordinator to support you in the delivery of your careers programme.

2. Support for Careers Leaders



- Sign up to our free [online training](#) course to learn more about the role.
- [Register for a Careers Leaders bursary](#) to carry out training with one of our 11 training providers.
- New Careers Leaders can get support through our [Getting Started Guide](#).

3. Help meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks



- Evaluate and track your school's progress through our digital tools, [Compass and Tracker](#).
- Understand the Gatsby Benchmarks better with [our toolkits](#).
- Find high-quality providers to deliver programmes within your school through our [Provider Directory](#).

Other sources of support



Further support for governors can also be found at:

- [National Governance Association](#).
- [Governors for Schools](#).
- [The Career Development Institute](#) website has a range of support including webinars for governors.

5 | Role of Governing Body

It is not a requirement however; it is recommended that schools appoint a Link Governor for careers. The Link Governor should take a strategic interest in careers education and guidance and encourage employer engagement for careers. They should be ensuring that the school, as a minimum, meets its statutory requirements for the provision of work-related learning and employer engagement for all its students. The Link Governor for careers is also encouraged to ensure that the school is constantly reviewing its practice. The Careers and Enterprise Company recommends that the Link Governor for careers meets regularly with the school's dedicated Careers Leader, Enterprise Coordinator and Enterprise Adviser to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to careers and implementing the Gatsby Benchmarks across the school.

Role of Link Governor

The role of the Link Governor could include:

- Supporting the member of staff at the school who has responsibility for careers education and guidance by arranging regular meetings;
- Reporting back to the Governing Board on how the school's careers education and guidance is contributing to the school's strategic priorities;
- Reporting back to the Governing Board on how the school's careers education and guidance is contributing to pupils' learning and career decision making;
- Facilitating the appointment of people from the business community as school governors or associate members;
- Facilitating partnerships with local businesses;
- Ensuring that the Governing Board is advised of and meeting the requirements of the statutory guidance;
- Ensure that statutory duties are met;
- Encourage schools to work toward the Quality in Careers Standard.

6 | Questions for Governing Body

- Are the details of the Careers Leader and the school's careers programme published on the website? Is this accessible to students, parents, carers, employers and other stakeholders? Is it kept up-to-date?
- Does the school comply with its statutory responsibilities for Careers Education and are these reflected in the school's Careers Policy?
- Does the school advise the governing body of statutory duties and guidance?
- Has the school published a policy statement setting out arrangements for education and training providers to access pupils?
- Does the Governing Body have strategic oversight of careers? Is the Governing Body fully aware of the careers programme that is offered in the school, how it is delivered and evaluated? Is careers discussed at Governing Body meetings and is a written record kept of these discussions?
- Does the Careers Leader report to the headteacher and/or give a report in a full Governing Body meeting on progress made toward the broader strategic aims of the careers programme?
- How is the school performing in relation to the Gatsby Benchmarks? How does your school's performance compare to the national/local picture?
- Is the Governing Body aware of the destinations of students over time (including sustained destinations) and is a plan in place to collect, analyse and improve destination data?
- Does the Governing Body know how the curriculum promotes progression to further education, training, apprenticeships and employment?
- Is the Governing Body aware of regional and national labour market information? Does the Governing Body ensure the school uses labour market intelligence to inform decision making and promote progression?
- Do governors attend careers events at the school?

7 | Key questions to ask of the school leaders

Governing bodies should be mindful of staff workload when requesting data and should not expect to receive data that is not already utilised by a member of staff with responsibility for delivering the careers programme.

Questions for secondary school Governing Bodies to ask when monitoring progress towards the benchmarks include:

- Is a robust school action plan in place to address any areas of weakness around the Gatsby Benchmarks? Does careers education and guidance feature in the School Development Plan?
- How do we know the careers support the school offers is effective? What evidence is there for this?
- How does the school collaborate with other schools and organisations in the provision of careers education and guidance? Is this effective? What evidence is there of this?
- Does the school have adequate safeguarding and health and safety arrangements in place if/when pupils take part in work experience, or other activities off the school site?
- Has the school a named Careers Leader who is appropriately trained? Do they have sufficient time and resources to undertake their role effectively?
- Does the Careers Leader have full backing of the headteacher/Governing Body and how is this demonstrated?
- What evidence is there that all pupils have the opportunity to engage with further and higher education, apprenticeships and other routes to employment?



8 | Prompt questions for reviewing progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks

Below are prompt questions for the Link Governor to consider when meeting with the Careers Leader. These are provided for each Gatsby Benchmark.

Benchmark 1 – A stable careers programme

- Does the Careers Leader utilise the Compass self-evaluation tool?
- How often does the Careers Leader report to the headteacher and/or give a report in a full Governing Board meeting on progress made toward the broader strategic aims of the careers programme?
- Does the Governing Body have strategic oversight of careers? Is the Governing Body fully aware of the careers programme that is offered in the school, how it is delivered and evaluated? Is careers discussed at meetings and a written record kept of these discussions?
- Is feedback on the careers programme collected from pupils, parents and staff and does this evidence inform judgements about the effectiveness of the programme and shape future work?
- How has this feedback impacted on the plans for future events?

Benchmark 2 – Learning from career and labour market information

- Is the Careers Leader aware of local, regional and national labour market information (LMI)? Is the school using labour market intelligence to inform decision making and promote progression?
- How is this LMI being communicated to pupils? What evidence is there that they are using this intelligence to inform their decision making?
- Does the Careers Leader make use of the [LEP website](#) for local LMI information.

Benchmark 3 – Addressing the needs of each pupil

- How is individual and cohort progression tracked over time?
- Do students have access to the full range of objective information about all the careers options available to school leavers?
- Is the support offered to students at key points in their education meeting the need? E.g. Transition points, Options choices.

8 | Prompt questions for reviewing progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks

- How does the school track individual engagement with the careers programme?
- Is the Careers Leader aware of and using Compass+, The Careers & Enterprise Company digital tool?
- Is there a plan in place to collect, analyse and improve destinations data (including sustained destinations)? How effectively is the data being used to adapt future provision?

Benchmark 4 – Linking curriculum learning to careers

- Is clear strategy on careers provision communicated and embedded across the school?
- What evidence is there that careers is embedded in the curriculum?
- Is it part of the School Development Plan/ performance management/curriculum planning?

- What evidence is there that Heads of Department/Subject Leads are engaged with the school's Careers Strategy?
- To what extent are teaching staff engaging with businesses? What evidence is there to demonstrate this involvement?
- How does the curriculum promote progression to further education, training, apprenticeship and employment? How is this evidenced?
- Is the careers provision sequential, meeting the changing needs of the students as they progress through the school?

Benchmark 5 – Encounters with employers and employees

- What evidence is there, that every pupil has a meaningful encounter with an employer every year?
- How does the school know the encounter was meaningful?

Encourage the use of 'The Meaningful Encounter Checklist' published by the CEC.

8 | Prompt questions for reviewing progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks

Benchmark 6 – Experiences of workplaces

- Do all pupils visit a workplace before the age of 16 and then again before 18? This could be work experience or a work place tour – see work experience toolkit for further guidance.
- How well are these visits embedded in the curriculum/meeting the needs of the students?

Benchmark 7 – Encounters with further and higher education

- If the school has a sixth form, how can impartiality be demonstrated for students making Post 16 choices?
- Do all students have an opportunity to visit Further and Higher Education institutions?

Benchmark 8 – Personal guidance

- Is career guidance presented in an impartial manner, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education or occupation?
- Does guidance include information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes?
- Is the person providing individual career guidance sufficiently qualified? They should have a qualification at Level 6/7 in career guidance and development and ideally on the UK Register of Career Development Professionals, accessible through the CDI website.

Look at destinations data –What is the proportion of students applying for vocational courses at college, 6th form or apprenticeships places? After Year 13, what proportion are gaining places on degree programmes at university (including elite universities), higher or degree level apprenticeships or employment? How is the school using this data to tailor their careers provision?

- Does guidance advice promote the best interests of the pupils to whom it is given?

8 | Prompt questions for reviewing progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks

Explore the longer-term destinations data collected by the school. What is the dropout rate? How many have become NEET (not in education, employment or training)? Is this a reflection of the appropriateness of the advice given?

- How does the school know that our careers education and guidance has positive outcomes for pupils? What evidence is there of this?
- Who is responsible for managing careers guidance? How does the school monitor that he/she is performing this role effectively?
- Does the school make careers education and guidance accessible to all students? What evidence is there of this?

9 | Glossary

An important distinction needs to be made here between careers programme, strategic careers plan and any related calendar of events.

A careers programme identifies careers learning outcomes for each year group and for any defined cohorts of students. Interventions can be mapped and audited against these outcomes

A strategic careers plan ensures that the Careers Leader is able to implement the careers programme and track impact. A strategic careers plan can be devised by the Careers Leader and the Enterprise Adviser. A strategic careers plan may include the following areas as objectives: resource to support implementation of careers programme, employer engagement, structures to engage colleagues, priority benchmarks, vulnerable groups, connecting to key college priority areas (attendance, literacy, etc.), links to mental health & wellbeing.

A calendar of careers events may also be created to share with stakeholders to highlight interventions and events.

Our Network: Enterprise Adviser Network

Our national network 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.

The network is made up of Enterprise Coordinators who we co-fund with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Combined Authorities. Enterprise Coordinators are trained professionals who work with clusters of 20 schools and colleges to build careers plans and make connections to local and national employers.

Enterprise Coordinator

An Enterprise Coordinator sits at the heart of the Enterprise Adviser Network and connects schools and colleges with employers and careers programme providers. The Enterprise Coordinator acts as the central point of information for local and national solutions.

An Enterprise Coordinator's role is to:

- Help schools and colleges build upon their careers and enterprise activities and engage with the world of work;
- Make it easier for schools and colleges to engage with employers and careers programme providers;
- Focus everyone's efforts on programmes and activities that are most effective in motivating young people, supporting independent choice and supporting positive outcomes for young people;
- Helping schools and colleges to focus efforts on programmes and activities that are most effective in motivating young people, supporting independent choice, and supporting positive outcomes for young people.

Enterprise Adviser

A senior business volunteer who spends around 8 hours a month working closely with the headteacher or Senior Leadership Team. An Enterprise Adviser uses their business experience and professional networks to help develop and implement an effective careers strategy that puts opportunities with local employers at the heart of a young person's education. An Enterprise Adviser adds value by:

- Supporting the development of a whole school/college plan for careers, enterprise and employer engagement;
- Providing employer perspective and insight and access to their local business networks;
- Helping schools and colleges to focus efforts on programmes and activities that are most effective in motivating young people, supporting independent choice, and supporting positive outcomes for young people.

Careers Hub

Careers Hubs are clusters of schools and colleges located in the same geographic area, working together and with partners to deliver outstanding careers education.

Secondary schools and colleges within a Careers Hub should have a shared vision of how they will work together to improve outcomes for the young people in their area by:

- Helping schools and colleges build upon their careers and enterprise activities and engage with the world of work;
- Making it easier for schools and colleges to engage with employers and careers programme providers;
- Focusing--- everyone's efforts on programmes and activities that are most effective in motivating young people, supporting independent choice and supporting positive outcomes for young people.

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