

## Teacher Encounters

# Education Leaders

## Empower your school staff to have confident and meaningful conversations with students about their futures through teacher encounters.

The Careers & Enterprise Company would like to offer your staff the chance to be involved in a unique and inspirational CPD opportunity. Teacher encounters are opportunities for the education workforce to spend time with, and learn from, people in industry. Teacher encounters offer professional learning in a different context, sparking and inspiring curiosity that can be brought back to the classroom and be passed on to students.

### We know:

- Teachers have a key role in advising and supporting students with their future decisions and yet they often struggle to stay up to date in such a fast-changing labour market
- Employers are keen to directly support education in order to help young people transition more seamlessly into the workplace
- The best and most impactful careers programmes come via a 'whole school, special school or college' approach and embedding careers learning across the curriculum

Teacher encounters enable educators to fully understand current industry practice and share up to date knowledge and skills with their students. They help educators maintain a breadth of knowledge and the latest technical and professional developments relevant to the subjects they teach, including present and future career opportunities, and the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for different roles.

Teachers can use these insights to inspire their students and keep their teaching and curriculum up to date. There are a number of pathways and routes into employment particularly apprenticeships, technical and vocational learning, and this knowledge can empower educators to effectively support students to take their next best step.

Teacher encounters can take a variety of forms for individual or groups of educators to meet employers, virtually, in school or at an employer's premises with a range and variety of outcomes that could include updating the curriculum or teaching practises, to engaging further with employers or increasing confidence to support transitions.

'The 'staff dream big' initiative enables over 150 of our teaching staff, every year, to apply this experience to their delivery of the curriculum and ensure that learners understood the relevance of their school-based studies. Non-teaching staff can also share their work-based experience with young people thus creating a rich and dynamic careers education that genuinely engages learners and encourages them to consider a wide range of career opportunities through all touchpoints.'

**Jo Higgins,**  
**Chief Executive Officer,**  
**Dudley Academies Trust**

# 88%

of teachers felt their training didn't prepare them to deliver careers information and guidance to students<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Paving the way](#)

# How will your school, special school or college benefit?

## Benefits for your students:

- Increased opportunities to engage impactfully with employers
- Valuable opportunities to recognise and articulate the skills employers value
- Increased progress through the creation of innovative and relevant learning opportunities
- Improved understanding of the relevance of the curriculum to their future employment

## Benefits for your teaching staff:

- Enhanced curriculum delivery and engagement as staff gain confidence to highlight the relevance of their subjects to future careers and make links to careers from the curriculum
- Increased confidence and knowledge to advise or signpost students, and articulate all available pathways (including technical and vocational), with equity and without bias
- Broadened subject experience, depth and range of knowledge to inform quality teaching practice
- A unique opportunity for experiential learning
- A valuable opportunity to develop and sustain meaningful contact with employers to enhance the curriculum

## Benefits for your setting:

- Positive impact on staff recruitment, retention and mental health and wellbeing through staff feeling valued and invested in
- Better informed teaching staff
- Careers learning becoming embedded in curriculum teaching
- Increased aspirational and effective transitions for your students
- Simple and effective way to build or improve the quality of crucial connections with local and national employers<sup>1</sup>

## Benefits for your Careers Leader:

- Development of a shared responsibility for enhancing the individual student careers learning journey
- Enhanced and embedded progressive careers programme development
- Increasing the range of staff who can have effective careers conversations with students and parents and the knowledge to signpost to specialist advice

'The skill of problem solving was evident throughout the experience. Employees were constantly solving problems and there were even departments within the company with this sole purpose. Solving 'real life' style problems can be difficult for students at our school as it takes them out of their comfort zone and can combine many skills. This has got me thinking into ways I can change my teaching to give the students more chances to do this and whether I can find strategies to help set them up to be more confident in this style question'.

**Teacher on a placement  
at Yeo Valley**

## Context

High-quality teaching, meaningful learning opportunities and curriculum development is central to school, special school and college improvement and to supporting the progression of all learners to aspirational, sustained destinations.

When careers education becomes embedded within school, special school and college improvement, it has the most impact.<sup>2</sup> Like other crosscutting areas, such as safeguarding and literacy, best practice involves:

- Responsibility held within the senior leadership
- Whole-staff training
- Use of curriculum
- Specialist input

To provide all young people with the best possible support, teaching staff and education leaders need to understand how curriculum subjects relate to different industries and the various pathways to work, including apprenticeships.

This has two main purposes:

1. To inform effective careers conversations with students and parents.
2. To support engagement and progress, by highlighting the relevance of a subject to careers through the curriculum.

The Schools White Paper (March 2022) reinforced commitments to 'improve professional development for teachers and leaders on careers education, including strengthening understanding of apprenticeships and technical routes'.

This is critical. Teachers pass on messages, sometimes implicitly, about career paths through the relationships they build and the curriculum they teach. To do this effectively [they benefit from support](#), especially because they do not always have knowledge or experience of all pathways and the local labour market.<sup>3</sup>

One way to ensure that teachers understand the requirements of the world of work and are able to provide up to date career support to young people with confidence, is through the provision of specific teacher CPD on careers and enterprise. Research on 'what works' in career and enterprise education repeatedly stresses the importance of education-employer links.<sup>5</sup>

"For Sandhurst School, teacher work placement opportunities have resulted in bringing the work of the school and business closer together. Through the establishment of quality partnerships our young people have been inspired through a relevant and wider curriculum, inspiring and securing engagement. The experience has reinforced to teaching staff that significant motivation and advice tends to come from people in the industry themselves, and together this has enabled us to work towards building the workforce we all need for the future."

**Debbie Smith, Headteacher,  
Sandhurst School**

**Evidence shows that although teachers were one of the most accessed sources of careers information, advice and guidance for young people, only a small proportion found teachers' advice to be the most useful.<sup>4</sup>**

## Get involved

For more information on how your school can get involved, contact your local Careers Hub or email [teacherencounters@careersandenterprise.co.uk](mailto:teacherencounters@careersandenterprise.co.uk)

2 1 Tanner, E. et al (2021). Careers Leadership in Colleges: Supporting learners through a 'whole college' approach. London: The CEC

3 Archer, R., Highton, J., et al (2021). The road not taken: the drivers of course selection: The determinants and consequences of post-16 education choices. Sub-report for the Social Mobility Commission (Pg.48).

4 Stewart, H. (2021). Young people's experiences of careers information, advice and guidance: Evidence from the second Longitudinal Study of Young People in England.

5 The Careers & Enterprise Company. (2016). What Works in Careers and Enterprise? London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.