



Careers education: A Guide for Secondary and Special School Governors

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Careers Context and The Gatsby Benchmarks

What is careers ?

Careers is everything learners need to know, understand and be able to do in order to:

- Make aspirational and informed decisions.
- Develop career readiness / prepare for adulthood.
- Make effective and sustained transitions.

Evidence shows that high quality careers education and guidance drives learner outcomes, reduces NEET figures (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and increases young people's skills, knowledge and behaviours to inform their next steps.

Schools are expected to take a strategic approach to the development of their careers provision, appointing a named Careers Leader and using the updated Gatsby Benchmark framework. The Gatsby Benchmarks were first established by Sir John Holman in 2014 and are based on extensive national and international evidence. Gatsby released a report, '[Good Career Guidance – The Next 10 Years](#)' in 2024 and schools are expected to work towards meeting the updated benchmarks from September 2025.

From September 2025, DfE expects all institutions to use the [updated Gatsby Benchmarks](#). The eight Gatsby Benchmarks are:

1. **A stable careers programme**

Every school 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**

All pupils, parents and carers, teachers and staff who support pupils should have access to good-quality, up-to-date information about future pathways, study options and labour market opportunities. Young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents and carers may require different or additional information. All pupils will need the support of an informed adviser to make the best use of available information.

3. **Addressing the needs of each young person**

Pupils have different career guidance needs at different stages. Careers programmes should help pupils navigate their concerns about any barriers to career progression. In addition, opportunities should be tailored to the needs of each pupils, including any additional needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, young people with SEND and those who are absent.

4. **Linking curriculum learning to careers**

As part of the school's programme of careers education, all teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. Subject teachers should highlight the progression routes for their subject and the relevance of the knowledge and skills developed in their subject for a wide range of career pathways.

5. **Encounters with employers and employees**

Every pupil 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 opportunities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes, and could include learners' own part-time employment where it exists.

6. **Experiences of workplaces**

Every learner should have first-hand experiences of the workplace to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.

7. **Encounters with further and higher education**

All pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them, including academic, technical and vocational routes. This should incorporate learning in schools, colleges, independent training providers (ITPs), universities and in the workplace.

8. **Personal guidance**

Every pupil should have opportunities for guidance meetings with a careers adviser who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These meetings should be available for all pupils whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all pupils but should be scheduled to meet their individual needs. The careers leader should work closely with the careers adviser, SEND coordinator and other key staff to ensure personal guidance is effective and embedded in the careers programme.

The core of the eight Gatsby Benchmarks remains the same but important changes include:

- **Careers at the heart of education and leadership.** Careers guidance is both a whole-staff and a whole-institution endeavour. Updates emphasise linking careers and the institution's vision and strategic plans, acknowledge the importance of staff development and include distinct responsibilities for leadership, governors, careers leaders and advisers.
- **Inclusion and impact for every young person.** Woven through multiple benchmarks are updates that emphasise the importance of tailoring programmes to the needs of each young person. Particular attention is given to inclusion and any additional or different support that may be needed by vulnerable or disadvantaged young people or those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- **Meaningful and varied encounters and experiences.** Emphasis has been placed on multiple encounters and experiences and the impact of these. The definitions of 'meaningful' in benchmarks 5 and 7 have been expanded and a meaningful definition has been added to benchmark 6. They specify the importance of offering a variety of encounters and experiences, of giving young people time to prepare and reflect and of using technology alongside, but not instead of, in-person activity.
- **Focusing on the use of information and data.** All young people must be able to explore all future pathways equitably. The focus is now on using information to inform decision-making. Data collection has been refocused to include aspirations and intended destinations, to help tailor support. Longer-term and sustained destinations data remain important as part of the evaluation process.
- **Engagement of parents and carers.** Parents and carers are one of the biggest influences on young people's career decision-making. Updates embed parent and carer engagement into planning and specify the need to share information with parents and carers and support them to use it with their children.



Watch this short video on understanding the updates to the Gatsby Benchmarks

Statutory Duties and Ofsted Requirements

In May 2025, The Department for Education released statutory guidance entitled, 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers,' which articulates the government's vision for careers guidance. In this context, 'careers guidance' is a comprehensive support system designed to help learners make informed decisions about their education, training, and career paths. It encompasses a range of activities and support aimed at providing learners with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to navigate their future careers effectively.

The Statutory Guidance states that 'high-quality careers guidance is at the heart of the government's mission to grow the economy and break down the barriers to opportunity.' This statutory guidance replaces 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers: statutory guidance for school and guidance for further education colleges and sixth form colleges', published in January 2023.

The [updated provider access legislation](#) released in January 2023, specifies schools must provide at least six encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education, for all their learners.

The legislation is a key mechanism to further help learners understand and take-up, not just of apprenticeships, but wider technical education options such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications.



Access Careers Statutory Guidance: At a glance guides for school, college and ITP leaders

Governing bodies have a key role in ensuring schools not only meet their legal requirements but are also equipping their all learners 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 the careers provision.

The governing body should provide clear advice and guidance to the school leader on which they can base a strategic careers plan which meets the legal or contractual requirements of the school or special school. The plan should be developed in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks and informed by the requirements and expectations set out in the Statutory Guidance. This plan should show how the careers programme will be implemented and how its impact will be measured.



Governors can signpost Careers Leaders to the following resource when developing a strategic careers plan: [Understanding how to create a strategic careers plan](#)

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

1. The appointment of a Careers Leader.
2. Compliance with the provider access legislation.
3. The publishing of policy statements on the school's website.
4. Commitment to the delivery of independent and impartial careers guidance.
5. A strategic approach to meeting legal and statutory requirements with a commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement.



For further information, access our '[At a Glance Checklist and Guide for School Leaders](#)'.

This resource provides an overview of the responsibilities of schools, outlined in the publication 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers.'

The appointment of a Careers Leader

From September 2018, schools and special 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 provision.



By involving governors with the work on careers, the governing board can ensure that Careers Leaders are supported and challenged at a senior level.

The governing body should provide clear advice and guidance on which the school or special school leader can base a strategic careers plan which meets all legal or contractual requirements. The plan should be developed in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks and informed by the requirements and expectations set out in statutory guidance. This plan should show how the careers programme will be implemented and how its impact will be measured.

Have you benefited from our Governor CPD on the [Careers & Enterprise Academy](#)?

Does your school have a [trained Careers Leader](#)?

Governors can empower Careers Leaders and keep up to date with developments and progress of the careers provision by scheduling regular meetings with the Careers Leader.

Compliance with the provider access legislation

Provider Access Legislation means there is a duty to provide opportunities for “a range of technical education and apprenticeships to access learners and inform them about technical qualifications and apprenticeships”. Every school is expected to publish a provider access policy statement which sets out their arrangements for education and training provider access learners and the access policy should be signed off in agreement with the governing body.

Schools and Special Schools must provide at least six encounters for all their students:

- Two encounters for pupils during the ‘first key phase’ (year 8 or 9) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend.
- Two encounters for pupils during the ‘second key phase’ (year 10 or 11) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend.
- Two encounters for pupils during the ‘third key phase’ (year 12 or 13) that are mandatory for the school to put on but optional for pupils to attend.

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

- The provider access policy statement must be published on the school's website and must include:
- An explanation of how the school will comply with the legal requirement to put on at least six encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships, including the times at which access is to be given.
- Any procedural requirements in relation to requests for access e.g., the main point of contact at the school to whom requests should be directed.
- Grounds for granting and refusing requests for access e.g., details of timetabled careers lessons, assemblies or careers events which providers may attend; and should include the safeguarding policy.
- Details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access e.g., rooms and resources to be made available in support of a provider visit.

How should the careers programme be published on the school's or special school's website?

The Department for Education (DfE) requires maintained schools and expects academies and colleges to publish the following information about their careers programme on their website:

- **The name and contact details of the Careers Leader**
- **A summary of the careers programme, including details of how students, parents and carers, teachers and employers may access information about it**
- **How the school measures and assesses the impact of the careers programme on learners**
- **The date of the next review of the information published**

Commitment to the delivery of independent and impartial guidance

The updated statutory guidance (May 2025) states that the governing body must make sure that independent careers guidance is provided to all learners throughout their secondary education (11- to 18-year-olds) and learners aged up to 25 with an education, health and care plan, and that it is:

- Presented in an impartial manner, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education or work option.
- Includes information on the range of education or training options, including apprenticeships and technical education routes.
- Guidance that the person giving it considers will promote the best interests of the learners to whom it is given.

Tracking learner Destinations

Schools should collect and analyse education, training and employment destinations data for all learners. This data may help schools and colleges to identify pathways, subjects or courses with low take-up that could be addressed by changes to the careers provision.

Schools should collect, maintain and use accurate data for each learner on their aspirations, intended and immediate education, and training or employment destinations, to inform personalised support.

Although the expectation to track the destinations of young people over three years has been removed, schools should use sustained and longer-term destinations data as part of their evaluation process. Destinations data can also help schools to build and maintain alumni networks which will be valuable for giving learners encounters with employers and employees (Benchmark 5) and encounters with further and higher education (Benchmark 7).

DfE recommends that schools support local authorities with Risk of NEET Indicators (RONI) work to drive improvements to prevent learners from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) and support effective post-16 transitions. This can support better join-up to share destinations data for reporting on the Gatsby Benchmarks, via Compass+, and RONI (Risk of NEET indicator) processes.

The DfE publishes Key Stage 4 and 16–18 (Key Stage 5) education destinations in [performance tables on gov.uk](https://performance.tables.on.gov.uk). Aggregated sustained and longer-term destinations data can be found at the following places: [Longer term destinations](#) and [16–18 destination measures](#).

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.

Governor with a strategic interest in careers – Careers Link Governor

Every school should have a member of their governing body who takes a strategic interest in careers education and guidance and encourages employer engagement. This person is often referred to as the Link Governor. They should be ensuring that the school, as a minimum, meets its statutory requirements for the provision of [modern work experience](#) and [employer engagement](#) for all its learners. 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 Careers Leader and Enterprise Coordinator to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to careers and implementing the Gatsby Benchmarks across the school.

The role of the Link Governor **could** include:

- Ensuring that the Governing Board is advised of and meeting the requirements of the statutory guidance.
- Ensuring that statutory duties are met.
- 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 learner's career decision making.
- Facilitating the appointment of people from the business community as school governors or associate members.
- Facilitating partnerships with local businesses.
- Participating in a Careers Impact internal leadership review
- Encouraging work towards the [Quality in Careers Standard](#).

Ofsted requirements

The Ofsted [school inspection handbook](#) currently includes a focus on careers guidance, including by clarifying that inspectors will always report where a school falls short of the requirements of the provider access legislation, as well as considering how it affects a school's inspection grade. Inspectors will assess the quality of careers information, education, advice and guidance as part of personal development and explore how well it benefits learners in choosing and deciding on their next steps. This will include looking at the school's implementation of the provider access arrangements, the provision of unbiased information about potential next steps and provision of high quality, meaningful opportunities for encounters with the world of work.

Careers as a driver for school improvement

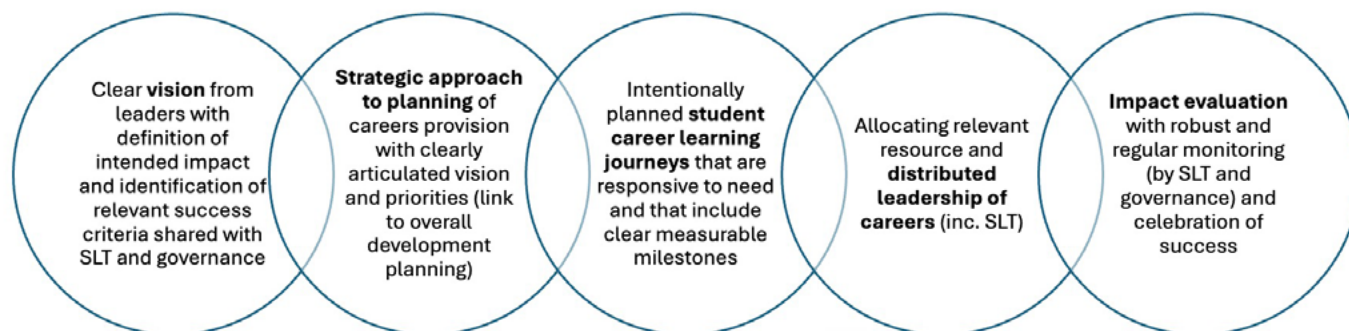
Statutory guidance and the [Gatsby Next 10 report](#) reference the importance of a whole institution approach to careers guidance by aligning the strategic careers plan to school priorities.

The careers provision should be aligned with the institution's vision, priorities and development plans. This helps to establish a whole-institution approach where the careers provision can play an important part in addressing wider improvement priorities, including attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, inclusion and attainment.

Headteachers, principals and those in governance roles should all be actively engaged in setting the direction for a whole-institution approach to careers guidance and give explicit backing to the institution's careers provision.



An effective Careers Leader should work with senior leaders to ensure the careers provision is informed by a strategic careers plan aligned to school priorities. Governors can signpost Careers Leaders to the following resource when developing a strategic careers plan: [Understanding how to create a strategic careers plan](#)



These are the five conditions for success that drive sustainable and strategic careers leadership, and when present, can act as a driver for improvement and measurably contribute to improved student learner outcomes.

- Ambitious and comprehensive vision from leaders that is clearly articulated, measurable and widely shared and understood.
- A strategic approach to planning for careers with articulated priorities and clear and distributed lines of accountability with robust monitoring of progress by SLT and Governors.
- Definition of intended impact for learners, with intentional careers learning journeys that are responsive to need and underpinned by learning outcomes, enabled by progressive and meaningful learning experiences and encounters.
- Distributed leadership of careers with leaders at all levels across supported and empowered to support a whole-school approach to careers.
- Robust monitoring of success and impact towards the school vision and intent for learners as leavers, supported by a clear articulation of vision, specific priorities and related learning outcomes.

[The Careers Impact System Maturity Model](#) articulates how maturity in each of these areas can lead to stability and sustainability within careers leadership and how this can lead to school improvement.

The Careers Impact System aims to continue to drive positive learner outcomes by:

- Providing assurance of quality of careers leadership and careers provision as a driver for school and special school improvement.
- Improving careers leadership and careers provision across the country.
- Elevating the status of Careers Leadership within wider school development priorities.

The Careers Impact System is rooted in the Gatsby Benchmarks and other evidence about best practice in careers and careers leadership. School leaders can undertake a Careers Impact internal leadership review by following the guidance within Compass/Compass+.



Undertaking an internal leadership review will support leaders to identify areas for development and a clear strategic action plan.

- **Has an internal leadership review been completed at your school or special school?**
- **Were you or could you be involved and discuss the outcomes?**

Want to learn more about the impact of the Careers Impact System? Access information about the Careers Impact internal leadership reviews here [Careers Impact system internal leadership review](#) | [CEC Resource Directory](#)

Key strategic questions to support and challenge 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 provision.

Below are the main questions the Governing Body might consider when reviewing its role in relation to provision of careers support for learners and monitoring progress towards the Gatsby Benchmarks whilst supporting an impact driven approach to careers provision.

Legal requirements and other expectations

- Have the school leaders informed the Governing Body of its legal and other requirements with regard to career guidance, and the expectations in the DfE's latest guidance?
- Does the school comply with its legal requirements and other responsibilities for career guidance, and are these reflected in the careers policy?
- Do all learners have the opportunity to engage with further and higher education, apprenticeships and other routes to employment?

Strategic oversight

- Is the Governing Body fully aware of the careers provision and it is engaged in the evaluation of the careers provision?
- Is there a strategic careers plan?
- How frequently is it discussed at Governing Body meetings?
- Is it aligned with the school's strategic priorities?
- Has the school undertaken a Careers Impact internal leadership review? Is completion of the review in line with the school's strategic planning cycle?

Leadership of careers

- Who in the senior leadership team is responsible for careers, and which staff members have defined roles in this area?
- Is the Careers Leader adequately trained, resourced, and are their details and the careers programme information accessible and up-to-date on the school's website?
- How often does the Careers Leader report to the senior leadership team and Governing Body, and is there a Link Governor for careers who meets regularly with the Careers Leader?

Quality assurance

- How is the effectiveness of the school's careers provision evaluated, and what evidence supports this?
- Does the careers provision meet the needs of all learners, including vulnerable or disadvantaged students, and how does it compare to national and regional standards?
- Is sufficient time allocated to whole-staff CPD to support them to link curriculum learning to careers and to have effective careers conversations with learners, parents and carers.



Access [Careers Statutory Guidance: At a glance guides for school, college and ITP leaders](#)



Access [Driving equity and tackling disadvantage through your careers provision: Educator Guide](#)

Prompt questions to support conversations with Careers Leaders

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

- Are there clear mechanisms in place for ensuring the quality of provision? For example, has the leadership team undertaken a Careers Impact System internal leadership review and is progress reported on in a full Governing Body meeting effectively?
- How do you know careers provision is responsive to the needs of learners, sequenced appropriately, underpinned by learning outcomes and linked to the whole-school development plan?
- To what extent is the strategic plan for stakeholder feedback and parental engagement in careers linked to the whole school plan? How has this feedback impacted on the plans for future provision?

Benchmark 2 – Learning from career and labour market information

- How is the school using local, regional and national labour market intelligence (LMI) to inform decision making and promote progression?
- How effectively is LMI being communicated to learners and their parents and carers and are they supported in how to access and use this information to inform decision making? What evidence is there that they are using this intelligence to inform their decision making?
- Does the Careers Leader make use of the Careers Hub for local LMI information?

Benchmark 3 – Addressing the needs of each young person

- How effectively is the school measuring learner careers readiness at key points of transition, for example, through the [Future Skills Questionnaire](#), the use of which is strongly recommended in Statutory Guidance? How are the findings from this used to inform the development of the careers provision and to tailor provision based on individual and cohort need?
- How effectively is the school collecting, analysing and improving destinations data (including sustained destinations)? How effectively is the data being used to evaluate the success of the careers provision, adapt future provision or to inform personalised support?
- How effectively does the school use digital tracking to ensure all learners are engaging with opportunities provided as part of the careers provision? Are systematic records kept of the participation of learners in all aspects of their careers provision, including the individual advice given to each learner and any subsequent agreed decisions?

Benchmark 4 – Linking curriculum learning to careers

- How is a clear strategy on careers provision communicated and embedded across the school and what evidence is there that Heads of Department/Subject Leads are engaged with the school's Careers Strategy?
- What evidence is there, that every learner, every year, in every subject, has the opportunity to learn sequentially, how the knowledge and skills developed in that subject helps people in a wide range of careers?
- What are the plans for careers to form part of the school's ongoing staff development programme?

Benchmark 5 – Encounters with employers and employees

- What evidence is there, that each and every learner has a meaningful encounter with an employer every year from the age of 11?
- How does the school know all encounters are meaningful and impactful?
- Encourage the use of this guide, '[Understanding how to embed progressive employer encounters and work experiences](#)' published by the CEC.

Benchmark 6 – Experiences of workplaces

- How well is the school preparing for the Government's ambition to introduce a guarantee of two weeks' worth of work experience during key stages 3 and 4?
- How does the school know all experiences are meaningful and impactful?
- How are learners, particularly more disadvantaged learners, being supported to expand their networks?



Institutions should begin to prepare and introduce multiple, meaningful and varied experiences to all young people. Find out more about modern work experience [here](#).

Benchmark 7 – Encounters with further and higher education

- Are learners and their parents and carers introduced to all pathway options early and with equity?
- Do all learners have an opportunity to visit Further and Higher Education institutions to meet staff and learners? If the school has a sixth form, how can impartiality be demonstrated for learners making Post 16 choices?
- Are there plans in place for providing the required number of encounters with further education and training providers, as detailed in the provider access legislation?

Benchmark 8 – Personal guidance

- How is personal guidance quality assured to ensure that it is effective?
- Is personal guidance delivered by a suitably qualified individual and presented in an impartial manner, promoting the best interests of the individual, showing no bias or favouritism towards a particular institution, education pathway or occupation?
- Are learners, parents and carers being given sufficient information about personal guidance support and how to access it, including through the website?

The Careers & Enterprise Company and available support

The Careers & Enterprise Company is the national body for careers education in England, supporting schools and special schools to deliver modern, 21st century careers education.

Our mission is to help every young person find their best next step. We do this by working with both primary and secondary schools, colleges and employers to improve careers education and secure better outcomes for young people.

Our work is at a national scale and delivered through our network of Careers Hubs that bring together schools, colleges, employers and apprenticeship providers in local areas across England, working in partnership with Mayoral, Combined and Local Authorities and, Local Enterprise Partnerships to connect with local skills needs.

The CEC produces annual insight briefings showing how careers guidance is developing in England. To view the latest reports and evidence, click [here](#).

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

There is a free online training module on the [Careers & Enterprise Academy](#), designed to support you in your role as Governor.

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

Access our Careers Hub network

- [Careers Hubs](#) are partnerships between The Careers & Enterprise Company and Combined and Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- Careers Hubs have been shown to drive up standards of careers education against the best practice Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Each school or special school has a dedicated Enterprise Coordinator to support with the development and evaluation of the careers provision.

Other sources of support for Governors

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

Help meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks

Gatsby Benchmark toolkits and guides to support the meaningful achievement of all eight benchmarks are available through The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) [Resource Directory](#), a curated one-stop-shop of high quality, trusted careers tools, guidance and information and the [Careers & Enterprise Academy](#).

- For those new to Careers Leadership, our short induction on the [Careers & Enterprise Academy](#) will give the base level knowledge to hit the ground running.
- CEC has created a set of new [toolkits](#) to support the implementation of the updated Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Self-serve online courses to support understanding of the updated Gatsby Benchmarks preparing for meaningful achievement of the updated Gatsby Benchmarks are available on the [Careers & Enterprise Academy](#).

Compass/Compass+ digital tools

The [Compass/Compass+ digital tools](#) help institutions to benchmark, manage, track and report on their careers provision. Compass evaluations enable institutions to quickly and easily evaluate their careers activity against the eight Gatsby Benchmarks. Compass+ offers schools the facility to collect data at individual learner level, using a range of Compass+ reporting to track career learning journeys and target personalised support appropriately.

Future Skills Questionnaire

In the Statutory Guidance, the DfE strongly recommends that schools use the [Future Skills Questionnaire](#) (FSQ), as an evaluation tool for their careers provision. FSQ is a learner self-completion questionnaire, measures career readiness at points of transition across institutions. Insights enable careers leaders to make targeted interventions, evaluate the careers provision and identify the impact of careers guidance in their institution.

Careers Impact System

The DfE strongly recommend the use of the [Careers Impact System](#) in the Statutory Guidance 2025. The [Careers Impact internal leadership review](#) is based on the Careers Impact maturity model, which provides a shared language of how careers can be positioned as a driver for school, special school and college improvement. The digital feature allows for responses agreed in your internal leadership review discussion to be centrally recorded in Compass/Compass+. Institutions also have instant access to a summary of responses, including a visualisation showing a snapshot of indicated areas of strength and priority action areas.

Modern work experience

For support to understand the work experience guarantee, visit the CEC website [here](#).

Appendices & Glossary

Let's also take a moment to review the different terminology used when considering strategic planning for careers. Sometimes these terms are used interchangeably so it's important to develop a shared understanding of what is meant when different documents are referred to. Careers Policy

A careers policy is a set of guidelines and principles, established by an educational institution to provide a framework for the intent, implementation and evaluating impact of a careers programme. This could include:

- Legislation, guidance and evidence informing practice
- Approach and rationale for key strategic decisions e.g. CPD, stakeholder engagement, partnership working
- Commitment to resourcing and acknowledgement of budget to support the implementation of plans

Strategic Careers Plan

The Strategic Careers Plan, first conceptualised by Teach First in 2017, can be used as a 'manual' to achieve careers and whole school, special school, and college strategic objectives. The format follows the Teach First Strategic Careers Plan concept and includes:

- Vision
- Current state
- Key strategic objectives (student-centred and measurable)
- Action plan to achieve objectives

Action Plan

An action plan for careers provides detail outlining specific steps, tasks and timelines to achieve a set goal or objective. It serves as a guide for individuals and teams to implement plans, providing clarity on what needs to be done, by whom and when. A careers action plan can form the operational element of a comprehensive strategic careers plan.

Careers Programme

A planned programme of universal and targeted careers activities, which includes careers learning, encounters and experiences.

Careers Learning Journeys

Careers Learning Journeys acknowledge the learning gained on a personal level from participating in careers learning, encounters and experiences, within and beyond the subject specific curriculum. Each person's careers learning journey has many influences and contributors. Leaders in schools, special schools and colleges have the opportunity to:

- provide meaningful encounters and experiences with opportunities for reflection and analysis
- equip learners with the skills to take control of their own careers learning journey, make aspirational and informed decisions, make effective and sustained transitions and develop career readiness
- mitigate against any false or misleading information learners may have encountered from different sources

Careers Leaders can further enhance the Careers Learning Journeys through staff development and embedding parent & carer engagement.

Careers Leader and Careers Adviser

These are two distinct roles, although in some instances, one person may hold both roles.

- A Careers Adviser offers advice and guidance to individuals or groups of young people to help them make informed decisions about their futures.
- A Careers Leader is responsible and accountable for the delivery of their institution's programme of career education. It is a senior role that requires the person doing it to have a clear overview of the institution's careers provision and to make sure that the setting meaningfully meets the Gatsby Benchmarks through the development of a progressive careers learning journey.

Careers Guidance

Careers guidance is a comprehensive support system designed to help learners make informed decisions about their education, training, and career paths. It encompasses a range of activities and support aimed at providing learners with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to navigate their future careers effectively.

THE CAREERS &
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COMPANY

