



Compass Evaluation Question-by-Question Guidance

FE and ITPs

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Compass Evaluation Question-by-Question Guidance – FE and ITPs

This question-by-question guidance is designed to support your Compass evaluation process, enabling every college and independent training provider (ITP) to feel confident in their self-evaluation of the updated Gatsby Benchmarks. Please note that this guidance is designed as a reference guide if you need additional support or clarification on any specific question within the Compass evaluation. Resources and support are also signposted where relevant to encourage further good practice and to fulfil the requirements of each Benchmark.

Scoring

To fully achieve Benchmarks where percentages are the measure, the overwhelming majority (76-90%) of learners should be accessing opportunities.

In addition to 'All' (100%), an additional bracket has been added - 'Almost all' (91-99%) – to allow for stretch and challenge even when all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks have been fully achieved – this allows Careers Leaders to strive for inclusion and impact for each and every young person even if all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks have been fully achieved.

You will notice that some questions are unscored and will not affect your organisation's overall Benchmark score. Please answer these questions as accurately as possible – this information is crucial to gain important insight into current approaches in key areas.

Getting started

We encourage you to make evidence-based decisions. This will make your self-evaluation robust. Before you get started it is a good idea to access relevant data to support you to answer the questions within the evaluation fully.

Information that will support with self-evaluation includes:

- records of learner participation in careers activities by year group.
- cohort level data e.g. FSM.
- access to the organisation's development plan.

Finally, please don't worry if some of the questions in this guidance do not appear in your evaluation. The questions you will see within your evaluation depend on your cohort and your answers to previous questions. Please ignore any questions in this guidance that don't appear in your evaluation as they are not relevant to your setting.

Completion dates

To support your planning and ability to monitor your progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks, we recommend completing a Compass evaluation during each academic term. Please note that given variations in term dates, the cut off points for data analysis are:

- 31st December
- 31st March
- 31st July

When completing a Compass evaluation, we recommend that you focus on the position as it is now in your institution. Where activities are planned to occur later in the academic year we recommend that they are included in the evaluation in the following circumstances:

- the activity is booked into curriculum plans.
- the activity has a specific delivery date.
- the activity has resource and budget allocated to it.

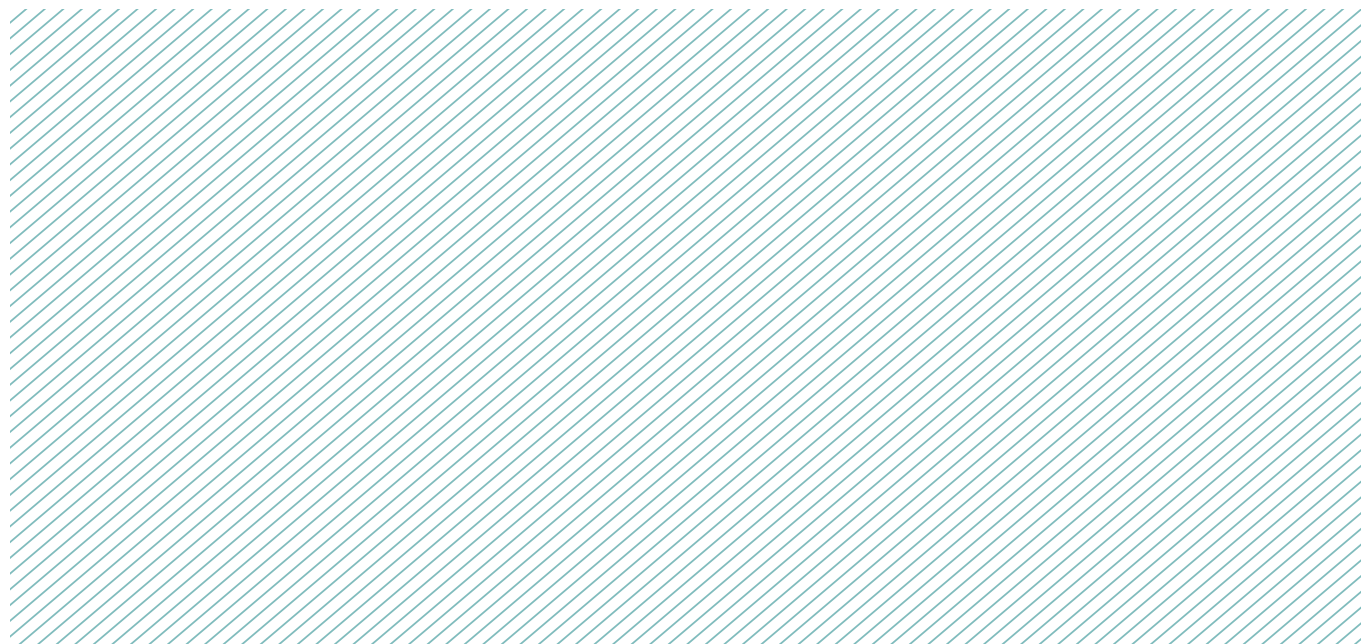
Compass evaluation completions early in the academic year will therefore be likely to include a mix of actual and planned activity. The final Compass evaluation completion of the academic year will significantly reflect actual activity and exclude any planned activity that didn't, or now clearly won't take place.

Gatsby Benchmark 1: A stable careers programme

Question	Questions to consider and additional guidance	Resource
1.1 Does your setting have a trained Careers Leader?	Is there a Careers Leader who is currently employed in your organisation who has completed (or is in the process of completing) The Careers & Enterprise Company quality-assured Careers Leader training? This includes completing the Careers Leader induction module on The Careers & Enterprise Academy and registering for funded Careers Leader training via The Careers & Enterprise training portal.	Careers Leader training
1.2 Does your setting have a careers programme that aligns with the following guidelines? Is tailored to the needs of all learners, including disadvantaged young people?	Does the Careers Leader have access to relevant data, which may inform how careers provision can be tailored to the needs of different learners? (e.g. SEND, attainment, disadvantage etc.) Are there milestones set for relevant data to be captured and analysed to consider the needs of different learners? Have any changes to the careers programme been recorded in response to analysis of relevant data? Clarification: Examples of disadvantaged learners could include any vulnerable groups, those who face additional barriers and young people with SEND.	Understanding how to develop progressive and responsive careers provision Driving equity and tackling disadvantage through your careers provision: Educator Guide
Has the explicit backing of your setting's governance structures (where applicable)?	Is the explicit backing of the governance structure demonstrated through actions such as strategic careers plan approval and visible and regular support, etc.? Does a Careers Link Governor help secure the board's backing for the careers programme?	Careers Education: A Guide for college governors
Is underpinned by learning outcomes and sequenced appropriately for your cohort of young people?	Is there clarity on learning that is happening within, or as a result of, the careers programme? Is the careers programme sequenced to build on prior learning? Is there a process for agreeing, documenting and sharing the learning outcomes that underpin the organisation's careers programme? Clarification: Learning outcomes are clear, concise statements that describe what learners are expected to know, understand or be able to do by certain stages through participation in a careers programme (e.g. the end of the programme). These outcomes are typically measurable and observable, providing a way to assess whether the intended goals of the careers programme have been achieved.	Benchmark 1: Suggested universal career-related learning outcomes Understanding how to develop progressive and responsive careers provision
Is linked to the whole setting development or quality improvement plan?	Is the Careers Leader aware of the whole organisation's development or quality improvement plan? Is the careers programme aligned with priorities, aims and objectives from the organisation's development or quality improvement plan? Is careers linked to the Self Assessment Report (SAR)?	Understanding how to create a strategic careers plan
Sets out how parents and carers will be engaged with careers education?	Is there clarity on how parents and carers are engaged within, or as a result of, the careers programme? Are key engagement opportunities with parents and carers mapped and tracked?	Parental Engagement: Parental Journey/roadmap
Has the explicit backing of the Principal or Chief Executive?	Is the explicit backing of the Principal or Chief Executive demonstrated through actions such as strategic careers plan approval, visible and regular support, and timetabled careers activities, etc.?	Careers Impact system internal leadership review Careers Statutory Guidance: At a glance guides for school, college and ITP leaders

Question	Questions to consider and additional guidance	Resource
• Has the backing from the Senior Leadership Team?	Is the explicit backing of the SLT demonstrated through actions such as strategic careers plan approval, visible and regular support, and timetabled time for careers activities, etc.?	Resources for Education Leaders
1.3 Does your organisation publish the careers programme on its website?	Is there a process in the organisation to ensure that the up-to-date careers programme is published on the website? Clarification: Organisations should publish information about their careers programme online, including: • the name and contact details of the Careers Leader. • a summary of the careers programme. • details of how learners, parents, teachers and employers can access information about the careers programme. • how the institution measures and assesses the programme's impact on learners. • the date by which the institution will review information.	Understanding how to develop progressive and responsive careers provision
1.3.1 Is the information about the careers programme on your setting's website communicated in ways that enable different groups to engage with it?	Is information about the careers programme on the website: • easy to find and interpret for different stakeholder groups? • easy to navigate to? • included within relevant areas on the website (e.g. staff, learners, employers, parents, carers and other agencies)? Is information relevant to each stakeholder group included, e.g. how they can get involved and the support they can expect?	
1.4 Is your careers programme communicated in different formats (beyond text on the website) so that it's accessible to stakeholders with different needs?	Is the careers programme presented in any other way to support learners and their families to understand the provision and what they can expect and how they can fully engage to maximise the impact of the provision? Examples could include giving presentations, sending letters or publishing in accessible web formats such as audio or video.	Journey/roadmap (Learner Journey)
1.5 Does your setting regularly evaluate its careers programme?	Are there milestones set for relevant information and data to be captured and analysed to regularly evaluate the careers programme? Clarification: Careers Leaders and college/ITP leaders should decide on the frequency of implementing systems and processes and collecting data to inform effective impact evaluation. Clarification: Data that can be captured and analysed to evaluate the careers programme: • learner perception of their career readiness. • sustained and longer-term destinations data. • aspirations, intended and immediate education, training or employment destinations. • stakeholder voice. • feedback on specific elements of the careers programme. • quality assurance insights. Clarification: 'Regularly' could mean annually or more frequently, Careers Leaders and college/ITP leaders should decide on the frequency of implementing systems and processes and collecting data to inform effective impact evaluation.	Understanding how to effectively evaluate your careers provision

Question	Questions to consider and additional guidance	Resource
1.5.1 In the last 12 months, have you made any changes to the careers programme as a result of past evaluations?	Does the Careers Leader and other key colleagues have access to relevant data to support evaluation of the careers programme? Are there milestones set for relevant information and data to be captured and analysed to regularly evaluate the careers programme? Are any changes to the careers programme in response to evaluation recorded and shared? Clarification: If no changes were found to be required when the evaluation process was carried out, please feel assured in selecting this option, as it accurately reflects your current practice.	
1.6 Does evaluation of the careers programme take into account feedback from the following groups? • Learners • Parents/Carers • Teachers • Other staff who support pupils • Careers Advisers • Employers	Is feedback related to specific events collected and recorded? Is feedback on the effectiveness of the whole careers programme collected? Are there mechanisms in place to regularly collect feedback from these stakeholder groups? Are there milestones set for feedback to be captured and analysed to evaluate the careers programme? Clarification: Other staff who support learners may be non-teaching staff in support roles (e.g. pastoral teams, mentors, coaches, programme delivery leads). Clarification: Feedback does not need to be collected for every event, but when it is gathered, it should be proportionate to the scale and purpose of the activity.	Understanding how to effectively evaluate your careers provision Impact Evaluation Resource and Support: Survey Questions



Gatsby Benchmark 2: Learning from career and labour market information

Question	Questions to consider and additional guidance	Resource
2.1 What proportion of learners have access to information about careers, pathways and the labour market to inform decisions on study options and/or next steps during their programme of study?	Are there specific and documented elements of the careers programme that inform learners about the wide range of careers, pathways and the labour market? Are learners signposted to quality assured sources of labour market information (LMI) such as the National Careers Service? Are strategies in place to track the proportion of learners who access up-to-date LMI?	Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit: Colleges and ITPs
2.2 To what extent are staff confident that learners use this information to inform decisions on their study options and/or next steps?	Are there milestones set to evaluate how and when learners are using information to inform their decisions on their study options and/or next steps? Clarification: The collection of data such as learner voice, learner perception of their skills, career aspirations and intended destinations data can support with building a picture of how confident and aspirational learners are feeling when making decisions. Clarification: Study options refer to choices within the college/ITP, as well as decisions about choices/transitions after leaving college/ITP.	
2.3 Which of the following statements are true of the careers, pathways and labour market information available in your setting? • The information learners receive is good quality, relevant and up to date. • Learners are informed of different opportunities, including technical and vocational pathways. • The information is tailored, where appropriate, to meet the needs of learners with SEND. • An informed adviser is used to support all learners make best use of the information available.	Is pathway and labour market information being provided via the website monitored and quality assured? Is career pathway and labour market information that is shared with learners, staff, parents and carers updated and refreshed to ensure that it reflects the most current and up-to-date opportunities? Are there systems in place to assess whether learners, including those with SEND, require tailored information to meet their individual needs? Is careers, pathway and labour market information then tailored to meet the needs of learners with SEND? Clarification: An informed adviser, as defined by Gatsby, is someone who supports learners, parents and carers by providing high-quality, current information about future pathways, study options and labour market opportunities. This role can be filled by a Careers Adviser or any professional capable of offering such information. Their support is essential for helping individuals make well-informed decisions about their educational and career choices.	
2.4 Does your setting provide parents and carers with access to information about careers, pathways, and the labour market?	Does the college/ITP use different ways of sharing information about careers, pathways and the labour market with parents and carers? For example: Are there regular communications to parents and carers via presentations, letters, newsletters, emails, messaging apps? Is there information for parents and carers within the careers section of the college/ITP website?	Parental Engagement: Good parental engagement recommendations Parent and carer engagement CPD
2.5 Does your setting actively encourage and support parents and carers to have meaningful careers conversations with the young people in their care?	Does the college/ITP support parents and carers with strategies to have careers conversations and to use the information provided to them to inform these conversations?	Parental Engagement: Good parental engagement recommendations Parent and carer engagement CPD

Question	Questions to consider and additional guidance	Resource
2.6 Does your setting, where appropriate, send tailored information about careers, pathways and the labour market to parents or carers of learners with SEND?	Is information about careers, pathways and labour market information tailored for and shared specifically with parents and carers of learners with SEND?	Parental Engagement: Good parental engagement recommendations
2.7 What proportion of staff (including teachers and other staff who support learners) have access to up-to-date information about transitions, future pathways, study options, and labour market opportunities?	Is pathway and labour market information being provided to staff monitored and quality assured? Is career pathway and labour market information shared with staff updated and refreshed to ensure that it reflects the most current and up-to-date opportunities?	Online training courses available for teachers and the wider education workforce.

Gatsby Benchmark 3: Addressing the needs of each young person

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
3.1 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your setting's careers programme? • Our careers programme actively seeks to raise the aspirations of all learners.	Are there specific elements of the careers programme that actively seek to raise the aspirations of learners? Does your careers programme provide learners with access to aspirational careers encounters and experiences with employers that are tailored to learners' needs?	
• Our careers programme challenges misconceptions and stereotypical thinking (e.g., related to gender, socioeconomic status).	Are there specific elements of the careers programme that actively seek to challenge misconceptions and stereotypical thinking? Are opportunities planned within the careers programme to achieve this?	
• Our careers programme showcases a diverse range of role models.	Are there specific elements of the careers programme that showcase a diverse range of role models?	
3.2 Does your organisation use alumni to support your careers programme?	Are former learners engaged to support the careers programme? Do you have an engagement approach to allow former learners to support the careers programme?	Working with Alumni course
3.3 Does your setting systematically keep accurate records of each learner's participation in all aspects of your careers programme?	Are there records of each learner's participation in careers learning in the curriculum and within the wider careers provision? Is this happening every year for every learner? Clarification: Systematic record-keeping is that which enables institutions to determine whether all young people have received the encounters, experiences and support they need, including the individual advice given to each learner, and any subsequent agreed decisions. It should allow learners to access and use these records to support their next steps and career development.	
3.4 Does your setting systematically track the individual advice given to each learner, including agreed actions?	Is the individual advice given to each learner, including agreed actions recorded?	
3.4.1 Does your setting share learner records with new education providers if learners change providers during their time at your institution?	Point to consider: You might use management information systems (MIS) or online learning systems to capture participation in careers activity and the associated learning.	
3.4.2 Does your setting provide learners with access to records of their participation in careers activities?	Point to consider: Sharing of records should be aligned with where this would best add value (e.g. when preparing a CV, when making decisions, reflecting on achievements, etc.).	

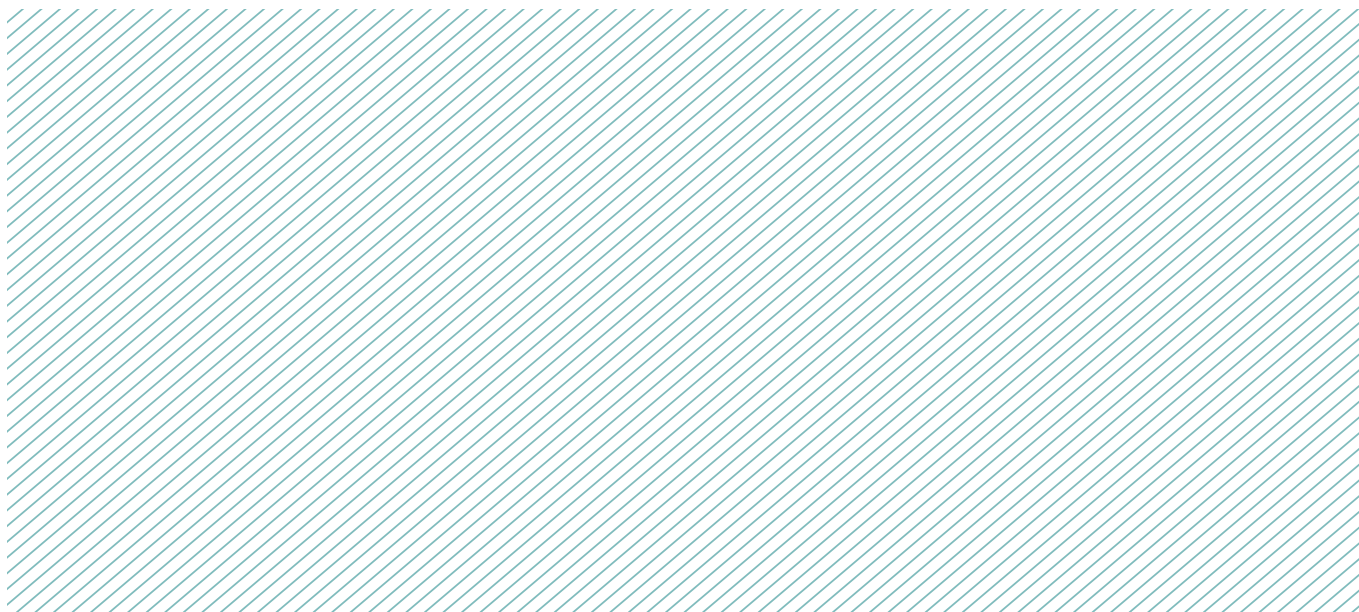
Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
3.4.3 Are learners supported in using these records to inform their next steps, for example at key transition points?	Are there specific elements of the careers programme that support learners to make well-timed effective use of records of participation in careers activities? For example, does the careers programme include support for learners to use records of participation in careers activities to: • make aspirational and informed decisions? • prepare for effective and sustained transitions? • articulate their career readiness?	
3.5 Does your setting collect and maintain accurate data for each learner for each of the following categories? • Aspirations. • Intended destinations upon leaving your organisation. • Immediate destinations upon leaving your organisation.	Are learners' aspirations tracked over time? Are learners' intended destinations tracked over time? Are learners' immediate destinations tracked?	
3.6 Do you use the following destination data to evaluate the careers programme?	Are there milestones set for the sustained destinations data of learners (six months after leaving) to be captured and analysed to inform evaluation of the careers programme? Colleges/ITPs should collect and analyse education, training and employment destinations data for all learners.	The DfE publishes Key Stage 4 and 16-18 (Key Stage 5) education destinations in performance tables on gov.uk.
• Sustained destinations of learners.	Clarification: The DfE defines a sustained destination as 'six months of continuous activity' in a further or higher education institution, in employment or in an apprenticeship.	16-18 study leavers institution level destinations. Data set from 16-18 destination measures
• Longer-term destinations of learners.	Are there milestones set for the published longer term destinations data of learners to be analysed to inform evaluation of the careers programme? Clarification: Longer-term destinations data can be accessed through data published by DfE. Colleges/ITPs should consider whether they also need to collect this data themselves to support evaluation processes.	Aggregated sustained and longer-term destinations data, from DfE, can be found in the following places: Longer term destinations and 16-18 destination measures .
3.6.1 Do you use the data you collect on learners' aspirations or intended destinations to personalise the support given to each learner?	Does the Careers Leader have access to relevant data on learners' aspirations or learners' intended destinations to inform how the support given to each learner can be personalised? Are there milestones set for learners' aspirations or learners' intended destinations data to be captured and analysed to personalise support given to each learner? Is personalisation of support given to each learner tracked and recorded?	

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
3.7 Does your setting provide personalised support to all learners, including disadvantaged learners and those with SEND?	Does the Careers Leader have access to relevant data on disadvantaged learners and those with SEND to inform how the support given to each learner can be personalised? Are there milestones set for data on disadvantage and SEND to be captured and analysed to personalise support given to each learner? Is personalisation of support given to each learner tracked and recorded?	Understanding how to develop progressive and responsive careers provision (Careers Learning Journeys)

Gatsby Benchmark 4: Linking curriculum learning to careers

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
4.1 What proportion of programmes of study delivered in your setting include learning on progression routes and how the subject applies to careers and future pathways?	Is learning on progression routes and how subjects apply to future careers and pathways tracked and recorded? Clarification: This question is specifically related to progression routes and future pathways into different careers. For colleges: Consider a proportionate way to track this, e.g. an audit of curriculum subjects at the start of the year to gain an understanding of which subjects have information on progression routes and pathways into future careers included in curriculum plans. That may include a termly audit of the lessons in which learning about progression routes and pathways has happened. (NB: The same curriculum audit could help you gain the information you need to answer the questions throughout Benchmark 4.) For ITPs: Track this learning across sign up and induction content, learners' individual learning plans (ILPS), curriculum planning documents and contact and review records.	My Learning My Future
4.1.1 In which of the following sector subject areas is careers information included within the programme of study? • Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care • Arts, Media and Publishing • Business, Administration and Law • Construction, Planning and the Built Environment • Education and Training • Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies • Health, Public Services and Care • History, Philosophy and Theology • Information and Communication Technology • Languages, Literature and Culture • Leisure Travel and Tourism • Preparation for Work and Life • Retail and Commercial Enterprises • Science and Mathematics • Social Sciences	Clarification: For more information on which subjects fit into the 15 subject areas please see this link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/types-of-regulated-qualifications/qualification-descriptions Is the inclusion of careers information tracked and recorded across all sector subject areas? Clarification: Careers information encompasses learning and any encounters and experiences within the curriculum that supports learners to: • make aspirational and informed decisions. • make effective and sustained transitions. • develop career readiness. Consider a proportionate way to track this e.g. an audit of curriculum subjects at the start of the year to gain an understanding of which subject areas have career-related learning included in curriculum plans, that may include a termly audit of the sessions and reviews in which career-related learning has happened.	Understanding how to embed careers in the curriculum

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
4.2 By the end of their programme of study, approximately what proportion of learners have experienced curriculum learning that highlights the relevance of their chosen programme to future career pathways?	Is careers related learning tracked and recorded across all curriculum areas? Clarification: Give an approximate answer to this question rather than tracking the exact number of learners who have engaged in career-related learning by the end of their programme of study. Career-related learning encompasses learning and any encounters and experiences within the curriculum that supports learners to: • make aspirational and informed decisions. • make effective and sustained transitions. • develop career readiness. Consider a proportionate way to track this e.g., an audit of curriculum subjects at the start of the year to gain an understanding of which subjects have career-related learning included in curriculum plans, that may include a termly audit of the sessions and reviews in which career-related learning has happened. Delegate responsibility to curriculum staff to record activity.	Understanding how to develop progressive and responsive careers provision (Careers Learning Journeys)
4.3 What proportion of staff who support learners have careers embedded into their continuous professional development programmes?	Is relevant careers content embedded in staff continuous professional development offer? Are staff supported to access up-to-date and accurate progression route information? Are staff supported to highlight the relevance of their subject to future careers, including the skills developed and the careers learning happening within their subject area? Is staff engagement in careers-related continuous professional development tracked and recorded?	The Careers & Enterprise Academy



Gatsby Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
5.1 What proportion of your learners experience at least two meaningful encounters with an employer during their programme of study?	Is learner engagement in meaningful employer encounters tracked and recorded? Clarification: Meaningful employer encounters should be broad, inclusive and well-sequenced throughout the careers programme. Gatsby refers to examples of successful approaches including: • employers giving talks or co-leading activities as part of curriculum lessons. • careers fairs. • employers leading careers events such as careers speed networking and mock interviews. • employer workshops covering topics such as CV writing, recruitment processes or work simulations. • employer participation in enterprise competitions, events or projects. • employees mentoring young people.	A guide to Gatsby Benchmark 5
5.2 What proportion of your learners experience at least one meaningful encounter with an employer during their programme of study delivered through their curriculum area?	Is learner engagement in meaningful employer encounters tracked and recorded for different curriculum areas? Clarification: Guidance from Gatsby states 'Every year, alongside their programme of study, learners should participate in at least two meaningful encounters with an employer. At least one encounter should be delivered through their curriculum area.' A meaningful encounter will: • have a clear purpose, which is shared with the employer and the young person. • be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person. • have opportunities for two-way interactions between the young person and the employer. • be followed by time for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through the encounter.	
5.3 Which of the following statements are true of the employer encounters organised by your setting? • Encounters have a clear purpose which is shared with both the employers and young people. • Encounters are underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young people. • Encounters involve opportunities for two-way interactions between young people and the employer. • Encounters are followed by time for the young person to reflect on what insights, knowledge or skills they have gained through the encounter.	Are all recorded encounters quality assured internally as meaningful? Clarification: A meaningful encounter will: • have a clear purpose, which is shared with the employer and the young person. • be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person. • include opportunities for two-way interactions between the young person and the employer. • be followed by time for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through the encounter.	Understanding how to embed progressive employer encounters and work experiences Benchmark 1: Suggested universal career-related learning outcomes

Gatsby Benchmark 6: Experiences of workplaces

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
6.1 During their programme of study, approximately what proportion of your learners have at least one meaningful experience of a workplace?	Is learner engagement in experiences of workplaces tracked? Are all recorded experiences quality assured internally as meaningful? This could be achieved through visits to workplaces, work shadowing or work experience block placements. Throughout the careers programme these meaningful experiences could be in person or a combination of in person and virtual, where appropriate. Employment as part of an apprenticeship counts as one experience. Clarification: A meaningful experience will: • have a clear purpose, which is shared with the employer and the young person. • be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person. • involve extensive two-way interactions between the young person and employees. • include opportunities for young people to meet a range of different people from the workplace. • include opportunities for young people to perform a task set by the employer or to produce a piece of work relevant to that workplace. • include the employer providing feedback to the young person about their work. • be followed by opportunities for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through their experience. Point to consider: If an experience does not meet all of the Benchmark 6 meaningful criteria you might want to reclassify the experience as an encounter if it meets all of the Benchmark 5 meaningful criteria. (E.g., if two-way interactions are present but not 'extensive' or if there is not the opportunity for young people to perform a task set by the employer and receive feedback then this would be an encounter rather than an experience).	A guide to Gatsby Benchmark 6

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
6.1.1 Which of the following statements are true of the workplace experiences organised by your setting? • Experiences have a clear purpose which is shared with both employers and young people. • Experiences are underpinned by learning outcomes appropriate to the needs of young people. • Experiences involve extensive two-way interactions between young people and employees. • Experiences include opportunities for young people to meet a range of different people from the workplace. • Experiences involve young people having opportunities to perform tasks set by the employer/produce a piece of work relevant to that workplace. • Experiences include the employer providing feedback to young people about their work. • Experiences are followed by opportunities for the young person to reflect on the insights, skills or knowledge they have gained through their experience. • Experiences are available in a range of industries including technical, creative and vocational sectors. • Experiences include additional or personalised support provided where it is needed for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and for young people with SEND.	Are all recorded experiences quality assured internally as meaningful? Clarification: Gatsby note that a meaningful experience ‘gives the young person the opportunity to explore what it is like to work in that environment, what skills are valued in the workplace, their recruitment processes and what it takes to be successful. This could be achieved through visits to workplaces, work shadowing and/or work experience. Throughout the careers programme these experiences could be in person or a combination of in person and virtual, where appropriate. Both the young person and employers should be supported to prepare for the experience. Additional or different support may be needed for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)’ Gatsby Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years.	



Gatsby Benchmark 7: Encounters with further and higher education

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
7.1 By the end of their programme of study, approximately what proportion of learners will have had meaningful encounters with the following further and higher education providers? • Sixth Form Colleges • Further Education Colleges (including land-based colleges where appropriate) • Independent Training Providers (ITPs) • Specialist provision (e.g. specialist further education colleges, supported day centres) • Universities • Other Higher Technical Education Providers (including Further Education institutions, Institutes of Technology or employers offering degree apprenticeships)	Is learner engagement in meaningful encounters with education providers tracked and recorded? Are all recorded encounters quality assured internally as meaningful? Clarification: A meaningful encounter with further and higher education will: • have a clear purpose, which is shared with the provider and the young person. • be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person. • involve a two-way interaction between the young person and the provider. • include information about the provider, such as their recruitment and selection processes, the qualifications that provider offers and the careers these could lead to. • describe what learning or training with the provider is like. • be followed by opportunities for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through the encounter. Clarification: Encounters with FE/HE providers in the form of a visit to the provider, a visit from the provider or virtual encounters all contribute to achieving this Benchmark as long as they meet the definition of meaningful. For apprentices this may also include exploration of continuing professional development (CPD) courses during continued employment. N.B The “Not Applicable” option should only be selected where there is a clear and justifiable reason why a particular encounter or activity is not suitable for your learners or setting. Careers Leaders are encouraged to consider each encounter type carefully before determining that it is not applicable. The expectation is that learners should have access to the broadest appropriate range of opportunities to explore their future education, training and employment pathways. When selecting “Not Applicable”, Careers Leaders should be able to articulate the rationale for this decision, ensuring that it is based on learner need, curriculum context, or institutional circumstances rather than existing practice or assumptions. The key principle is that all learners should be supported to consider the widest possible range of relevant progression opportunities, with the “Not Applicable” option used thoughtfully and only where genuinely appropriate.	A guide to Gatsby Benchmark 7
7.2 By the end of their programme of study, approximately what proportion of learners will have had meaningful encounters with an appropriate range of further and higher education providers?	Point to consider: An appropriate range of further and higher education providers Guidance from Gatsby states: “By the end of their programme of study, every learner should have had a meaningful encounter with a range of providers of learning and training that may form the next stages of their career. This should include, as appropriate, further education colleges, universities and ITPs. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and learners.”	

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
7.2.1 Which of the following statements are true of the encounters with further and higher education provided by your setting? • Encounters have a clear purpose shared with the provider and the young person. • Encounters are underpinned by learning outcomes appropriate to the needs of the young person. • Encounters involve two-way interactions between young people and providers. • Encounters involve providers describing what learning or training with them is like. • Encounters involve providers giving information on their recruitment and selection processes. • Encounters involve providers referencing the qualifications they offer and the careers these could lead to. • Encounters involve young people being given the opportunity to reflect on the insights, skills or knowledge gained.	Are all recorded encounters quality assured internally as meaningful? Clarification: Gatsby notes that a meaningful encounter “gives the young person the opportunity to explore what it is like to learn, develop and succeed in that environment. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and learners/trainees. Throughout a careers programme, encounters should be sequenced so that a young person can build up a clear picture of opportunities available to them. Experiences or encounters could be in person or a combination of in person and virtual and could include providers delivering sessions in a school, college or ITP, as well as young people visiting the provider. Young people and providers should be supported to prepare for the encounter. Additional or different support may be needed for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).” Gatsby Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years.	Understanding how to embed progressive encounters with further and higher education Benchmark 1: Suggested universal career-related learning outcomes

Gatsby Benchmark 8: Personal guidance

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
8.1 What proportion of learners have had at least one personal guidance meeting with a qualified careers adviser by the end of their programme of study?	N.B 'meeting' in question 8.1 refers to a 'personal guidance meeting'. Are learners' meetings with a qualified careers adviser tracked? Clarification: What is a 'personal guidance meeting'? Personal guidance meetings are one-to-one meetings delivered by an appropriately qualified careers adviser. These are an essential part of a careers guidance programme. "My careers meeting helped to reduce my confusion and helped me make sense of everything. My careers adviser helped me think about practicalities for me and I really think they helped me to make an educated decision not only about my next step but my next, next step and even the step after that." Year 12 student, Gatsby Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years Clarification: What does it mean for a careers adviser to be trained to an appropriate level? As the relevant professional body, it is for the Careers Development Institute (CDI) to determine the appropriate level of qualification. The CDI makes a distinction in this regard between offering 'information and advice' and offering 'guidance'. It notes: "... as a minimum the CDI states a level 4 qualification to offer careers information and advice and a level 6 or level 7 career development qualification to offer career guidance." Further, the CDI advises that: "Considered to be 'fully qualified', only those holding a careers development qualification of level 6 or level 7 are recognised as being qualified to offer career guidance and coaching."	Careers Guidance in Schools and Colleges: A Guide to Best Practice and Commissioning Independent Career Guidance Services
8.2 Does the Careers Leader work closely with a range of staff, including teachers, lecturers, mentors and other staff who support learners, to ensure personal guidance is effective and embedded in the careers programme?	Do relevant staff (including the Careers Leader, career advisers, pastoral staff, teachers, lecturers, mentors and other support staff) meet or work together to consider the effectiveness of personal guidance and how it is embedded into the careers programme? Are milestones set for relevant data to be captured and analysed to consider the effectiveness of personal guidance?	
8.3 Is information about personal guidance support, and how to access it, communicated effectively to learners?	Are learners aware of the personal guidance available to them? Is this clearly communicated to all learners? Are there different methods of enabling learners to access this e.g., QR codes, online booking, in person? Are learners given advance notice of when personal guidance meetings are available so that they have time to prepare for the personal guidance meetings they access?	
8.4 Is information about personal guidance support, and how to access it, communicated effectively with parents and carers, including through the setting's website?	Are parents and carers made aware of the personal guidance available to learners? Are parents and carers given advance notice of when personal guidance meetings are available, so they have time to support the young person in their care to prepare for the personal guidance meetings they access?	

Question	Prompt questions and additional guidance	Resource
8.5 Are personal guidance meetings timed to meet the needs of learners?	Are personal guidance meetings responsive to learner needs? Are they well-timed to support learners to prepare for key transitions and are they embedded within a structured approach to careers provision? Consider how learners are triaged and their needs understood and how this is planned for in the careers curriculum.	
8.6 Are personal guidance meetings made available to learners at key transition points?	Are personal guidance meetings made available to learners within a timescale that supports informed decision making at key milestones e.g., application deadlines for FE, HE or apprenticeships?	

Further support

Complete a [Careers Impact internal leadership review](#) to reflect on the maturity of careers leadership across your institution and create an action plan to support meaningful achievement of the Gatsby Benchmarks:.

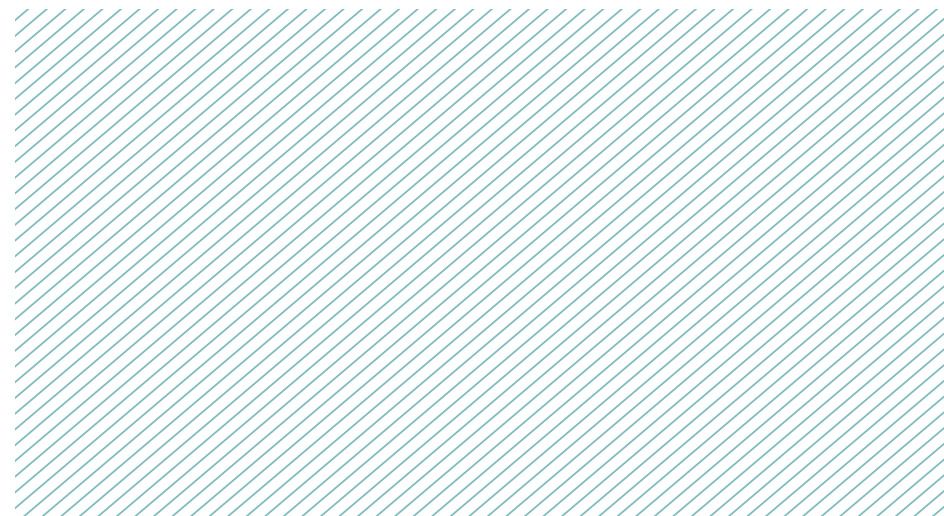
Access resources and support including our '[At a glance' guides](#) to the updated Statutory Guidance.

Access new and updated [Gatsby Benchmark Toolkits](#).

Access [additional resources](#) for apprenticeship providers.

Access [How To Guides](#) to support you to:

- establish a sustainable and strategic approach to careers leadership.
- develop a progressive and responsive careers provision that meets the needs of all learners.
- evaluate your careers provision and plan for impact.



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