
GOOD CAREER GUIDANCE

SIR JOHN HOLMAN



Good career guidance helps inspire students towards further study and enables them to make informed decisions whenever choices are open to them. It helps them to understand enough about the world of work to know what skills and qualifications they need to succeed. It is critical for social mobility because it helps open students' eyes to careers they may not have considered.

The Benchmarks for Colleges listed here outline the important elements of a robust career guidance programme. They have been developed from the Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance, following consultation with a range of colleges across England to align them with the needs of the sector.



GATSBY

THE BENCHMARKS

1 A STABLE CAREERS PROGRAMME

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

- Every college should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team, and has an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it.
- The careers programme should be published on the college's website in a way that enables learners, parents, college staff and employers to access and understand it.
- The programme should be regularly evaluated, with feedback from learners, parents, college staff and employers as part of the evaluation process.

2 LEARNING FROM CAREER AND LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

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

- During their study programme, all learners should access and use information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options.
- Parents should be encouraged to access and use information about labour markets and future study options to inform their support to the learners in their care.

3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EACH STUDENT

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

- A college's careers programme should actively seek to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations.
- Colleges should keep systematic records of the individual advice given to each learner, and subsequent agreed decisions.
- The records of advice given should be integrated with those given at the previous stage of the learner's education (including their secondary school) where these are made available. Records should begin to be kept from the first point of contact or from the point of transition.
- All learners should have access to these records to support their career development. Colleges should collect and maintain accurate data for each learner on their education, training or employment destinations.

<p>4 LINKING CURRICULUM LEARNING TO CAREERS</p>	<p>All subject staff should link curriculum learning with careers, even on courses which are not specifically occupation-led. For example, STEM subject staff should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths. Study programmes should also reflect the importance of maths and English as a key expectation from employers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Throughout their programme of study (and by the end of their course) every learner should have had the opportunity to experience how their subjects help people gain entry to (and be more effective workers within) a wide range of occupations. 	
<p>5 ENCOUNTERS WITH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES</p>	<p>Every learner should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities, including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes, and should include learners' own part-time employment where it exists.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Every year, alongside their study programme, learners should participate in at least two meaningful encounters^{*1} with an employer. At least one encounter should be delivered through their curriculum area. – Colleges should record and take account of learners' own part-time employment and the influence this has had on their development. 	
<p>6 EXPERIENCES OF WORKPLACES</p>	<p>Every learner should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – By the end of their study programme, every learner should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have. 	
<p>7 ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION</p>	<p>All learners should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes, and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – By the end of their programme of study, every learner should have had a meaningful encounter^{*2} with a range of providers of learning and training that may form the next stage of their career. This should include, as appropriate, further education colleges, higher education and apprenticeship and training providers. This should include the opportunity to meet both staff and learners. 	
<p>8 PERSONAL GUIDANCE</p>	<p>Every learner should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of college staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level.^{*3} These should be available for all learners whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all learners, but should be timed to meet individual needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Every learner should have at least one such interview by the end of their study programme. 	

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

*2 A 'meaningful encounter' is one in which the learner has an opportunity to explore what it is like to learn in that environment.

*3 The college should ensure that access to a level 6 adviser is available when needed.



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The eight Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance were developed through a study of schools and colleges in six places – Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, The Netherlands and Ontario – where career guidance is known to be good. This study, together with a literature review, a survey of English state schools and a costing exercise, resulted in a set of benchmarks identifying the different dimensions of good career guidance.

Published in 2014, the benchmarks were further tested in a two-year pilot with 13 schools and three FE colleges in North East England from 2015 to 2017. The benchmarks have now been adopted as the organising framework for the Department for Education's Careers Strategy for Schools, published in late 2017, and the accompanying Statutory Guidance.

THE GOOD CAREER GUIDANCE REPORT AND ASSOCIATED APPENDICES
CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT: [GATSBY.ORG.UK/GOODCAREERGUIDANCE](https://gatsby.org.uk/goodcareerguidance)