

Careers in Context: A Can Do Guide for Providers



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Introduction

The Gatsby Benchmarks are a framework of 8 guidelines that define the best careers provision in secondary schools. They are based on best national and international research and define all the elements of an excellent careers programme. Introduced in 2018, the Benchmarks sit alongside statutory duties on schools to publish a policy statement setting out their careers strategy, appoint a careers lead for the school, ensure all pupils from year 8 upwards are provided with personalised careers guidance and ensure that a range of education and training providers are allowed access to pupils to inform them about the full range approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships.

Further information on the Benchmarks can be found [here](#) on the CEC website. The CEC has created and published a 'Can Do' guide to help Careers Leaders kickstart their careers programmes this academic year under the continuing impact of Covid-19.

This document is an abridged version of that Can-Do guide made specifically for providers of careers education and activities. It is intended to draw on our research and work with schools, employers and other stakeholders to assist you, as part of our valued provider network, to deliver effective interventions in the coming months that address schools' priorities while meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Coping with Covid has become the default position for us all as the academic year continues. With potential for the youth unemployment rate to reach 25% and 44% of employers surveyed by the Sutton Trust saying that time lost from learning during the pandemic might affect future hiring decisions, this generation of school aged students has a tough hill to climb. This makes delivering high quality careers related learning more important than ever even if you are having to reinvent the ways in which you deliver it.

From conversations across our Network, we have identified 4 main priorities that Schools will have in the coming months and have applied these to the benchmarks while also signposting you to relevant sections of our Can Do guide for Careers Leaders and other useful sources of information or advice.



Priorities for schools following the impact of Covid-19

Managing Access

We all know that getting into places, whether it is an office, a restaurant or a school, is going to come with certain restrictions from now on. Many schools will have decided that there will be limited or no external visitors to school sites for some time to come. They may have also taken a decision that students will not be going offsite for excursions or other activities like work experience. In addition, schools may still prefer students to remain in specific groups requiring consideration in the way that activities or interactions are structured. Remote technologies are going to be vital, but teachers may still need additional support to make this effective in the classroom.

Using Technology Safely

“You’re on mute” might turn out to be the most used phrase as we have all embraced Zoom, Teams, and other platforms to keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. Online technologies have also offered a wide range of opportunities for students to access learning and interact with a wider range of people. For schools, their focus has and will continue to be on making sure that their students are not put at risk or disadvantaged by this move towards tech adoption. Remote delivery that addresses safeguarding concerns and ensures that controls are in place to manage interactions between volunteers and young people in a safe and positive way remains essential.

Ensuring Staff and Student Wellbeing

It takes just two months to form a habit, students and teachers had been out of school for many months so there is going to be a lot of re-learning of previous habits going in school. Students, and teachers, will have deinstitutionalised to a greater or lesser extent so will all need different amounts of time to get used to the structures and requirements of the school timetable again. For schools, they will be looking at how they can mitigate the impact of this for everyone and that may mean teachers are less likely to take risks with new things so will stick to what they know so they can best support their students.

Balancing curriculum priorities

We all know that students have missed out on learning due to the pandemic and that some will have missed more than others. Schools are going to be focused on assessing where students are in their learner journey and what needs to be done to bring them up to where they need to be, especially for students in key transition years or facing exams. Career related learning might not be their first priority when confronted with students who are behind the curve when it comes to Maths, English or Science, so taking a supportive and targeted approach to integrating careers will be needed.

Helping with these priorities

With those priorities in mind, here are some of the ways of working you may want to think about when approaching your delivery this academic year and beyond:

1. Think about fun and motivational ways to engage young people that takes the strain from teaching staff while giving students a positive view of their options
2. Stay flexible with multiple delivery options ensuring you clearly demonstrate how you have addressed safeguarding with any technology for remote delivery
3. Consult with schools on team arrangements for project work or activities and work with employers on ways workplaces can be opened up remotely to students
4. Be empathetic with all institutions who are having the juggle their responsibilities to their new/ current students with their learner pipeline and consider how technology can save time while maximising impact



Addressing the Benchmarks

Benchmarks 1 (A stable Careers Programme) and 3 (Addressing the needs of every pupil) are specifically structured for schools to address themselves so our focus here is on the six other benchmarks that you as provider organisations are ideally placed to deliver support with.

Benchmark Overview		What to think about	Where to go for more help	
			What we're telling Careers Leaders	What could be useful for you
Benchmark 2	<p>Learning from labour market information</p> <p>Students are supported to access and understand objective and up to date LMI during a range of interventions - in the classroom, through external activities and via interactions with employers - to inform decision making</p>	<p>Consider practical ways that LMI can help in core curriculum areas and provide tips or examples of how subject teachers can use the data in the classroom</p>	<p>Focus on equipping students to make positive data-based choices about a changed labour market</p> <p>Refer to page 18 in Careers in Context Guide</p>	<p>Sign up to get your local LEP newsletter.</p> <p>Register with NOMIS for the latest government data.</p> <p>Keep up to date via the LMI portal</p> <p>Listen to Aimee Higgins, our Director of Employers and Partnerships talk LMI.</p>
Benchmark 4	<p>Linking curriculum learning to careers</p> <p>Organising career learning involving employer through extracurricular activities, providing career learning as a subject in its own right and curriculum bringing subject lessons 'to life'.</p>	<p>Can you design resources or Lesson plans that support teachers of maths, science, English, and PSHE to embed careers within their subjects.</p>	<p>Be clear about why careers is critical to student outcomes and champion it with teachers</p> <p>Refer to page 25 in Careers in Context Guide</p>	<p>Check out the Skills Builder Hub</p> <p>Use the Amazing Apprenticeships resource bank.</p> <p>Tap into Healthcare examples via Step Into the NHS.</p> <p>Take a look at what World Skills are doing .</p>
Benchmark 5	<p>Encounters with employers and employees</p> <p>Executing and evaluating a clear plan for employer encounter led activity with the support of an active and effective Enterprise Advisor utilising alumni and parent relationships and with a clearly defined ask for employer engagement or participation</p>	<p>When planning virtual encounters, think about how you can continue to ensure these are meaningful to students and where possible create a two-way conversation between employer and student.</p>	<p>Maximise the value of each encounter, ensuring they support school objectives and student outcomes</p> <p>Refer to page 28 in Careers in Context Guide</p>	<p>Read through the guidance we have provided Careers Leaders about building a careers plan with Benchmarks 5&6 in mind</p>

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Benchmark 6	<p>Experiences of workplaces</p> <p>Provision of meaningful visits, work shadowing and work placement activities for students that is planned and evaluated as well as supported by employability interventions to reinforce skills and knowledge</p>	<p>Trips to the workplace en-masse may be unlikely. Think about how you can replicate the experience of visiting an office and meeting employees remotely. Is a virtual tour an option? Can employers set students challenges/tasks that replicate a workplace role?</p>	<p>Seize the opportunity to show students new ways of working reflecting the changing workplace</p> <p>Refer to page 32 in Careers in Context Guide</p>	<p>Read through the guidance we have provided Careers Leaders about building a careers plan with Benchmarks 5&6 in mind</p>
Benchmark 7	<p>Encounters with further and higher education</p> <p>Ensuring a range of meaningful encounters with universities, further education colleges, and training providers to enable students, staff and parents to make informed choices about academic and technical educational choices including apprenticeships</p>	<p>Consider how you can maximise time and impact through using technology. Do remote encounters provide more opportunity to engage parents?</p>	<p>Expand student horizons about where and how they can learn in the future through digital visits</p> <p>Refer to page 36 in Careers in Context Guide</p>	<p>Sign up for the Association of Colleges Blog</p> <p>Take a look at the Careers Pilot stories</p> <p>Tap into the Careers and Enterprise Company's My Choices portal</p> <p>Keep up to date with the latest from the Office for Students.</p>
Benchmark 8	<p>Personal guidance</p> <p>Every school must ensure that pupils are provided with independent careers guidance from Year 8-13 delivered by guidance professionals qualified to at least level 6 with appropriate parental engagement</p>	<p>Think about ways to include staff, peers or parents in positive ways to help mitigate risk in 1-1 online guidance situations and to support students to maximise the impact of the experience</p>	<p>Prepare students to ensure they can get the most value from 1-1 guidance interventions</p> <p>Refer to page 39 in Careers in Context Guide</p>	<p>See the CDI guide for safe and ethical use of videoconferencing for Personal Guidance</p> <p>Read through a case study of Careerpilot's approach to Providing effective, whole-school guidance through a triage model</p>

Contact us

Our Investment and Education teams can provide more information or connect you to providers who are delivering best practice on the Gatsby Benchmarks while our [Provider Directory](#) allows you to promote your provision to schools from across our network.

Email us via investments@careersandenterprise.co.uk to find out more or education@careersandenterprise.co.uk for guidance on safeguarding.



The Careers & Enterprise Company
2-7 Clerkenwell Green
Clerkenwell
London EC1R 0DE

careersandenterprise.co.uk