CAREERS POLICY

2026-2027

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Date of next review	September 2027

This policy sets out Unified Academy's approach to Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), including provider access, curriculum-linked careers learning, personal guidance, Preparation for Adulthood and transition. It reflects our commitment to ensuring that careers education is an integral part of the planned curriculum for students in Years 5–11 and is responsive to individual needs, strengths, aspirations and EHCP outcomes. The policy also sets out how the Academy meets its legal obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997 and the statutory guidance 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers' (May 2025).

Aim

The Careers programme is an integral part of the Unified Academy planned curriculum. It raises aspirations, broadens students' understanding of the world of work and supports them to recognise the knowledge, skills and personal qualities they develop across the curriculum. Careers learning is embedded through subject schemes of work, PSHE and Preparation for Adulthood, enrichment, vocational learning, employer encounters, personal guidance and transition planning. Our careers curriculum is personalised through the Academy's Discover, Aspire and Achieve pathways. This enables careers education to be adapted to students' developmental stage, SEND profile, EHCP outcomes, interests, aspirations and readiness for adulthood, while maintaining high expectations for every student. We aim to provide a relevant, engaging and progressive careers curriculum that supports students to make informed choices, develop independence and employability skills, understand appropriate education and training routes, and make successful transitions into further education, training or employment.

Careers Programme

At Unified Academy, we provide independent careers advice to all our students in the format of individualised sessions and / or group sessions led by Innervate Careers and Personal Guidance.

The programme includes these elements:

- Learning derived from current career and labour market information
- Addressing the specific needs of each student in the form of personal guidance
- Placing careers education within the curriculum as a whole
- Mapping careers activities to evidence meeting the statutory requirements of the Gatsby Career Benchmarks
- Independent travel training for any students as necessary
- Differentiated programme across school years
- Tailored experiences of the workplace opportunities across Key Stage 4
- Explicit and meaningful careers and progression links within subject curriculum planning, including relevant occupations, sectors, transferable skills and future pathways
- Progressive careers learning from early awareness and exploration through to options, employability, workplace experience and post-16 transition.
- Careers learning linked, where appropriate, to EHCP outcomes and Preparation for Adulthood.
- Opportunities for students to understand how curriculum learning connects to future education, training and employment

Through our careers programme we plan to:

- Prepare students for the transition to life after Unified Academy

- Promote decision-making skills in relation to option and career choice
- Provide students with broad and varied experiences
- Support students to develop personal characteristics such as social skills, communication, independence and resilience
- Inspire and motivated students to develop themselves as individuals and live as independently as possible
- Promote self-awareness and support the development of skills and behaviours required to contribute positively to the wider community
- Enable the development of a range of character attributes which underpin success in education and employment
- Promote awareness of opportunities on a local and national scale
- Develop application skills, including use of IT
- Support students in developing a personal action plan and CV
- Provide practice interviews where appropriate
- Provide support for students to experience work placement visits
- Develop links with local Colleges
- Support with transition visits / meetings with new placements
- Provide practice interviews

Curriculum Implementation

Careers education is a shared responsibility across the Academy. The Careers Lead oversees the strategic careers programme and Gatsby Benchmark evaluation, while subject leaders and teachers ensure that meaningful careers and progression links are identified within curriculum planning and made explicit to students where appropriate. Careers links should enhance, rather than replace, subject learning and help students understand the relevance of the knowledge and skills they are developing. Curriculum careers links are planned progressively and adapted to the Discover, Aspire and Achieve pathways. Students move from awareness of roles and sectors, to recognising strengths and interests, exploring options and qualifications, developing employability skills, experiencing workplaces and preparing for post-16 transition. For students with EHCPs, careers learning and transition planning contribute to Preparation for Adulthood outcomes and are informed by individual aspirations, annual review discussions and identified support needs. Families, external careers advisers, employers, colleges and other relevant partners are involved where appropriate.

Impact of Careers Programme on Students

At Unified Academy we evaluate the impact of the careers programme through a combination of destination measures, student outcomes and curriculum quality assurance. This includes:

- Student voice across relevant year groups, including students' ability to identify their strengths, aspirations and next steps
- Evaluation of Gatsby Benchmark progress, including Compass+ where used
- Curriculum quality assurance to evaluate how effectively careers and progression links are embedded and made meaningful within subject learning
- Review of participation in employer encounters, workplace experiences, careers events, college visits and personal guidance
- Successful completion of appropriate work experience or workplace visits
- NEET and destination data
- Retention and sustainability of post-16 education, training or employment placements Feedback from students, parents/carers, staff, employers, providers and external careers professionals where appropriate

Gatsby Benchmarks

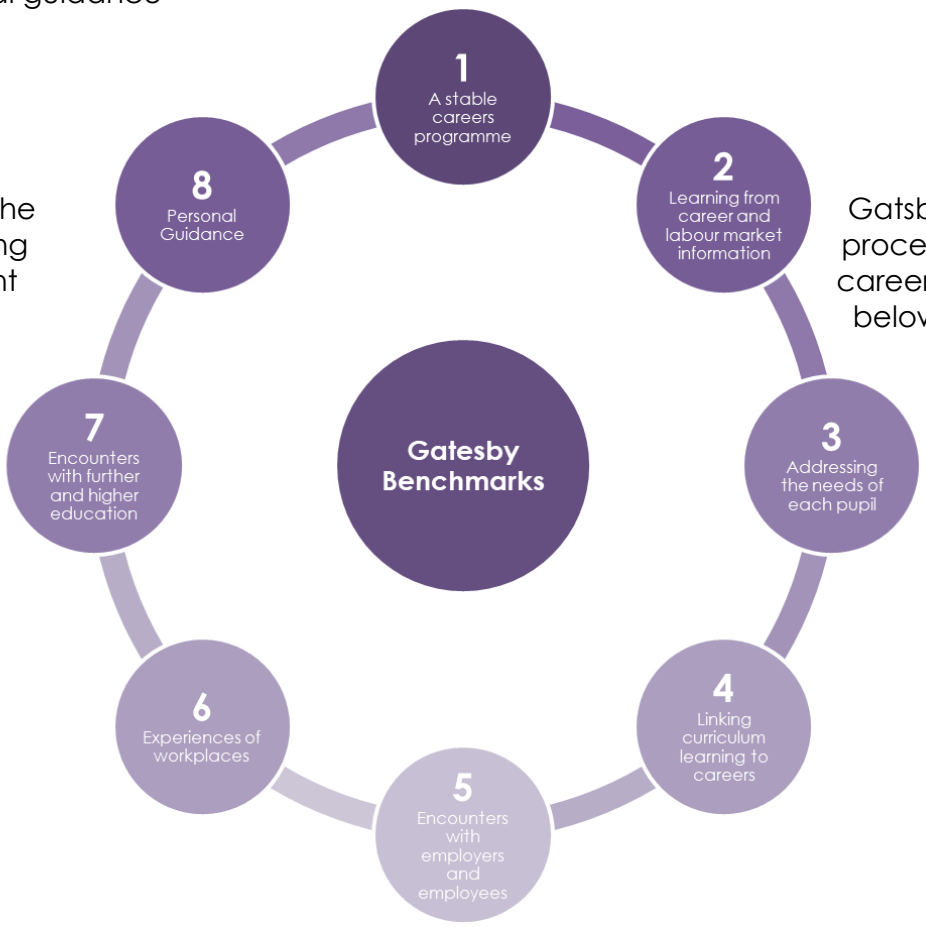
Unified Academy is committed to providing all students in Years 5–11 with a stable, progressive and personalised careers programme. The programme is evaluated against the eight Gatsby Benchmarks and the Department for Education statutory guidance. Particular emphasis is placed on Benchmark 3 (addressing the needs of each student), Benchmark 4 (linking curriculum learning to careers), Benchmark 6 (experiences of workplaces), Benchmark 7 (encounters with further and higher education) and Benchmark 8 (personal guidance), while ensuring all eight benchmarks are addressed.

The Gatsby Benchmarks:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experience of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8.Personal guidance

8. Personal guidance

Meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks is an ongoing process and detail of our current careers programme is outlined below:



Stage	Year Group	Provision	Gatsby Benchmark
KS2	5	• Career focused assembly – twice yearly	1, 2, 4
	6	• Careers link in all schemes of work	1, 4
KS3	7	• AQA Unit Award Scheme	1, 3, 4
	8	• Impartial careers guidance delivered by external providers	1, 2, 3, 8
	9	• Entry Level Qualifications in English, maths and Science	1, 2, 4
		• Visiting speakers: Industry, Local Authority, Uniformed Services	1, 4
		• Options event in Spring Term	1, 2, 3
Key Stage 4	10	• Impartial careers guidance delivered by external providers	1, 3, 8
		• Qualifications - GCSE English, Maths, Photography, Art and Design, Biology, Food & Nutrition, Physical Education (NCFE)	4
	11	• Vocational Offer in Construction and Mechanics	1, 3, 8
		• Review of career and learning progress and aspirations within Annual Review	1, 2, 4
		• Post 16 Transition meeting with Careers Lead	1, 2
		• Career focused Assembly – twice yearly	5, 6, 7
		• Visiting speakers: Further Education; Industry; Local Authority; Armed Forces	1, 4, 8
		• Careers/ Preparation for adulthood taught within PSHE curriculum	5, 6
		• Work placement visits	7
		• Student transition/college visits	2, 5, 7
		• Visit to national/ local careers fairs	1, 2, 8
		• Parent meetings for Year 11 transition	1, 2
		• Information on website specifically aimed at students and parents	