

INFLUENCERS

APPRENTICESHIP GUIDE FOR SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

An introduction to apprenticeships and the statutory requirements for providing quality careers provision in secondary education.



Introduction

Apprenticeships have evolved over the last few years and it is important that educational establishments are up to date with the latest information and guidance to help support students and their families in making informed career choices.

This short guide has been created for senior leadership teams within schools or colleges to provide key updates and information about:

- apprenticeships and the key benefits
- statutory careers provision in secondary education
- increasing awareness amongst students and their families
- increasing awareness amongst teaching staff

Apprenticeships and the benefits

An apprenticeship is a paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experience. Alongside their on-the-job training, they will spend the equivalent of six hours per week of their paid time completing classroom-based learning with a college, university or training provider which will lead to a nationally recognised qualification.

An apprenticeship includes:

- experience and skills development
- paid employment with holiday leave
- hands-on-experience in a sector/role of interest
- equivalent of six hours of off-the-job learning during their paid time
- formal assessment which leads to a nationally recognised qualification
- chance to work with industry professionals

Different levels of apprenticeships equate to a different level of qualification. An apprenticeship can start at any level, but some may require:

- previous qualifications such as English or maths GCSEs
- additional training in English or maths to ensure the apprentice is at the right level

One of the following qualification levels will be achieved depending on the apprenticeship level:

Apprenticeship type	Level	Equivalent education level
Intermediate	2	GCSE
Advanced	3	A level
Higher	4, 5, 6 & 7	Foundation degree or above
Degree	6 & 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

Apprenticeships are an exciting opportunity for anyone wanting to gain experience, upskill or change career, because they offer the chance to earn a wage whilst they work and study.



Statutory careers provision in secondary education

Gatsby Benchmarks

In 2017, the 'Careers Strategy' was published as part of the government's plan to make Britain fairer, improve social mobility and offer opportunity for everyone:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>

The strategy outlines 8 benchmarks, known as the 'Gatsby Benchmarks'. Schools and colleges are expected to use the benchmarks to develop their careers provision and fulfil their statutory duty to provide independent careers guidance for students and their families on the full range of education and training options available.

The eight Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance are:

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

Find out more about the Gatsby Benchmarks here: <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/careers-leaders/gatsby-benchmarks>

The Baker Clause

In January 2018, the Baker Clause was introduced as an amendment to the Technical and Further Education Act 2017, stipulating that schools must allow colleges and training providers access to every pupil in Years 8-13, to inform them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Provider Access Legislation

In January 2023, Provider Access Legislation (PAL) was introduced to strengthen the Baker Clause and ensure that all schools and colleges were informing their students on the variety of options open to them upon leaving education:

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/fe-skills/provider-access-legislation/>

Through the Provider Access Legislation, schools and colleges are legally required to:

- provide a minimum of six encounters during Years 8-13 with a range of education and training providers to inform them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- ensure these encounters are 'meaningful' in their content, duration and format. The provider must be allowed to cover the full range qualifications and apprenticeships they offer, discuss a range of career options and respond to student questions as they arise.
- make all sessions as accessible as possible; the interactions must be within the school day and available to all students, excepting those more targeted engagements which might be relevant to a smaller cohort in addition to the more generalised activities.

Stay informed

For further information and the latest guidance:

- read the statutory guidance on careers guidance and access for education and training providers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools>
- read the careers strategy policy paper: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>
- read the Gatsby Benchmarks: <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance>
- read the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) school handbook: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/education-inspection-framework>
- visit the Careers and Enterprise Company website: <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/>

Tips for success

To ensure your school is delivering gold standard careers provision:

- talk to the school's careers leader about how the benchmarks have been used to develop the school's careers provision.
- research how your local Careers Hub can support the school's careers strategy:
<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/careers-hubs/>
- research the 'ASK' programme and what support your school can access: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/influencers/request-ask-support>
- check that the school's provider access statement is published on your website.
- check when the provider access statement was last reviewed and explore examples: <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/resources/example-provider-access-policy-statement>



Keeping students and families informed

Students and their families often rely on educational establishments to keep them informed about career options.

Many students and their guardians are unfamiliar with the alternative progression routes available, so it is important that they are given equal access to information about all career options.

Access government support

All educational establishments are able to access support through the Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge (ASK) for schools and colleges programme.

The programme is funded by the Department for Education and provides in-person and virtual support to schools and colleges to help inform and support students and their families.

These activities qualify as 'meaningful interactions' within the PAL requirements and will help towards meeting your legal obligations.

Schools can also access a range of free resources that have been designed to inform and inspire young people to think about their career options and make informed decisions:

www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/influencers/resource-hub

Tips to help support students and their families:

- ensure that alternatives like apprenticeships are discussed at regular points in the student's educational journey
- provide parents, carers and guardians with the latest guidance about all career options
- ask students and their families about ways they would like to receive information about their career options

Keeping teaching staff informed

It is important that schools and colleges ensure that their staff are well informed about the different career options available to their students.

Your school's careers leader should provide all teaching staff with the most up-to-date information regarding career options, including alternatives such as apprenticeships and T Levels.

ASK

The Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge (ASK) programme has been designed to support schools in educating teaching staff about technical education alternatives.

Your school can request in-person or virtual support where appropriate through the ASK programme to help increase careers awareness among teaching staff. This can be discussed with your delivery partner.

To request support through the ASK programme, visit: www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/influencers/what-support-can-i-access

Amazing Apprenticeships

Amazing Apprenticeships has been a delivery partner of the ASK programme since the start, and run a variety of engaging and informative webinars for students, parents, carers, teachers and careers advisers that provide an abundance of tips, advice and information around the topic of apprenticeships and technical education. You can find all the ASK webinars here:

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/workshops-webinars/>

Additional support

For further information about careers and apprenticeships:

- visit <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>
- visit the National Careers Service website: <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>
- visit the Amazing Apprenticeships website: <https://amazingapprenticeships.com/>
- call 0800 100 900 to speak to the National Careers Service



More information on
apprenticeships:

Visit: www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

Call: 0800 150 400

