

Careers Education and Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy (including Provider Access Policy Statement)

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Related policies and documents	• Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version) • DfE Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (2025) • Education Act 1997 • Education (Careers Guidance in Schools) Act 2022 • Education and Skills Act 2008 • Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 • Equality Act 2010 • Children's and Families Act 2014 • Technical and Further Education Act 2017 • Education and Inspections Act 2006 • Provider Access Legislation (January 2023) • Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015) • Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance (2024) • Positive Behaviour Policy • Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy • Equality and Diversity Policy • Freedom of Information Policy • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, the policy will be reviewed as per the review cycle. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.



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1.0 Policy statement

At Dixons Academies Trust, we believe that high-quality careers education is central to transforming lives through education. Our careers provision is rooted in our trust mission to ensure that all students, regardless of background or starting point, leave our academies with the knowledge, character and ambition needed to succeed in further education, training and employment.

We are committed to providing independent, impartial and well-structured careers education and information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) as a core entitlement for every student. Our careers programmes are designed to help students develop a clear understanding of themselves, the world of work and the full range of pathways available to them, so that they can make informed and realistic decisions at key points of transition.

Our approach to careers education reflects our belief that hard work, high expectations and strong character open doors. We aim to raise aspirations while ensuring that guidance is personalised, inclusive and responsive to individual needs, enabling students to make choices that are both ambitious and achievable.

1.1 Through our CEIAG programme, students will be supported to:

- develop ambition, confidence and self-belief, and to recognise that future success is built through sustained effort and commitment
- explore a broad range of education, training and career pathways, including academic, technical and apprenticeship routes
- gain insight into the world of work through meaningful encounters with employers, further and higher education providers, and training organisations, appropriate to their age and stage of development
- build the knowledge and skills needed to research opportunities, evaluate information critically and make well-informed decisions
- understand how their learning in school connects to future careers, employment and wider life opportunities
- make successful transitions at key points, particularly at the end of Key Stage 3 and throughout Key Stages 4 and 5
- challenge stereotypes and assumptions about careers, progression routes and personal potential
- engage families as partners in supporting aspiration, motivation and informed decision-making
- access a coherent, progressive careers programme from Year 7 through to post-16 and post-18 transition points

1.2 Our careers education is underpinned by a commitment to equity, inclusion and fairness, ensuring that all students — including those with SEND, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those at risk of becoming NEET — receive appropriate support to plan positive and sustained destinations.

2.0 Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory requirements, including:

- Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers (DfE 2025) - sets expectations for impartial careers guidance and provider access
- Provider Access Legislation (January 2023) - requires schools to allow access to technical education and apprenticeship providers
- Education Act 1997 (Section 42A–42B) - establishes the statutory duty to provide careers guidance
- Education (Careers Guidance in Schools) Act 2022 - strengthens duties around independent and impartial guidance

2.1 Whilst not a legal requirement, Dixons strives to meet the nationally recognised Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance (2024: The Next Ten Years)

3.0 Scope and purpose

3.1 All students are entitled to a planned programme of careers learning and development from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 5, which includes:

- a curriculum that progressively builds career knowledge and skills
- access to impartial careers information and guidance



- meaningful encounters with employers, providers and further study options

3.2 The purpose of this policy is to:

- outline how our trust ensures inclusive, high-quality, age-appropriate careers education and information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) for all students
- define the nature, scope and delivery of careers education, including careers learning within the curriculum, employer and provider encounters, and access to independent and impartial guidance
- demonstrate our trust's commitment to impartiality, equality of opportunity and safeguarding within careers provision, including when students engage with external providers and employers
- provide clarity for staff, families, governors, trustees, and students regarding our trust's approach to careers education and guidance
- ensure all academies within our trust meet their statutory duties in relation to careers guidance and provider access, including the requirements of the Education Act 1997 (as amended) and associated statutory guidance
- support students to make informed and well-considered decisions at key transition points, particularly at the end of Key Stage 3, throughout Key Stage 4, and at post-16 and post-18 transition points

4.0 Rationale, ethos and intent

Careers education at Dixons Academies Trust is rooted in a belief that all students should be supported to make informed and ambitious decisions about their future. Our approach reflects our trust's ethos of high expectations, strong character and equity of opportunity.

4.1 Careers provision is structured in line with the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance, ensuring a coherent and progressive programme.

4.2 We aim to broaden horizons, challenge stereotypes and provide impartial access to academic, technical and apprenticeship pathways. This enables students to navigate key transition points and progress into sustained education, training or employment.

5.0 Delivery and content

Careers education and information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) across Dixons Academies Trust is delivered through a trust-wide framework that allows individual academies to design and implement provision in ways that best meet the needs of their students and local context. While delivery models may vary between academies, all provision is aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance and statutory requirements.

5.1 Gatsby Benchmark 1: a stable careers programme

Each academy delivers a planned careers programme that is appropriate to its phase, context and cohort. Careers education is delivered with the same rigour, high expectations and professional standards as all other areas of the curriculum, ensuring that learning is purposeful, well-planned and valued by students. Delivery will be accessible to SEND students through adaptation and support. Delivery may include a mixture of:

- trust or academy-led dynamic grouping careers sessions
- discrete careers lessons (where applicable)
- tutor time activities
- assemblies, visiting speakers and employer talks

Each academy reviews provision regularly to ensure it remains responsive to student needs.

5.2 Gatsby Benchmark 2: learning from career and labour market information

Students are supported to access and understand up-to-date information about careers, future pathways, study options and labour market trends depending on their location.

5.3 Gatsby Benchmark 3: addressing the needs of each student

Careers provision is designed to support individual needs and aspirations. Academies identify students who may benefit from additional guidance, including those with SEND, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those at risk of becoming NEET. In all academies, targeted support and intervention are provided where appropriate. Some academies do this via external careers platforms, such as Unifrog, to support personalised guidance, destination planning and tracking, whilst some academies use internal monitoring systems.



5.4 **Gatsby Benchmark 4: linking curriculum learning to careers**

Careers learning is embedded within the curriculum. This may include:

- careers talks or lessons linked to specific subjects
- subject-specific employer engagement
- career spotlights within normal subject lessons

These approaches help students understand how curriculum subjects relate to future pathways and employment opportunities.

5.5 **Gatsby Benchmark 5: encounters with employers and employees**

Students have opportunities to engage with employers and employees through a range of activities. These include assemblies, talks, careers events and virtual encounters. These experiences support students to develop an understanding of different sectors, roles and progression routes.

5.6 **Gatsby Benchmark 6: experiences of workplaces**

Each academy plans workplace experiences in ways that are appropriate to its students and local opportunities. This may include:

- virtual work experience
- work experience
- employer workshops
- workplace visits
- wider educational trips are linked to careers learning where appropriate

These experiences are designed to help students gain insight into working life and different employment sectors.

5.7 **Gatsby Benchmark 7: encounters with further and higher education**

Academies provide students with opportunities to learn about further and higher education pathways, including academic, technical and apprenticeship routes. This includes engagement with colleges, training providers, universities and apprenticeship providers. Encounters may be delivered through assemblies, events, visits or virtual sessions.

In line with the statutory provider access requirements, each academy will provide at least two encounters with approved providers of apprenticeships and technical education that are mandatory for all students to attend in the 'first key phase' (Year 8 or 9), and two in the 'second key phase' (Year 10 or 11). Dixons Sixth Form will also provide at least two encounters for students during the 'third key phase' (Year 12 or 13) that are optional for students to attend).

5.8 **Gatsby Benchmark 8: personal guidance**

Students have access to personal careers guidance at key transition points. Guidance is impartial and supports students to make informed choices about education, training and employment pathways. Where external careers advisers are used, academies ensure they are appropriately qualified and that guidance complements the wider careers programme.

6.0 **Roles and responsibilities**

Content will meet the needs of our students with input from the following stakeholders:

- School and college trust leaders: approve and monitor policy implementation.
- Principals: ensure compliance, adequate curriculum time, and staff training.
- Careers lead: design, oversee, and evaluate the programme in their academy.
- DSLs: provide support where disclosures arise and integrate safeguarding into delivery.
- SENCOs: support in ensuring the needs of all students are met.
- Families: engage with CEIAG information shared by the academy, access careers materials where needed, and provide feedback to support their child's decision-making.
- Students: respond to student voice to ensure curriculum relevance.

7.0 **Stakeholders**

7.1 **Parents and carers**



Families play an important role in supporting students to explore future pathways and make informed decisions about education, training and employment. Across our trust, we recognise the value of working in partnership with families to encourage aspiration, motivation and informed choice, particularly at key points of transition.

Academies aim to keep families informed about careers education and post-16 and post-18 pathways through a range of appropriate communication methods. This may include information shared via academy websites, events, written communications or meetings linked to key decision points.

Families are encouraged to engage with careers information alongside their child, supporting discussions about interests, strengths and future plans. Where appropriate, academies may invite families to attend careers-related events or access guidance materials that help them understand the range of academic, technical and vocational pathways available.

Engagement with families supports our trust's commitment to inclusive and impartial careers education, ensuring that students are supported both in school and at home to make well-informed decisions about their next steps.

7.2 Local further and higher education, and training providers.

Further education and training providers, including colleges and apprenticeship providers, contribute to students' awareness of post-16 and post-18 technical and vocational pathways where appropriate.

Higher education institutions, which support students' understanding of academic pathways and progression routes at relevant stages.

7.3 Local employers

Local employers support careers education through encounters that help students understand the world of work, employment sectors and progression routes.

8.0 Provider access policy statement

This statement sets out the arrangements for managing access by education and training providers to students at Dixons Academies Trust, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Education Act 1997 (as amended) and associated guidance.

8.1 Who can request access

Requests for access may be made by a range of education and training providers, including:

- further education colleges
- apprenticeship and training providers
- universities and other higher education institutions

Access is intended to support students' understanding of the full range of academic, technical and vocational pathways available to them.

8.2 Which students can be accessed

Education and training providers may request access to students in Years 8 to 13, and in some cases Year 7, where such access is appropriate to students' age, stage and planned careers programme.

8.3 How providers can request access

Requests for access should be made to the careers lead at the relevant academy (this information can be found on the 'Careers' page of each individual academy's website) using the academy's published email contact details.

All requests will be considered in line with the academy's safeguarding and child protection policy, and access will only be granted where appropriate safeguarding arrangements can be met. Providers will be expected to comply with all safeguarding requirements while on site or when engaging with students virtually.

8.4 What form access may take

Access may be offered in a variety of formats, determined by the academy, including:

- assemblies
- timetabled lessons or careers sessions
- careers events or fairs
- drop-in sessions
- mock interviews
- virtual encounters



- visits or talks delivered on or off-site

The format of access will be agreed in advance and aligned with the academy's planned careers programme.

8.5 **How requests are considered and managed**

All requests are considered by the academy with regard to:

- safeguarding requirements
- the age and needs of the students
- the relevance and appropriateness of the provider's offer
- the timing of the request in relation to the academy's careers programme and curriculum

Access is managed to ensure that provision is impartial, inclusive and balanced, and that no particular pathway or provider is given unfair advantage.

8.6 **How complaints are handled**

If a provider believes that access has been unreasonably refused, they may raise a concern in line with our trust's published complaints procedure, which includes escalation to the trustees where appropriate. If unresolved, providers may raise concerns with the Department for Education.

9.0 **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

To ensure CEIAG in each academy is relevant, effective, and compliant with statutory requirements, our trust will monitor and evaluate the delivery through:

- student voice
- staff feedback
- family feedback
- feedback from external employers and providers
- Compass+ evaluations (academies use Compass+ to support evaluation of careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks and to inform ongoing improvement. Compass+ evaluations are completed at the end of each cycle and reviewed by our trust CEIAG lead)
- review of destination data and participation in post-16 and post-18 pathways.