

Written evidence submitted by the Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education

I gave evidence to your Committee as part of the inquiry into careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) on 14 March. There were a number of issues about which further information was requested.

Review of the Gatsby Benchmarks

1. The Gatsby Foundation are looking at the future of careers guidance, capturing the experiences of schools and colleges, reflecting on changes in the education and labour market and deciding if any small amendments are needed to the Gatsby Benchmark framework to ensure its continued impact. Further information about the project can be found on Gatsby's website: <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/programmes/good-career-guidance-the-next-ten-years>.
2. Throughout 2023 Gatsby will conduct a significant programme of stakeholder engagement, consultation, and research. This will include an open consultation: [Gatsby Benchmarks Evaluation - Research and consultancy - University of Derby](#), a literature and evidence review and various roundtables with stakeholders across the sector. Gatsby will publish the findings in late 2024, and we will work with them to understand any implications for the implementation of the benchmarks in schools and colleges.

Government's 2017 careers strategy

3. During the hearing I explained that, for the most part, the government's 2017 careers strategy was achieved. I committed to send you the timetable of what happened and what was missed. Please see a summary attached to this letter.

Impact of Careers Hubs on Gatsby Benchmark progress

4. By December 2022, [90 per cent \(4,499\) of schools and colleges in England were part of a Careers Hub](#) - groups of schools, colleges, employers and providers within a local area working together to improve practice. In the 2021/22 academic year, schools and colleges in Careers Hubs since 2018 achieved [nearly double the number of Gatsby Benchmarks \(5.6\)](#) compared to those not engaged with The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) (2.9).
5. Of course, this translates into better careers experiences for young people. For example, 80 per cent of schools and colleges in a Careers Hub since 2018 are [fully achieving the employer encounters benchmark](#) (compared with 50 per cent of those not engaged with CEC); 79 per cent of schools and colleges in a Careers Hub since 2018 are [fully achieving the personal guidance benchmark](#) (compared with 55 per cent of those not engaged with CEC).

BTECs and the qualifications review

6. My officials and I have regular conversations with colleges and awarding bodies about the challenges facing the further education sector and I do appreciate that planning for qualifications reform must take place on top of the fantastic work the sector already does.
7. The changes to post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below are designed to create a ladder of opportunity for young people of all backgrounds. The development of employer-led occupational standards has represented a major step-change in the occupational relevance and

quality of technical education, and I want as many people as possible to undertake world-class A levels and T Levels. I firmly believe these qualifications provide the best foundation from which to progress into either higher education or skilled employment.

8. In January, we published details of the next major phase of reforms to post-16 qualifications in England at level 3. Qualifications in scope of the review, such as BTECs, will be assessed under a new funding approval process in order to be funded from 2025. This will ensure that alternative academic and technical qualifications have both a clear purpose and lead to meaningful progression outcomes. Technical qualifications will also need to meet occupational standards which have been co-designed with employers.
9. I understand the concerns about students with special educational needs and disabilities, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who have lower levels of prior attainment accessing the reformed level 3 offer. Where a young person is not able to reach level 3 immediately, our reforms to level 2 will support transition to both employment and apprenticeships and level 3 study. We have confirmed that in future we will fund high quality level 2 qualifications that support progression to employment in jobs where level 2 skills are needed, aligned to employer-led occupational standards; and qualifications that support progression to level 3 technical study including T Levels and apprenticeships. The T Level transition programme, which has seen a 49 per cent progression rate from the first cohort into level 3 study, is also increasingly being offered by colleges. Our reforms will ensure that there is a high-quality offer for all.

Ofsted inspection of outcomes data for schools

10. To the point we discussed on better understanding how outcomes data is used by Ofsted in their inspection judgements, as you may be aware, careers provision is evaluated as part of Ofsted's personal development judgement as well as the quality of education judgement during an inspection.
11. In evaluating the quality of education, Ofsted inspectors will use national published data as a starting point (including destination data for key stage 4 and key stage 5) but will focus on the quality of education as experienced by pupils first hand and understand how well leaders know what it is like to be a pupil at the school.
12. An important part of the quality of education judgement is the extent to which pupils are ready for the next stage of education, employment and training, whatever that may be; gaining qualifications that allow them to go on to destinations that meet their interests, aspirations and the intention of their course of study.

Careers support for young carers

13. To respond to your point about targeted support for young carers, as of January 2023, all primary and secondary education settings in England are being asked annually if a student undertakes caring responsibilities at home, via the school census. This will increase young carers visibility in the school system. The Government has published information on how and where young carers can get help and support. This is in addition to requirements, set out in statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), for school Designated Safeguarding Leads to undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills to carry out their role – including a good understanding and alertness to the needs of young carers. [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) also sets out the requirement for local authorities to carry out an assessment

where they consider a young carer to have support needs, and to consider the needs of the whole family when carrying out this assessment.

14. The careers statutory guidance states that Careers Leaders should work closely with the relevant teachers and professionals in their school or college to identify the guidance needs of all pupils, including young carers, and put in place personalised support and a transition plan. The CEC is also developing a suite of online learning modules and frontline worker support materials aimed at reaching vulnerable young people, including young people outside of mainstream education, for example some young carers. This project aims to engage young people with trusted, self-directed learning and high-quality signposting to pathway information, online experiences of the workplace, sector information and transitions support. The National Careers Service website and helpline offers support and are experienced in supporting vulnerable groups.

National Careers Service impact

15. During the hearing I referenced new National Careers Service progression and customer satisfaction statistics. These come from the [Ipsos Mori independent report](#) published on 13th March 2023 and based on findings from May 2021 to April 2022. Key statistics include:
 - 94 per cent of customers who used the telephone and face-to-face service felt the quality of the service was good.
 - customers aged 18-24, who are not in education, employment or training were more likely to be satisfied with the service (92 per cent) than the average (88 per cent).
 - 69 per cent of face-to-face and telephone customers progressed into new learning and 56 per cent of face-to-face and telephone customers achieved employment progression with a new or existing employer (up from 44 per cent in the previous year).
 - 18 to 24-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training are more likely to progress into employment after working with a careers adviser- 69 per cent compared with the average of 56 per cent.
 - Young customers aged 16-24 had higher levels of satisfaction with the website: For example, 86 per cent said the website was easy to use, compared to 72 per cent of customers aged 25-49 and 73 per cent rated the ease of being able to find information as good, compared to 65 per cent of customers aged 25-49.

I would also like to take this opportunity to make some clarifications on certain points that were made during the session.

You asked some questions about the Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance (Q322). I said that if a school achieves most of the benchmarks, they increase apprenticeships uptake by 17 per cent, that they are most likely to ensure that they reduce a young person's chance of being not in employment or training by 20 per cent, and that they score 3.9 per cent higher in career readiness. I would like to clarify that these points relate to if a school achieves all eight of the benchmarks.

In response to a further question from you (Q326) regarding progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks, I said that 100 per cent of schools are meeting at least half of the benchmarks – I should have said that 100 per cent of schools are meeting or partially meeting five of the Gatsby benchmarks.

In response to Flick Drummond (Q330) I also said that 88 per cent of the CEC's budget is being spent on Careers Hubs – this should be 88 per cent of the CEC's budget is spent on the front line, including Careers Hubs, Career Leader training and digital tools.

I also responded to Flick Drummond (Q330) by saying that 93 per cent of students had employer encounters – I want to clarify that I mean 93 per cent of students had at least one employer encounter last year.

In response to a question from Miriam Cates (Q339) about careers provision in primary schools, I said that the current programme delivered by the CEC was called 'Primary Futures' in the past – I would like to clarify that the previous programme funded by government was never called Primary Futures (although Primary Futures was one of a number of recipients of funding via the previous CEC-led programme for primary schools which ran from 2019 to 2021).

Finally, in response to a question from Miriam Cates (Q359) about support for disadvantaged groups, I highlighted the work that the National Careers Service does with pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities, including special mentoring and one-to-one support – in fact, this support does not include mentoring but is one-to-one support offered through the telephone service and web chat.

Please do let me know if I can provide anything further for your Committee on this subject.

2017 Careers Strategy: progress against commitments

Commitment	Progress
January 2018 delivery	
Schools and colleges should use the Gatsby Benchmarks to improve careers provision, as set out in new statutory guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2018, DfE careers statutory guidance was updated to set out what schools should do to meet the eight Gatsby Benchmarks.
Schools must give providers of technical education and apprenticeships the opportunity to talk to all pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Original Provider Access legislation enacted in January 2018. Ofsted school inspection handbook updated in September 2021 to make clear that if a school is not meeting the provider access legislation requirements, inspectors will state this in the inspection report and take into account when arriving at a judgement about the school's personal development. Strengthened legislation enacted in January 2023 (schools must offer at least six provider encounters for pupils during years 8-13), following a public consultation, and updated statutory guidance published.
Ofsted must comment in college inspection reports on the careers guidance provided to young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enacted in September 2017. Careers is a mandatory line of enquiry for full Ofsted inspections of all further education and skills providers, and the inspection report will note whether the school meets the requirements of the Provider Access legislation.
September 2018 delivery	
The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) will launch a new investment fund of £5 million to support the most disadvantaged pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC launched a two-part investment fund to support disadvantaged pupils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £2.5m to support employer encounters for young people aged 11-18 through 10 Careers Hubs and 25 disadvantaged areas. £1.7m to test new approaches for disadvantaged groups, especially SEND, gypsy Roma travellers and looked after children.

Commitment	Progress
<p>Schools and colleges are expected to publish details of their careers programme for young people and their parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since September 2018, maintained schools have been required (and academies and FE colleges expected) to publish information about their careers programme on their website. • In 2021/22, 93% of schools, 97% of colleges and 73% of AP/special schools had website information about their careers programme aimed at students. Source Insight briefing - Gatsby Benchmark results 2021/2022 The Careers and Enterprise Company • In 2021/22, 92% of schools, 92% of colleges and 83% of AP/special schools have website information about their careers programme aimed at parents/carers. Source Insight briefing - Gatsby Benchmark results 2021/2022 The Careers and Enterprise Company
<p>Job specification and standards for Careers Leaders developed and started to be used by schools and colleges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC worked with school and college leaders to clearly set out what Careers Leaders should do, what the job involves and the benefits of the role.
<p>A named Careers Leader should lead the careers programme in every school and college.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since September 2018, maintained schools have been required (and academies and FE colleges expected) to publish details of a named Careers Leader on their website. • In 2021/22 100% of schools, 99% of colleges and 99% of AP/special schools reported that they have a named Careers Leader. Source Insight briefing - Gatsby Benchmark results 2021/2022 The Careers and Enterprise Company
<p>CEC will begin to take on a broader role across all the Gatsby Benchmarks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2018, the remit of the CEC was expanded to support schools and colleges across all eight Gatsby Benchmarks through: rollout of Careers Hubs, Careers Leader training, Enterprise Adviser Network and digital tools (Compass and Compass+).
<p>20 “careers hubs” will be funded by Government and supported by a coordinator from the CEC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,500 institutions are now part of a Careers Hub, meaning that 90% of schools and colleges are benefiting from the Careers Hub Network. Source: cec-ready-for-the-future-2022.pdf (careersandenterprise.co.uk)

Commitment	Progress
Government sponsors two UK Career Development Awards for 2018.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government has sponsored at least one award every year since 2018.
2018 and 2019 delivery	
CEC triples the number of cornerstone employers committing to work with schools and colleges across the country, including Opportunity Areas, to 150.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 440 businesses are now engaged as Cornerstone employers, providing local leadership in Careers Hubs across England. Source: (unpublished) figured reported to DfE by CEC on 22/02/23.¹
New approaches tested and evaluated to encourage young people, especially girls, to consider STEM jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2021 the CEC, with STEM Learning, launched a series of STEM toolkits; to support Careers Leaders to support teachers to link careers to the STEM curriculum, and a guide for employers. In 2021 the CEC relaunched the STEM careers webpage with an increased focus on Department funded resources, with resources for schools and colleges, and information for employers.
New approaches tested and evaluated to understand what careers activities work in primary schools .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We invested over £2m funding which delivered a Primary Fund programme, a What Works research paper and a Primary Toolkit for sharing existing best practice and research on career-related learning in primary schools. The toolkit supports schools and other organisations to share good practice. The 2022 schools white paper Opportunity for all also announced the introduction of a new programme for improving careers provision in primary schools in areas of disadvantage. The programme will target primary schools in the 55 Education Investment Areas (EIAs) between November 2022 and March 2025, supported by £2.6m funding.
CEC will provide digital tools to help schools and colleges meet the Gatsby Benchmarks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEC has developed and rollout out Compass and Compass+ for this purpose. In 2020/21, 4,200 (84%) secondary schools and colleges reported progress against the Gatsby Benchmark using Compass or Compass+.

¹ Figures are calculated based on the number of employers that have agreed to and returned the Cornerstone Employer Commitment Statement issued by CEC.

Commitment	Progress
	Source: insight-briefing-gatsby-benchmark-results-for-2021-22.pdf (careersandenterprise.co.uk)
Careers Leaders training funded for 500 schools and colleges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of December 2022, 2,702 Careers Leaders had completed this training and received this bursary. Source: Our Impact 2021/22 The Careers and Enterprise Company By the end of October 2023, we will have extended this training to 3,750 Careers Leaders in total.
Clear information about T levels is provided to parents, teachers, young people and careers professionals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 'Get the Jump' Skills for Life campaign promotes the full range of post 16 and post 18 education and training routes (inc. T levels) available to young people, signposting to the National Careers Service website.
Guidance will ask universities to do more to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds to make good use of their careers services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uni Connect (formerly known as the National Collaborative Outreach Programme, NCOP) brings together partnerships of universities, colleges and other local partners to deliver outreach programmes to young people in years 9 to 13.
New contracts for the National Careers Service in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Careers Service contracts providing community based, face-to-face and telephone careers advice has been re-procured. The new contracts commenced in October 2022.
Results from the Career Learning Pilots collected and evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible Learning Fund pilot evaluation published 2021. Report: Flexible learning fund pilot evaluation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
New standardised application forms tested to make it easier for young people to apply to further education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pilot was carried out to test standardisation of FE application forms however, it was not taken further. Evidence showed the issue was around the information given to students rather than the form itself. We have worked with UCAS to expand their facility to support students to make apprenticeship applications alongside HE applications. From autumn 2023, students will be able to see more personalised options including relevant apprenticeships. From autumn 2024, students will also be able to apply and track apprenticeships applications in the UCAS Hub.

Commitment	Progress
<p>Data on student destinations widely available and easily understandable by people of all ages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We publish employment and earnings outcomes for higher education graduates and outcome-based success measures, which show the progression into employment and technical training. • These datasets are still evolving and further developments are planned. • We are working with the Unit for Future Skills to provide better data on the links between qualifications, skills and employment.
<p>End 2020 delivery</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All schools and colleges will have access to an Enterprise Adviser. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,503 (70%) secondary schools and colleges are now matched with an Enterprise Adviser to develop their career strategies and employer engagement plans. Source: CEC Q3 Performance Report (end Dec 2022 - unpublished)²
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should offer every young person seven encounters with employers - at least one each year from years 7 to 13 – with support from the CEC. Some of these encounters should be with STEM employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021/22, 71% of schools provided at least one employer encounter per year to the majority of students (up from 57% the previous year). Source: insight-briefing-gatsby-benchmark-results-for-2021-22.pdf (careersandenterprise.co.uk)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new, improved National Careers Service website will include all of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A first tranche of improvements to the National Careers Service website were completed by the end of 2020.

² An Enterprise Adviser (EA) is counted as matched after the first meeting (face-to-face or virtual) with the institution - the Enterprise Coordinator must be present at this meeting. Both parties (EA and institution) agree to the match either verbally or by email. Careers Hub teams are responsible for updating the EANR database. The 3,503 (70%) relates to the amount of institutions that were matched with at least 1 EA at end-December 22 (representing a snapshot).

The 70% is rounded up from 69.78%, which relates to the proportion of the total number of institutions showing as 'in scope' for Careers Hubs at the 31 December 22 (which was 5,020). This is not the number of institutions in a Hub, it is the number eligible to join a hub so includes institutions in the Activation Stage. It is based on the number of unique URNs in [Get Information about Schools](#) for institutions that fall into AP, FE, mainstream schools and Special Schools – the number grows and shrinks during the academic year as institutions close and open.

Commitment	Progress
information to help citizens make informed choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="719 320 2076 448">• The National Careers website is constantly improving, and the department is working with young people to make sure that information and tools developed are useful to them. It now hosts the 'Get the Jump' campaign- supporting young people to understand the skills and training offers available to them and helping them to take their next steps.

April 2023