



TeachFirst

Access Toolkit

2016-17





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The toolkit is structured around our approach to taking action on improving progression and on the key information we believe all teachers need to know.

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Introduction: Access Toolkit

The road to securing employment, a place at university, an apprenticeship or other post school destination can be a difficult one for young people to navigate. Teach First believes it is every teacher's responsibility to support students with this journey. Whether you are an early years, primary or secondary teacher you can influence the post-school choices of the students you teach and, throughout their education, prepare them to progress and succeed in their lives beyond school.

By the time they leave school we want every child to have made an informed and ambitious decision about their future, have secured a place on their route of choice and have the skills which will help them to succeed – and crucially sustain – their place on that progression pathway.

This toolkit is designed to help teachers understand the action they can take to support the post school progression of the students they teach. It also provides guidance for school leaders to set up a whole school, strategic approach to progression, careers and employability.

This introduction sets out:

- what we believe is critical for successful post school progression
- some of broader context and research around progression issues
- what the toolkit contains and how to use it

For quick ideas on improving progression now, [this table](#) shows phase appropriate activities you can implement in your classroom immediately.

Our Approach

To progress beyond school successfully, we believe students need:

- key mind-sets
- well-developed skills
- knowledge and insight into all the post school progression options available to them





Students should follow a phased approach to successfully transition into their progression route of choice, which we call the progression journey. The table opposite shows the phases which make up this journey.

A strong sense of self should be at the start of a student's progression journey. This self-understanding, along with exposure to the available post school progression routes, should begin early in a student's educational journey, happen regularly, and be something students are continually encouraged to reflect on. They should use this personal insight, along with knowledge of different progression routes, to make decisions about

the right option to pursue. Having given attention to the initial two phases, students will be in a position to make an application to a route they are passionate about pursuing, before then preparing to transition into that route.

Following these phases makes for a young person who is set up to flourish post school. It can help to avoid a situation where a young person picks a progression route which does not fit their talents or is made from a narrow understanding of the available options, which risks them not thriving in that route or dropping out.

Teachers have a crucial role to play in aiding students with each phase of their progression journey, but are only one of the strands of support a student needs to receive. It is important to recognise the vital support of independent, impartial careers advisors, as well as parents, employers and other organisations young people may interact with on their journey to successful post school progression.

Phase	Outcome
Who am I? 	Students have a clear understanding of their passions, skills, talents, interests and needs.
Where am I going? 	Students use insight and knowledge of the employment, education and training options open to them to make an informed decision about which one to follow, based on insight gathered through the 'Who am I?' phase.
How do I get there? 	Students make a well planned, high quality application for their chosen option.
Preparing for the future 	Students secure a place on their chosen employment, education or training route and are prepared for the start of their chosen option.



Why have we developed a toolkit?

Teach First believes that a child's background should not limit the opportunities they have in life. We want to transform the lives of young people from low-income communities across the UK, and to do this we are part of the [Fair Education Alliance](#).

We have worked with our partners in the alliance to set goals to narrow the gap in the proportion of young people taking part in further education or employment-based training after finishing their GCSEs, and to narrow the gap in university graduation. Through this toolkit we want to empower teachers to help us meet these goals.

In the UK, there are key issues and concerns around the post school progression of students, especially those from low income communities. We know that 23% of students from low income families enter university, compared to 40% of their better off peers, despite having the same academic profile¹. They are also more than three times less likely to go to a high tariff university, and are more likely to drop out of their degree course². Young people from poor families are twice as likely to be NEET (not in education, employment or training) than their more affluent peers.

In a 2013 survey, employers said that 42% of 16 year old school leavers are poorly or very poorly

prepared for work and that vacancies are hard to fill because of shortages in job specific and workplace skills³. In addition, competition for apprenticeships is intense, and schools in low income communities have a lower level of students participating in apprenticeships than schools serving high income communities.

Research undertaken by the Access Department at Teach First has identified barriers which students commonly face as they consider their post school future. Although each child, school and community will face its own set of unique barriers, we identified a number of common barriers which can be viewed on the next page.



35% of schools don't provide staff with training on careers guidance⁶

Common barriers to post school progression

Failing to make the grades – students may not achieve the exam grades you know them to be capable of, which will then close options available to them

The influence of peers – peers can exert an influence over decisions to stay in or leave education, with students following the path of their friends rather than making their own decisions

Lack of confidence, resilience and a poor perception of ability or self – some students lack the self-confidence and non-cognitive skills vital for coping with the process of making decisions about the future

Concerns about the transition to the world of work or university – many students are worried about independent living, making friends, working with colleagues, or managing university life and study

Unable to turn ambitions into reality or lack of ambition – although they may be capable, some students do not have the aspirations, support or self-efficacy to take action to secure their progression route of choice

Negative school experience – students who dislike school or who have had a negative experience in education may desire to leave the education system all together and be dissuaded from further learning

Concern about financial issues – many students are worried about debt and do not understand how to fund their chosen pathway

Feeling that a pathway 'isn't for me' – apprenticeships, jobs and university can feel like an alien, inaccessible world to some students and this can affect their willingness to apply

Stigma attached to specific pathways – students may discount options because of misinformed associations they, their families or their peers have, for example associating apprenticeships with low achievement

Lack of consistent information, advice and guidance (IAG) across the key stages – many students do not receive careers and progression education in the classroom, get access to tailored IAG, or get adequate engagement with employers and representatives from different progression routes to inform their decisions. Students don't always feel the content of their lessons relates to life outside of the classroom.

Lack of home based support and parental influence – caregivers may not have adequate insight to support their child's progression, not want them to move away from home, or put pressure on them to study at particular institutions, study particular courses or apply for particular jobs which do not align with the student's own wishes

The barriers young people face are compounded by research which indicates that schools do not have systematic approaches to tackling progression issues and teachers are not trained to take action. A Sutton Trust commissioned survey found that many teachers underestimate the proportion of students from state schools who study at Oxbridge and 56% of them wouldn't encourage their brightest students to apply to Oxbridge. There are clearly teacher misconceptions which add to the issues young people face when being encouraged to secure their desired progression routes. Yet we know that tackling progression issues in schools has a positive impact; research has shown that there is evidence suggesting that career and employability learning could support student engagement and attainment, the economy, social mobility and social inclusion⁴.

Although many organisations are taking crucial action to improve student post school progression and are providing schools with guidance on how to do this, it often comes from a specific perspective, such as improving access to university or improving young people's readiness for the workplace. In this toolkit we have put information on all post 16 and 18 options into one place to give teachers ideas for how to integrate awareness of these options in their teaching practice. We provide guidance on how to develop the mind-sets in students and build the skills which are vital to all progression routes.

The question of what we want for our children when they leave school is a contested subject, and different interests can often be in tension. Our starting point is that all young people should have the same access to opportunities, and that they should be empowered to

make informed choices. This guide is aimed to help teachers ensure that this access to opportunity is a reality, and that young people are able to make these decisions. It is very practical in nature, focusing on the steps and support that will most likely lead to young people accessing opportunities that align with their abilities and aspirations.

Note on navigating the toolkit

If you are particularly interested in effective action you can take in the classroom, we recommend sections one and two of the toolkit first; these are information/reference based sections which will give you the foundation to go on to sections three and four.

If you are particularly interested in exploring an effective school-wide approach, we recommend familiarising yourself with sections one-four before really focusing in on section five.



Only **44%** of teachers would advise their brightest students to apply to Oxbridge⁷

What are the mind-sets and skills essential for progression?

Section 1

What are the mind-sets and skills essential for progression?

In this section you will find information on the mind-sets and skills that we believe students need in order to progress through and beyond school successfully. These learnable ways of thinking and acting will help them develop meaningful and fulfilling lives, as well as make the right decisions for their futures, and succeed in accessing and sustaining those choices long term. In these descriptions, we focus on the benefits from a practical point of view.

We selected and verified our mind-sets and skills by reviewing publications from a range of sources including third sector organisations, career guidance specialists, employers, higher education institutions and employability theory, as well as our own research. The four mind-sets and seven skills outlined here were those that were consistently considered vital across sectors, organisations and progression pathways.

For each mind-set and skill we offer a brief description of what it looks like, and why it is important for progression. You will then have the option to jump to suggested activities for developing that mind-set or skill in students, both within teaching and outside of the curriculum.

Mind-sets

1. Curiosity
2. Aspiration and Ambition
3. Confidence and Self-Worth
4. Growth Mind-Set and Self-Efficacy

Skills

1. Reflection
2. Problem Solving
3. Resilience
4. Initiative and Independence
5. Communication
6. Research, Planning and Organisation
7. Collaboration

Mind-set

Curiosity

What does it look like?

Students have a positive attitude towards learning, and take opportunities to research things that interest them in more depth. They are open-minded and understand the value of knowledge beyond passing exams and gaining qualifications. They are also aware of the wider world and current events, exploring issues that they are less familiar with.

Why is it important?

Curious young people will fully develop their knowledge and understanding, engaging potential employers and educators with their evident interest and ability to research beyond the curriculum. Proving intellectual curiosity is imperative for success in a higher education application.



[Click here to find out how to develop this mind-set in your students.](#)

Aspiration and Ambition

What does it look like?

Students strive to be the best they can be, set themselves ambitious goals, and have high expectations for themselves. They have considered the kind of future they want and the steps they need to take, and are motivated and driven to get there. They believe anything is possible.



Why is it important?

An aspirational mind-set will ensure students work consistently towards their goals with a clear sense of direction and purpose, maintaining positivity and effort over long periods of time. They will understand that achievement brings fulfilment and satisfaction and see the value in perseverance – necessary in an increasingly challenging and competitive labour market. They will not be limited in their expectations by their background or social circumstances.

[Click here to find out how to develop this mind-set in your students.](#)

Mind-set

Confidence and Self-Worth

What does it look like?

Students know that their words, ideas and actions have value. They believe that, with the right dedication and effort, they deserve to achieve, and 'belong' anywhere they want to be, including a top university or prestigious workplace.

Why is it important?

Confident young people are empowered to reach for their aspirations, believing in the contributions they have to make. They will be able to present themselves compellingly, ensuring that they both access further education and employment and function effectively in the workplace. They will be hopeful, optimistic, and have high self-esteem.

[Click here to find out how to develop this mind-set in your students.](#)

Growth Mind-Set and Self-Efficacy

What does it look like?

Students understand intelligence isn't fixed and that they can improve and achieve with the right effort and attitude, regardless of previous attainment or their personal circumstances. They push themselves into their stretch zones, confident that they can develop with dedication and perseverance. Ultimately, they know that they have the ability to shape their future.

Why is it important?

Students who believe that their abilities and skills can be developed, and are willing to push themselves to make this happen, will have the best chance of impressing employers and training providers. They will also have the best chance of career agency, and life-long career growth, as they proactively improve their skills and knowledge to succeed in promotion and professional development.



[Click here to find out how to develop this mind-set in your students.](#)

Skills

Reflection

What does it look like?

Students can objectively review their performance, considering what they have done well, and what they will do differently next time. They know what their strengths and weaknesses are, and regularly give thought to how they are developing. They know what their interests and passions are, and what is important to them.

Why is it important?

Students need to be reflective to make choices informed by their interests and skills, and to learn from unsuccessful applications and interviews and improve their performance. With this skill, they will be more likely to develop themselves, as they recognise both their strengths and their limitations. Employers will understand that they are able to build on their current skills and potential.

[Click here to find out how to develop this skill in your students.](#)



Problem Solving

What does it look like?

Students can analyse a task or problem and come up with a range of solutions. They think creatively, whilst considering potential benefits and risks, and take these into account when evaluating options. They seek extra information if needed, weighing up influences and advice, and review decisions if necessary.



Why is it important?

Students will be faced with problems and decisions throughout their education and career pathway, and must be able to solve these problems creatively but realistically. If students are invited to an assessment centre they may be set a group exercise that is intended to test this skill.

[Click here to find out how to develop this skill in your students.](#)

Skills

Resilience

What does it look like?

Students are committed and determined, not giving up, but demonstrating persistence when things are difficult or unexpected. They respond to problems in a considered and controlled manner, and overcome and learn from setbacks, adapting their approaches when needed. They are willing to act bravely, taking calculated risks, and know when to draw on support from those around them.

Why is it important?

Students need resilience to be able to navigate an unpredictable and hostile labour market, where they are likely to receive setbacks in the selection process. They need to be able to commit to and apply themselves to challenging contexts, and adapt to changes in their work environment. Resilience will also give them a long term ability to cope with personal, social and economic pressure, and to achieve a healthy work/life balance.

[Click here to find out how to develop this skill in your students.](#)

Initiative and Independence

What does it look like?

Students readily take responsibility for themselves, recognising the importance of independent action, and don't rely solely on the support of others. They manage their time and commitments effectively, proactively seeking out and making the most of every opportunity. They 'go the extra mile' whenever possible, and do things for themselves or others without needing to be asked to.

Why is it important?

If students can develop initiative and independence, they will take active responsibility for their attainment and progression, including asking questions about content they are unsure of, researching post 16 or 18 options independently and developing skills for independent living, such as budgeting. They will also be more likely to stand out from their peers in their independent approach during application and selection.

[Click here to find out how to develop this skill in your students.](#)



Skills

Communication

What does it look like?

Students speak and write articulately, engagingly, and accurately, structuring their arguments clearly. They are able to adapt to different purposes and audiences, listen carefully, and use body language and eye contact appropriately. They are able to evaluate others' perspectives and their own for bias.



Why is it important?

Students who can communicate competently are better able to demonstrate their knowledge and ability, and promote themselves in a way that impresses recruiters and selectors. The accuracy of students' written and verbal English is important across applications and interviews, and employers consistently list communication skills as a high priority. It is also a skill that will remain difficult to replace with technology.

[Click here to find out how to develop this skill in your students.](#)

Research, Planning and Organisation

What does it look like?

Students are able to research effectively, filling in gaps in their knowledge independently and accurately. They are able to construct a logical plan for a task, turning large goals into sequences of smaller steps, and can anticipate and mitigate problems that are likely to arise. They manage their time carefully, arriving punctually and meeting deadlines.

Why is it important?

Students who can research, plan and organise themselves effectively are far more likely to impress a recruiter with their understanding of an institution, and are also far more likely to sustain a chosen pathway as they are fully informed of its requirements and are able to plan their time and resources to meet these expectations.



[Click here to find out how to develop this skill in your students.](#)

Skills

Collaboration

What does it look like?

Students understand how to be an effective team member, and are able to work well with different people and take on a range of roles within a group. They are able to motivate and encourage others, and are aware of the differing needs and qualities of the individuals they work with. They are open to the ideas of others, and seek their support when needed. They are receptive to constructive feedback, whilst demonstrating diplomacy and sensitivity when offering feedback of their own.

Why is it important?

Students with collaboration skills will be more likely to progress within an organisation or field, demonstrating their ability to work effectively with colleagues towards a common goal. They will be able to adapt their style to different stakeholders, and demonstrate flexibility during interactions, showing leadership potential and capacity.

[Click here to find out how to develop this skill in your students.](#)



**What are the
post 16 and 18
progression
routes?**

Section 2

What are the post 16 and 18 progression routes?

If you are to effectively inform, guide and advise your students on their options once they leave Year 11 or the sixth form, you need to understand the various education, employment and training routes available. This section will equip you with that knowledge. You will find information about the pathways available to students post 16 and post 18, with each pathway summarised, including information about entry requirements, format of study and options moving forward.

Use the tables of options on this page to find the pathway you are interested in, then click through to access the information and links to any relevant resources or websites.

Student Pathways Post 16

This table sets out the options in the different pathways available to students after the age of 16. All young people must be studying towards a nationally recognised qualification at least part time until the age of 18. Click on each pathway to jump to more information.

Students with 5 A*-C at GCSE including English and maths

Education	Apprenticeships	Employment
A Levels Applied Vocational Awards (Level 3)	Advanced apprenticeships	Job (part-time study)

Students with less than 5 A*-C at GCSE including English and maths

Education	Apprenticeships	Employment
Applied Vocational Awards (Level 2)	Intermediate apprenticeships	Job (part-time study)

Student Pathways Post 18

This table sets out the options in the different pathways available to students after the age of 18.

It is now possible to gain qualifications at a higher education level through a number of pathways, both through full and part time study and/or employment. The columns below indicate to which type of organisation students would apply to access each option. Click on each pathway to jump to more information.

Higher Education	Apprenticeships
Foundation Year Higher National Diploma/Certificate Foundation Degree Honours Degree	Advanced Apprenticeship Higher Apprenticeship Degree Apprenticeship
Employment	Gap Year
School Leaver Programme Job	

Post 16 Pathways

Education: Applied vocational awards

Applied vocational awards are available from Level 1, equivalent to a D or below at GCSE, up to Level 8, at doctorate standard. After Year 11, students can choose to take applied vocational awards at Level 2 (equivalent to GCSEs at C or above), or Level 3 (equivalent to A levels). For more on the different types of applied vocational awards students can study post 16, [read this guidance](#) from the Department for Education or [this guidance](#) from Qualification Wales.

Entry requirements

To study a Level 3 applied vocational award, schools or colleges normally require students to have a number of A*-C passes at GCSE, commonly between four and six. The

expectation for students wishing to study at Level 2 is normally a number of Ds at GCSE. Students who did not achieve a C or above in GCSE maths and English in Year 11 are currently required to re-sit these subjects alongside their Key Stage 5 curriculum.

Format of study

Applied vocational awards can be studied full or part time, and take one or two years to complete. They commonly take a more practical approach than A level courses, applying learning to real-life situations and job roles. Many schools offer applied vocational awards, with an extensive range available at further education colleges. They are assessed using

a blend of coursework and exams. Some institutions will allow students to sit vocational qualifications alongside one or two A levels.

After applied vocational awards

After Level 2 applied vocational awards, a student would typically move on to study at Level 3, or move into employment. Beyond Level 3, students will have access to a range of pathway options including higher education, apprenticeships, and the workplace. Although some universities specify A levels on their entry criteria, many accept applied vocational awards; currently, about half of those who study vocational qualifications go onto higher education.



Post 16 Pathways

Education: A Levels

A levels are Level 3 qualifications students can take after their GCSEs (or equivalent Level 2 qualifications). Students will typically study between three and five subjects.

Entry requirements

Schools and colleges normally require students to have a number of A*-C passes at GCSE including English and maths, commonly between four and seven. Many will ask that students have a B or above in the subjects that they wish to study.

Format of study

A Levels are full time qualifications commonly taught in a classroom environment within a school or sixth-form college. They require extended reading, writing, and theoretical understanding – even

those that appear practical by nature, for example physical education, are assessed more on theoretical knowledge than practical ability and application. They are mostly assessed through linear exams (taken at the end of the course). Some institutions will allow students to sit A levels alongside applied vocational awards. A levels are in the process of changing format, with all subjects due to be delivering the new qualifications by 2017. AS levels will no longer constitute the first half of an A level, but will be considered separate, one-year qualifications. Some schools will still encourage students to sit AS levels separately to two-year A level courses; others will not deliver AS levels at all. You can find more details on the [Gov.uk website](http://www.gov.uk).

You may hear the phrase ‘facilitating subjects’ being used in reference to particular choices at A level. This term is one used by [Russell Group universities](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk) to describe A level subject choices that keep students’ degree options open – they advise students unsure of what they want to study at university to pick two ‘facilitating subjects’. These include biology, chemistry, physics, English Literature, Geography, History, Modern and Classical Languages, and maths. Read more about facilitating subjects on the [Russell Group website](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk).

After A Levels

After A levels, students will have access to a range of pathway options including higher education, apprenticeships, and the workplace.



Post 16 Pathways

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available from Level 2, equivalent to GCSE, up to Level 7, at master's degree standard. After Year 11, students can choose to undertake an intermediate apprenticeship (Level 2), or an advanced apprenticeship (Level 3). Students without the entry requirements or necessary experience to access an apprenticeship can choose to complete a [traineeship](#), a six month unpaid work experience placement that will support them in developing the skills to move into an apprenticeship or employment. For more on apprenticeships and traineeships [read this guidance](#) from Gov.uk or [this guidance](#) from the Welsh Government.

Entry requirements

The entry requirements for apprenticeships vary between employers and training providers.

For both intermediate and advanced apprenticeships a number of A*-C passes at GCSE will be expected, including English and maths. Some employers would also prefer students applying for an advanced apprenticeship to have some qualifications at Level 3 (A levels or vocational qualifications).

Apprenticeships are typically extremely competitive, and develop skills much more specifically to jobs and sectors than other post 16 pathways, and so it is not unusual for students to move 'sideways', completing an apprenticeship at a level they have already attained through another qualification. This is a reflection of the different skills needed in employment, rather than on a student's ability.

Format of study

Apprenticeships are work-based training schemes, and take between one and five years to complete. Most time is spent with an employer gaining job-specific skills - at least 30 hours a week. An external provider, either a college, training provider or university, will deliver the rest of an apprentice's training. This might be in the form of 'day release', where students study for one day per week, or as 'block release', where they spend a whole period of time on the qualification aspect of the course. It is worth remembering that fundamentally, an apprenticeship is a job - students will be on a contract of employment, with payment in return for performing in their role, with the additionality of training to ensure they are skilled and qualified. Apprenticeships are assessed on an ongoing basis.



Post 16 Pathways

Apprenticeships (continued)

Finding an apprenticeship

In England you can find information about applying to apprenticeships and traineeships on the [Gov.uk website](#) and the [National Apprenticeships Service](#) website. Both will direct students to a government search engine for apprenticeships that allows them to specify preferred field and location. In Wales you will find information and vacancies on the [Careers Wales website](#).

The challenge with finding apprenticeships is that employers and training providers can advertise them in a range of places of their choosing, including their own company websites or other external websites; there is no centralised comprehensive database. So although many will be advertised

through the above search engines, some may not be

It is therefore advisable for students to look at a range of sources to make sure they find the best opportunities available. This post on the [Careers Advice for Parents](#) website has a clear list of suggested places to look when searching for an apprenticeship or traineeship.

After apprenticeships

After an apprenticeship, students may choose to continue working with the same employer, or use their skills to apply for and secure other jobs. Those wishing to further their qualifications may move onto a higher or degree apprenticeship, or access higher education through a university or further education college.



Post 16 Pathways Employment

After sitting their GCSEs (or equivalent Level 2 qualifications) it is possible for students to enter the workplace immediately, without going through an apprenticeship. They must be employed, self-employed or volunteer for at least 20 hours a week, and also be studying for a nationally recognised qualification part time.

Students wishing to go straight into work after Year 11 will need guidance from a [careers advisor](#) to ensure workplace options offer the right opportunities for security in the short term and progression in the longer term. Employment that includes a clear training framework will be more likely to offer students long term job satisfaction, development of skills, and better pay across their career.



Post 18 Pathways Higher Education

Higher education is a term used to describe any qualification that is nationally recognised at Level 4 or above. After achieving Level 3 qualifications at a school, college or through an apprenticeship, students can apply to study at higher education level.

All applications to higher education institutions are managed by [UCAS](#), whose website contains a wealth of information and guidance on higher education.

Types of courses

Honours degree

Honours degrees are available to those with a range of results at Level 3 – entry requirements will vary between universities. They usually take three years to complete full time, unless the qualification is a

sandwich course, which includes a year's work placement or overseas experience. They take students through from Level 4 to Level 6 qualification standard across the course, unless they include an additional year to achieve a master's degree at Level 7. Honours degrees that are linked to a profession, such as engineering, will often also enable students to gain professional qualifications or recognition from a relevant professional body.

There are now also a range of honours degree programmes which can be completed in two years for those young people who are most dedicated and able, and degrees that are delivered by professional bodies rather than universities – both are commonly offered at a more competitive price than traditional honours degrees,

and include the professional qualifications necessary to operate within certain fields.

It is possible to undertake an honours degree that is either fully or partially sponsored by an employer. In this case, students study full time towards their degree, and work for the sponsoring organisation during their holidays with a guaranteed job at end. These are often available only as a result of completing a successful gap year programme with the employer.

Foundation degree

Foundation degrees are taught in further education colleges and some universities, and are designed with specific job roles in mind, combining workplace learning with study.



Post 18 Pathways

Higher Education (continued)



After completion, it is possible to go on to study for a full honours degree, typically requiring an extra year of learning. Some companies will contribute towards the cost of a foundation degree – for more on sponsored degree programmes [jump to this page](#).

Higher National Diploma/ Certificate (HNDs/HNCs)

HNDs and HNCs are vocational qualifications offered for full or part time study by further education colleges and some universities, designed to provide students with a skills or career based qualification. HNCs take a year to complete full time. HNDs take two years, and can be used to access the second or third year of an equivalent degree course.

Foundation year

A foundation year is an additional year of study completed before moving onto an honours degree. They give students who don't have the entry requirements for an honours degree a chance to upskill to the necessary standard and access the full course the following year. In some disciplines, typically those related to art and design, a foundation year is expected even for those with strong Level 3 results; in this case these courses equip students with the skills and portfolios necessary to access a full honours degree, as well as supporting them in deciding which of a range of art specialist degrees they want to apply to.

Post 18 Pathways Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are available from Level 2, equivalent to GCSE, up to Level 7, at master's degree standard. After completing sixth form or college, students can choose to undertake an advanced apprenticeship (Level 3), a higher apprenticeship (Levels 4-7), or a degree apprenticeship (Levels 6-7). You can find more about the different types of apprenticeships from the [Department for Education](#) or via [this guidance](#) from the Welsh Government.

Entry requirements

The entry requirements for apprenticeships vary between employers and training providers. For advanced apprenticeships, some employers would prefer students to have some qualifications at Level 3 (A levels or vocational qualifications), as well as a number of A*-C passes at GCSE, including English and maths. Apprenticeships

are typically extremely competitive, and develop skills much more specifically to jobs and sectors than other pathways, and so it is not unusual for students to move 'sideways', completing an apprenticeship at a level they have already attained through another qualification. This is a reflection of the different skills needed in employment, rather than on a student's ability.

To access a higher or degree apprenticeship, students will be expected to have attained qualifications at Level 2 and 3, with the most popular apprenticeships requiring results equivalent to those needed to get into a top university. Degree apprenticeships are relatively new courses, introduced in September 2015, and so at present are offered in fewer industries than higher apprenticeships. Higher apprenticeships also offer

the opportunity to gain a higher education qualification, but the new degree apprenticeships place more focus on the study element, with the course being co-designed by the university and employer to ensure the workplace applicability of the skills developed. For the specific fields that offer degree apprenticeships visit the [Career Pilot](#) website.

Format of study

Apprenticeships are work-based training schemes, and take between one and five years to complete. Most time is spent with an employer gaining job-specific skills, at least 30 hours a week. An external provider, either a college, training provider or university, will deliver the rest of an apprentice's training. This might be in the form of 'day release', where students study for one day per week, or as 'block release', where they spend a whole



Post 18 Pathways

Apprenticeships (continued)

period of time on the qualification aspect of the course. It is worth remembering that fundamentally, an apprenticeship is a job - students will be on a contract of employment, with payment in return for performing in their role, with the additionality of training to ensure they are skilled and qualified. Apprenticeships are assessed on an ongoing basis.

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In England you can find information about applying to apprenticeships and traineeships on the [Gov.uk website](#) and the [National Apprenticeships Service website](#). Both will direct students to a government search engine for apprenticeships that allows them to specify preferred field and location. In Wales you will find information and vacancies on the [Careers Wales](#)

website.

The challenge with finding apprenticeships is that employers and training providers can advertise them in a range of places of their choosing, including their own company websites or other external websites; there is no centralised comprehensive database. So although many will be advertised through the above search engines, some may not be.

It is therefore advisable for students to look at a range of sources to make sure they find the best opportunities available. This post on the [Careers Advice for Parents](#) website has a clear list of suggested places to look when searching for an apprenticeship or traineeship.

After apprenticeships

After an apprenticeship, students may choose to continue working with the same employer, perhaps towards a higher level qualification or promotion. They may also use their skills to apply for and secure other jobs.



71% of apprentices stay with the same employer after their course has finished.

Post 18 Pathways Employment

After sitting Level 3 qualifications students may wish to start work, rather than staying in full-time education. One option would be for them to pursue an apprenticeship, but this not the only option.

A **school leaver programme** is a work-based training programme similar to a higher or degree apprenticeship, usually resulting in professional qualifications and/or a general education qualification which may be at higher education level. They are normally offered by large organisations, and have no national framework, so require thorough research to understand what is involved, and how the resulting qualification might be recognised outside of the organisation. Employers will set entry requirements, but these are normally similar to those expected

for university or higher or degree apprenticeships.

It may be the case that students find the perfect job outside of a higher education level training scheme. Students should still be encouraged to consider how they might combine their new role with learning, immediately or in the future; employers are increasingly looking for higher level skills, and so many will be supportive of employees who wish to train alongside fulfilling their position. Students planning to apply for study programmes separate to their employment post 18 would especially benefit from guidance from a [professional careers advisor](#).



Post 18 Pathways

Gap Year

After completing their Level 3 qualifications, some students may wish to take a gap year in which to go travelling, gain some work experience, or volunteer before they begin a course of study or full-time employment.

Some students will use a gap year to affirm the sector or subject area they wish to pursue, and these students may choose to apply for higher education or an apprenticeship during their gap year, with their Level 3 results to support their application. Others who are clear on their pathway, but simply want to take some time out from education, may apply during their final year of sixth form or college and defer their entry for a year.

Students should think carefully about their gap year, and try to balance enjoyable elements with

activities that will develop their skills and employability. Some organisations offer gap year programmes that offer students a chance to develop their skills and gain an insight into employment before going onto higher education. These placements can lead to permanent contracts, or offers of sponsorship for a degree. For examples of organisations that run these programmes, visit the [Student Ladder](#) website.



Case study: Beth Laxton

Former pupil at Grace Academy, Solihull

Beth Laxton went to school at Grace Academy in North Solihull. After gaining A levels in History, Geography and an AS level in biology she went on to do an apprenticeship with Xoserve, an agent of National Grid.

“I wanted to earn money but I didn’t want to give up studying and an apprenticeship enabled me to do both. The first 10 months of my apprenticeship I spent one afternoon going to college to get my IT qualification. The rest of the time I did tasks to support other team members. I ran my own mini project to help me get my NVQ Level 3 in business administration.

I interviewed for a higher level position within 12 months and was offered a permanent role in Customer Data Services. I have since been promoted again to a Credit and Risk Co-ordinator and earn twice as much as I ever thought I would be at 21. I am responsible for:

- Cash collecting over 1 billion pounds a month from our customers such as British Gas and Npower.
- Notifying Ofgem when a customer fails to pay.
- Monitoring and analysing risk of customers and deciding whether or not we should extend/stop credit facilities to them.
- Other administrative and organisational roles.

Looking back, university probably wouldn’t have been the best idea for me. I am much more practical than academic so an apprenticeship was the best route for me to take. I get paid exactly the same amount (if not more) than people with degrees in my organisation so having a degree doesn’t mean everything.

I am thinking of going to night school soon to get a degree in business administration, and it looks very likely that the company will be able to support me with some of the funding.”

Case study:**Ozair Said***Former pupil at Haberdashers Askes Federation, London*

Ozair Said went to Haberdashers Askes Federation in London. After getting A levels in biology, chemistry, physics and Product Design he started an advanced apprenticeship with WSP UK, while studying part time for a Level 3 BTEC in Building Services Engineering Technology and Project Management.

“With many stories of graduates from top universities unable to be employed in their fields, I realised that having on the job experience would be more advantageous than qualifications, and applied to the apprenticeship. The application process was all new to me as a school leaver; the Construction Youth Trust assisted with interview practice and CVs,

better preparing me for employment in the engineering sector.

I am currently working in Telecommunications and Controls within Rail Specialist Services, designing communication systems for major stations, airports, and transport hubs. Some examples of projects include Crossrail, Edinburgh Gateway Station, and Heathrow Airport.

My work is quite varied and could involve anything from writing reports, to drafting designs, to attending design coordinating meetings and carrying out site surveys. This variety makes engineering an exciting sector, as there are always developments

and a chance to interact with other disciplines.

I have had various types of training, such as in-house training for use of new programmes, and health and safety training through the Construction Skills Certification Scheme, enabling me to work in more complex projects.

I am currently working on the Crossrail Project and studying a BEng degree. An apprenticeship will give you an insight into the working world, allow you to network with so many people, and give you a head start in your career!”

Case study: **Heather Barrass**

Former pupil at Grange Technology College, Bradford

Heather Barrass went to Grange Technology College in Bradford. After doing A Levels in English, History and Graphic Design she has gone on to do a BA in Archaeology at the University of York.

“Before sixth form I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do after school but I was certain that I didn’t want to go to university. I saw it as a lot of unnecessary debt. I didn’t know many people who had gone to uni and the people I knew that hadn’t gone had all done quite well for themselves without a degree, so why should I bother? I also didn’t consider myself clever enough and thought that I had ages to figure something out.

I took part in the Teach First Futures programme, which opened my eyes to the different opportunities available at university and gave me a chance to meet and speak with past and present undergraduate students so I could make a more informed opinion and decision about university. Just hearing from teachers at school saying “going to university to get a degree will enhance your job prospects in the future” wasn’t very helpful for me.

Futures also helped me a lot in terms of thinking about university finance, giving me resources and information about the different types of aid I could get which I probably wouldn’t have found out about otherwise. In particular the

idea that university is an investment for my future, not just a collection of massive amounts of debt, was really influential.

Being on Futures pushed me to do new things, which helped me have confidence in my academic achievements and potential. It really highlighted the fact that I could thrive at and fit in at a Russell Group university – I was just as clever as other people at private schools, I just had to leave my comfort zone. I’m now studying Archaeology at the University of York, and it’s great!”

Case study:**Amanda Cheema***Former pupil at Eastbury Comprehensive, Barking*

Amanda Cheema went to school at Eastbury Comprehensive in Barking. After getting A levels in Economics, Business Studies and maths she went on to start a school leavers programme with Ernst & Young.

“I decided to choose this route as I was not entirely convinced that university was for me. I was always keen to get into the professional world as soon as possible and therefore felt this was a good option. It also allows me to study for a professional qualification which will allow me to qualify as a Chartered Accountant within four-five years, alongside getting paid for the job itself.

My job is really varied. I audit companies within the insurance sector and have have worked on various clients. The majority have been in London but I have also had my fair share of travelling up and down the country. To be in the audit sector you have to be training towards becoming a qualified chartered accountant which involves taking 15 exams over the course of five years. They are intense exams as you have to go to college for a period of time, but then use your evenings after work to revise and prepare for the exams.

In addition to college training, you get a variety of on the job training and coaching which is always helpful. So far, I have enjoyed my

time here and do not regret taking this route as opposed to going to university.

I’m halfway through my five year programme and have already been promoted to Senior Associate. Students should research the option of going into the professional world straight after school. If you believe it is the right route for you then it is definitely worth applying. Ensure you are well prepared for the interviews and also be willing to work hard if you get the place as balancing work and exams is not easy, but worth it in the long run.”

**What can you
do to support
the pupils
you teach?**

Section 3

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

In this section you will find guidance on supporting your students in three ways:

- 1. Building the mind-sets and skills necessary for progression**
- 2. Building the knowledge they need about life beyond school**
- 3. Supporting students into the next phase of their journey**

The guidance is divided by educational stage: early years and primary, secondary and sixth form, or throughout school. It includes suggested activities that can be delivered as part of subject teaching, during form or other pastoral time, or as extra-curricular provision. However, do not just limit yourself to looking at the activities for the stage that you teach, as some may be relevant for all ages.

The activities suggested here will be familiar – they are widely considered pedagogical best practice and will form many of the aspects of your daily teaching. We are not advocating whole schemes of work be developed to deliver the content outlined below; integrating activities into your academic and pastoral teaching will best reflect how these skills support, rather than conflict with, attainment and progression. Preparing young people for later life requires a shift in perspective, and a focus in your aims on personal development as well as academic outcome. For example, signposting how learning not only applies to an academic course but also to careers, or rewarding students for developing skills. If your students can recognise that they are developing mind-sets, skills and knowledge that will support them for their whole lives, they will better apply these competencies, and see the relevance of their studies to their futures. These outcomes can only support and bolster attainment.

Section 3

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

Click on the links to jump to the guidance.

Building mind-sets

[Curiosity](#)
[Aspiration and ambition](#)
[Confidence and self-worth](#)
[Growth mind-set and self-efficacy](#)

Building skills

[Reflection](#)
[Problem Solving](#)
[Resilience](#)
[Initiative and independence](#)
[Communication](#)
[Research, planning and organisation](#)
[Collaboration](#)

Building knowledge

[At early years and primary level](#)
[At secondary level](#)

Supporting transition

[At early years and primary level](#)
[At secondary level](#)

Building *curiosity*...

...at Early Years and primary level

...at secondary and sixth form

...throughout school

...within the curriculum

- Try to establish real world context by linking learning to local and global events, or ask students to reflect on when knowledge and skills might come in useful in their everyday lives or the workplace.
- Use your lesson starters as an opportunity to hook students into a topic – give them something to puzzle over and pique their interest, perhaps a striking image or some incomplete information.
- As a plenary or at the end of a unit of work, ask students what they have gained from or enjoyed about the day's learning, and what they would like to know more about.

- When students are self-assessing work, encourage them to pose a question for you to answer about the work at the bottom of their own comments. The question could be technical – 'how would I improve this paragraph?' or 'how can I further simplify this fraction?', or philosophical – 'why did behave in this way?' or 'how will knowing this support me in the future?'
- Offer wider reading lists for your subject, encouraging your students to talk to you about their reflections.
- Ask students to present to the class about research projects they have been set, and encourage their peers to ask questions.

- Experiment using learning questions to guide lessons rather than learning objectives – questions pose a challenge and stimulate curiosity, whereas objectives often give students the answer before the lesson has even begun. For example, 'why does it rain?' is more likely to promote curiosity than 'to understand the water cycle', or 'why does Beatrice marry Benedick?' is more likely to promote curiosity than 'to understand the expectations of women in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*'.
- Demonstrate your own love of learning by flagging to students when you discover something you didn't know before.

...outside of the classroom

- Set an extended research project as a series of homework tasks, encouraging students to become real experts on a narrow topic or area of study.

- Signpost opportunities for students to develop their engagement with topics further – is there an after school club they can attend if they have enjoyed a particular area of study?
- Use form time or school council meetings to give students the opportunity to plan and deliver awareness campaigns on a range of issues, both local and global.

- Keep parents and carers informed of what their child is studying through parents' evenings or newsletters. Directing parents to useful websites will help them to know where to find reliable information in partnership with their child. For more on working with parents and carers, [jump to this page](#).

Building *aspiration and ambition*...



...within the curriculum

...at Early Years and primary level

- After explaining what university is, ask the class to work in groups to design a university, giving it a name and a logo.
- When discussing current events, encourage students to reflect on how the world could be made to be a better place. Link these discussions to the types of employment that might enable students to make a difference in these areas.

...at secondary and sixth form

- Arrange for undergraduates from a local higher education institution to come in and deliver revision workshops. As students revise academic content, they will also be exposed to post 18 pathways and courses they may not have considered.
- Pepper lessons with more advanced material to demonstrate high expectations of students.

...throughout school

- Introduce your class to inspirational figures at the top of their fields with a range of career backgrounds, encouraging your students to look beyond those with 'fame careers' as role models.
- Give students the freedom to select the work they do and move freely between different levels of difficulty.

...outside of the classroom

- Create wall displays featuring people in different jobs.

- Take students to visit universities and ask undergraduates to talk to them about what they have gained from their studies and experiences. For more on working with higher education institutions, [jump to this page](#).
- Alongside visits to workplaces and universities, encourage students to attend as many other trips as possible – exposure to cultural opportunities broadens students' horizons, and may add to what they want from their futures.
- Talk about your students' potential for further study/careers with their parents. For more information on working with parents and carers, [jump to this page](#).
- During form time, ask students to reflect on what 'success' means to them. What are the stereotypical symbols or attributes of success? How important are these to their futures?

- Explain what university is and what your experience of it was.
- Bring in guests from a range of industries to speak about their jobs. Visit the [Speakers For Schools](#) website for support in engaging an inspiring speaker.
- Organise for students to go on trips to workplaces, experiencing different types of industries and employment first hand. For more information on working with employers, [jump to this page](#).
- Establish a regular slot in pastoral lessons or form time for an inspirational story or film.

Building confidence and self-worth...



...at Early Years and primary level

- Get students to invent an individual superhero who has their own academic and non-academic interests, skills and talents. Create a comic book or story about the superhero's adventures. Share with the whole class, emphasising that, although each superhero has different abilities, they are all superheroes.
- Write out personalised sticky labels, instead of giving students generic stickers.

...at secondary and sixth form

- When asking students to reflect on their performance, encourage them to use the pronoun 'I' consistently when describing their actions.
- At parents' evening or when you make phone calls home, talk about the potential each of your students has for university-level study.

...throughout school

- Challenge students when they express limiting views, of themselves or of others. Encourage them to believe in themselves by demonstrating your faith in them – see [Rita Pierson's TED Talk](#) for inspiration.
- Ensure you facilitate opportunities for all to share their ideas, allowing less vocal students to have their ideas heard and their value recognised.
- Ensure you regularly visit what students are doing well through teacher feedback, peer or self-assessment.
- Display labelled examples of student work that exemplify specific strengths. Encourage students to look at and learn from work by their peers.

...within the curriculum

...outside of the classroom

- If your school doesn't already have one, consider setting up a peer support or paired reading scheme, where older students are buddied with earlier years.
- Nominate a 'star of the day' to provide public praise of your students' achievements.
- Create an 'I Can' wall: a space where students can log small successes in the classroom and build self-confidence through a cumulative sense of achievement.

- Use form time to discuss landmark discrimination cases, focusing on the equality of rights of all, regardless of ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.
- During registration ask students to think of something they have done recently that they are proud of, and share this with a partner/the form.
- When target setting with students try to focus on building on students' strengths as much as developing their weaker areas.

- Take opportunities to publicly praise your students for a range of actions and achievements – hand out certificates in class or in assembly, telephone home or mention them at parents' evening, and send them to your head teacher for his or her recognition.

Building growth mind-set and self-efficacy...



...at Early Years and primary level

- Embrace struggle and failure – routinely ask students ‘what did you struggle with today?’ Celebrate failure as an opportunity for everyone to learn – ‘I’m so pleased you made that mistake, because we can all develop our understanding using it...’

...at secondary and sixth form

- Talk about comfort, stretch and panic zones – observe students’ zones and comment on them during lessons.

...throughout school

- Make links between effort and outcome clear in feedback, both verbal and written, and in discussions with parents.
- Be happy to share your own areas of development with students, both historical and present – demonstrate your own growth mind-set.
- Praise progress and effort rather than sheer attainment - hone in on the specific details of what students have done well in your verbal and written feedback.
- Present success criteria as a list that students can tick off as they complete different parts of a lesson.

...within the curriculum

...outside of the classroom

- Create a wall display of the educational ‘journey’ students are embarking upon in school, with a timeline for the different stages. Emphasise that the journey does not end once school does, but is a lifelong experience.

- Arrange for alumni to speak to students with a particular focus on growth mind-set – emphasising that most do not achieve things naturally, or without effort, but with constant small steps and support from teachers and parents. For more on working with alumni, [jump to this page](#).

Building reflection...



...at Early Years and primary level

- Encourage your class to keep a 'learning diary', where they record things they have enjoyed, and things they have found difficult.
- At the end of every day, ask a range of students to speak about what they enjoyed doing the most that day, and why they enjoyed it. You could also ask them to speak about what they now know or can do, that they could not this morning.
- Display each students' key areas for improvement somewhere they can easily and frequently see them. Teach students to use this list to assess their own work.

...at secondary and sixth form

- Build in opportunities for silent reflective thought, written reflection, and paired discussion – the 'think, pair, share' model.

...throughout school

- Ask students to evaluate their performance and progress, in both closed numerical scales and in more open reflective questions. For an example of scaled self-evaluation, see p5 of [Macmillan's Employability Toolkit](#).
- Encourage students to routinely reflect on their work, using the 'What Went Well', 'Even Better If' model, or 'two stars and a wish'. Have some prompts ready, and try to ensure students focus on the aims of the piece of work, rather than generic comments on quantity or appearance e.g. 'even better if I had written more/more neatly.'
- Ask students to describe how they have changed since starting the academic year/secondary school, and how they feel about how they've developed.
- The target chart and TIM coaching tool on p35 and 41 of [this handbook](#) are used on our Futures programme, to support sixth formers in thinking about their interests, skills and motivations; they could be adapted for younger students.

...within the curriculum

...outside of the classroom

- Make students responsible for completing monthly reviews and developing priorities for the week ahead. See p18 and 19 of [Macmillan's Employability Toolkit](#) for examples.
- Encourage students to continually update a log of their skills and interests- what they log could be used to develop a CV, application or personal statement. If they use the STAR framework (Situation, Task, Actions, Result), they are also developing a bank of experiences they could draw upon in a competency interview.

Building *problem solving*...



...within the curriculum

...at Early Years and primary level

- Engage your students in problem solving with a practical activity. Set out a range of varied equipment with a question in the middle of the table and encourage your students to work through the equipment, attempting to solve the problem both independently and collaboratively. Without realizing it, students are going through a process of trial and error.
- Create a card sort of decision making styles, e.g. asking for opinions from friends or family, picking the easiest, picking the most popular etc., and ask students to discuss the pros and cons of each.

...at secondary and sixth form

- In group discussion tasks, allocate a 'devil's advocate' role, with prompt question starters such as 'what if...?' and 'supposing...?'
- When preparing groups for a problem solving activity, introduce them to different styles of decision-making and ask them to choose the most appropriate for their team and task. See [this article](#) for examples.

...throughout school

- When asking students to come up with ideas, try to encourage them to mind map freely, without worrying about 'right', or 'wrong'.
- For a lesson on the rise of Adolf Hitler, for example, ask students to consider how you would go about improving a country's morale after losing a war.
- Create a selection of problems that students may face, both now, and in the future. Ask students to select one, and in pairs discuss how they would solve the problem – what steps would they take?

...outside of the classroom

- Set students problem solving activities when on trips and excursions outside of school, for example scavenger or treasure hunts.
- Use homework slots to engage students in problem solving – you could use this [national strategy document](#) for inspiration.
- Introduce students to the concept of using a [T-chart](#) for decision making. Ask them to use one to list the pros and cons of a choice they are considering. Discuss how they might then evaluate the chart to come to a considered decision.

- As part of your pastoral or PSHE curriculum, sign up to [LifeSkills](#) for free, and access a range of lesson plans and resources, including [this one](#) on problem solving.
- Introduce your form to [Pugh's decision matrix](#) as an advance on the T-chart method they should know from primary school, where options are scored against weighted criteria.

- In the workplace, students will often have to problem solve in a group. Introduce them to [this activity](#) when introducing team work, and discuss why it is more productive to be a SUN person rather than a RAIN person.

Building *resilience*...



...at Early Years and primary level

...at secondary and sixth form

...throughout school

...within the curriculum

- Run a 'people who help us' class project, focusing on who children can reach out to when facing different kinds of challenges.
- When students behave impulsively or lose their temper, ask them to reflect on this after the event. Ask them how they might manage their feelings better next time, and avoid getting upset or angry.
- Provide every student with a 'learning ladder' that shows steps to follow when they're stuck.

- Explore managing workload and achieving work/life balance when setting homework – discuss different approaches to homework and how they might impact on feelings of stress or anxiety.

- Remark when students have overcome a setback and use as a basis for discussion. How did they overcome the setback? What have they learnt? What can the rest of us learn from their experience? Encourage your students to see adversity as a challenge, and ultimately an opportunity to learn.
- Praise students who bravely attempt the most difficult tasks and problems, regardless of the outcome.
- Create a resource sheet that contains basic information relating to a new topic, which students can use to support themselves during ambitious pieces of independent work.

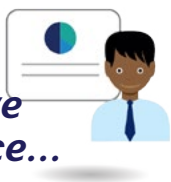
...outside of the classroom

- Take your students on trips to a range of workplaces – get them used to acclimatising to unfamiliar environments. For more on working with employers [jump to this page](#).
- Encourage students to go out of their comfort zone on outdoor trips and expeditions – overcoming physical challenges can translate to overcoming academic or workplace challenges.

- Explore exam and workload coping mechanisms during form time as part of study and revision skills. You will find ideas on this on the [Mind](#) and [Student Minds](#) websites.
- Signpost your students to enrichment, volunteering or summer school opportunities, both inside and outside of school, that will put them outside of their comfort zone. For examples, see p38 and 39 of our [Futures Pupil Handbook](#).

- Consider sourcing an organisation that specialises in developing resilience to deliver a workshop in your school. [How to Thrive](#) is one such organisation that offers sessions.
- Consider exploring what a workshop on mindfulness might offer in terms of building resilience. [Mindfulness in Schools](#) is a good place to go for more information.
- Ensure students know where they can access pastoral support – through their form tutor, on-site counsellor, peer mentor, or head of year, for example.

Building initiative and independence...



...within the curriculum

...at Early Years and primary level

- Make a regular habit of giving students a choice of activities or approaches in lessons to reach the same outcomes.
- Introduce your students to the concept of banking as part of a numeracy lesson, and discuss the benefits of saving your money in different kinds of accounts.
- Create opportunities for students to opt into more challenging work.

...at secondary and sixth form

- Investigate the possibility of students from older years leading parts of your lessons lower down the school (their head of year will have an idea of how well students may be able to cope with this alongside their studies).
- Setting homework as pre-work for lessons is an effective way to give students greater responsibility for their learning.

...throughout school

- Ensure there is a clear process in lessons for students to support themselves before they ask you for help, e.g. 'see three before me', accessible dictionaries/thesauri, active use of wall display or proof reading mats.
- Praise students when they take the initiative to do something positive e.g. helping one another with a task, gluing in worksheets, or engaging in wider reading unprompted.

...outside of the classroom

- Discuss students' independence with their parents or carers at parents' evening – how much responsibility does their child take for packing their bag or completing their homework? Discuss ways in which students can use their school planners or checklists to take an active role in these activities. For more on working with parents and carers, [jump to this page](#).

- Explore students' independence with their parents or carers at parents' evening – how much responsibility does their child take for completing their homework or scheduling opportunities to revise? Discuss ways in which students can use their school planners or phone calendars to take a proactive role in these activities. For more on working with parents and carers, [jump to this page](#).
- Encourage students to reflect on the value of their extra-curricular endeavours – what do they gain from the non-compulsory parts of their lives? What more could they do to maximise these opportunities?

- Facilitate opportunities for students to lead in extracurricular projects, e.g. fundraising events or stalls at the Christmas/summer fair.
- Devise an activity that requires students to allocate a budget – ask them to reflect on how wisely they divided their money between priorities as an evaluation of the task. This activity could be adapted for younger children.

Building communication...



...at Early Years and primary level

...at secondary and sixth form

...throughout school

...within the curriculum

- During group tasks, allocate students a range of roles including scribe, time keeper, and presenter, to give them a range of communication experiences.
- Give your students structured opportunities to debate and disagree with one another, with the support of appropriate phrases and frameworks. You can see suggestions on the [English Club](#) website.
- Include tasks where communication is essential to performance e.g. playing Articulate with a lesson's key terms, or 20 questions with characters from a novel/elements from the periodic table.

- Explore the range of approaches described on the [Voice 21](#) website when grouping your students for discussion.
- During group tasks, allocate students a role to give them a range of communication experiences. See [De Bono's six thinking hats](#) for inspiration.
- Consider using the [Harkness Method](#) to structure discussion in your lessons, placing the onus on students to engage in purposeful academic conversation with little or no input from their teacher.
- When you feedback on student communication, refer to the [four strands of oracy](#) developed by Voice 21: physical, cognitive, linguistic and emotional.

- Ensure you encourage both verbal and written accuracy of English in your feedback – consistently ask students to answer questions in full sentences using Standard English.
- Give your students opportunities to present, either independently or in groups, in front of the class, in assemblies or to you individually, and discuss the qualities and importance of confident delivery.
- During presentation tasks, discuss what good listening looks like with your students. Encourage them to ask questions and paraphrase to show understanding, and ask presenters to feedback to listeners.

...outside of the classroom

- Comment on communication when completing duties during break or lunch time – praise students who have played successfully in a group.

- Organise for your students to participate in interviews. Make these experiences as authentic as possible by inviting members of the local business community or governors to deliver them. The interviews could also be for real positions of responsibility, e.g. peer mentors or members of the school council.

- In preparation for election of school council members, ask students to produce and deliver a manifesto to their class.

Building research, planning & organisation...



...at Early Years and primary level

- Schedule time each week to use computers or tablets, to begin to develop pupils' research skills. Introduce them to the most effective ways to use search engines, and how to skim and scan for information.

...at secondary and sixth form

- Involve students in the planning process for trips and school events – introduce them to key concepts such as risk assessments and permissions.
- When setting students research homework, discuss how to find reliable and accurate information online, and direct them to credible websites.

...throughout school

- Get students to work in pairs or groups to deliver a part of a lesson/presentation/project – ask them to reflect on the planning process afterwards. How did they manage their time? How did they ensure they were on track? What would they do differently next time?
- Ask students to reflect on how a plan has supported them with a piece of work e.g. writing a story or carrying out a science experiment. Link this to planning of projects within the workplace and at home.

...within the curriculum

...outside of the classroom

- Spend some time developing research skills in your school library. Teach pupils approaches to capturing information including making notes and organising these notes in folders.

- Discuss the features of an effective revision timetable, and the process for producing one. [Examtime](#), [Get Revising](#) and [Revision World](#) are useful starting points that you can signpost your student to.
- Ask students to reflect on how they already use, or could use, technology in their planning. What apps or phone features could they use to support their organisation?

- Encourage students to get involved with the planning and delivery of school projects and productions.

Building collaboration...



...at Early Years and primary level

- Allocate 'learning partners' who support each other and evaluate each other's progress.

...at secondary and sixth form

- Create a mutually supportive team spirit by looking at class performance as a whole and competing with parallel classes.
- Reflect on leaders in history, government, literature, sport etc. – what qualities would students wish to emulate or avoid when in role as team leader, and why?

...throughout school

- Work with students to develop a set of class guidelines for collaborative work – what will ensure that group work is successful in your lessons?
- Rotate opportunities for students to play the role of 'team leader' in group tasks. Ask students to reflect on their performance in this role. Equally, ask students how they would appraise their actions as team member. You could build on the above by asking students to negotiate their roles based on strengths and weaknesses.
- Encourage students to offer one another constructive criticism verbally. What went well? Even better if?

...within the curriculum

...outside of the classroom

- Direct students to enrichment or summer school opportunities available in your local area – collaboration is a skill best tested when working with people who you don't know. For examples of these types of opportunities, visit the [National Citizen Service website](#).

- Signpost opportunities for student leadership within your school – do you have a school council, a peer mentoring or buddying scheme? Interested in introducing a scheme to your school? [See this guide](#) from the Mentoring Resource Centre.
- Facilitate opportunities for students to work in teams during extracurricular activities, be they sport, academic subject or skill specific e.g. debating. For support in setting up a debating club, see [Debate Mate's](#) website.

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

Building knowledge at primary level

Key Stage 1

What do students need to know?

- That there is a life beyond school, and that what they are doing in school is contributing to what that life will be like.
- The concept of job satisfaction.
- That literacy, oracy and numeracy are important skills for the real world, including for work.

What should you do to build this knowledge?

- Bring in guests to speak about their jobs. Students could interview them about what they like most and least about their work.
- Explore how English and maths are used in daily tasks, like shopping.
- Create wall displays featuring people in different jobs.

Key Stage 2

What do students need to know?

- The different stages to their journey in education.
- That there are many options open to them for their future.
- That in secondary school they will have to decide what GCSEs to study and at age 16, what further education or training routes to take.
- What university and apprenticeships are.
- That careers develop in different ways.
- The kinds of employment that are available in their local area.
- That there are laws to protect people in the workplace.
- Some of the core qualities that employers look for.

What should you do to build this knowledge?

- Create wall displays featuring students in different stages of their education, or an educational timeline, and discuss them with your class.
- Create three case studies of characters who have different jobs, or bring in guests or alumni of the school to speak about their jobs. For more on working with alumni, [jump to this page](#).
- Explain what university is and what your experience of it was. Ask the class to work in groups to design a university, giving it a name and a logo.

You can also find lots more ideas of how to develop knowledge of career pathways in the [ACEG Framework for careers and work-related education](#).

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

Building knowledge at secondary and sixth form level

Key Stage 3

What do students need to know?

- What university can do for them.
- What higher level alternatives to university are available, including apprenticeships.
- Some of the key terms associated with university.
- What learning is like in university and work-based settings.
- Their Key Stage 4 options and the implications of these choices on higher education progression/employability.
- The features and benefits of different types of Key Stage 4 qualification.
- That careers can develop in a range of different ways.
- That people have a range of experiences in the workplace.
- The information, advice and guidance available to them in school.

What should you do to build this knowledge...

...within the curriculum?

- Ask students to research someone they admire for homework, and describe their career development story.
- Facilitate opportunities for your students to visit a workplace, university or apprenticeship provider, and interact with employees, undergraduates and apprentices respectively. For more on working with employers [jump to this page](#), and for more on working with higher education institutions, [jump to this page](#).

...as a form tutor?

- Either as a class, or one-to-one, talk your students through their Key Stage 4 options, including the features and benefits of GCSEs and any vocational awards your school offers. Be clear on what the implications of these choices are on higher education progression/employability.
- Explore the different employment paths linked to particular subject areas, asking groups of students to produce posters for each faculty.
- Discuss any key stage four courses offered by your school that are not part of the Key Stage 4 curriculum e.g. sociology. What do the courses cover and entail?
- Encourage students to have a 'back up plan' should they not be able to study all of their first choice subjects.
- Create a display of key 'progression' terms and their definitions, including competencies, degree, graduate, campus, gap year, UCAS, apprenticeship etc.
- Describe your career development. Ask a colleague to do this as well so students can compare and contrast the two.
- Sign up to [LifeSkills](#) created with Barclays to access ready-to-deliver lessons on a range of employability topics targeted at 11-14 year olds.

[Click here for more information on choosing Key Stage 4 options.](#)

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

Building knowledge at secondary and sixth form level

Key Stage 4

What do students need to know?

- The options open to them post 16, and the implications of these choices on higher education progression/employment.
- The university landscape; different types of institutions (including Russell Group), degrees, courses and entry requirements.
- The school leaver employment and apprenticeship landscape.
- That their results at Key Stage 4 will determine what choices they have access to at post 16.
- What facilitating subjects are.
- The difference between school and college study.
- The difference between school and university study.
- Some of the features of different kinds of careers.
- That there are multiple pathways into careers, but that some will require you to have a degree or other specific qualifications.
- That their engagement with enrichment opportunities and work experience will determine the quality of their future applications.

What should you do to build this knowledge...

...within the curriculum?

- Bring in job descriptions linked to the subject(s) you teach and explore the qualifications required for them.
- Teach a part of a lesson in a higher education style, e.g. lecture or seminar. Ask students to reflect on the benefits and challenges of this style.

...as a form tutor?

- Provide advice and guidance to students and parents, at an event or one-to-one, about their Key Stage 5 options, including the features and benefits

of the pathways. Be clear on what the implications of these choices are on higher education progression/employability. For information on these topics, [jump to this page](#).

- For a digital service that enables students to explore post 16 options tailored to their subject and attainment profile, see the [Skills Route](#) website.
- Direct students considering applying to apprenticeships to [this advice](#) from the National Apprenticeship Service on writing effective applications.
- Ask students to read the [Russell Group](#) website and create presentations about facilitating subjects and its impact on choices.
- Bring in 17 and 18 year old students to talk about the different paths they have taken after GCSEs, including A level students.
- Design a hot seat activity where students can ask any question about university to a graduate (yourself, or a visitor). Pre-prepare questions (such as: why should I go? How much will it cost? Will I make friends there?) to get discussions going. Encourage honest questions, and invite students to tell you the myths they have heard about university.
- Ask pupils to weigh up the benefits and disadvantages of different types of careers e.g. self-employed versus employed.
- Create some fictional character case studies and ask your class to brainstorm what their post-school futures might be if they made poor or sound decisions.
- Sign up to [LifeSkills](#) created with Barclays to access ready-to-deliver lessons on a range of employability topics targeted at 14-16 year olds.
- Direct students to [this tool](#) developed by Which? that will support them in thinking about the degrees their A level or vocational award choices might lead to.

[Click here for more information on choosing Key Stage 5 options.](#)

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

Building knowledge at secondary and sixth form level

Key Stage 5

What do students need to know?

- The options open to them post 18, and the implications of these choices on their future careers.
- The application process for their chosen post 18 pathway, including key dates and deadlines.
- How to make a strong application for their chosen post 18 pathway.
- How and when to apply for student finance.
- What they will do if their results are better or worse than predicted.
- How businesses operate and measure success.
- How individuals use social media to network and market themselves.
- The skills universities and employers are looking for, and how to convey these skills in applications and at interview.

What should you do to build this knowledge...

...within the curriculum?

- Hold at least two of your classes in either a university or business and talk about the differences between the two environments. For more on working with employers, [jump to this page](#).
- Organise university subject-specific seminars and taster lectures.

...as a form tutor?

- Deliver a session on the different pathways open to students post 18 - [jump to this page](#) for information on these pathways.
- Direct students considering alternatives to a traditional university degree to the opening pages of [this publication](#) from GTI Media.
- Explain the UCAS application process in detail.
- Direct students considering applying to apprenticeships to [this advice](#) from

the National Apprenticeship Service on writing effective applications.

- Compare and contrast strong and weak personal statements with students.
- Ask students to develop and deliver a presentation on their post 18 plans to the rest of the class.
- Organise events and prepare literature around making firm and insurance choices, UCAS Extra, Clearing and Adjustment.
- Organise for a representative from a university to deliver a presentation on coping with the transition to independent living. Ensure students are aware of where they can get support if they need it. For more on working with higher education institutions, [jump to this page](#).
- Take students through the basics of student finance, and direct them to the [Student Loans Company](#) for more support and information.
- Ask students to work in groups to research and produce posters on key business terms such as corporate social responsibility, sustainability, globalisation etc.
- Run a session on creating a LinkedIn account, using [this guidance](#) from LifeSkills.
- Support students in thinking about their options if their results are better or worse than expected.
- Explore how higher education fits into the wider world – the research that universities are involved in, why the economy requires more graduates, etc.
- Run a session during form time on making the most of open days.
- Give students opportunities to practice a problem solving task in a group, to simulate a group exercise at interview.
- Sign up to [LifeSkills](#) created with Barclays to access ready-to-deliver lessons on a range of employability topics targeted at 16-19 year olds.

For a range of resources to support you with the activities above, [jump to this page](#).

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

Supporting transition at primary level

Transition to Secondary School

In the UK, students typically transition to secondary school aged 11, for the start of Year 7.

Why is this an important transition?

Successful transition to secondary school is a crucial factor in ensuring the continuity of a young person's academic and personal development. Early experiences of secondary school can either build upon a positive relationship with education, or prohibit an individual from viewing learning in a positive light. As one of the earliest substantial transitions for students, navigating this successfully will also ensure they feel equipped to deal with later transition points.

Why is this a difficult transition?

Secondary schools are much larger places than the primary schools students have become used to, and they will need to adjust to new routines, multiple teachers, and the anxieties of making new friends and fitting into a new cohort. It is typical for students to experience a dip in attainment in Year 7, with disadvantaged students being at more risk of this dip than more advantaged peers. For more on the challenges of transition to secondary school, see the research section of the [Teach First Cross Phase Toolkit](#).

What do students need to know?

- The secondary school options open to them.
- That there will be support available to them when they start secondary school, and how they can find and use the support.
- How their day to day routine will differ at secondary school.
- How their work in Year 6 will feed into their work in Year 7.

- That the move to secondary school is one of many transitions they will experience in their lives.

How can you support with this transition?

- Liaise with your linked secondary school to give Year 6 students opportunities to hear from Year 7 pupils about their experiences of starting secondary school. This could be through letters/an online blog, or through a more formal assembly/presentation, with an opportunity for question and answer at the end. For more on working with secondary schools, [jump to this page](#).
- Encourage students to develop a checklist of things they want to find out about secondary schools for when they visit at open evenings.
- Give students an opportunity to reflect on their experiences of taster days at secondary school, commonly taking place during Year 5. These reflections could form part of a homework project or presentation, and could be either written or digital in form.
- Ask students to research their new journey to school using online maps.
- Ask students to produce a table of similarities and differences between primary and secondary school. Use this as an opportunity to dispel myths, as well as ensure students are clear on the changes they will experience.
- If your school does not have a bridging unit for Year 6 pupils to directly prepare them for Key Stage 3, consider developing one. You could contact a core subject lead at your linked secondary school – they may be able to offer some insights into what could be included in a bridging unit, or direct you to a Key Stage 3 coordinator who may be prepared to co-plan with you.

For examples of primary to secondary cross-phase work in action, with relevant links and resources, please see the [Teach First Cross Phase Toolkit](#).

What can you do to support the pupils you teach?

Supporting transition at secondary and sixth form level

During their time at secondary school and sixth form students move through a number of decision points, from picking their GCSEs at twelve or thirteen, to choosing their post 18 pathway.

Explore the resources and guidance below to learn more about supporting your students up to and through these transitions.

Stage	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key Stage 5	All stages
Resources and guidance	Making decisions about Key Stage 4	Making decisions about Key Stage 5	Making decisions about Post 18 routes Why chose a Russell Group university Applying to higher education Applying to Oxford, Cambridge and specialist higher education courses Writing personal statements Accepting offers Understanding university finance	Helping students make pathway decisions Giving one to one support to students about pathways Supporting students with revision Helping students prepare for interviews

How can others help with post school progression?

Section 4

How can others help with post school progression?

In this section you will find guidance on working with stakeholders outside of school to support your students in developing their career skills and perspectives. Engagement with the wider world is vital if your students are to understand the relevance of their development in school to their lives beyond it. Evidence suggests that increased engagement with employers substantially reduces the likelihood of a young person becoming NEET.

For each type of organisation or individual outlined in this section, there is advice for both classroom teachers and school leaders on engaging with each, both on an ad hoc basis and at a more strategic level. When approaching any organisation or individual for

support, it is important that you have a clear idea of what you want them to contribute and the intended impact of any collaboration. Ensure you have the capacity in school to sustain their involvement, with a clear designated contact who manages the relationship on an ongoing basis.

In producing this section, we drew on the expertise, advice and guidance of a range of organisations; please visit their websites for further information. The organisations referenced here are examples of the great support available, but the list is by no means exhaustive – we would encourage teachers to explore local and regional networks for programmes that individual schools can access.

Click on a topic to jump to the relevant section.

Working with alumni

Working with career guidance providers

Working with employers

Working with higher education institutions

Working with parents and carers

Working with schools and colleges

Working with third sector organisations

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with alumni

Alumni are in an excellent position to affect the way students think about their futures. They are living proof of the possibilities open to students attending your school, and can understand exactly the unique challenges that face students from their community. They can also be more inclined to contribute to the development of students at their former school, and to do so in a substantial, meaningful way.

Future First are an organisation that support schools in engaging their alumni to effectively impact students, and have suggested the most effective ways to work with former students.

How should you work with alumni...

...within the curriculum?

Alumni from a range of industries can have real impact by being invited to co-deliver lessons with teachers. Possible roles for them fall into three main categories:

- Experts that add depth and context to material that teachers are covering.
- Guides to offer feedback from a professional point of view or act as 'judges' for projects.
- Resources to bring lesson content to life with a real world (free) example.

You should think about the role you wish your alumni to take before approaching them, and have a plan for the lesson available. This will enable them to fully understand what they will participate in, and what they need to prepare.

...through extra-curricular activities?

Alumni can support in workshops and assemblies that cover four main areas:

- Inspiring pupils and increasing knowledge of the world of work.
- Building motivation of targeted groups, such as those performing at below their potential, through coaching activities.
- Supporting key transitions by sharing subject and pathway options and providing tips around decision making.
- Developing employability skills by advising on CV preparation or providing mock interviews.

The possible formats of these sessions are flexible and wide ranging – from one off assemblies, to multi-session interventions, mentoring (in person and online), posters in school, online profiles or drop in clinics.

Continued...

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with alumni (continued)

How can alumni support...

...teachers?

Engaging alumni in collaborative planning with classroom teachers or key stage coordinators can be an enlightening opportunity to think about how the knowledge and skills employers use link to the national curriculum and exam syllabus of schools in their local area.

...the wider school?

You should consider their engagement with alumni as an integral aspect of your [whole school strategy](#). Leavers should expect to hear from their old school, and continue to consider themselves a part of it through updates, social activities and through activities that support current students.

Establishing this culture provides schools with a sustainable, varied volunteer base, who are experts in a wide range of areas and are emotionally relatable for current students. Alumni can also prove valuable members of the board of governors, bringing their experiences of education as well as employment.

To support your work with alumni jump to these pages on running effective trips and organising a guest speaker.



[Future First](#) aims to create a national culture of alumni engagement in state schools and colleges. Former students can have a transformative effect on young people's confidence, motivation and skills. They provide schools and colleges with the infrastructure, support and advice they need to build sustainable alumni communities in order to meet their students' needs.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with career guidance providers

Ensuring that students have opportunities for meaningful engagement with professional careers advisers as they move through their education is critical to ensuring students make considered and effective pathway choices, as well as fulfilling statutory school requirements.

Careers advisers have the expertise, both in terms of knowledge and delivery of guidance, as well as the impartiality to support students with a range of aspirations and academic profiles to achieve their goals. The contributions of a career guidance provider should form part of your whole school approach to careers – [jump to this section](#) for more information.

The Career Development Institute is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector, and has suggested the most effective ways for schools to work with career guidance providers.

How should you work with career guidance providers...

...through extra-curricular activities?

There are various ways that you can work with career guidance providers in your classroom, such as:

- One-to-one guidance interviews with students.
- Group work sessions on particular topics, such as apprenticeships, career management or employability skills.
- Sessions on Labour Market Information (LMI) for particular localities or sectors.
- Attendance at events and parents' evenings.
- Talks delivered to students and parents.
- Attendance at careers fairs.
- Drop-in surgeries.
- Support on results days.

Continued...



How can others help with post school progression?

Working with career guidance providers (continued)

How can career guidance providers support...

...teachers?

Career guidance providers can help teachers develop a greater understanding of relevant LMI, which can then be reflected in their own careers conversations with students.

...the wider school?

Career guidance providers can also have an impact on the whole school by providing:

- Support to the school's careers leader when running school-based CPD for careers and subject teachers and for tutor teams.
- Advice and support on achieving one of the careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) Quality Awards.

- Support to the careers leader and senior leader with responsibility for careers as they draft the school's strategic plan for careers.
- Presentations to the governing body.
- Advice and support ahead of an Ofsted inspection.
- Added value by joining the governing body.

For more on commissioning careers guidance services see [this guide](#) produced by the Career Development Institute.



The Career Development Institute is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector. It is responsible for the UK Register of Career Development Professionals, custodian of the National Occupational Standards, responsible for the new Framework for Careers, Employability and Enterprise Education, the Career Assured quality standard and UK Career Development Awards.

The CDI offers a special School Affiliate membership status, which can be renewed annually. School member benefits include an extensive CPD programme, free webinars and training, quarterly magazine, dynamic website, fortnightly news emails and use of the School Affiliate logo.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with employers

Engaging with employers is an essential component of a young person's education, supporting them in thinking about their future career, the kinds of jobs that they might pursue, and how they would access particular roles and industries.

Recent research suggests that students who have four or more interactions with employers during their time at school are significantly less likely to become NEET and are [likely to earn more across their careers](#). Businesses are increasingly looking to recruit young people based on their skills and competencies and are removing academic qualifications from their recruitment practices as seen most recently by PwC and Penguin Publishing. It is therefore vital that businesses work with schools to develop these broader skills sets. [Business in the Community](#) have suggested ways of working with employers.

How should you work with employers...

...within the curriculum?

Business volunteers can help to bring learning to life and enhance young people's attainment by enabling young people to apply their learning to a real business problem or project. This helps to give a sense of purpose as to why students are learning a particular element of the curriculum and builds their understanding of how this can support them both in their future career and life in general. It provides class teachers with:

- A professional development opportunity to enhance their teaching and learning.
- Access to opportunities for an ongoing relationship with employers for wider development opportunities.
- Access to materials to use in the classroom that businesses are often keen to provide.

When young people apply theoretical learning in solving a business problem they also develop an understanding of critical business facing language and employability skills.

Jump to this [video clip](#) to see how [Veolia](#) worked with St Francis of Assisi School in Liverpool to improve mathematical attainment.

You could also ask an employer to act as an independent reviewer of work, giving students a real world audience.

Continued...

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with employers (continued)

How should you work with employers...

...through extra-curricular activities?

Employers can offer work placements, work shadowing opportunities or host trips for students to gain an insight into a business environment. You could also invite employers into school to:

- Deliver career sector specific workshops, employability workshops or enterprise activities.
- Support students in developing their CVs or approaches to cover letters.
- Hold mock interviews, mock assessment centres and mock psychometric tests, or be on the panel for school leadership positions e.g. the school council.

- Work with small groups of students delivering mentoring, coaching or tuition - particularly useful for vocational awards where students are required to complete coursework that demonstrates real world application of skills.

Businesses can also involve students in their corporate social responsibility or community engagement activities. [Lex Autolease](#), for example, have been [working with the National Forest](#) for a number of years supporting a regeneration project to create a new forest. Since establishing a Business Class partnership with Stockport Academy through Business in the Community, they have involved students in tree planting and landscape management alongside Lex Autolease volunteers.

How can employers support... *...teachers?*

Teachers can work with employers by:

- Seeking local employer contribution to curriculum development, particularly in relation to vocational education and delivery of modules.
- Working with an employer to develop work-related assignments and briefs to support learning and module/unit achievement.
- Involving employers in informal assessment of assignments and allowing opportunities for them to give feedback to students to support their understanding of application of theory to practice.
- Visiting organisations to get first-hand experience of the opportunities available to students.

Continued...

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with employers (continued)

...the wider school?

When a business builds a long term partnership with a school, it is able to build a relationship based on trust and confidence. Through programmes such as [Business Class](#) coordinated by Business in the Community, that ask for a minimum three year commitment, partnerships work together to tackle challenges of a strategic nature which can often have the greatest impact.

Many employers are also keen to provide access to development opportunities for school leaders, teachers and school staff, such as mentoring, providing advice or assisting with the development of a school's vision or mission.

This is an excellent way to transfer best practice to help enhance leadership and governance. School leaders could:

- Invite employers to deliver staff development sessions on career areas related to subject fields and developing employability skills in students.
- Try to ensure there is at least one local employer on your board of governors.
- Build on relationships with employers by asking them to recommend or connect the school with other employers that may be able to support student or staff development.
- Inquire if employers are willing to share their financial management, marketing or human resources expertise.

For more on engagement with employers, see [this toolkit](#) produced by the Career Development Institute.

To support your work with employers jump to these pages on [running effective trips](#) and [organising a guest speaker](#).

Continued...

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with employers (continued)

Finding an employer

Sourcing employers to participate in or host events can be challenging, and in the first instance approaching the member of staff at your school responsible for employer engagement would be the most sensible way to try and organise an opportunity for your students. If support is not available from a colleague, there are a number of other avenues you might try in order to reach out to local employers:

- Large organisations often have outreach programmes for students and schools that you can apply for directly – explore their websites for details.
- Register your interest with [The Careers and Enterprise Company](#) if your school hasn't already done so, and they will put you in touch with an enterprise adviser who can support you in developing your employer engagement.

- Use your postcode to locate businesses local to your school that are open to supporting students at [Founders4Schools](#).
- School alumni can be a great source of industry knowledge, as well as being particularly well-placed to comment on pathways most relevant to your students – for more on working with alumni [jump to this section](#).
- Consider your own wider network, as well as those of your colleagues – do you know anyone personally that might be willing to offer an employer engagement opportunity to your students?

It is worth noting that cold calling is rarely the most effective way of sourcing employer engagement opportunities – try to leverage a contact or network, who will be more likely to consider the mutual benefits of a school or student visit.



Business in the Community (BITC) is the Prince of Wales's Responsible Business Network. Their members work together to tackle a wide range of issues that are essential to building a fairer society and a more sustainable future.

Business Class is BITC's flagship education programme. It is a school-business partnership programme, which provides an effective model for businesses to support schools, enabling the young people who attend them to achieve their best possible outcomes and leave ready to build successful working lives. To date over 500 secondary schools have been involved in Business Class, supported by 1,000 businesses, impacting on 140,000 young people across the UK.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with higher education institutions (HEIs)

Ensuring that students understand what university is, the experiences it offers, and how it can support career development is an essential role for schools. For many students, particularly those whose parents have not gone to university, there are misconceptions around higher education that inhibit them from considering it as a viable option for them.

If students can interact with universities across their primary and secondary school careers, their familiarity with the key terminology, lifestyle, and academic and pastoral support available will enable them to make a fully informed choice about their future. Below are some specific suggestions from the [University of Birmingham](#) on meaningful engagement activity with universities. Each institution will have different opportunities

available across the key stages, so make contact with your local HEIs and further education colleges to see what they can offer.

How should you work with HEIs...

...within the curriculum?

Higher education providers offer a range of masterclass programmes which often link to A level curriculum topics, and provide an extension to classroom delivery. Most universities will offer a range of subject taster days, as well as workshops on study and revision skills. There may also be opportunities for undergraduates from local universities to come into your school to provide one to one mentoring and subject support to students, or for lecturers to deliver a subject talk to students.

Many universities also have online resources which will support the

development of study skills that are important for the transition to higher education, and the delivery of Extended Project Qualifications (EPQ) such as [skills4uni](#).

...through extra-curricular activities?

Higher education providers offer a wide range of activities aimed at raising aspirations and attainment of young people for future progression to university. Activities include campus visits, taster days, residential experiences, mentoring, talks in schools and colleges and student panels. Sessions focus not only on university-specific content, but also on general employability and enterprise skills.

Universities will also attend guidance events, such as parent's events or careers fairs, to help students choosing GCSEs, A levels and other Level 3 pathways.

Continued...

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with higher education institutions (HEIs) (continued)

The [National Networks for Collaborative Outreach](#) (NNCO) scheme aims to encourage more young people into higher education. It brings together universities and further education colleges into local networks to provide coordinated outreach to schools and colleges. Each network has a point of contact who will:

- Help teachers and advisers find out about the outreach activity run by universities and colleges in their area.
- Provide general advice about progression into higher education.

Each network [hosts a website](#) with information about outreach activity.

[Realising Opportunities](#) is an example of a national network of selective universities providing support for sixth formers from less advantaged backgrounds.

Students considering alternatives to university may also benefit from engagement with the further or higher education providers that work with employers to deliver apprenticeships. It is possible to find and contact local learning providers directly through the [National Apprenticeship Service](#) website.

How can HEIs support...

...teachers?

Universities organise teacher conferences which include advice on courses, what admissions tutors are looking for, how to write academic references for students and current employment statistics and trends. Many are also engaged in teacher training and can provide development opportunities for practising teachers.

24 leading universities are working together with schools and colleges to develop CPD resources for

teachers and advisors who support learners making their Key Stage 4, Key Stage 5 and university choices. Visit [Advancing Access](#) for more details.

...the wider school?

Try to ensure there is at least one representative from a HEI on your board of governors.

To support your work with higher education institutions jump to these pages on [running effective trips](#) and [organising a guest speaker](#).



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

The [University of Birmingham](#) is a Russell Group university. It runs [Access to Birmingham](#) – an outreach scheme for young people in the West Midlands from families or communities where there is little or no experience of higher education.

Case study:

Michael Kolawole

Teacher of Computer Science, Ark Kings Academy, West Midlands

During the autumn term I accompanied five Year 11 pupils to an event launching a partnership between Teach First and Google to attract new science and computing teachers. It was held at the headquarters of Google and afterwards we went for a tour of the nearby Ark education charity HQ.

The aim of the trip was to spark pupil aspirations and help them to realise the steps they would need to take to achieve them. They enjoyed seeing first-hand the wide range technological roles and projects within Google, and by being around high-profile individuals, such as Liz Sproat (Head of Education at Google) and Nicky Morgan (Secretary of State for Education), they were able to accumulate social and cultural capital.

The pupils were able to gain confidence and communication skills through taking part in a round table at Google discussing the ICT/computing curriculum. Then when we toured Ark they managed to share clear and passionate ideas of their future goals with Ark employees, who were able to offer support on how the pupils would be able to achieve them.

The main challenge I found when organising the trip came from narrowing down the small logistical details. My school has a template which efficiently captures all of this crucial information - a comprehensive logistical plan is important to show to school leaders and to ensure the safety of pupils whilst they're off-site.

In order to maintain my classroom commitments whilst organising the trip I kept 30 minutes of 'sacred time' each day to ensure any emails/letters were followed up and any necessary updates were made to the plan. This is a particularly important point as the main challenge for external organisations dealing with teachers is the lack of communication (presumably because a teacher's to-do list is endless). Showing them that you can be flexible and reliable when responding to communications is essential to building rapport with organisations, and provides the foundations for more events in the future.

When organising a school trip it's important to:

1. Have a clear purpose for the event and make sure this is clearly communicated to all parties involved (staff, pupils, parents, external organisations, etc.). If the intended outcomes are clear to all, there's a higher chance of a lasting impact on the pupils.
2. Create follow-up activities for the pupils. It's easy to simply stop communicating the message once the event has concluded but, to ensure a long term impact, ask pupils to share what they've experienced with their classmates, write action plans for what they would now do differently and at the very least feedback to other staff so you're in a better position to improve future events.
3. Ensure these events are part of the wider plan and vision for your school and its pupils. Rather than having events take place in isolation, if possible, seek to have events follow on from one another. For example, an onsite workshop on the misconceptions of attending university can then be followed by a trip to a university for a more hands on experience.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with parents and carers

Parents and carers are an integral source of progression and careers support to young people, and have an influential position to affect the choices their children make.

In a [recent report](#) published by GTI Media, only 5% of students surveyed said they had taken 'no notice' of their parents' wishes when choosing their post 18 options. Families should therefore be considered a key component in the delivery of information, advice and guidance to students.

If schools can engage with parents and equip them to support their children in thinking about their education and career journey, students are much more likely to access and sustain the pathways

that are right for them. Parents, like many teachers, can have misconceptions around particular routes that need to be dispelled, as well as important insights on their child's skills and interests.

The most effective progression support will connect parents and teachers to ensure the needs of every student are met.

GTI Media have recently published a [parents' guide](#) to supporting school leavers which contains the features, benefits and opportunities of different post 18 options, or parents could use [this guide](#) from Inside Jobs to guide the conversations they have with their child.

Continued...

The information included here was either collated or translated by Annemarie Oomen. Annemarie is a careers practitioner and consultant, who has worked with a range of global organisations across her career including schools, universities, governments and NGOs. She has expertise in a range of approaches to careers education, including parental involvement in careers guidance.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with parents and carers – *The Principles*

Research carried out in the Netherlands by Mariëtte Lusse, identified ten factors for effective parental engagement in student progression and career perspectives:

1. **Parents feel welcome** when visiting the school. They are invited to do so on a regular basis, and feel their contributions are valued by teachers and school leaders.
2. **Parents develop relationships with classroom or form tutors** at the start of the school year, at an introductory meeting. This avoids the risk of parents and teachers meeting for the first time to address a problem.
3. **Schools work with families to find the most appropriate person to support their child's progression and career perspectives**, should parents or primary carers not be the most appropriate. For a range of reasons, an elder sibling, aunt, uncle or grandparent may be a young person's primary source of advice and guidance above their primary carer – schools should work with parents to recognise when this is the case.
4. **Students are present when parents and teachers meet to discuss their progress** – it is then clear to all parties the positions and perspectives of each stakeholder, with far less capacity for misunderstanding.
5. **Parents feel contact from the school is a dialogue**, rather than a one way conversation. Literature and events delivered around progression and careers give parents an opportunity to voice their concerns, questions, input or feedback.
6. **Parents receive concrete advice and clear resources to frame the careers conversations** taking place in the home, to best support their child.
7. **Parents receive contact from the school to celebrate successes**, as well as when there are concerns.
8. **Careers and pathways form a central component of what is discussed with parents** when they have contact with the school. Parents should understand the choices open to their children and consider those that are best suited to their interests, skills and needs.
9. **Development targets for young people around careers and pathways should include clearly outlined actions by student, teacher and parent.**
10. Where students or parents are disappointed in either exam results or pathway options offered or explored by the school, **they should feel confident to raise these concerns** and that they will be addressed by the school.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with schools and colleges

In order to best support your students with progression it will at times be necessary to work with other schools and colleges. This may be to ensure smooth transition between primary and secondary school, or between secondary school and sixth form, or to ensure your students hear from providers of qualifications your school does not offer, such as applied vocational awards.

In the simplest terms, there are two ways a school or college can engage with your students:

- Through a visit to their site. For guidance on running effective trips, [click here](#).
- Through delivering a session at your school. For guidance on arranging guest speakers, [click here](#).

Wherever possible, both these experiences should include interaction with a student/s to gain their perspective on transitioning to a new institution.

Those wanting to develop a more comprehensive strategy for successful transition should consider how a range of interventions might be scheduled across the school year. Lynda Measor identifies five 'bridges' that need to be crossed for successful transition ([Measor, 2005](#)); your approach should ensure activities enable students to cross these successfully. Measor's bridges were developed with primary to secondary transition in mind, but could be applied to transition more generally. The table on the following page describes them.

For more on preparing your students for the next stage of their education, [jump to this page](#) for primary to secondary transition, and [jump to this page](#) for transition to post 16 and 18 pathways.

For examples of primary to secondary cross-phase work in action, with relevant links and resources, please see the [Teach First Cross Phase Toolkit](#).

Teach First participants and ambassadors can access more cross-phase resources [here](#) and [here](#).

Continued...

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with schools and colleges

Bridge	Includes	Examples
Bureaucratic	The general management of the transition process - formal liaison between schools, usually at the senior management level.	Transfer of pupil records; achievement data; meetings and visits (parents, head teachers); etc.
Social	Social links between students and their caregivers with the new school prior to and immediately after transfer, and student 'induction' into the new school.	Induction days; open evenings; special visits for use of facilities; school orientation; classes; booklets; etc.
Curriculum	Improving curriculum continuity between primary and secondary - sharing plans for the content to be taught on either side of the 'divide'. Teachers rather than senior managers would be involved here.	Cross-phase teaching; bridging units; summer schools; joint training days; sharing or shared planning.
Pedagogic	Continuity in classroom practice and teaching - developing a shared understanding of how students are taught, not just what they are taught.	Understanding differing teaching styles, perspectives and skills; CPD; teacher exchanges at primary/secondary.
Management of learning	Ensuring pupils are active participants in their transition. This would entail empowering the student and the family with information about achievement and needs and the confidence to articulate these needs in the new environment.	Information to parents/pupils; learning portfolios; samples of achievements; pupils' awareness of needs/talents.

AAIA, 2000; Fuller, 2005; Galton, 1999; Measor, 2005; GSR, 2011

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with third sector organisations

There are many charities and social enterprises working to support students in developing the skills and mind-sets necessary to achieve excellent post school progression, as well as the knowledge and grades to access aspirational pathways. Engaging the services of those most appropriate to your school context is an important part of your work in leveraging wider stakeholders to secure the best possible outcomes for your students.

Teach First partners with a number of social enterprises and innovative projects that share our mission to end educational inequality. These organisations are detailed below, with some information about their work, their impact, eligibility for their support and the areas in which they work.

Future First

The offer

[Future First](#) helps state schools build, engage and mobilise a network of former students to support current pupils as relatable role models, inspiring careers speakers, volunteers to enrich the curriculum and more. Students educated in state schools, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are less likely to believe that people like them can succeed. By bringing back successful and relevant former students, schools and colleges can dispel this myth and open students eyes to the range of opportunities available to them after school.

The impact

Over 75% of students who leave Future First workshops and assemblies, having heard from former students, commit to working harder in their next lesson and feel more confident that they too can go on to succeed in the future.

Eligibility

Future First work with secondary schools and colleges.

Availability

Across England and Wales

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with third sector organisations

Teach First Futures

The offer

Futures inspires and supports sixth-form students to make informed and ambitious life choices. The programme is targeted at students who come from groups under-represented at university, including those whose parents didn't attend university and those who have claimed Free School Meals.

Participants have proven academic ability at GCSE (minimum six Bs) and would benefit from additional support to help guide them through important decisions when choosing higher education. Pupils are provided with a programme of activities including university day trips, a four-day residential Easter School and sessions designed to provide an insight into different career paths. Pupils are matched with a mentor who supports and guides them while they are making choices about their future. Those applying to Oxford or Cambridge are offered additional support.

The impact

In 2015, 82% of Futures pupils progressed to higher education, of which 40% progressed to Russell Group universities. Pupils involved with Futures are 50% more likely to progress to Russell Group universities than their peers with similar characteristics, according to independent evaluation from research.

Eligibility

Futures works with secondary schools. To find out whether your school is eligible, contact access@teachfirst.org.uk.

Availability

Various locations in England.

Unifrog

The offer

Unifrog makes it easy for students to find and apply for the best courses and apprenticeships for them, and the platform also saves staff time. It is the only place where young people can compare every post-16 and post-18 opportunity in the UK – everything from university courses, to School Leaver Programmes, to MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) to Oxbridge colleges. As well as making it easier for students to find opportunities, Unifrog helps schools to manage the application process – it provides one place for students and teachers to write and feedback on Personal Statements and Teacher References. Unifrog is a one-stop-shop for improving student destinations: students and teachers always know their next task, and nothing ever gets lost.

The impact

96% of students say Unifrog was helpful or very helpful in supporting them to find the best next step after school. Staff reduce the time they spend managing the applications process by 40% - the equivalent of more than one full-time member of staff per school.

Eligibility

Unifrog work with secondary schools. Subsidised subscriptions and increased support are available to schools in special measures and with 30% or more of students in receipt of free school meals.

Availability

Across England and Wales.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with third sector organisations

The Brilliant Club

The offer

[The Brilliant Club](#) is an award-winning charity which supports non-selective state school students to secure places at leading universities. Through its Scholars Programme, The Brilliant Club recruits, trains and places doctoral and post-doctoral researchers in schools and sixth-form colleges to deliver programmes of university-style tutorials to small groups of students. The Scholars Programme also incorporates structured visits to two leading universities.

The impact

Through the Scholars Programme, students develop knowledge, skills and ambition to help them secure places at highly selective universities. In the 2014 cohort of school leavers, three quarters applied to a highly selective university and nearly half are now studying at one.

Eligibility

The Brilliant Club work with all non-selective state schools.

Availability

Across England.

Enabling Enterprise

The offer

[Enabling Enterprise](#) is a social enterprise that works to offer all students the opportunity to develop enterprise skills, experience the world of work and develop aspirations to be successful. It achieves this through partnership with more than 70 top businesses, including BT, Virgin and Morgan Motors. Enabling Enterprise brings the world of work into the classroom through lesson time projects, challenge days and trips to businesses. It provides a full package of enterprise skills assessment for your students, full teaching materials, and teacher training and support to help embed the programmes into your curriculum. It also organises trips to businesses.

The impact

Students on Enabling Enterprise's programmes complete an enterprise skills assessment at the beginning and end of their participation. Students on the programmes make more than twice the level of progress in eight key skill areas compared to students not following the programmes. This is backed up by their teachers, 97% of whom report attributable progress in at least six of the eight enterprise skills.

Eligibility

Enabling Enterprise work with all schools.

Availability

Across England.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with third sector organisations

Future Frontiers

The offer

Future Frontiers offers students eight sessions of one-to-one careers coaching, alongside assertive mentoring from top undergraduates. Trained coaches work with students on a rigorous programme of career exploration and discovery, guiding them to discover inspirational careers and the development required to achieve them. Future Frontiers then connects them (via Skype) to professionals who work in the student's key areas of interest. Assertive mentoring ensures that they are held to account on their academic and developmental plan – students must provide regular evidence of the concrete steps to achieving their development goals.

The impact

At one London school, participants who were underachieving by 30% made more than twice the academic progress in core subjects as those who didn't take part in the programme. Coupled to this, 94% of students on the programme agree or strongly agree that they know how lessons at school will help them to achieve their top careers, compared to 54% before the programme. Students also report a transformational effect on their engagement with their education and a key understanding of how their academic targets relate directly to their own idea of long term success.

Eligibility

Future Frontiers work with secondary schools. To find out whether your school is eligible for support, please contact Dominic Baker on dbaker@futurefrontiers.org.uk.

Availability

Across England.

The Access Project

The offer

The Access Project works with high-potential students from disadvantaged backgrounds, providing in-school support and personalised tuition, to help them gain access to selective universities. Personalised, one to one academic tuition is delivered weekly by high achieving graduates now working in business. These sessions are proven to help students achieve better grades needed to gain places at top universities. In school support is delivered by a programme co-ordinator who provides bespoke and ongoing high quality information and guidance on the pathway to a place at a selective university. The Access Project works with 40 students in each school from years 10 to 13. We currently work with 18 schools across London and the West Midlands.

The impact

Students at an Access Project school are twice as likely to attend a selective university than students at a comparable school. Academically, students make an average six months' more progress than their non-tutored peers, and are twice as likely to be offered a place at university when compared to a student with the same A level grades. In one school, since joining the project in 2011, 29 pupils have met offers to Russell Group universities, compared to four in the three years prior.

Eligibility

The Access Project works with secondary schools who serve highly disadvantaged communities. To find out whether your school is eligible for support from The Access Project, please contact Lucy Ball on lucy@theaccessproject.org.uk

Availability

London and the West Midlands.

How can others help with post school progression?

Working with third sector organisations

In2ScienceUK

The offer

[In2scienceUK](#) supports students from low income backgrounds progress to science, technology, engineering, maths, psychology and computer science degrees and careers by providing students with summer placements enabling students to meet and work alongside scientists working on cutting edge research. Students also attend STEM specific workshops with different focuses from STEM careers to writing a personal statement. This unique experience enables students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to experience research science first hand and gain the information and support they need to progress to top Universities and STEM careers.

The impact

Annual impact reports* show that each year:

- 74% of In2scienceUK students' progress to university
- 48% progress to Russell Group universities
- 100% of students say they would not have been able to arrange a placement for themselves
- 80.4% of students now know how to successfully apply to university

**Data cited represents the lowest %s from last 5 years*

Eligibility

In2ScienceUK work with students in Year 12 studying a Level 3 STEM qualification who are eligible for free school meals or whose parents have not attended university.

Availability

London, the South East and the South West.

National Citizens Service (NCS)

The offer

[NCS](#) is a part-residential experience focused around fun and discovery for 16-17 year olds, who commit 30 hours to a local community project. Young people work in diverse teams of 12-15, building skills for work and life, taking on exciting challenges, making new friends, and contributing to their community. The programme runs outside of term time, with most young people taking part in the summer holidays post-GCSE. It is free for schools to get involved, and costs students no more than £50 to participate. Bursaries are also available for young people for whom the cost would be a barrier.

The impact

95% of participants say that NCS gave them a chance to get to know people they wouldn't normally meet and 83% feel more positive about people from different backgrounds after NCS. NCS also offers opportunities to develop essential skills for work that employers want, as well as the character strengths and confidence that will stand participants in good stead for life. 92% of participants feel that NCS gave them a chance to develop a skills that would be useful in the future.

Eligibility

NCS work with all secondary schools. For more information go to visit the [NCS website](#) or contact NCS on education@ncstrust.co.uk.

Availability

Across England.

**How can you
take a whole
school approach
to progression?**

Section 5

How can you take a whole school approach to progression?

Whilst previous sections of this toolkit have focused on practical ideas to implement in schools and classrooms, we believe that sustained interventions across a whole school are crucial in the long term. A consistent school wide approach provides clarity to all staff and ensures that post school progression is promoted by all. It is vital a whole school approach is endorsed by the senior leadership team (SLT) and governors to ensure it is a prioritised part of the school's culture, and is embedded in classrooms and tutorial sessions for all students.

It might be daunting when first considering how you could achieve this, so this section sets out how you can create a whole school strategy around pupils' post school progression including some best-practice frameworks and ideas.

A strategy, put simply, is a plan to bridge the gap between where you are now and where you want to get to.

It helps you to work out:

1. The position you're in now
2. Where you want to get to
3. The steps you need to take to get there
4. How you will evaluate and make improvements

It is a document that is 'live', needs to be referred back to and evaluated regularly and be available to all tiers and departments across your school – the strategy won't be successful if only one person knows about and uses it.



Only **8%** of schools have a *systematic approach* to integrating careers into the curriculum⁵

How can you take a whole school approach to progression?

What to include

To put together your whole school strategy, here are some examples of what you should think about and include.

1. The position you're in now

It's a good idea to begin with an exercise to fully understand your current provision for post school progression and any challenges you are facing with it. To do this you could complete a whole school [SWOT analysis](#), where you research, capture and reflect on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (barriers) in your provision. Don't rush this stage – it will take time to do well, and set you up to create a successful strategy.

Here are some ways to help get a full picture for this:

- Survey what teachers and wider staff in your school are already doing, both individually and with the help of other colleagues or external providers.
- Refer to existing systems, processes or policies and understand how these are disseminated to staff members.
- Ask a cross-section of staff what their perceptions of your current approach are.
- Ask students, parents, employers, and other key groups about their experience of your progression provision, and what they would like to learn more about.
- Conduct desk/market research about what external providers are based near you, or what other schools in your area are doing.
- Look at what's happening across all key stages and year groups, if it is being delivered in pastoral time and/or within the curriculum and how widely known the work is.
- Use these [good career guidance](#) benchmarks as an auditing tool, by mapping your current provision against them.
- Consider if what you're doing now is driven by pastoral staff, teaching staff and/or by the leadership team and how much this area of work is deemed a key priority for the school.
- Think about how your current provision is monitored and evaluated and if its impact is understood.

How can you take a whole school approach to progression?

What to include

2. Where you want to get to

Having a vision or mission statement for your progression provision is crucial as it provides clarity about what you are aspiring for, and is a good starting point for writing or reviewing your strategy. You should make sure your vision links to your school's values, and build on it by recording the specific actions you need to take to reach it.

Key points to consider when working out what you'd like to achieve are:

- That the words vision and mission can be interchangeable, but essentially what you need is a statement that sets out what you're aiming for and why.
- List the desired outcomes for the school, the teachers, the students and any other 'end goals'

you're trying to achieve through this strategy.

- That the parents of your pupils are included in the audience of your strategy – what do they want to know about how you are going to support their child's post school progression?
- What is in/out of scope? It's important to be realistic and understand what you're not going to be doing as part of this project as much as what you will be doing. For example, you may be able to commit to inviting an external speaker from a local business to an assembly once every half term, but you might be setting yourself up for failure if you tried to get someone in once a week.
- Decide on the milestones and performance indicators that you'd like to reach so that you'll be able to see if you are achieving what you've set out to do.

Example vision statement

"We believe that every pupil should be able to reach their potential in their future. We aim for all of our pupils to make fully informed decisions about their future jobs or courses, so that they can pursue a route that best suits their ability and aspirations."

How can you take a whole school approach to progression?

What to include

3. The steps you need to take to get there

This is the part where you set out actions you are going to take. These should be [SMART](#) – specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound - and show how you will check your progress. Here are some things you should think about doing:

- Define who in the school will be involved in delivering your strategy, and how, using the [guidance on this page](#).
- Spend considerable time thinking about and talking to others in school about the actions you could take – this will help to get buy in for the activity you want to see happening in school.
- Consider any training which may be required so that staff feel equipped to take action on careers and progression learning.
- Think about actions that can be carried out in the short, mid and

longer term. You can jump to [section three](#) or [section four](#) for inspiration and use these [good career guidance](#) benchmarks to work out the interventions you are going to put in place.

- Set out in a table, or use a project planning template such as [Gantt chart](#), the SMART actions you want to do against the time they will take to complete.
- Add in outcomes and evaluation measures against each SMART action so that you are clear on what you are hoping to achieve, how you will know if outcomes have been met and so there is a plan to measure the impact of your activities.
- Assign responsibility and a deadline for completing each task in your table/project plan, making sure to check with individuals about their capacity to commit to actions.
- Decide how you/others will

keep on track, such as through regular meetings with other staff members to review your progress against the performance indicators you've set.

- Cross reference any other school policies to make sure they don't have conflicting information in them.
- Make sure you have budget available for any activities that will have a cost attached.
- Ensure SLT have been involved with the strategy, sign off the final version, are the ones to launch it to all existing staff and raise awareness of it for new staff.
- Engage the board of governors in the process by presenting your plan, and updating them at appropriate milestones.

Example of a SMART action

Instead of “Build relationships with local businesses” you could say “Research and contact at least 10 local businesses, and arrange for six of them to present in a series of assemblies themed around employability skills in the spring term.”

How can you take a whole school approach to progression?

What to include

4. How you will evaluate and make improvements

So, you've created your strategy and started ticking off the actions in your plan – what now?

- Use regular meetings to assess progress and identify if any changes are needed if performance indicators are not being met – keep asking yourself 'are staff still bought in and is this strategy being embedded across the school?' and 'do all staff know their role within the strategy and are they carrying out their duties effectively?'
- Set out how often you will review and update the strategy such as annually or every other year – it

might be good to include the most recent review date, with signatures from the careers, SLT and governor leads when you do this.

- Set times to repeat the exercises you completed in stage one, where you worked out your current position, such as surveying staff, students and parents. How do the results compare?
- Talk to staff members that have recently joined the school – do they know what the careers strategy is and where to find it? If not, make sure that this is included in future inductions for new staff.

Good strategy

- Is focused on the problem(s) and root causes
- Identifies clear steps to get to where you want to be
- Has a logical structure: a diagnosis, a guiding policy, and coherent actions
- Is available to all staff, who know what the school's approach is

Common pitfalls of strategy

- Doesn't fully recognise the problems that are faced
- Tries to please everyone
- Confuses strategy with a vision or stand-alone decision, and doesn't pay attention to the actions needed to achieve it
- Is held by a single person or small amount of people, and is unknown to the whole staff body

How can you take a whole school approach to progression? Who needs to be involved?

In short, the answer to this question is everyone. Without the buy in from all members of staff across your school, your students won't receive consistent and joined up provision, risking them missing out on vital information or the chance to fully understand how their own skills translate to possible progression pathways.

In our [Careers in the Classroom](#) report, we identified six roles over three levels where teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting progression, which you can see on the next page.

These roles should work together and are most effective when they are all connecting as part of a coherent whole school programme. The vital role is that of a well-trained career leader, who should be

responsible for leading the development of a whole school progression strategy and ensuring that it is implemented effectively.

Often teachers are already engaged in one of these six roles to a greater or lesser extent, but when developing your strategy you should ensure that you clearly assign staff to each of these roles and communicate what each person is responsible and accountable for. This will ensure that responsibilities around careers and progression education are spread across all teachers in school.

Continued...



Half of schools and colleges don't have any governor involvement in careers guidance.

How can you take a whole school approach to progression? Who needs to be involved?

At leadership level - middle leaders and senior leaders

School leaders have a vital role in embedding your approach to post school progression as a core part of the school's overall strategy. Someone in a middle or senior leadership position should have the role of career lead, to direct and coordinate all progression activity. There are significant benefits to this role being taken on by a teaching member of staff so that they can support with curriculum planning and pedagogy of careers and progression delivery. They should also be responsible for building long term partnerships with external organisations and employers and for ensuring all staff are trained, for example, on up-to-date labour market information, qualifications and progression routes.

Senior leaders provide the direction and recognised authority that is needed for the strategy to be successful. They have capability to ensure that post school progression is incorporated into a school's culture and values and that the necessary resources and time are invested to make it work.

At teaching level – subject teachers and careers teachers

By embedding careers information into teaching, subject teachers provide the connections between academic subjects and their real world applications. This enables students to envision the different pathways they could take and helps them understand how their school studies will benefit them in later life, which in turn increases motivation.

Outside of subject specialisms, careers teachers use PSHE, tutorial time or off-timetable days for learning focused on practical activities, such as writing applications and interview preparation, or developing the mind-sets and skills needed for successful progression, such as reflection or communication.

For more details on building mind-sets, skills and knowledge of progression options within the classroom [jump to this section](#).

At tutorial level – pastoral support and careers informants

Young people frequently seek careers support from a trusted adult within their immediate network, such as a teacher or member of school staff. Through informal conversations about their own career choices, form tutors can help shape students' understanding of progression routes as a career informant.

Form tutors also provide important pastoral support, help students' with any concerns or personal issues relating to accessing progression route, in particular at transition points when choosing subject/course options. Forms tutors are also likely to be the main point of contact for parents, contributing to, and in some cases leading, conversations about their child's progression choices.

For more details on supporting the transition between academic stages and building knowledge of progression routes outside of the classroom [jump to this section](#).

How can you take a whole school approach to progression? Gatsby good career guidance benchmarks

In a recent report, The Gatsby Foundation outlined what good careers guidance should look like in all schools. From researching international and national best practice, it included eight benchmarks recommending what was needed for a successful whole school strategy on post school progression.

Several organisations, including Teach First, the Careers and Enterprise Company and the Sutton Trust, as well as all career quality awards, have embedded these benchmarks into their work. When developing your whole school strategy, you should use these to inform the interventions you provide for your students by mapping out what you currently provide against them so you can plan to fill the gaps. Please note each benchmark is further broken down into sub-benchmarks on p35 of the report linked to above, which you may find useful when planning your provision.



How can you take a whole school approach to progression?

Gatsby good career guidance benchmarks

The Benchmarks	Description	How can this toolkit help?
1. A stable careers programme	Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers.	Create your whole school strategy using information in Section five .
2. Learning from career and labour market information	Every student, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.	Share the information in Section two .
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil	Students have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.	Use the information in Section one .
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.	Incorporate examples from Section three .

Continued...

How can you take a whole school approach to progression? Gatsby good career guidance benchmarks

The Benchmarks	Description	How can this toolkit help?
5. Encounters with employers and employees	Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.	Get guidance on working with employers in Section four .
6. Experiences of workplaces	Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.	Get guidance on working with employers in Section four .
7. Encounters with further and higher education	All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.	See how you could work with universities in Section four .

Continued...

How can you take a whole school approach to progression? Gatsby good career guidance benchmarks

The Benchmarks	Description	How can this toolkit help?
8. Personal guidance	Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all students but should be timed to meet their individual needs.	Commission the support of a career guidance provider and use the information in Section four .

Other frameworks you may find useful for developing your whole school strategy:

- [Framework for careers, employability and enterprise education for students from 7 – 19](#) from the Career Development Institute
- [Developing Careers Work](#) from CASCAID

Appendix

Click on a title below to access the appendix document.

- Appendix 1 - Problem solving
- Appendix 2 - Evaluating the Key Stage Four options
- Appendix 3 - Evaluating the Key Stage Three options
- Appendix 4 - Evaluating the post-18 options
- Appendix 5 - Russell Group universities
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- Appendix 7 - Giving one to one support
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Teach First Access Department authors and contributors:

- Maxine Barrett
- Rachel Brown
- Nicola Farrow
- Megan Clatworthy

Contact:

access@teachfirst.org.uk
@TeachFirst | #TFaccess

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