

Careers and enterprise provision in England's secondary schools and colleges: State of the Nation

Introduction and background

This report from the Careers and Enterprise Company provides an overview of careers provision in England's schools and colleges at the end of the academic year 2017-2018. It follows on from previous reports which were published in 2014 and 2017. The report draws on data that has been collected through the Compass self-assessment tool from 3,092 schools and colleges. Of these schools and colleges, 2,707 completed Compass for the first time and 944 had already completed Compass more than once. The Compass tool measures careers programmes in relation to the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance which were developed by the Gatsby Foundation in 2014. They state that schools should: have a stable careers programme; make use of career and labour market information; address the needs of all their students; link career learning to the curriculum; provide encounters with employers and experiences of the workplace; offer the opportunity to find out about all educational routes; and provide access to personal career guidance.

Results are reported as: fully achieving a benchmark (a score of 100% which means meeting all sub-benchmarks); partially achieving a benchmark (score of between 1-99%, meeting one sub-benchmark); or not achieving a benchmark (score of 0%, not meeting any sub-benchmarks).

The full report includes a series of 8 case studies which describe good practice against the benchmarks.

Key points

Performance against the Gatsby Benchmarks

- Schools and colleges are achieving an average of 2.13 of the 8 benchmarks, compared to 1.87 last year and 1.34 in 2016.
- Looking at the sub-benchmarks, on average schools and colleges are 51 per cent of the way to achieving all 8 benchmarks, meaning that they are now doing half of the things that they need to do to meet the benchmarks.
- Twenty-one per cent of schools are now achieving all of the benchmarks. Eleven per cent are achieving the majority of the benchmarks and 18.1 per cent are not achieving any.
- The benchmark which has been fully met by most respondents is Benchmark 8 (personal guidance).
- The benchmarks with the highest rate of non-achievement are number 5 (encounters with employers and employees (61.7% not achieved) and experience of workplaces (37.3% not achieved)).
- careers) and Benchmark 5 (Encounters with employers and employees). For both of these benchmarks there has been an increase of around 15 percentage points in the number of institutions meeting them.
- Strong progress has also been made in Benchmarks 1, 2, and 3 (a stable careers programme, learning from career and labour market information, addressing the needs of each pupil). These have improved by around 10 percentage points each.

Performance Analysis by Benchmark

Benchmark 1: A stable career programme.

Progress among repeat submissions

- The 944 respondents who had already completed Compass in previous years appear to have made strong progress in establishing the benchmarks, with an average improvement of 0.79 Benchmarks.
- These schools and colleges have a significantly higher achievement rate by number of benchmarks in their most recent data than the other schools and colleges in the sample, an average of 2.70 compared to 1.89.
- Among the cohort of schools and colleges that have repeated Compass, progress has been strongest on Benchmark 4 (Linking curriculum learning to

- This benchmark has been fully achieved by just 6.1 per cent of schools and colleges. It has been partially completed by 91.1 per cent and not achieved by 2 per cent. The high percentage of partial achievement scores can be partly explained by the fact that this benchmark has a high number of sub-benchmarks.
- The issue of providing good online information about the school or college's careers programme was one of the main areas where institutions failed to meet the requirements of the benchmarks. The Gatsby Benchmarks state that it is important for institutions to provide information for a range of different groups on their websites. However, online information was available for less than 50 per cent of all of the specified groups, but was particularly weak for teachers and employers (18.7% and 17.9% respectively).
- Another key area for development was the commitment to gather feedback and evaluate the school or college's



programme at least every three years. Only 68 per cent of schools and colleges were committed to a regular evaluation cycle. Whereas it was common to gather feedback from students (88%), it was much less common to gather feedback from employers (56%) or parents and carers (47%).

Benchmark 2: Learning from career and labour market information

- This benchmark requires every pupil, and their parents, to have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. This benchmark was fully achieved by 31.8 per cent of schools and colleges, partially achieved by 40.6 per cent and not achieved by 27.6 per cent. Amongst schools and colleges which had previously completed Compass, there was a 12 per cent increase in the number meeting this benchmark.
- Only around 40.9 per cent of schools and colleges are ensuring that the overwhelming majority or all of their students are accessing the above information by the relevant key decision point in their school career. Currently, only 61.1 per cent of institutions report that they are helping parents and carers to make use of up-to-date information to support young people.

Benchmark 3: Addressing the needs of each pupil (embedding equality and diversity considerations)

- This benchmark was fully achieved by 13.1 per cent of schools and colleges, partially achieved by 85.6 per cent and not achieved by 1.3 per cent. In schools and colleges which had previously completed Compass, there was an improvement of 9 percentage points.

Benchmark 4: Linking curriculum learning to careers (encountering careers through maths, English, PHSE and science)

- This benchmark was fully achieved by 25.9 per cent of schools and colleges, partially achieved by 43.4 per cent and not achieved by 30.7 per cent.
- Amongst institutions which had previously completed Compass, there was a 15 per cent increase in the number fully achieving this benchmark.
- The proportion of institutions delivering careers education varies across these four subjects with 62 per cent reporting that the overwhelming majority (more than 76%) or all of their students have engaged with careers through the PSHE curriculum. However, the proportions are far lower for English (35.7%), maths (36.2%) and science (38.6%).

Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees

- This benchmark was fully achieved by 38.3 per cent of schools and colleges and not achieved by 61.7 per cent. These results show that schools and colleges are either providing the requisite number of encounters (1 per year) or they are not.
- Amongst institutions which had previously completed Compass, there was a 16 per cent increase in the number fully achieving this benchmark.
- Compass asks in what years pupils are having encounters with employers and employees. The vast majority of these encounters are taking place in Year 10, showing that there is scope for extending them to the younger or older years.
- Thirty-three per cent of schools and colleges reported that their pupils will have had fewer than 4 encounters by the time they leave school; 47 per cent report that they will have had between 4 and 8; and 19.9 per cent report more than 8.

Benchmark 6: Experience of workplaces

- This benchmark was fully achieved by 36.6 per cent of schools and colleges, partially achieved by 26.1 per cent and not achieved by 37.3 per cent.
- Overall, 62.7 per cent of institutions are delivering experiences of the workplace for the overwhelming

majority of their students either pre- or post-16. Forty-seven per cent are offering experiences of the workplace pre-16 and 53.3 per cent are offering experiences of the workplace post-16. This highlights a need for schools and colleges to provide multiple experiences of the workplace throughout a pupil's school career.

- A comparison with last year's figures shows a slight decline in the delivery of pre-16 experiences and an increase in the delivery of post-16 experiences.
- Those schools and colleges who had made repeat submissions to Compass had made progress on the delivery of both pre- and post-16 experiences, although progress was more marked in the latter.

Benchmark 7: Encounters with further and higher education

- This benchmark was fully achieved by 12.5 per cent of schools and colleges, partially achieved by 73 per cent and not achieved by 14.5 per cent.
- While most schools are providing some of these opportunities, very few are meeting all of them. There has been a slight increase in the number of schools and colleges meeting this benchmark compared to last year. Amongst schools and colleges which had previously completed Compass, there was a 6 per cent increase in the number meeting this benchmark.
- Students have had meaningful encounters with universities in only 47.4 per cent of schools and colleges. Meaningful encounters with independent training providers are reported in only 32 per cent. Information about the full range of apprenticeships has been provided in 66.4 per cent.

Benchmark 8: Personal guidance

- Benchmark 8 stipulates that pupils should have opportunities for interviews with a Careers Adviser who has been trained to an appropriate level. These should be available at points where significant study or career choices are being made.
- This benchmark was fully achieved by 49 per cent of schools and colleges, partially achieved by 17.5 per cent and not achieved by 33.5 per cent.
- In the institutions which had completed Compass twice there was a 7 per cent increase in the number of institutions meeting benchmark 8.
- A majority of schools and colleges (67.1%) were offering a personal guidance interview by the time pupils finish Year 11. However, they are less likely (49.8%) to ensure that the overwhelming majority of their students receive personal guidance during Year 12 and 13.

What makes a difference?

- Analysis for this report identifies a number of factors which influence the number of benchmarks which schools and colleges report meeting.
- Meeting one benchmark makes it more likely that a school or college will meet others.
- Schools with a sixth form report a lower overall score than those without a sixth form, echoing concerns that some schools are over-focussed on retaining their own students.
- Schools and colleges in areas with higher unemployment and lower professional employment provide slightly better careers programmes than those in more advantaged areas.
- Schools and colleges in the Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) score 6.3 percentage points better on the Overall Benchmark Score than those which are not.
- Schools and colleges which hold the Quality in Careers Standard, score 13.1 percentage points better on the Overall Benchmark Score than those which do not.

The full document can be downloaded from:

<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/state-of-the-nation-careers-and-enterprise-provision-in-englands-secondary-schools-and-colleges/>