

Northampton College Strategy for Careers Education, Information Advice & Guidance (CEIAG) 2025 –2026

Introduction

At Northampton College, we are committed to providing our students with a comprehensive programme of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and have a Matrix accredited service. Careers education should be a core focus at every stage of the student and apprentice journey, and it is essential to positive progression into career pathways that they will find engaging and rewarding.

The Careers Lead and Assistant Principal of Student Services & Careers Mark Owen oversees CEIAG provision, alongside the Careers Education and Guidance Coordinator Kirsty Lee.

The College works towards the and other good practice guidance from the Department of Education, OFSTED, and other relevant bodies. Effectiveness of the CEIAG provision is assessed using the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) which underpin the DfE Careers Strategy and set the standard for good careers guidance. Refinements to the Gatsby Benchmarks from Good Career Guidance: The Next Ten Years (2024) have been considered in the Careers Strategy. Progress is evaluated termly through The Careers and Enterprise Company's Compass evaluations supported by the South Midlands Careers Hub.

It is our belief that each student at Northampton College should be well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life beyond education. Access to good careers guidance enables individuals to clarify their aspirations, understand options open to them and to take control of and make informed decisions to progress to sustained and meaningful destinations that support long-term success.

Northampton College's Futures team consists of 3 Careers Advisers. Careers staff all hold a Level 6 Careers Education qualification with some holding other degrees and postgraduate qualifications. Futures advisers provide high quality, professional and impartial careers information, advice and guidance to support the students' learning journey and progression into work, training or higher education.

Futures staff work closely with Curriculum Managers and Careers in Curriculum link staff to support the development and inclusion of careers learning to ensure that the curriculum offer has careers at its core. The careers related content of each course is mapped against the Gatsby Benchmarks to identify examples of best practice, areas for development and employer engagement. Students experience curriculum learning that highlights the relevance of their subject to future career paths. Careers education is aligned with labour-market needs, and delivered in partnership with employers, universities, training

providers, and community organisations. Employers inform curriculum design and delivery with learning that links to industry practice and employability skills, taking into account local skills priorities.

Our Careers Education and Work Experience programmes provide students with skills, knowledge, support and insight into the world of work to enable them to make informed choices for their future to maximise their potential. Northampton College also supports students in researching and identifying a full range of opportunities, raising aspirations and attainment, challenging stereotypes and supporting progression to their next steps.

Northampton College encourages parents and guardians to play an active role in exploring the options and choices which are best for their child, providing relevant information on their progress, termly careers newsletters, advice and guidance on progression options and links to local labour market information. Having access to relevant labour market information (LMI) is critical when exploring career options and making career decisions. This is a crucial part of ensuring a successful transition to and sustainability of employment throughout life. LMI can tell us; skills currently sought by employers, areas of work that are growing and those that are in decline, education or training required for particular jobs, industries that are prominent in particular areas of the UK, where there may be skills gaps with demand for workers.

Northampton College also supports adults in the local community to access courses specifically designed for them. The aim of these courses is to support adult learners to build on their skills to enter, or succeed further, in employment or education. Northampton College staff are committed to supporting adults to overcome barriers to learning and to progress successfully in their chosen career path. Where these courses are part-time students can still access careers advice and guidance from the Futures team at a time to suit them, as well as the careers resources on the student intranet and in the College libraries.

Scope

This strategy applies to all identified young people and adults on any College study programme as well as the managers, teaching staff and support workers that contribute directly to the educational and wider experiences of these students.

Aims & Objectives

- To provide a structured programme of teaching and learning that allows each student to develop the necessary values, skills and behaviours for life.
- To ensure students will receive a rich provision of extra-curricular and work-related learning activities that develop a range of character attributes, such as resilience and aspiration, which underpin success in education and employment.

- To provide access to high quality, independent careers guidance that helps students emerge from college as rounded individuals and ready for the ever-changing world of work.
- To ensure all students will be well-informed on a full range of options when making subject and career decisions.
- To provide a variety of opportunities to all students for engaging with employers, universities and other education providers to experience a working environment during their time at Northampton College
- To deliver services to students using both physical and digital means to support remote working during either lockdown or periods of limited social contact.
- To provide resources and information that allows parents to support their children in making informed choices on a wide range of opportunities.

The aims of this strategy with the associated operational objectives and quality improvement plans will be monitored by the College's Careers Lead and the Careers Education and Guidance Coordinator, who will work closely with curriculum teams and the link governor for careers.

CEIAG Strategy

Northampton College uses the most up-to-date information released by the DfE on careers guidance to help ensure all students are fully prepared and informed about their next steps. The following specifications are key to achieving the strategic objectives;

- Provide access to a range of activities that inspire students, including presentations and careers fairs, employer talks, and university presentations.
- Build strong links with employers from the local community who can help to boost employability skills, inform students about the range of roles and opportunities available and help them understand how to succeed in the world of work.
- Support students to access high quality work experience.
- Widen access to advice on options available post-16 and post-18.
- Deliver professional careers guidance to provide individual advice and guidance, building confidence, focus and motivation.
- Ensure measures are taken to identify vulnerable young people, including those with special educational needs, looked after children and those at risk of not participating in post-16 education or training, and provide the necessary targeted support and guidance to them.
- Ensure students are aware of the full range of options that are available to them post-18 and that they are supported in following the most appropriate pathways. This includes information on the availability of funding, access courses and the development of personal statements.
- Consciously work to raise aspirations and prevent all forms of stereotyping in the advice and guidance provided, to ensure that students from all backgrounds and diversity groups consider the widest possible range of careers.

Work Experience

Northampton College's Work Experience Programme seeks to assist the College in its joint aims of providing opportunities for all students to learn and achieve, and promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; preparing all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of life. This is achieved by providing all students with the opportunity to learn about work, learn through work and learn for work. All students on appropriate study programmes complete a relevant work experience placement.

- Parents and students will be briefed on the importance of work experience and given an overview of the process at the start of the academic year.
- A Work Experience pack will be provided to each student to support them in their placement.
- Further support will be provided in college by dedicated work experience staff.

Students with special educational needs will be given special consideration and guidance when choosing a placement. Any details of relevant special educational needs will be forwarded to employers, and if necessary, a phone call will be made to discuss the possibility of special provision during the placement.

Responsibilities of Students

- Be actively involved in and take ownership of their progression planning and career development
- Attend punctually all planned Progress and Support sessions, Futures guidance appointments and CEIAG activities
- Work co-operatively with staff and fellow students, respecting the views of others and the principles of equality and diversity

Key Areas for Development in 2025-26

- 1. Achieve the Quality in Careers Standard (a nationally recognised accreditation of excellent careers guidance, aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks and supported by the DfE.)**
 - Research process

- Seek approval for cost
 - Plan activities and resources required for assessment
- 2. Conduct an internal leadership review to support the quality assurance of careers provision and to encourage continuous improvement aligned to College priorities.**
- Use the Careers and Enterprise Company's model to assess the College's current position in the 6 key themes.
 - Participants to include key staff e.g. Futures team, SLT, Careers Link Governor.
- 3. Develop tracking for student participation in the Careers Programme and student destinations.**
- Quality team to explore options for packages to support this.
 - Staff training on the use of any system adopted.
 - Use this to identify gaps in the Careers Programme and target support and development.
- 4. Update the Careers in Curriculum monitoring process to reflect updates to Gatsby Benchmarks from September 2025.**
- Futures team to review current document and adapt to meet the requirements of completing the new Compass evaluation
 - Details to be shared with curriculum teams to allow time to adapt where possible ahead of the end of year evaluation.
 - Use this to identify gaps in the careers related learning and target support and development for the next academic year.
- 5. Increase quality of engagement with employers and higher education providers**
- Futures team to support curriculum teams to increase the impact of encounters with employers and representatives from higher education institutions by making them more "meaningful" (as defined by Gatsby Benchmark 6).

- Strategic planning to embed careers into curriculum staff development e.g. industry visits to strengthen knowledge of current labour market and staff-employer connections.

6. Increase student engagement with personal guidance

- Review current Futures staffing
- Targeted information for vulnerable student groups to promote careers guidance
- Implement text reminders for IAG appointments
- Source a separate interview space for careers meetings where appropriate

7. Increase advice and guidance on degree apprenticeships for students

- Develop and promote resources for Futures SharePoint site
- Increased promotion of university webinars relating to degree apprenticeships
- Schedule tutorial sessions and guest speakers.

8. Increase student usage of online tools to support CEIAG

- Develop usage of careers platform Xello with a structured programme of sessions in tutorials.
- Adapt the Data Sharing Agreement with Xello to include level of Study Programme enabling targeted lessons to be set.
- Provide staff refresher training to increase staff knowledge of the tools and sessions available.

9. Increase parent/carer awareness of, and engagement in, the Careers Programme

- Develop a higher education page on the parent/carer section of the website to better inform on the UCAS process and how to support their child.

- An earlier parent/carer webinar to be scheduled for January 2026 to link to Level 3 year 1 students' introduction to Higher Education sessions and enable earlier research and planning e.g. attending open events.

10. Schools Liaison

- Increased promotion of T Level programmes to school staff, students, and parents/carers.
- Increased promotion of our higher education provision to school careers link staff, students, and parents/carers.

Measures of Success

It is important to us that our Careers Programme meets the needs of our students, employers, and other stakeholders. A summary of progress is reported twice a year by the Careers Education and Guidance Coordinator to the senior management team.

Progress and success will be measured and evidenced by:

- Student progression outcomes
- Futures careers service engagement figures
- Employer engagement figures
- Careers in Curriculum annual reviews
- Reduced NEET figures and as a result increased retention statistics
- Maintaining quality standards e.g. Matrix
- Student and parent/carer feedback
- Compass assessment rating
- Self-assessment report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan
- Staff appraisals
- Destination and exit surveys

Review

This strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis. The review will include perceptions of all stakeholders, as well as those college staff with direct involvement in supporting students' learning programmes. The strategy will be updated in line with local and national policy changes.

Additional Reading

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Northampton College CEIAG Policy 2025-26
- Northampton College Work Experience Policy 2025-26
- Northampton College Mission Vision and Values

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