



Teach First



Post-school success toolkit

2019-2020

Introduction

The road to securing employment, a place at university, an apprenticeship or other post-school route can be a difficult one for young people to navigate. Whether you're an early years, primary or secondary teacher, you can prepare your students to reach their potential – in school, in work, and in life.

Since 2018, as per the [statutory guidance](#) it's been every teacher's responsibility to make sure:

- there is a careers programme in place (based on the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) - a set of eight benchmarks following international best practice for careers provision. The government wants these benchmarks met by 2020)
- the careers programme is available to students and parents
- there is a Careers Leader in school
- all pupils in Years 7-13 learn about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships from a range of education and training providers

This overlaps with the responsibility created in 2012, for pupils in Years 8-13 to have independent careers guidance. There is also research about the importance of this in primary schools.

This toolkit will help you to understand what you can do to meet these requirements and support your students. For more information, see our online [content on careers work and careers leadership in schools](#).

This toolkit contains:

- context and research on progression issues
- what's in the toolkit and [how to use it](#)

Introduction

THE PROBLEM

In the UK, there are significant inequalities between pupils from low- and high-income communities. This continues after they have completed their school education.



Young people from low-income families are **twice as likely** to be NEET (not in education, employment or training)



1 in 12 university freshers from poor families drop out each year, compared to 1 in 20 of their classmates



24% of pupils eligible for free school meals go on to higher education, compared to 42% of pupils who aren't on free school meals



Only 4% of doctors, 6% of barristers, 11% of journalists and 12% of solicitors come from working class backgrounds

Most of England's secondary schools and colleges (over two thirds) now follow the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#). As they were put in place in January 2018, there is still a long way to go – on average, schools are achieving 2.13 of the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, and 18.1% of schools and colleges are not meeting any at all. And while the responsibility to provide pupils with personal careers guidance was put in place in 2012, only 49% of schools are achieving this.

We know tackling progression issues in schools has a positive impact – evidence suggests career and employability learning could support student engagement and attainment, the economy, social mobility and social inclusion.

Introduction

THE BARRIERS

Each child, school and community faces its own unique set of barriers during education. Here are some of them:

1 Failing to make the grades

Students may not achieve the exam grades you know them to be capable of, which will close options available to them.

2 Stigma attached to specific pathways

Students may overlook options because of misinformed associations they, their families or their peers have. For example, associating apprenticeships with low achievement.

3 Feeling that a pathway 'isn't for the likes of me'

Apprenticeships, jobs and university can feel inaccessible to some students, and this can affect their willingness to apply.

4 Concern about financial issues

Many students are worried about debt and don't know how to fund their chosen pathway.

5 Unable to turn ambitions into reality, or lack of ambition

Although they may be capable, some students don't have the aspiration, support or self-belief to go for their progression route of choice.

6 Lack of home-based support and parental influence

Caregivers may not support their child's progression, not want them to move away from home or put pressure on them to apply for particular courses or institutions.

7 The influence of peers

Peers can influence the decision to stay or leave education, with some students following the path of their friends rather than making their own decisions.

8 Lack of confidence, resilience and a poor perception of ability of self

Some students lack the self-confidence and non-cognitive skills to cope with making decisions about the future.

9 Negative school experience

Students who dislike school or had a negative experience in education may want to leave the education system altogether.

10 Lack of consistent information, advice and guidance (IAG) across the key stages

Many students don't have careers and progression education in the classroom, tailored IAG or access to people who have been through different progression routes to learn about their decisions. They often can't relate their classwork to everyday life and see why it's important for post-school routes.

Introduction

USING THIS TOOLKIT

There are many toolkits on post-school routes. But most focus on particular areas – such as university or the workplace – and few are designed for teachers.

What teachers need is a single source of information. One they can use to make pupils aware of their options at 16 and 18 – and to help them pursue the route they want.

This toolkit is for teachers at all key stages and phases. It tells you where you can find support from a range of organisations, as well

as Teach First. We'll show where activities link to the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) throughout the toolkit, so you can see how you're working towards to meeting them.

Before taking on any activities, speak to your Careers Leader to understand more broadly what is happening with Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) in your school.

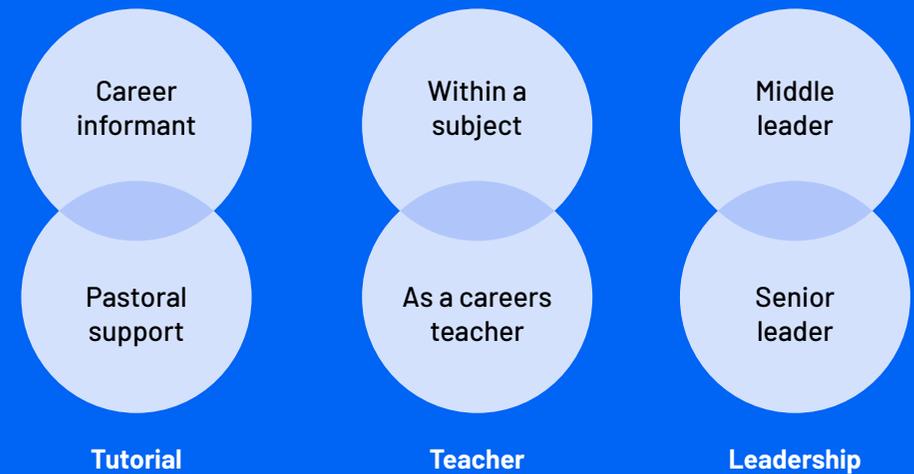
Use the table below to go to a specific section.

Section	What's included?
1. The role teachers play	How to help pupils with their post-school routes
2. Overview of post-16 and 18 routes	Descriptions of all post-16 and 18 routes, including key features and entry requirements
3. Developing self-understanding and awareness	Activity ideas on self-awareness and understanding
4. Explaining the post-16 and 18 routes	Activity ideas on post-16 and 18 routes
5. Careers and the world of work	Activity ideas on the careers open to pupils (now and in the future), how to find more information and understanding the working world
6. Plan, choose, apply and transition	Activity ideas on the next steps after school, how to help with applications and how to help pupils succeed on their chosen route
7. Skills and mindsets	Models and resources to help pupils build key skills and mindsets

1 The role teachers play

Teachers have a crucial role to play in each phase of their student’s progression journey, but what does this mean in practice?

In 2015, Teach First commissioned research with the International Centre for Guidance Studies to explore the different roles teachers play in this area, proposing that all teachers should be able to support in some way. They placed different teacher roles within three ‘tiers’ of involvement, each of which are explained in the diagram to the right and table below.



Tier	Role teacher can play	Description of role
Tutorial	Career informant	A trusted adult who has made career decisions and has experiences that might help a young person’s career building – all teachers should play this role.
	Pastoral support	Provides pastoral support and helps to build links to career decisions and career support – all teachers should play this role.
Teacher	Within a subject	Helps to build connections between a subject and careers education in the context of the wider curriculum – all teachers should play this role.
	As a careers teacher	Involved in delivering specific careers education programmes, for example as part of the PSHE curriculum – specific teachers should play this role.
Leadership	Middle leader	Acts as the school’s Careers Leader/Head of Careers, responsible for creating and overseeing the school-wide careers strategy. Also has overall responsibility for coordinating the work in school – one specific teacher should play this role.
	Senior leader	A member of senior leadership with who assigns roles relating to careers – one specific teacher should play this role.

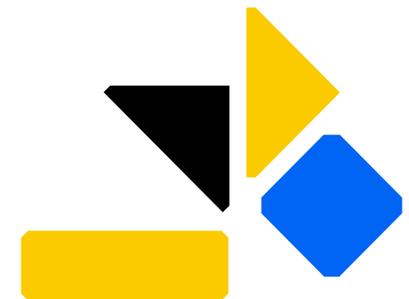
1. Providing support

Below are the methods a teacher is likely to use to provide support:

- One-to-one careers conversations (separate to one-to-one sessions with a careers adviser).
- Activities during tutorial/form time.
- Subject teaching – exploring careers in medicine during biology lessons, for example.
- Careers lessons – a lesson on apprenticeships, for example.
- Off-timetable sessions/enrichment activities, talks, trips or events – a visit to a university, for example.
- By referring to others/organisations – a local FE college, for example.
- Through conversations with parents about possible career options based on their child's progress.

Teachers are part of a long-term approach to improving post-school outcomes for young people. The most effective approach to careers education is for it to be a school-wide activity, with all teachers playing their part.

However, teachers shouldn't be alone in this – impartial careers advisers, parents, employers and charities should also be involved.



2 Overview of post-16 and 18 routes

To inform, guide and advise your students on their options beyond 16 and 18, you'll need to understand the basics of the education, employment and training routes available to them.

To use this section, first read the post-16 and 18 routes on the next page to understand how they all fit together on a spectrum of work-based to academic options. Then use the information on pages 10-12 to learn about the post-16 options in more detail. See pages 13-15 for the post-18 options.

In section 4, you'll find activities you can do with your pupils to help them understand these pathways.

For a table that sets out all qualifications currently available in England and Wales, from entry level (equivalent to Key Stage 3) to level 8 (doctorate), visit [this page](#) of the Career Pilot website



2 | Post-16 and post-18 routes

As part of the Raising the Participation Age (RPA) legislation, young people aged between 16 and 18 must either:

1. stay in full-time education
2. start an apprenticeship/traineeship or supported internship (for SEN students/students with an EHC plan)
3. spend 20 hours (or more) working and/or volunteering combined with part-time education or training

Work-based routes

Academic routes

Employment/volunteering

A full or part-time job/volunteering.

Post-16 or post-18?

Both. It's possible for young people to start a job aged 16, but they must be working and/or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week, while also being in part-time education or training.

Traineeships and apprenticeships

Traineeship: an unpaid course with work experience to prepare for work or an apprenticeship. Lasts up to six months.

Apprenticeship: a paid job combined with study/training (normally one day a week) from level 2 up to level 7.

Post-16 or post-18?

Both. Apprenticeships are available post-16 and post-18 (up to age 25, and beyond in some sectors).

School leaver programme

Similar to apprenticeships. A paid job with study/training towards a qualification – normally a professional qualification linked to a career path. Often longer than apprenticeships (three to seven years) and can vary more in their structure.

Post-16 or post-18?

Post-18.

Vocational qualifications

Qualifications that develop skills and knowledge related to an area of employment/job. Includes core content, English/maths and work experience. Available from level 1-8. Mostly offered at further education colleges. BTECs, NVQs and TechBaccs are all vocational qualifications.

Post-16 or post-18?

Post-16. Level 1-3 vocational qualifications are designed as an option.

T-levels

Technical ('tech') Levels are a new level 3 vocational qualification designed as an equal alternative to the more academic A-levels. There are 15 T-levels covering a range of sectors (more will be available in the future). Includes three months' work experience. Study for one T-level is two years. The first T-levels are available from September 2019, the rest from 2020.

Post-16 or post-18?

Post-16. Tech Levels are designed as an option for 16 to 18-year-olds.

A-levels

Advanced, level 3 subject-based qualifications that can lead to university, further study, training or work. Normally three A-levels are completed over two years and require five GCSEs at A*-C to study them. There are over 100 A-levels.

Post-16 or post-18?

Post-16. A-levels are designed as an option for 16 to 18-year-olds.

Higher education, including university

Higher education covers all courses at level 4 and above. Studied at a higher education institution. There are different types of degrees (such as foundation degrees or bachelor's degrees) and you can study over 50,000 courses at a wide range of institutions. The common bachelor's degree takes three years to complete.

Post-16 or post-18?

Post-18. Higher education is only a post-18 option.

2 | Post-16 routes

Employment/volunteering

A full or part-time job that a pupil starts without going through an apprenticeship. Pupils who choose this route aged 16 must be employed, self-employed or volunteer for at least 20 hours a week, while also be studying for a nationally recognised qualification part-time until their 18th birthday.

Entry requirements

Will vary by employer, though many will require a grade 4 pass in English and maths.

How to apply

Directly to the employer.

After employment/volunteering

Pupils who take this route could continue their career journey to another job, start an apprenticeship or take on a vocational qualification/other study.

Traineeships and apprenticeships

Traineeship: an unpaid course with work experience to prepare a pupil for work or an apprenticeship. Lasts up to six months.

Apprenticeship: a paid job with study/training (normally one day a week, or a block of training) delivered by a training provider following a national framework. Starts at level 2 and goes to level 7, taking between one and four years to complete. Post-16, pupils study an apprenticeship at level 2 (intermediate apprenticeship) or 3 (advanced apprenticeship).

Entry requirements

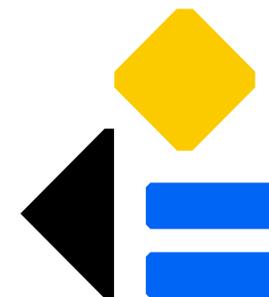
Varies between employers and training providers. As with a job, pupils will be competing for an apprenticeship role with others. They must have the required qualifications, be able to complete a professional application and perform well in an interview. For a traineeship, a pupil will need to be qualified below level 3 and not have a current job.

How to apply

There's lots of information about apprenticeships on the [Amazing Apprenticeships](#) website. In England, you can find information about applying to apprenticeships [here](#) and traineeships [here](#). There is also a helpful guide to apprenticeships which can be downloaded from the site.

After traineeships and apprenticeships

After an apprenticeship, pupils can continue working with the same employer or apply for 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.



2 | Post-16 routes

Vocational qualifications

Qualifications that develop practical skills and knowledge related to an area of employment/job. Includes core content related to the employment/job area, plus English/maths and work experience. BTECs, NVQs and TechBaccs are all vocational qualifications. Qualifications are available from level 1 (equivalent to level 1–3 at GCSE) to level 8 (equivalent to doctorate standard).

Post-16, pupils study vocational qualifications at level 1, 2 or 3. They take one or three years to complete full-time. For more information, visit [this website](#).

Entry requirements

Level 1 qualifications normally require a number of grade 1 and 2 GCSEs, but if students don't have these they can normally complete their level 1 while resitting GCSEs – particularly English and maths.

For level 2 qualifications, normally four grade 3 passes at GCSE are required, including English and maths. For level 3 qualifications, it's commonly four to six grade 4 GCSE passes or better, including English and maths.

How to apply

Apply directly to the desired institution offering the qualification (normally a further education college).

After vocational qualifications

After level 2, pupils typically move on to level 3, an apprenticeship or employment. After level 3, pupils typically move into employment, an apprenticeship or higher-level study.

T-levels

Technical ('tech') Levels are a specific type of vocational qualification designed as an equal alternative to the more academic A-level. They are being introduced as part of the vocational education reform. There are 15 T-levels covering a range of sectors (more will be available in the future). They are a mix of classroom and on-the-job learning and include a 45-day (minimum) industry placement. Study lasts two years and are equivalent to three A-levels. The first three Tech Levels are available in selected colleges from September 2020. [This video](#) and [this website](#) has more information.

Entry requirements

Each provider of T-levels will set their own entry requirements.

How to apply

The first three Tech Levels in 1) digital production, design and development 2) design, surveying and planning and 3) education are available at [these providers](#). Students are advised to keep checking [this website](#) to find out when applications open.

After T-levels

Pupils can move onto skilled employment in technical occupations at level 3 and above. They can also move onto higher education, including higher technical qualifications, higher apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships, technical degrees and apprenticeships at level 4 and above.

A-levels

Advanced, academic level 3 subject-based qualifications that can lead to university, further study, training or work. Pupils normally study three A-levels over two years full-time. They require extended reading, writing and theoretical understanding of a subject.

Entry requirements

Commonly between five and seven grade 5 passes at GCSE, including maths and English. Normally a level 5 or 6 at GCSE will be required for the subject a pupil wishes to study at A-level.

How to apply

Directly to the desired institution offering the qualification (normally a sixth form school, standalone sixth form or further education college).

After A-levels

Pupils typically move to higher education, apprenticeships, school leaver programmes or employment.

2 | Post-16 routes

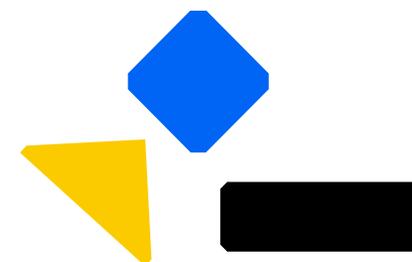
A NOTE ON CHANGING ROUTES AND FUNDING QUALIFICATIONS...

It's not uncommon for students to have a change of mind about the route they've picked. Changing subjects or route is possible, and they should seek support from staff and teachers to work out a revised plan.

In terms of costs associated with changing, entry level, level 1 and level 2 qualifications are free for all learners, whatever their age. Level 3 courses are free for under 19s, or for 19 to 23-year-olds if they don't have another full level 3 qualification.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

All the routes in this section are available for pupils with SEND, but they may need additional support to choose, apply and transition, including additional one-to-ones or more time to prepare for work experience. [Supported internships](#) are available for young people aged 16-24 with a statement of SEND or EHC plan. They're structured study programmes based mainly with an employer and aim to build the skills needed for employment. They're unpaid and last for a minimum of six months. Afterwards, pupils are helped into paid employment. The [Talentino](#) website has useful materials and information on supporting SEND pupils with post-school routes and the Gatsby Foundation has produced [this report](#).



2 | Post-18 routes

Employment

A full or part-time job that a pupil enters without an apprenticeship.

Entry requirements

Will vary by employer, though most will require a grade 4 pass in English and maths.

How to apply

Directly to the employer.

After employment

Pupils can continue to another job, start an apprenticeship or take on a vocational qualification or other study.

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a paid job with study/training (normally one day a week or a block of training) delivered by a training provider following a national framework. From level 2 up to level 7, taking between one and five years to complete. Post-18, pupils would normally study an advanced apprenticeship (level 3, a higher apprenticeship (levels 4–7), or a degree apprenticeship (levels 6–7). There is information about apprenticeships on the [Amazing Apprenticeships](#) website. There is a short guide to apprenticeships [here](#).

Entry requirements

Varies between employers/training providers. As with a job, pupils will be competing for a role with others. They must have the required qualifications, be able to complete a professional application and perform well in an interview.

To access higher and degree apprenticeships, pupils will need qualifications at levels 2 and 3. Degree apprenticeships are relatively new (2015) and there are only a few available. They're as competitive, if not more so, than university degree places.

How to apply

In England, you can find information about applying to apprenticeships [here](#) and traineeships [here](#).

After apprenticeships

Pupils may choose to continue working with the same employer (77% do), to get a higher-level qualification or promotion. They may also use their skills to apply for other jobs.

School leaver programme

Similar to apprenticeships, these are paid jobs with an element of study/training towards a qualification – normally a professional qualification linked to a career path (such as finance and accounting qualifications). They are often longer than apprenticeships (three to seven years) and can vary more in their structure (unlike apprenticeships, they don't follow a national framework). As such, they require more research to understand what's involved.

Entry requirements

School leaver programmes are normally offered by large organisations and each one will set their own entry requirements, but they're similar to the grades required for university.

How to apply

Pupils apply directly to the employer, so they'll need to research the kind of job/company they want to work for and whether they offer school leaver programmes. [This website](#) lists some of them. There are less opportunities than with apprenticeships and in a more limited range of sectors.

After school leaver programme

Pupils may choose to continue working with the same employer or use their skills to apply for other jobs. As they don't follow a national framework, pupils need to be clear how the qualification would be recognised in future when taken outside the organisation.

2 | Post-18 routes

Sponsored degree

A type of school leaver programme. A sponsored degree is a normal bachelor's degree with honours (honours refers to a final year project or dissertation), which is either fully or partly paid for by an employer.

Pupils will normally study full-time towards their degree at a specified university and work for the sponsoring organisation during their holidays with a permanent, guaranteed job offer at the end (subject to performance). These are often available only as a result of completing a successful gap year programme with the employer.

Pupils may also go to a specified university part-time while working for the employer regularly part-time, with a job contract from the start. Pupils need to carefully check the terms of sponsored degrees and confirm whether they could leave the employer after the programme without paying back any costs.

Entry requirements

Sponsored degrees are normally offered by large organisations, and each one will set their own entry requirements, but they are similar to the grades required for university.

How to apply

Sponsored degrees are only available from a small number of employers and through a specific range of universities. Pupils apply to the company directly.

[This website](#) has more details.

After sponsored degrees

There may be a guaranteed job or job offer. Pupils can also look for another job.

Higher education

Higher education is a term used for study at level 4 and above at a higher education institution. With higher level study, pupils will explore a subject area they're passionate about. Study is academically demanding, and students are expected to think more critically and be much more independent than at A-level. Most learning takes place individually. There are many types of higher education courses (such as HNCs, HNDs and foundation degrees) but pupils will normally study over three years for a bachelor's or bachelor's with honours degree (honours refers to a project or dissertation completed in the final year of study). Pupils can study over 50,000 courses at a wide range of different institutions.

Entry requirements

Varies between university and course. Top universities and competitive courses will want A*AA or the equivalent UCAS points. Some universities may require an admissions test or an interview. Universities will also look at pupils' GCSE grades when they apply, as they will not have sat A-levels at the time of application. Most universities will be looking for level 4 GCSEs in English and maths.

How to apply

Application for all universities is done through [UCAS](#). They require an application form to be completed, including a teacher's reference and a personal statement. Some universities will also need a portfolio of work, admission test or interview.

After university

Most students look for a job, take a gap year or begin an apprenticeship.

2 | Post-18 routes

➤ A NOTE ON CHANGING ROUTES, GOING BACK TO VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND FUNDING...

It's not uncommon for students to have a change of mind about the route they've picked. Changing subjects or route is possible, and they should get support from staff and teachers to work out a revised plan.

In terms of costs associated with changing, entry level, level 1 and level 2 qualifications are free for all learners, whatever their age. Level 3 courses are free for under 19s, or for 19 to 23-year-olds if they don't have another full level 3 qualification.

Many institutions offer Advanced Learner Loans, similar to Student Loans for university and paid back once the pupil is earning over a certain threshold. This means a young person could, for example, withdraw from a university course and get a loan to study a vocational qualification.

➤ TAKING A GAP YEAR

At 18, pupils no longer have to be in employment, education or training under the Raising the Participation Age (RPA) legislation. Some may take a gap year to go travelling, gain work experience or volunteer before they begin studying or taking on employment.

Pupils need to think carefully about a gap year, and balance fun with activities that will develop their skills and future employability. Some organisations offer gap

year programmes that give pupils a chance to develop skills and gain 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 types of programmes, visit the [Pupil Ladder](#) website.

➤ PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

All the routes in this section are available for pupils with SEND, but they may need additional support to choose, apply and transition, including additional one-to-ones or more time to prepare for work experience. [Supported internships](#) are available for young people aged 16-24 with a statement of SEND or EHC plan. They're structured study programmes based mainly with an employer and aim to build the skills needed for employment. They're unpaid and last for a minimum of six months. Afterwards, pupils are helped into paid employment. The [Talentino](#) website has useful materials and information on supporting SEND pupils with post-school routes and the Gatsby Foundation has produced [this report](#).

3 Developing self-understanding and awareness

A strong sense of self is important in post-school decision-making. It helps pupils make choices that are right for them, as they explore their skills, passions and values. It should begin early in a pupil's educational journey and be revisited often.

This section has activities you can use to help your pupils understand themselves better and articulate that self-knowledge to others.

Activities in this section link to Gatsby Benchmark 3

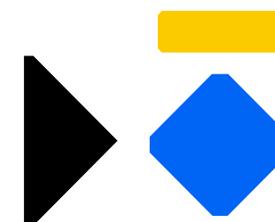


3 | Developing self-understanding and awareness

	At early years and primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Through activities in form/tutorial time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to create mind maps or list things they enjoy and are good at, other than the subjects/topics they are studying (such as teamwork, caring for others – you could provide some prompt words to help this). Come back to this list once a term to add to it. • Look at local news websites and make a list of local issues (such as littering, crime, closure of shops, education). Ask pupils which issue they would most like to change, and why. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make pupils responsible for completing monthly reviews and developing priorities for the week ahead. See page 18 and 19 of Macmillan's Employability Toolkit for examples. • Encourage pupils to regularly 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're also developing a bank of experiences they could draw upon in a competency interview. • Use online quizzes to start a discussion about strengths, weaknesses and interests, such as this quiz. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The target chart and TIM coaching tool on pages 35 and 41 of this handbook are used in our Futures programme to help sixth formers think about their interests, skills and motivations. They could also be adapted for younger pupils.
Within curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to keep a 'learning diary', to record what they've enjoyed and what they've found difficult. • At the end of every day, ask a range of pupils what they enjoyed the most and why. You could also ask them what they know or can do that they couldn't that morning. • Display each pupils' key areas for improvement where they can see them. Teach pupils to use this list to assess their own work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for reflective thinking, writing and paired discussion – the 'think, pair, share' model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils to evaluate their performance and progress, in both closed numerical scales and more open, reflective questions. For an example of scaled self-evaluation, see page 5 of Macmillan's Employability Toolkit. • Encourage pupils 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 make sure pupils focus on the aims of the piece of work rather than generic comments on quantity or appearance, such as 'even better if I had written more/neatly.' • Provide opportunities for independent learning, research and extended projects, so pupils can further their study on their own.

3 | Developing self-understanding and awareness

	At early years and primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Through one-to-one conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss strengths and weaknesses with pupils and offer support for the transition to secondary school. 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When you have one-to-one time with any pupil, tell them what you think they're skilled at, or what you think they've taken an interest in. Ask them if they feel these are accurate. Ask pupils to describe how they have changed since starting the academic year/secondary school, and how they feel they've developed.
When at a trip or event	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask pupils to reflect on what they've learnt about themselves during the trip in terms of their skills, interests, values or passion, and what they might do with this new information they have learnt. Provide prompts where helpful.



4 Explaining post-16 and 18 routes

As you will have seen from section 2, there are many routes available post-16 and 18. This can be overwhelming for young people, and a range of support will be needed to make sense of them. This section will give you activity ideas you can run with pupils to help them understand their options.

By making pupils aware of all the routes available, you may be opening their eyes to a future previously unknown to them, or even dismissed by them.

Activities in this section link to Gatsby Benchmark 2,4, 5 and 7



4 | Explaining post-16 and 18 routes

	At early years and primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Through activities in form/tutorial time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a wall display that explains the educational phases pupils will move through – early years, primary, secondary school, and then either a further education, employment or training route at 16. • Create wall displays of people in different post-school routes. • Explain what university is and what your experience was like. Also explain what apprenticeships are. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a display of key 'progression' terms and their definitions, including competencies, degree, graduate, campus, gap year, UCAS, apprenticeship and so on. • Display this list of unique apprenticeships to show they are not just for traditional trades. • Show pupils the Informed Choices website so they can see which subjects open up different degrees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On large pieces of paper, ask pupils what they know about the options on page 9. If you create a separate space for each pathway, you'll be able to see immediately the areas pupils are unsure of. • King's College London have developed an interactive games platform to help pupils in Years 5-9 understand higher education.
Through dedicated careers lessons or drop timetable sessions	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print out page 9 (all routes on a spectrum) of this toolkit and ask pupils to read it. As a class, discuss the routes the pupils have heard of and what they think or know about them (challenging any myths or false beliefs). Follow this with or paired internet research time to explore each of the options further. • Ask your class to work in groups to design a university, giving it a name and a logo. • Bring in 17 and 18-year-old pupils to talk about the different paths they've taken after GCSEs, including A-level pupils and those on vocational courses. • Design a hot seat activity where pupils can ask any question about university to a graduate (yourself or a visitor). 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 ask pupils the myths they've heard about university. • Amazing Apprenticeships have developed a range of activity packs, videos and posters to help pupils understand apprenticeships. Check out the teacher pack here and the pupil pack here. 	



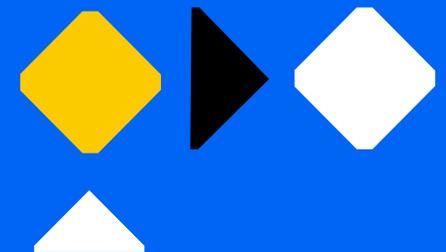
4 | Explaining post-16 and 18 routes

	At early years and primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Within curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain to pupils how literacy, oracy and numeracy are important skills for the real world, including for work. Give examples. The Scottish website ‘My world of work’ has some resources, including an activity plan on how the concepts of journey, distance and time are needed in some careers, and an activity plan on the careers where speaking skills are needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite an undergraduate or apprentice to co-deliver a lesson, using an industry context to teach academic content. Ask the speaker to explain the post-school route they took. Teach a part of a lesson in a higher education style, such as a lecture or seminar. Ask pupils the benefits and challenges of this style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring in guests to speak about jobs related to different curriculum areas and the route they took to get that job. Pupils could interview them about what they liked and didn’t like about the route they took. Inspiring the Future helps to connect workplace volunteers with schools for free.
Through one-to-one conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain there are many options open to pupils for their future, and there are many routes that will take them to the same goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a short conversation with each of your form members about their Key Stage 4/5 options, including the features and benefits of each and the implications of these on higher education progression/employability. Refer to the information on pages 10 to 11 to do this. 	-
Through trips or event out of school	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a visit to a workplace, university or apprenticeship provider, and talk with the employees, undergraduates or apprentices. When taking pupils on any trip, explain that it’s a workplace (such as a museum or theatre). Ask staff to tell pupils about their job and the route they took to get it.

5 Careers and the world of work

We want all young people, no matter what route they take, to end up in sustainable, fulfilling employment. This section focuses on building an understanding of careers and the world of work, both at a local and national level.

Activities in this section link to Gatsby Benchmark 2,4, 5 and 7



5 | Careers and the world of work

	At early years and primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
<p>Through activities in form/tutorial time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create wall displays of people in different jobs. • Create three case studies of characters with different jobs and get pupils to explore them. You could look at some of the 800 job profiles on the National Career Service site for inspiration. • Get pupils to role play a range of jobs, using props where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the concept of the national and local labour market (the availability of employment locally and nationally, which is influenced by technology, demand for goods, geography, climate and so on). Through the Nomis portal, get pupils to look at your local area, specifically focusing on the sectors people are employed in compared to the national picture. • Give pupils support and advice on the importance of work experience. Many schools run work experience programmes for pupils, but if yours doesn't, encourage pupils to seek their own placements in holiday time. Getting real life experience will help when it comes to choosing their next step as the decision can be based on insight rather than guesswork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List key terms related to the world of work, career, CV, salary, labour market, and so on. Discuss what they mean or ask pupils to research them. • Explore this list of job sectors on the Prospects website with students. Ask pupils to note the ones they find interesting or appealing and why. Ask pupils to consider jobs across all sectors, such as IT, finance and HR roles. • Create a 5-10-minute whiteboard brainstorm on why we work. Encourage pupils to think beyond money/salary, for example putting skills to use, satisfaction from doing a job well and making a difference (to society, the environment or the economy).
<p>Through dedicated careers lessons or drop timetable sessions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the concept of the national and local labour market (the availability of employment locally and nationally, which is influenced by technology, demand for goods, geography, climate and so on). Group pupils into fours and assign each a local employer (look at these local labour market guides for inspiration). Ask pupils to research the employer and brainstorm the sort of jobs they might have. Would they like to work there – why/why not? • Use your school as a live example of a business to learn from. Make a list of around 10 staff and the different jobs they do (such as cook, caretaker, receptionist and business manager). Ask pupils to write questions for staff, such as what they do on a day-to-day basis and what qualifications and skills they need for their job. Get pupils to interview them to learn about the job they do and what they enjoy/find challenging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils to look at the pros and cons of different types of jobs, such as self-employed versus employed, full-time and part-time work. • Ask pupils to work in groups and create posters on key business terms, such as corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and globalisation. • Schedule time for pupils to visit your careers library in school so they can do independent learning and research on careers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in guests to speak about their jobs, such as alumni. Pupils could interview them about what they like most and least about their work. You could also start a hot seat activity with prepared questions, such as: What skills do you use in your job? How did you get your job? Have you made friends there? Encourage honest questions and ask pupils about any myths they've heard.

5 | Careers and the world of work

	At early years and primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Within curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use real-life examples of using curriculum learning in a job/workplace to show the relevance of skills or knowledge in your subject. The STEM learning website has some resources for this. • In a geography or history lesson, explore the main industries in your local area today and in the past. Talk about the jobs people did and what working conditions and life was like. You could invite speakers to talk about their experience of current and past employment sectors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show job descriptions linked to the subject(s) you teach and look at the qualifications required for them. • Discuss possible career options from your subject that pupils can follow (such as journalism from media studies/English and accounting from maths). The BBC Bitesize website shows a range of jobs linked to subjects. • Use examples to explain the practical use of certain skills or knowledge from your subject in different jobs. Look at Forum Talent-Potential for case study examples, a step-by-step planning tool and a free online CPD course. You can also look at pages 12–13 of this best practice guide to careers in the curriculum and the STEM learning website for teaching resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite a volunteer from the workplace to co-deliver a lesson with you, using an industry context to teach academic content. Use this guidance from Future First to help you. Inspiring the Future helps to connect workplace volunteers with schools for free.
Through one-to-one conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the jobs and careers that the parents of pupils may be doing and how they may have transitioned to this choice. 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils of all ages what jobs, careers or employers interest them, and why. Challenge any misconceptions or myths and encourage older pupils to do more independent research (this list of job sectors from Prospects is a good starting point).
Through trips or event out of school	-	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>You can find ideas on how to develop your pupils' knowledge of careers and the world of work in the CDI Framework and in this report from LKMO.</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for pupils to visit a workplace and talk with employees there. • Remember, most trips will be at a place someone calls work (such as museums and nature sanctuaries). Ask the people hosting you to talk to pupils about their job, how they came to be in it, what skills they use and what rewards it brings. Encourage pupils to ask questions. Pupils can then reflect on whether it's a career they're interested in.

6 Plan, choose, apply and transition

Understanding the different pathways and qualifications available is one thing; selecting, applying and transitioning to them is quite another.

Teachers must help pupils learn to make informed and ambitious choices while supporting them throughout the process. Pupils should also spend time with a professional careers adviser to get the range of guidance needed to make the best decisions.

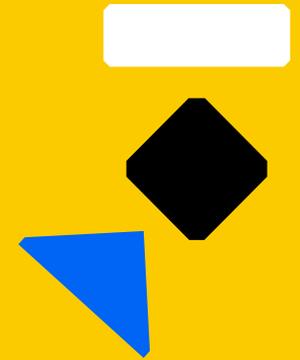
One-to-one conversations are especially important during this time. These may be different from discussions in curriculum teaching, as they have a clearer end point for your pupils to reach. Post-school discussions are more in line with the principles of coaching than teaching, although you will be also be drawing on your subject expertise.

As well as working with pupils, involving and empowering their parents and carers is vital to help their child make a positive choice.

Top tip

Remind pupils that it's possible to change their mind during the choosing, applying and transitioning process – and even when they've started their new route. They should give it a go, but also be able to see when it's not right and do something about it. They should seek support if they're thinking of changing and, if possible, get help for their alternative choice.

Activities in this section link to Gatsby Benchmark 2, 3, 4 and 8



6 | Choosing

	At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Through activities in form/tutorial time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask all teachers and staff to put posters up on classroom/office doors about the options they thought about after school, what they went with and why. Ask pupils to find and read them. • Introduce pupils to decision-making techniques, such as a pros and cons lists, and get them to practice creating one. Ask pupils to brainstorm in a group the sorts of future decisions that need careful consideration (such as where to live, what to study and what job to pursue). Ask why careful consideration is important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your post-school route in detail with pupils and make sure visitors to your classroom, including older pupils, tell their own stories. • Show your pupils websites that will support their thinking – the National Careers Service or Career Pilot are useful places to start. • Remind pupils that their interests and talents should factor into decisions they make about their educational and career journeys. The coaching tool on page 41 is a helpful starting point. • Show pupils page 9, all of the routes on a spectrum, and create a timeline of when they'll have to make decisions by. Keep it up in your classroom. • Run a session about making Key Stage 4 choices (GCSE and vocational qualification) – see page 38. • Run a session about making post-16 choices – see page 39. • Run a session about making post-18 choices – see page 41. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your post-school experiences. Include any tools or techniques you used to help you choose, as well as the advice and guidance you sought.
Through dedicated careers lessons or drop timetable sessions	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore detailed approaches to decision-making and give pupils an opportunity to experiment with them. These can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a pros and cons table - a scored pros and cons chart. Each entry is given a score from -5 to 5 (5 being strongly positive and -5 being strongly negative). Scores are added up and the result evaluated. Overall, do they get a positive or negative result? - a Pugh's decision matrix. Options are scored against weighted criteria • Those choosing a university might want to consider the three Ls – location, learning and lifestyle. • Allow pupils to look through university brochures to explore the courses offered at them. This will also help pupils understand what content is covered, how the course is structured and how it is assessed. Choosing a course – see page 14 of this toolkit. 	-

6 | Choosing

	At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Within curriculum teaching	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer advice and support for pupils wanting to continue studying or start working within your subject area. Many A-level courses teach elements of degree-level content. Explain what pupils could expect in a degree within your subject area. • Direct pupils to any apprenticeships, companies or universities that specialise in your subject area. 	-
Through one-to-one conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask each pupil about their ambitions and hopes for the future and challenge any myths and negative thinking. Refer to any activities you did from section 4 (post-16 and 18 routes). Remind them of the options they'll have to choose from and what it will take to achieve them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your form group about their interests and the choices they're thinking of making this year, and why. Students in Years 7-9 may not have much of an idea, but it's important to tell them when they need to make these decisions. They should also start to research and get experience as soon as possible. Challenge limited and negative thinking. Encourage them to speak to your independent careers adviser for further one-to-one support. 	-

Top tip

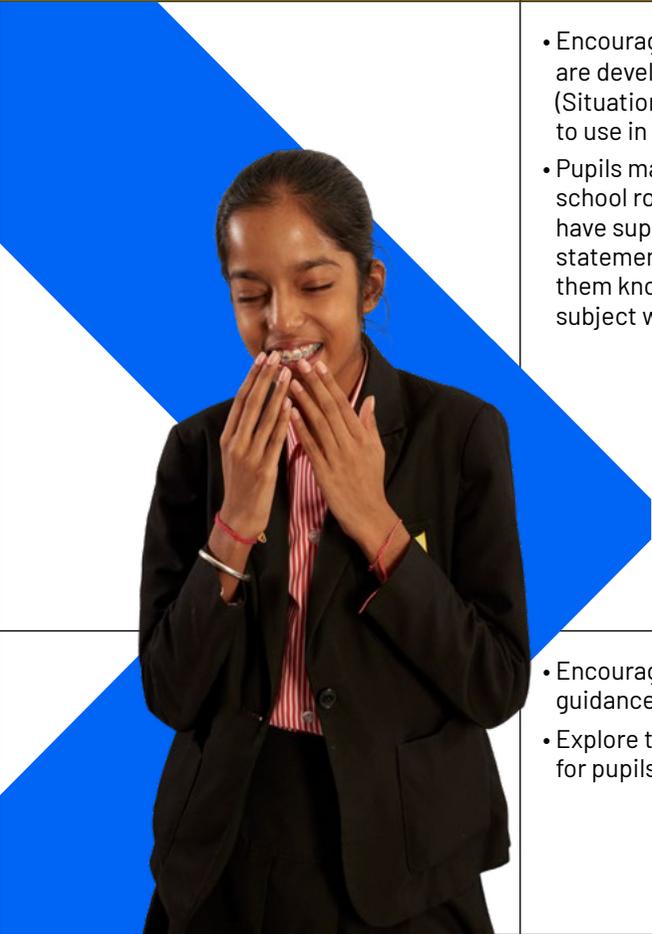
Talk to pupils about 'lifelong learning'. For example, they may decide to study for another A-level or vocational qualification once they have a job. This could be for fun or to move into a new career. Taking on a different course after the age of 18 is likely to cost money, but there are options - such as the Advanced Learner Loan for over 19s wishing to study level 3- 6 qualifications. This is similar to a student loan for undergraduates.



6 | Applying

	At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Through activities in form/tutorial time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce pupils to the concepts of job/ university application forms, CVs and interviews, and that they will need to know about them at secondary school. • Ask staff in a range of different jobs in your school to simplify their CVs and stick them to their office/classroom doors. This will give pupils both an insight into different careers/routes and what a CV is. Encourage pupils to read them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run quickfire paired interview activities with your pupils. Each pupil has five minutes to interview the other using questions you brainstormed together as a class (such as: What do you want to do after school? What work experience have you got? What did you learn from it?). Talk about what makes a good and poor interview (including clothing, research on the company you're applying to, meeting and greeting skills and the ability to answer questions and talk about yourself). • Explore the UCAS website for information on applying to university with your pupils. Explain that they can choose both a course to apply for and a university to study that course at. Make sure they understand the application deadlines and how to make a good personal statement. Help them understand the different types of offer they can expect and how to make insurance choices using this guidance (many students put higher grade requirements for their insurance choice than their firm choice). • Explore how to apply for an apprenticeship with your pupils using advice from UCAS. Encourage pupils to look at this list of available apprenticeships and explore the ones they're interested in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your own experiences of applying to the pathways you've taken throughout your educational and professional career, and ask visitors to your classroom (including older pupils) to tell their own stories. You could share experiences of good and bad interviews you have had yourself or led as an interviewer.
Through dedicated careers lessons or drop timetable sessions	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the range of lesson plans on the Barclays Lifeskills website and run these with your pupils, including writing a successful CV and interview skills. There are options for SEND lesson plans too. Consider running a mock interview day to follow up on an interview skills session, or a CV creation session after a CV workshop. • Invite three recent alumni of your school (someone who started university, someone who entered the workplace and someone who started an apprenticeship) to talk about their post-school choices, with a focus on the application phase. 	-

6 | Applying

	At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Within curriculum teaching		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students to keep a log of the employability skills they are developing through the curriculum using the STAR framework (Situation, Task, Actions, Result), which they are likely to be asked to use in an interview. • Pupils may ask for advice if they've chosen to apply for a post-school route within your subject area. They may also wish to have support with writing about your subject in their personal statement. If possible, arrange separate one-to-one time and let them know what they can expect when applying and studying a subject within your area. 	-
Through one-to-one conversations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage pupils to make the most of one-to-one careers guidance sessions. • Explore the Advancing Access website and use the guidance for pupils making university applications. 	-

6 | Transitioning

	At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Through activities in form/tutorial time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the experience of transitioning to secondary school. Brainstorm the things that will be the same (such as studying a range of subjects, having sports time and on-site catering). Also discuss the things that will be different (having different teachers for different subjects, going to a bigger site, a bigger selection of clubs and extracurricular activities). Ask pupils what their worries are, and what they could do about them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the experience of transitioning to sixth form and the changes pupils will experience. Advise pupils on appropriate study skills and ways for independent learning that will be required for post-16 and post-18 study. Watch this video developed by Amazing Apprenticeships. They asked pupils to list advice on starting a new role. Discuss why each is important. Then ask pupils to work in pairs to complete task 34 in this pack on making a good first impression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share your own experiences of transitioning to the pathways you've taken throughout your educational and professional career and ask visitors to your classroom (including older pupils) to tell their own stories. Include transitions that didn't go so well and why. What did you do to get back on track? Encourage pupils to join extracurricular clubs or take positions on the school council. This is a good way to prepare them for being in classes with new people. Buddy up older or existing pupils with incoming cohorts for informal support and guidance. Talk pupils through the support available to them at their new institution. Explain who their new sources of support will be. Look at some of the resources in section 7, which focus on building mindsets and skills for progression. Pupils who have a sound skillset are more likely to cope better with the adjustment to a new route.
Through dedicated careers lessons or drop timetable sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite former pupils who are in Year 7 and 8 to speak to your class about what secondary school is like and what they had wanted to know before they got there. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite three recent alumni of your school (someone who started university, someone who entered the workplace and someone who started an apprenticeship) to talk about their post-school choices, with a focus on the transition phase. 	-

6 | Transitioning

	At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Within curriculum teaching	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how different units of study in your subject are extended in degree-level study. • Explore the principles of good note taking, introducing linear and flowchart techniques, before teaching part of a lesson in a lecture or seminar style. Talk afterwards about the benefits and challenges of this style. • Using revision as an example, run through strategies of self-management and time management that could be translated to the workplace. Begin by mind-mapping tasks (in this case: subjects and modules), ranking by importance (in this case: the modules pupils are most concerned about), allocating time and fitting it into a schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils to make a table of similarities and differences between learning at primary and secondary school (or sixth form and university). Challenge myths and make sure pupils understand the changes they'll experience. • If your school doesn't have a bridging unit for pupils to prepare them for key stages or pathways, consider developing one. You could contact a core subject lead at your linked secondary school/university – they may offer insight into what could be included, or direct you to a colleague who may co-plan with you.
Through one-to-one conversations		-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make time, if only for five minutes, to ask everyone in your class/form group how they feel about making the transition to the next year group/key stage/education institution/workplace. Listen to their concerns and worries and provide advice.
Through trips or event out of school		-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take pupils on visits to secondary schools, colleges, universities, and workplaces so that they have an understanding of what lies ahead. Make sure there is time planned for pupils to have informal conversations with current students/undergraduates/employees on what the transition was like for them. Encourage older pupils to make these visits independently, developing a checklist of things they want to find out.

7 Skills and mindsets

'Skills for the future' has become a hot topic in education. From employers and training providers to third sector organisations, the lists of skills that pupils need after school and into work (which are often reported as missing) are extensive. Whether or not there needs to be a definitive list of skills is uncertain, but it is clear that pupils need a range of skills and attitudes to set them up to thrive when they move to their post-school route of choice.

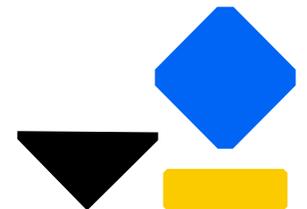
This section contains ideas on building core skills and mindsets in your pupils, as well as organisations that have useful tools, resources and materials.

Activities in this section link to Gatsby Benchmark 3, 4, 5 and 7



7 | Skills and mindsets

		At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Building confidence and self-worth	Outside of curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominate a 'star of the day' to provide public praise for your pupils' achievements. • Create an 'I can' wall: a space where pupils can log small successes in the classroom and build self-confidence through a sense of achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During registration, ask pupils to think of something they have done recently that they are proud of, and share this with a partner/ the form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly praise your pupils 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 headteacher for his or her recognition.
	Within curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get pupils to invent an individual superhero with academic and non-academic interests, skills and talents that mirror their own. Create a comic book or story about their superhero adventures. Share with the whole class and tell them that, although each superhero has different abilities, they're all superheroes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When asking pupils to reflect on their performance, encourage them to use the pronoun 'I' when describing their actions. • When target-setting with pupils, try to focus on building pupils' strengths as much as developing their weaker areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge pupils when they express limiting views of themselves or others. Encourage them to believe in themselves by demonstrating your faith in them - see Rita Pierson's TED Talk for inspiration. • Display labelled examples of pupil work that show specific strengths. Encourage pupils to learn from work by their peers.



7 | Skills and mindsets

		At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Building problem-solving	Outside of curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set problem-solving activities on trips. For example, scavenger or treasure hunts. Introduce pupils to the T-chart for decision-making. Ask them to use one to list the pros and cons of a choice they're considering. Discuss how they might use the chart to come to a decision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of pastoral or PSHE curriculum, sign up to LifeSkills for free and access their lesson plans and resources, including this one on problem-solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the workplace, pupils will often have to solve problems in a group. Introduce them to this through teamwork and discuss why it's more productive to be a SUN person rather than a RAIN person. Create a selection of problems that pupils may face, both now and in the future. Ask pupils to select one and in pairs discuss how they would solve it - what steps would they take?
	Within curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage your pupils in problem-solving with a practical activity. Set out a range of varied equipment with a question in the middle of the table, and ask your pupils to work through the equipment to solve the problem, both independently and together. Without realising it, pupils are going through a process of trial and error. Create a card sort of decision-making styles, such as asking friends or family for opinions, picking the easiest, picking the most popular and so on, and ask pupils to discuss the pros and cons of each. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In group discussion tasks, choose 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asking pupils to come up with ideas, encourage them to mind map freely, without worrying about 'right', or 'wrong'.

7 | Skills and mindsets

		At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Building resilience	Outside of curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take your pupils on trips to a range of workplaces – get them used to unfamiliar environments. • Encourage pupils to go out of their comfort zone on outdoor trips and expeditions – overcoming physical challenges can translate to overcoming academic or workplace challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore exam and workload coping mechanisms during form time as part of study and revision skills. You'll find ideas on this on the Mind and Student Minds websites. • Suggest enrichment, volunteering or summer school opportunities to your pupils, both inside and outside of school, that will take them out of their comfort zone. 	-
	Within curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run a 'people who help us' class project, focusing on who children can reach out to when facing different kinds of challenges. • Provide every pupil with a 'learning ladder', showing steps to follow when they're stuck. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at managing workloads and achieving a work/life balance when setting homework – discuss different approaches to homework and how they might affect stress or anxiety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell pupils when they've overcome a setback and use it 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 pupils to see adversity as a challenge and an opportunity to learn. • Praise pupils who attempt the most difficult tasks and problems, regardless of the outcome. • Create a resource sheet that contains basic information on a new topic. Pupils can use this to support themselves during ambitious pieces of independent work.

7 | Skills and mindsets

		At primary level	At secondary and sixth form	Throughout school
Building communication	Outside of curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comment on communication when on break or lunch time duty – praise pupils who have played well in a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise interviews for your pupils. Make these experiences as authentic as possible by inviting the local business community or governors to take part. The interviews could also be for real positions of responsibility, such as peer mentors or head boy/girl. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In preparation for election of school council members, ask pupils to produce and deliver a manifesto to their class.
	Within curriculum teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During group tasks, set roles such as scribe, time keeper and presenter to give pupils a range of communication experiences. Give your pupils structured opportunities to debate and disagree with one another, with the support of appropriate phrases and frameworks. You can find suggestions on the English Club website. Include tasks where communication is essential to performance, such as playing Articulate with a lesson's key terms, or 20 questions with characters from a novel/elements from the periodic table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the range of approaches described on Voice 21 when grouping pupils for discussion. During group tasks, set roles to give pupils a range of communication experiences. See De Bono's Six Thinking Hats for inspiration. When giving feedback on pupil communication, refer to the four strands of oracy developed by Voice 21: physical, cognitive, linguistic and emotional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage verbal and written accuracy of English in your feedback – consistently ask pupils to answer questions in full sentences using Standard English. Allow pupils to present, either independently or in groups, in front of the class, in assemblies or to you individually. Talk about the qualities and importance of confident delivery. During presentation tasks, discuss what good listening looks like with your pupils. Encourage them to ask questions, paraphrase to show understanding and ask presenters to give feedback to listeners.

Tools, resources and materials

The table below contains resources for building skills and mindsets. We don't endorse any one organisation over another and we haven't carried out assessments on the quality of the resources. However, these organisations and their work are generally respected in the post-school route space.

Organisation	Their tools, resources and materials
Enabling Enterprise	Enabling Enterprise was set up by a team of teachers to give students the skills they need to succeed. They've worked with over 60 organisations to build, test and refine the Skills Builder Framework – eight essential skills that are broken down into 15 teachable, assessable steps – for pupils from three-years-old to mastery level. You can download their Skill Builder Teacher Toolkit here , and access teacher tools here .
Barclays LifeSkills	LifeSkills, created with Barclays, is a curriculum-linked programme developed with teachers to help improve the skills and employability of young people in the UK. You can access lesson plans and resources here .
IGD	IGD are a research and training charity linked to the food and grocery industry. Their educator hub has a series of free lesson plans and resources focusing on employability skills and linking careers to the curriculum, with examples related to the food and grocery industry. You can also track lessons and receive free activity reports confirming progress against Gatsby Benchmark 4.
University of Birmingham	The University of Birmingham have a section of their website focused on the skills needed for university here (works best when viewed in Google Chrome).
University of Oxford	The University of Oxford have designed a platform called Oxplora to help 11 to 18-year-olds build their debating, broader thinking and intellectual curiosity skills.
UCAS/National Extension College	UCAS and the National Extension College have produced a series of guides on the skills pupils will need at university. You can find them here .
Voice 21	Voice 21 believes that prioritising oracy – speaking and listening skills – has a transformational effect on pupils, and all pupils deserve an oracy education. You can find a range of resources for building oracy in pupils here .
World Skills UK	WorldSkills UK is a partnership between businesses, education and Governments with the aim of accelerating young people's careers, in part through skill development. Their annual national competitions assess and build practical skills, knowledge and employability attributes.

Making choices about Key Stage 4

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

English, maths, and a science are compulsory. Schools can make more courses compulsory if they want. Schools usually offer a mixture of GCSEs and vocational awards.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GCSEs AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS?

GCSEs are usually more theoretical and are assessed through exams. Vocational qualifications are usually more practical and assessed through coursework.

ARE THERE PARTICULAR SUBJECTS I SHOULD ADVISE MY PUPILS TO TAKE?

Not really. Pupils should take subjects they enjoy or are good at. The priority is for pupils to get the best results they can, which is more likely with subjects they're interested in.

However, you may want to advise your students to maintain an academic balance to keep their options open. It's also worth telling the pupils considering a medical career that they'll need at least a double award science GCSE.

WHAT ABOUT THE EBACC?

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a school performance measure of pupils who get Cs (or Grade 4s) and above in 'core academic subjects'. These subjects are: English, maths, history or geography, science and a language. Pupils taking GCSE exams in 2020 will

all sit EBacc subjects alongside their chosen Key Stage 4 qualifications.

The EBacc is not referenced in university or college entry requirements at the moment, so they should not affect pupils currently choosing their Key Stage 4 qualifications.

More information can be found on the [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website. [Laura McInerney](#), former teacher, education journalist and co-founder of the research tool Teacher Tapp, has also written a blog post that could be useful to pupils and parents.

WHAT ABOUT THE WELSH BACC?

The Welsh Baccalaureate is a qualification that requires a Skills Challenge Certificate as well as a selection of GCSEs, AS and A-levels, and vocational qualifications.

The Skills Challenge Certificate assesses the skills needed in post-school routes. Pupils need to complete four projects and challenges to be awarded it. More information can be found on the [Qualifications Wales](https://www.qualifications.wales) website.

HOW DO KEY STAGE 4 CHOICES AFFECT POST-16 STUDY?

Schools and colleges usually require between four and seven A*-C grades (or Grade 4s) at GCSE to study A-levels (so taking vocational qualifications at Key Stage 4 may restrict pupils to vocational and work-based routes post-16). For most A-levels, schools and colleges prefer pupils to have a GCSE in the subject they want to study.

Making post-16 choices

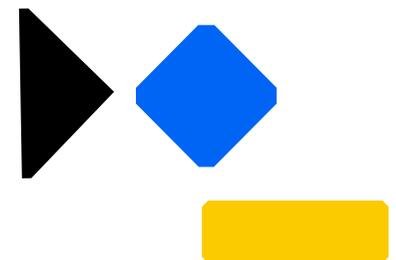
For information about the post-16 options open to pupils, see [Section 2](#).

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES, BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

A-levels	Apprenticeships	Vocational qualifications	Employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth, structured academic study • Assessed through exams • Recognised by employers and universities • Support available through school or college • Is a pathway to many careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured progression framework • Earn a salary • Recognised by employers • Develop skills specific to job field and role • Access to degree and professional qualifications • Practical workplace experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured modular courses • Practical use of skills and knowledge • Assessed through coursework and exams • Recognised by many employers and universities • Links closely with employment fields • Support available through school or college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time study • Earn a salary • Free from constraints of national framework • Practical workplace experience • Starting career immediately

WHAT ARE THE KEY CONVERSATIONS I SHOULD BE HAVING WITH PUPILS ABOUT THEIR CHOICES?

- The format of study and assessment that best suits them.
- What they think about post-18 study and career routes.
- What subjects they enjoyed at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- The size, reputation, location and leavers, destinations of the organisations or institutions they're considering.



Making post-16 choices

ARE THERE SUBJECTS I SHOULD ADVISE MY PUPILS TO TAKE?

For the pupils wanting to go to university and who have an idea of the course/s they want to apply for, encourage them to check which subjects (if any) are required for entry at a few universities. They can do this using the [UCAS](#) website.

For pupils with strong Key Stage 4 results but don't know what they want to do, you could recommend studying 'facilitating subjects' at A-level. Visit the [Russell Group](#) website for information.

For pupils with a specific passion, a vocational qualification may be the best way for them to develop field-related skills and expertise.

HOW DO KEY STAGE 5 CHOICES AFFECT POST-18 STUDY?

Top universities look for a strong set of Key Stage 5 results, such as As and A*s at A-level or Ds and D*s in vocational qualifications. It's also possible to move from a level 3 apprenticeship to a full-time higher education course, and those on apprenticeships who want to remain in employment can also access higher education level qualifications through higher or degree apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships are very competitive. The most popular will expect strong A-level or vocational qualification results.

Advancing Access have developed resources, including information sheets and presentations, that can help you advise pupils choosing Key Stage 4 and 5 options – find them all [here](#).

HOW DO KEY STAGE 5 CHOICES AFFECT FUTURE CAREERS?

Some professions require a degree, professional qualifications, or both. These can be achieved through university and apprenticeships.

Pupils considering university will need to be aware of 'underemployment', which happens when an extremely competitive labour market forces graduates into non-graduate level jobs. To avoid this, they should try to get work experience whilst studying.

Pupils considering apprenticeships should think about their next steps after their course ends. What will happen if they decide to change employer or job field?

Pupils considering employment at 16 should find out about the training and development opportunities available in their role. They must study for a national recognised qualification part-time until 18, but they should also think about the risks of 'getting stuck' if nothing is in place for their post-18 route.

Making post-18 choices

For information about the various post-16 options open to pupils, see [Section 2](#).

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES, BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

Higher education (full-time student)	Apprenticeships	School leaver programme	Sponsored degree	Job
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop academic skills and academic curiosity • Potential to gain a professional qualification • Enables entry to specific careers • Higher level knowledge • Tuition fee loan and maintenance loan required to cover the cost of tuition fees and living costs • Graduate schemes targeted at university graduates • Potential experience of living away from home • Broad extracurricular experiences • Degree-level qualification recognised by employers • Free to choose course – no employer input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn a salary • Potential to gain a professional qualification and/or degree • Practical workplace experience • Structured progression within a framework • Skills developed specific to job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn a salary • Potential to gain a professional qualification and/or degree • Practical workplace experience • Possible progression within the organisation • Professional straight away • Skills developed specific to job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition fees paid/partially paid • Gain a degree • Practical workplace experience • Recognised by employers • Element of pupil experience • Skills developed specific to job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earn a salary • Start career immediately • Little or no studying • Unstructured or flexible progression • Skills developed specific to job

Making post-18 choices

WHAT ARE THE KEY CONVERSATIONS I SHOULD BE HAVING WITH PUPILS ABOUT THEIR CHOICES?

- If they want/need to achieve a degree.
- How much time they want to spend studying and how much time they want to spend working.
- If they want to earn a wage.
- If they want to work towards expertise in a subject area or a job role.
- The size, reputation, location and leavers destinations of the organisations or institutions they're considering.

Advancing Access have developed a range of resources including activity sheets, presentations and video case studies to help guide pupils through the selection process – find them all [here](#).

SHOULD I ENCOURAGE PUPILS TO APPLY TO RUSSELL GROUP UNIVERSITIES?

[The Russell Group](#) of universities was formed in 1994. It's a group of 24 research-based universities with world class research and outstanding teaching. 'Russell Group' is often used as a term to describe the top universities in the UK.

The benefits include:

- high teaching standards and a stronger ratio of staff to pupils
- world class researchers and lecturers - teaching is research-based and tutors/lecturers are highly

- respected in their field
- great resources and facilities
- a higher than average pupil satisfaction and lower than average drop-out rate, according to research
- graduate recruiters value pupils who have been to a Russell Group university
- research conducted in 2015 showed that on average, Russell Group graduates earn £5440 more per year than a graduate from a non-Russell Group university

But a Russell Group university is not right for everyone and pupils shouldn't limit themselves to these universities.

One activity to help pupils compare universities is to ask them to make a mind map of factors they might want to consider, such as ranking, distance from home, quality of campus, pupil union and so on. Then ask them to rank these factors in order of importance. You could also show them the guidance on page 51 of our [Futures Pupil Handbook](#), which has useful websites on comparing university options.

[Advancing Access](#) has resources to help you support pupils deciding the universities and courses that best suit them. They suggest ways of approaching this decision-making process (including activities for pupils), show the sources available and have advice on how pupils should critique the information available to them.

Making post-18 choices

HOW DO PUPILS DECIDE BETWEEN HIGH-LEVEL ALTERNATIVES TO UNIVERSITY?

Pupils will need to look into the programmes they're considering carefully to compare them – each will be unique.

For general comments on the differences between them, go to the [UCAS](#) website.

For a comparison between school leaver programmes and apprenticeships, there is more information on the [All About School Leavers](#) website, and for a comparison between apprenticeships and sponsored degrees, visit [the Scholarship Hub](#).

HOW DO POST-18 CHOICES AFFECT FUTURE CAREERS?

Traditional degrees keep pupils' options open, and a strong result in any subject from a respected university will allow them to access most careers when they graduate. Pupils considering university will need to be aware of 'underemployment', which happens when an extremely competitive labour market forces graduates into non-graduate level jobs. To avoid this, they should try to get work experience whilst studying.

Apprenticeships, sponsored degrees and many school leaver programmes allow pupils to gain a degree whilst building valuable skills in employment. This helps them build a bank of work experience that demonstrates

their capability, as well as a professional network. Many traditional graduates aren't able to achieve this by the time they leave university. However, those considering alternatives to full-time university will need to know what the implications will be if they decide to change employer or job field.

Many 18-year-olds may be tempted by a job unattached to a study programme as they'll want to begin their careers without exams and paperwork. Ask these pupils to look into the post-18 choices made by people already in the organisations they're considering. They should make sure they have thought about their career progression beyond the first few years after they leave school.

