



**Buckinghamshire  
College Group**

# **Careers Policy and Strategy 2020-23**

Responsible Officer: Head of Student Services  
Date reviewed: June 2021  
Next review date: June 2023  
Policy available: Intranet  
Policy Approved by: Executive

## 1. Purpose of the Policy

This policy responds to the quality agenda and requirements identified within the following nationally published documents:

- Careers Strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents (Department for Education 2017)
- Careers Guidance and access for education and training providers (Statutory Guidance January 2018)
- Careers Guidance – guidance for further education and sixth form colleges (February 2018)
- Quality in Careers Standard
- Matrix quality standard for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
- Common Inspection Framework (Ofsted)
- HEFCE Assurance Review

Buckinghamshire College Group (BCG) is committed to providing high quality, impartial, careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG), accessible to all students. The aim is to encourage students to raise their aspirations and assist them to plan and manage their personal progression and career planning.

The aim of this policy is to set the purpose of the College's Careers Strategy, and identify the responsibilities and procedures required to ensure successful implementation.

This policy links with the following BCG policies and strategies:

- Careers Strategy
- Quality Improvement Strategy
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy
- Buckinghamshire College Group Self-Assessment Review (SAR)

Key objectives of the policy are to:

- Make clear the College's CEIAG commitment to its students.
- To set out the involvement of all staff in CEIAG activities.
- To support the College's commitment to providing a high quality service and continuous improvement.
- To work with The Careers and Enterprise Company to access their external support for the College and to provide input into the national requirement for services to be measured against the Gatsby Benchmarks.

## 2. Accessibility

- All prospective students are entitled to appropriate course information and advice, assistance with course choice, and transition into study at the College, tailored to their needs.
- All students are able to use the full range of student services including Careers Guidance, funding advice, personal counselling and support as appropriate.
- All students should be able to access information and assistance with impartial progression choices during and at the end of their course.
- All full-time students should receive careers education and guidance activities appropriate to their needs, delivered through the Career Coaching and Progression programme, College events, visits and external speakers, and access to individual, impartial, guidance.

### **3. Students' Responsibilities**

- To be actively involved in, and take ownership for their progression planning and career development.
- To participate in all relevant tutorials, careers coaching programme, careers education and guidance activities in order to strengthen their understanding of education, training, employment and other progression opportunities.
- To work co-operatively with staff and other students, respecting the views of others and the principles of Equality and Diversity.
- To contribute to the ongoing evaluation and improvement of the service.

### **4. Staff Responsibilities**

#### Executive and Governors:

The College Corporation will nominate a Governor with overview of the provision of Careers support. This Governor will support a member of the Management Team to be the named Careers Leader as set out in the statutory guidance. This will normally be the Head of Student Services. This role is responsible for ensuring that the College:

- Has a high quality and impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance service that supports students to make well-informed career choices.
- Meets the statutory guidance on providing impartial careers education and guidance.
- Meets the requirements for appropriate Quality Standards.
- Initiates, organises and evaluates College-wide CEIAG events to promote learning, work and progression to support students in exploring career choices.
- Manages all CEIAG related resources, including electronic ones.
- Manages all CEIAG related relationships with external agencies.
- Devises, supports and evaluates delivery of the Career Coaching and Progression programme.
- Maintains clear communications with parents/carers of the CEIAG offer and builds that relationship.

#### Faculty Directors and Curriculum Managers:

- Ensure commitment of teams in supporting links through and between the Career Coaching and Progression programme, tutorials and curriculum areas.
- Ensure that industry specific careers education is embedded throughout all programmes in their area.

#### Teachers:

- Deliver target setting and employability teaching with transparent links to the self-awareness, labour market knowledge and planning embedded in the Career Coaching and Progression programme.

#### Careers Adviser:

- Supports the development of the Career Coaching and Progression programme.
- Delivers individual and group impartial information, advice and guidance to students.
- Coordinates centrally delivered opportunities for contact with employers and recruiters.
- Works closely with Careers Coaches, Course Leaders and Workzone colleagues to provide a seamless experience of accessing opportunities to experience the world of work.

### Careers Coaches:

- Deliver engaging content within the Career Coaching and Progression programme which inspires students and supports aspiration and confidence.
- Work closely with Course Leaders to ensure that the Tutorial and Career Coaching and Progression programmes knit together to support students in self-reflection and progression planning and activity.

### Industry Placement Officers

- Support students in arranging, securing Industry Placements and Work Experience.
- Liaise with Careers Advisor to ensure, where possible, the placement matches the aspirations of the student.
- Working with employers to contribute to the wider careers agenda e.g. Guest speakers, live briefs, etc. (Gatsby Benchmarks)

### All staff have a responsibility to:

- Support the development of students' confidence and self-esteem to access learning, apply experience and make positive progression.
- Participate in relevant professional training and maintain an up-to-date awareness of appropriate resources that they and their students can make use of to support career decision making.
- Participate, as appropriate, in adviser networks and appropriate training to maintain awareness of alternative education and training provision, locally and nationally.
- Provide timely and sufficient course information and advice to enable prospective students to make suitable choices.

## **5. Equality Impact Statement**

We have a duty to consider the impact of changes on groups with Protected Characteristics (race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership).

What are the overall aims of the change? Why are you proposing it?	The aim of this policy is to provide a framework to ensure that the guidelines are in place to support all stakeholders
Given the aims of your proposal, what issues does your data/information highlight?	Everybody is included within this policy, and all groups are given equality in regards to their needs and provisions
How could the proposed change affect positively/negatively on groups with protected characteristics?	This has a positive impact on all groups with protected characteristics, as they are ensured equal treatment and provision based on their needs. Risk assessments may be carried out to ensure that this is the case and provisions maybe altered to accommodate specific needs
What actions will you take to mitigate any negative impact?	No negative impact to having this policy
Is there any potential negative impact justified in light of wider benefits of the proposal?	No negative impact to having this policy
Recording final decision	This policy requires Executive approval

<p>Has the policy taken into consideration the requirements of GDPR regulations? Are there any actions that need addressing, e.g.; data sharing agreement; has data consent been considered; data retention timescales?</p>	<p>GDPR regulations have been considered and actions comply with data protection requirements.</p>
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## Careers Strategy

### 1. Intent

Buckinghamshire College Group is committed to ensuring that all students gain the “Bucks College Factor” during their studies at the College; that is students acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to progress in learning and career, and meet the needs of employers and the labour market. The Bucks College Factor is gained through access to state of the art facilities and resources, expert tuition, and real industry experience, supported by a scaffold of high quality, impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG).

The College’s commitment to a coherent programme of activity throughout the curriculum is recognised by Matrix Quality Standard accreditation, assuring the provision of high quality information, advice and guidance for all our students (including those on Apprenticeships and in Higher Education).

This strategy outlines the College’s current approach to delivering CEIAG and aspirations for enhancements to further improve outcomes for all students. It underpins the College’s CEIAG Policy 2019-21. CEIAG is fully integrated throughout the student journey, and involves collaboration with external partners to ensure currency and efficiency of support and coherence with the regional industrial strategy.

Buckinghamshire College Group prides itself on its strong vocational offer, which facilitates students from diverse social and educational backgrounds (including adults) in gaining essential life and professional skills to allow them to contribute to society. The CEIAG offer complements this through providing up-to-date and relevant labour market information, supporting students’ self-esteem and raising aspiration, driving career planning.

The strategy reflects activities to enhance the current careers provision in order to meet the eight ‘Gatsby Benchmarks’ accepted nationally as evidence of good career guidance, and the priorities set within the Education Inspection Framework. There are also statutory and funding requirements that specifically apply to:

- All students in College up to and including the age of 18 years old.
- 19 to 25 year olds with a current Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan in place under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Whilst the Gatsby Benchmarks were devised to support careers strategies within schools and colleges, Buckinghamshire College Group acknowledges the benefit for impartial information, advice and guidance for students of all ages, and reflects this in its strategy.

In addition to supporting current students the College recognises that impartial IAG is required earlier in the decision making process, to support students to choose a course that reflects their aspirations, potential and the opportunities within the local, regional, national and global labour market. The Careers Strategy (referred to hereafter as ‘the strategy’ acknowledges the resource required to support potential applicants in navigating the options and College-wide collaboration required to ensure the College offer reflects its community and labour market.

## 2. Background

As part of its FE College funding agreement Buckinghamshire College Group is required to ensure access to independent, impartial careers guidance. There is also a legal requirement to provide all students with guidance materials and a wide range of up-to-date reference materials relating to careers education and career opportunities. In tandem with apprenticeships the introduction of T Level programmes from 2021 will form the basis of the technical education offer going forward and will be included in the planning and delivery of a Careers Strategy. The Government published its Careers Strategy in December 2017, followed by statutory guidance in October 2018. The strategy sets out a long-term plan to build a world-class careers system that helps young people and adults choose the career that is right for them. The guidance expands on the measures set out in the strategy; to make sure that all young people get a programme of advice and guidance that is stable, structured and delivered by individuals with the right skills and experience. It is a requirement for 16 to 18 year olds (and also 19 to 25 year-olds with a current EHC Plan) in College to have access to independent careers guidance. All 16 to 19 study programmes should be focused on progression towards learning at the next level or progression in to employment. The Government uses the Gatsby Benchmarks as the national tool for ensuring national consistency of high quality access. An online self-evaluation tool, Compass, is used to assess how careers support compares against the Gatsby Benchmarks and the national average. There are 8 benchmarks which constitute 'good practice' in career guidance. These benchmarks are:

1. A stable careers programme.
2. Learning from career and labour market information.
3. Addressing the needs of each student.
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers.
5. Encounters with employers and employees.
6. Experiences of workplaces.
7. Encounters with further and higher education.
8. Personal guidance.

The Department for Education has published statutory guidance (most recently updated in January 2018) for maintained schools on their duty to provide careers guidance. From 2018 schools have been required to admit providers of technical education and apprenticeships to contact pupils to promote their courses.

Buckinghamshire College Group works closely with Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the Bucks Skills Hub and Bucks Careers Hub, enjoying support from its Enterprise Coordinators, access to its "Opps in Bucks" online provision, and wider employer collaboration as well as a network of professional support with colleagues working in mainstream and SEN settings in Buckinghamshire.

The Big Bucks Ambition strategic plan for 2018-2023 includes challenging key performance indicators for students completing work experience (70%) and students moving into positive destinations (96%). Whilst the operational environment has become tougher since the onset of Covid-19 we remain ambitious for all our students and continue to work towards these targets.

### **3. Implementation**

Prior to joining the College applicants have access to information through the website, open events (physical or virtual), and touch points with College staff through school Careers Fairs and the Bucks Skills Show, organised by the Bucks Skills Hub. Transition events are organised for specific applicant cohorts (those with special educational needs, and children leaving care).

Full-time students receive at least one pre-entry interview for initial advice and enrolment onto appropriate courses.

Every full-time student has a Course Leader, who delivers a programme of tutorials including academic and personal target setting. An in-house, qualified Careers Adviser offers impartial, individual and confidential careers guidance sessions to all full-time, part-time and non-students. Action planning is an integral part of these sessions.

From September 2020 the Career Coaching and Progression sessions will form part of the Study Programme, complementing the tutorial programme and collaborating across the wider College to support work placement and work experience timetables and objectives.

Careers Fairs (both internal and external) and visiting speakers are arranged and students are encouraged to engage.

Students receive support to find suitable work placements or work experience to help develop the skills they need to enter the workplace and to secure and sustain meaningful employment.

#### **3.1 The Marketing team contributes to the delivery of CEIAG through:**

- Organisation of open events showcasing the College facilities and provision offer;
- Design of literature to promote progression routes and careers for all cohorts;
- Maintaining the website for course information and signposting.

#### **3.2 Teaching staff contribute to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

- The delivery of tutorials that include College values, Equality & Diversity, and Study skills;
- Support for students in preparing e-Individual Learning Plans (ILP) and ensuring that students are aware of and monitor / review their individual targets and target setting;
- Conducting regular 1:1 reviews with students;
- Identifying employability skills that are embedded and demonstrated in all students' main vocational qualifications;
- Teaching and embedding Maths and English throughout the duration of the students' vocational qualification;
- Providing support and guidance for mature students and signposting to specific specialist provision internally and externally;
- Supporting and promoting careers and aspirations with students and encouraging participation at cross College events and with specific vocational opportunities.

### **3.3 The Student Support and Services team contributes to the delivery of CEIAG through providing:**

- Organisation of taster days within College to give specific cohorts of young people experience of the College offer (students with SEN and students who are children looked after or leaving care);
- Accessible, professional, impartial 1:1 careers guidance interviews across all campuses;
- Independent external careers advice offered to students via the National Careers Service, if this is considered to be more appropriate;
- Support provided to curriculum teams by developing and delivering the Career Coaching and Progression sessions, through Performance Coaches on each campus, including information on UCAS, HE, Student Finance and alternatives to HE;
- Organisation of the Annual Careers Fair; Schools Liaison to support schools' IAG provision, contributing to the LEP's overall area attainment of Gatsby Benchmark 7.

### **3.4 The Work Placement team contributes to the delivery of careers guidance through:**

- Liaising with employers and curriculum areas to provide opportunities for students to access meaningful work experience.

## **4. Objectives for 2020 – 2023**

The College's objectives reflect the Gatsby Benchmarks required nationally for schools and colleges with students aged 16-18, and additionally ensures that impartial information, advice and guidance is accessible to students of all ages.

### **Objective 1: A stable careers programme, including encounters with further and higher education**

- To ensure the careers programme is delivered by individuals with the right skills and experience. The College will use qualified careers professionals to offer advice and guidance to students;
- To enable all students to have an understanding of the full range of opportunities available to them, the skills that are valued in the workplace and to have first-hand experience in the workplace;
- To develop the Careers Coaching and Progression programme that will raise the aspirations of all students but is also tailored to meet individual needs;
- To develop ways for parents/carers and advisers to access good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities, including the understanding and promotion of evolving T Level provision;
- To further develop the College's approach to UCAS support for students; ensuring clarity of roles and responsibilities and plan timely alternatives to those who are planning alternative routes;
- To ensure there is a clear focus on the enterprise, employability skills, experience and qualifications that employers value and that can support preparation for work.

### **Objective 2: Learning from career and labour market information/resources/awards**

- To ensure that the College has, and uses, the appropriate online career tools to ensure currency of information, compliance with national recording requirements, and provision of engaging resources that motivate students in their career planning;
- To utilise and further develop the existing relevant labour market information to ensure staff and students are informed in their decisions and advice, working with the Careers and Enterprise Company and Bucks Skills Hub to reflect local, regional and national context;



- To enhance the value of GroFar in ensuring students are able to keep track of their own journey, record and access the advice they have received and monitor their agreed actions and next steps;
- To maintain high quality careers provision endorsed by continued Matrix Standard accreditation;
- To use the Compass online toolkit to benchmark against the Gatsby principles;

### **Objective 3: Linking curriculum learning to careers**

- To ensure subject teachers support the College's approach to CEIAG and are able to link the content of study programmes with careers;
- Ensure an effective referral process to the careers and work experience teams.

### **Objective 4: Encounters with employers and employees & experiences of workplaces**

- To further build coherence between the College careers provision, Performance Coaches, Work Placement team, Apprenticeship team and Bucks Careers Hub to enhance the opportunities available to students;
- To further realise opportunities for students to develop entrepreneurial skills for self-employment by engaging fully with local employers, businesses and professional networks to ensure real-world connections with employers lie at the heart of the careers strategy;
- To ensure students have the opportunity to participate in at least two "meaningful encounters 'with an employer per year whilst they are on their study programme with at least one encounter being delivered through their curriculum area. Ensuring in addition we take account of students' own part time work and its influence on their development;
- To ensure there is a clear focus on the enterprise, employability skills, experience and qualifications that employers value and can support preparation for work;
- To enable students to gain the confidence to compete in the labour market by providing opportunities to gain the practical know-how and attributes that are relevant for employment;
- To develop strategies for working with employers in planning for the introduction of T Level provision;
- To create a bank of resources by recording guest speakers, existing students and alumni and sharing within College and with partners;
- To explore using existing students as guest speakers to discuss progression in to HE and apprenticeship opportunities and to share their experiences in the workplace;
- Develop marketing material for employers that will enable them to easily understand the impact of their involvement, the breadth of the options available to them and the ways in which they can show they meet their corporate social responsibility.

### **Objective 5: Personal guidance & addressing the needs of each student**

- To ensure students with particular vulnerabilities and those who are at risk are appropriately supported and identified through close working relationships with the full range of educational and support agencies;
- To ensure that careers guidance for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is differentiated, where appropriate, and based on high aspirations and a personalised approach. Careers guidance for students with SEND should be based on the student's own aspirations, abilities and needs;
- To establish student feedback using appropriate mechanisms after 1:1 guidance, group work, talks, events and activities and through student voice processes that will inform future services and opportunities;

- To consider accessibility to CEIAG for all students, including those on part time programmes;
- To ensure all students are made aware of, and have access to, specialist professional and impartial Careers Guidance.

## 5. Impact

The strategy aligns with the Big Bucks Ambition (Buckinghamshire College Group Strategic Plan) 2018-2023 and specifically looks to impact on the following targets:

Linked KPIs	Target
Student satisfaction	90%
Ambition	96%
Students completing work experience	70%
Students' positive destination	96%

Compass reporting enables the College to measure activity and ensure that the Gatsby benchmarks are met or exceeded.

### Internal Links

CEIAG College Policy 2019-21

### External Resources / Links

The Careers Enterprise Company <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/>

Gatsby Foundation <http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-careerguidance>

Government Careers Strategy December 2017

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664319/Careers\\_strategy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf)

Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers October 2018

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/748474/181008\\_schools\\_statutory\\_guidance\\_final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748474/181008_schools_statutory_guidance_final.pdf)

National Careers Service <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>

UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) <https://www.ucas.com/>

Bucks Skills Hub <http://bucksskillshub.org/>

Bucks Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership <https://www.buckstvllep.co.uk/>