



Cumbria Careers Hub Yearbook 2022-23

Cumbria
CAREERS HUB

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THE **CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE**
COMPANY

FOREWORD



Cath Dutton,
Careers Hub Manager,
Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership

Welcome to the very first Cumbria Careers Hub Yearbook. Here we share some information about the wide-ranging careers activity that has taken place, and which continues to take place, across Cumbria to ensure every young person finds their best next step.

In my role as the Careers Hub Manager, I meet many people of a similar age, who comment that they wish they had received the level of careers guidance and support that is available to our young people today. My experience, like that of many others, was a 30-minute interview with someone, who asked me what I liked doing before recommending a couple of options. In fact, when I informed my Head of Year that I wouldn't be staying on to study A-levels, and instead intended to study Hospitality Management for four years at Blackpool and Fylde College, widely regarded as the best hospitality education provider in the country at the time, her response was "you will amount to nothing".

A young person should never be dismissed in this way, particularly at what is one of the most important but intimidating times in their life. That's why my job means the world to me.

The careers education programme for our young people provides so many opportunities:

- At any time in each academic year 31,261 students from year 7 to 13 are taking part in a career's activity.
- In year 10, just under 5,000 young people are venturing out on work experience with a local employer.
- Around 30,000 young people are given the opportunity to meet with at least one local employer to learn about working in their business.
- Approximately 4,000 students will practice their interview skills with an employer each academic year.

Our career partners and employers across the county deliver many of these opportunities because they are also passionate about giving every student the knowledge that they need to achieve their goals.

I would like to thank members of the Careers Hub Strategy Group for their ongoing support and leadership, and Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership for hosting the Hub and providing our match funding. This support helps every young person to find their next best step, prepares them for the world of work and ensures that they are aware of the fabulous career opportunities available to them in Cumbria.

However, there is still lots more to be done to ensure that our businesses have employees with the skills that they need to increase their productivity and every young person finds their best next step.

Finally, thank you to the hundreds of employers, who provide meaningful and impactful encounters for our young people, which includes careers talks, careers activities, such as mock interviews, and careers related projects and work experience.

Cath Dutton,
Careers Hub Manager,
Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership

WELCOME



Oli de Botton,
Chief Executive,
The Careers & Enterprise Company

When it comes to good careers provision – the important work of getting young people ready for the future - a consensus is emerging in England about what excellence looks like, backed up by a growing evidence base.

Young people need employers involved early on in their education journey, so they can learn about what comes next first hand and receive information about all the different pathways available – apprenticeships, technical routes, university, jobs. They also need an integrated approach full of powerful experiences. Maybe there is a talk from an employer in Year 4 about STEM careers, there is a site visit in Year 7 to an office or factory. There is curriculum learning in Year 9 that explains how maths concepts like ratio and proportion are used in industry. In Year 10 and Year 12 there is meaningful workplace experiences where young people learn key skills. And there is personalised guidance from qualified careers advisors along the way.

Careers Hubs like Cumbria, together with local partners, are playing a pivotal part in delivering for young people in their communities. The evidence of impact narrated in this report is testament to their hard work.

The work of the Cumbria Careers Hub along with other Careers Hubs across the country is making a real difference. As highlighted in our recent Ready for the Future report, 74 per cent of Year 13 students now say they are career ready, up from 45 per cent in Year 7.

There is a clear relationship between high quality careers education and positive post-16 destinations – twice as strong for schools serving the most economically disadvantaged students - and this is reducing the risk of a young person becoming NEET by 20 per cent.

Careers is now becoming more embedded in day-to-day lessons as careers education moves into the mainstream of school and college life and knowledge of different pathways is increasing, with awareness of apprenticeships doubling to 81 per cent by Year 11.

As we move forward with our mission to ensure all young people have the support they need to make take their best next step, we are acutely aware that while much progress has been made and real impact is being seen, more needs to be done.

Our shared strategic focus is on driving further improvement through five priorities:

1. Raise the quality of careers provision in schools, special schools and colleges against the Gatsby Benchmarks through training for the education workforce, targeted support and quality assurance
2. Drive more high-quality experiences with employers for students and teachers – with a focus on current areas of need
3. Amplify apprenticeships, technical and vocational routes – including by supporting the implementation of the Provider Access Legislation (PAL)
4. Focus on interventions for economically disadvantaged young people (FSM) and those who face most barriers – through identifying and addressing the needs of specific cohorts
5. Connect careers provision in schools and colleges to the needs of local economies – as articulated through Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs).



Cumbria Careers Hub

Cumbria Careers Hub is hosted by Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, who provide the match funding required to deliver this important service to Schools and Colleges.

We are working to ensure every young person receives outstanding, relevant careers education throughout their time at school and college. We want to make sure that every young person in Cumbria is equipped with the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to achieve their full potential and support our local economy.

We are a Community of Practice and bring together secondary schools, special schools and colleges with local employers and support them to bring learning to life through high quality, inspirational careers education.

We now have 53 institutions (49 schools and 4 colleges) in our Careers Hub.

Working together with our local Enterprise Adviser Network, Cornerstone Employers, universities, training providers, businesses and careers professionals from across Cumbria, the Careers Hub supports the schools and colleges to achieve the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, which collectively provide the framework for good careers education provision.

Our ambition is to develop a world class programme of co-ordinated careers education in Cumbria – one which inspires and engages every young person and empowers them to make informed decisions as they take their next steps.

Employers are vital to the success of this ambition and play a significant role in supporting young people in schools and colleges. There are a range of ways for employers, and their employees, to get actively involved and make a real difference to a young person's future.

Take a look at our website to find out more about the Careers Hub and how to get involved.

<https://www.careershubcumbria.co.uk/>

Cumbria Careers Hub aims to help every young person find their best next step.

Meet the Team



Cath Dutton //
Careers Hub Manager

Cath has lived and worked in Cumbria for over 30 years in skills development and HR roles. She is passionate about inspiring young people and ensuring they get the best opportunities.



Jo Tate //
Enterprise Coordinator

Jo works with our Furness and Carlisle and Eden Clusters. She has been teaching (in secondary and Further Education) for over 25 years and her hands on experience in raising student aspirations is valued in this role.



Nina Porter //
Enterprise Coordinator

Nina works with our clusters of schools and employers in West and South Cumbria. Prior to joining us, she worked in Further Education looking after work experience, school liaison and marketing.



Mel Carr //
Enterprise Coordinator
(maternity leave)

Mel enjoys working with education and employers. She has been an Enterprise Coordinator since the Enterprise Advisor Network began in 2016 and joined the Hub team in 2019.



Sharon Hitchen //
Programme Administrator

Sharon is temporarily supporting the team with delivering their projects while Mel is on maternity leave.



Rachelle Poyntz //
Hub Innovation Project Manager

Rachelle manages the Hub Innovation Project, working with students (age 16-19) at Furness College to help them secure their best next step by working closely with our Young Ambassadors from local businesses.

A partnership approach to delivering careers

Cumbria Careers Hub is a Community of Practice and in Cumbria we are fortunate to have a supportive community and strong partnerships.

In August 2022 we established the **Careers Partnership Group** which includes careers providers and employer representative bodies, which had an interest in careers, working alongside employers with a social value agenda and training providers.

Our initial meeting was attended by 36 stakeholder representatives and we spent time understanding the strategic priorities for careers education in Cumbria and mapping the current provision to identify gaps.

It was a positive meeting which highlighted that not all schools and colleges in the county have equal access to careers support which impacts on their Gatsby Benchmark scores. For example, the mapping exercise highlighted that due to the high presence of social value activity in West Cumbria and Barrow the schools in that area were more likely to achieve Gatsby Benchmark 5 which focuses on employer encounters.

We also learned that the schools in West Cumbria and Barrow had access to more free careers related programmes than the rest of the county due to the strong support provided by Sellafield and BAE.

The group recognised the importance of such employer support and resolved to further explore the good practice in West Cumbria and Barrow and find ways of offering similar support to schools in Carlisle, Eden and other areas of Cumbria.

Actions from the first meeting included:

- Establishing a task and finish group to improve the value of work experience
- Establishing a task and finish group to improve parental engagement in careers, and
- Exploring the possibility of launching an “Our Future” Young Ambassador Programme throughout Cumbria.

These actions are well underway with progress detailed in this report.

In April, the Partnership Group met again to support and inform the development of the 2023-24 Careers Hub Strategy for Cumbria. The strategy will seek approval from the [Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership](#) (CLEP) Board at the end of July 2023, prior to the start of the new academic year.



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Working with Cumbria Careers Hub and Cumbria LEP, helping to shape work experience for the future is great for our business and most importantly, good for students. We all want the best opportunities for our children, but not every child has the networks or opportunities that others have. Businesses and schools need to ensure we offer relevant opportunities to learn about the work environment to all students regardless of their backgrounds and abilities.

Cath Howard,
Environmental Sustainability Manager,
Balfour Beatty Kilpatrick

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Our Young People are Our Future

The Cumbria LEP (CLEP) is re-launching the Our Futures campaign, which looks to promote living and working in Cumbria. The Our Future campaign is focused on promoting Cumbria's great careers and job opportunities to our own young people.

It is important our young people feel inspired and know that their dream job and work experience with world-leading brands could be right here in Cumbria and we need everyone to help get that message out.

From advanced manufacturing, to health and social care, fashion, food and drink, logistics, construction, law, nuclear, hospitality, agriculture, finance and everything else in between, a wide range of opportunities are available to our young people. The Our Future campaign aims to ensure every young person from 11 years old (Year 7) is aware of these opportunities.

Over the last 12 months the Careers Hub has created and distributed Our Future Labour Market Information teaching resources and sector infographics to every school, special school and college in Cumbria. The teaching resources help our Career Leaders deliver up-to-date and relevant information about career opportunities available to young people in Cumbria focusing on Cumbria's priority sectors. In addition, the Careers Hub launched the U-Explore Platform, a real time platform that guides a young person through various post 16 education, training and career options.

To raise awareness of the Our Future campaign beyond education, CLEP has created several case studies of young people from a range of backgrounds in a range of careers. The case studies, some of which also come in video format, are shared across various social media platforms to engage with young people as well as parents and employers. Our case studies offer an opportunity to hear from successful young people about their current careers and how they got there, be that an apprenticeship programme, the further education route or 6th form to study A-levels.

To engage with the Our Future campaign or learn more contact cumbriacareershub@thecumbrialep.co.uk.



Talking Futures

Schools and colleges regularly tell us that engaging with parents can be challenging, especially when it comes to career conversations. To address this and better support our education colleagues, the Careers Hub has developed two new initiatives.

1 Parental Engagement Task and Finish Group

A task and finish group of Enterprise Advisers, stakeholders and Careers Leaders looked closely at the specific issues and developed an action plan for delivery on a small scale this academic year. If successful, the plans can be rolled out across Cumbria.

The group identified three target parent groups:

- The very engaged - where some need to update their knowledge on Post 16 options to include technical and vocational qualification routes.
- The engaged - those keen to get involved but don't fully understand how careers education has changed since their own experience at school.
- The disengaged - parents who aren't involved at all.

To update the knowledge of the very engaged and engaged groups of parents, the Careers Hub will create an information toolkit to share key messages about careers education and opportunities in partner newsletters and via social media. The group agreed to work with stakeholders, employer representative bodies, such as the Cumbria Chamber of Commerce, Cumbria Tourism and others, as well as large and small employers, to reach parents via their workplaces across Cumbria.

Work continues to develop actions to reach the disengaged audience.

2 Parent and Guardian Continual Professional Development

As part of a national pilot, Cumbria Careers Hub was asked by the Careers and Enterprise Company to deliver a project called Talking Futures.

This project aims to better enable Careers Leaders to equip parents to have more confident and informed careers conversations with their child. It was supported by a social media campaign which raised awareness of the project during National Apprenticeship Week (6- 12 February).

Careers Leaders were provided with a range of resources by the Careers and Enterprise Company including tips and an editable plan for engaging parents, posters, PowerPoints and a resource pack with up-to-date pathway information to showcase and promote vocational and technical qualifications.

Talking Futures in Cumbria

We worked with Queen Elizabeth Grammar School (QEGS) in Penrith and their Careers Leader, Sarah Nohavicka. The school had previously identified a low take up of apprenticeships at both level 3 and 4 from their destination data. The project, recognising their role as key influencers on the careers choices of young people, focussed on educating and updating staff and parents about the range of technical qualifications now available.

We delivered a [one-hour workshop to all staff](#), including the senior leadership team, in January 2023. The workshop explained the requirements of Gatsby Benchmark 7, introduced the new Provider Access Legislation (PAL) and gave information about all of the Technical and Vocational post 16 and 18 learning pathways. We shared some suggestions and resources that teaching staff could use to engage parents, as well as teaching resources and posters that could be used to link curriculum areas to the different career pathways.

In March, we held a [Parents Progression Evening](#), attended by 50 students and parents in years 10, 11 and 12. To add value to the session, we also invited some of our Partner FE/ HE providers including Carlisle College, Kendal College, Inspira and Gen 2 to meet the parents. The Headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and a Governor also attended. A presentation gave information about the different pathways including T levels, Apprenticeships (at all levels) and general vocational courses and routes as well as sharing lots of useful resources and links to further information.

The Talking Futures project at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School was followed by a Year 12 Transitions Day in May involving an interactive workshop sharing all post 18 options. The students were supported to identify their strengths and areas for development and consider what would help them 'stand out from the crowd' in a personal action plan. The students were really engaged in the session and sourcing information about their options which included higher and degree level apprenticeships.

The schools intended and actual destination data for these students will tell us if the workshop and the parental engagement activity has had the desired impact.

As a result of their renewed focus on Gatsby Benchmark 7 and providing greater opportunities for students and parents to access training providers and information, QEGS increased their Gatsby Benchmark 7 score from 83% in December 2022 to 100% in March 2023. In addition, knowledge and understanding about vocational and technical courses has significantly increased across the school.

Feedback was positive from staff and parents highlighting increased confidence and understanding but possibly more significant was the feedback from the providers who attended the progression evening. They reported that the questions being asked by parents and students were much more structured and informed demonstrating a greater understanding of apprenticeships.

The CEC reported that the national pilot confirmed there was a need to deliver parental engagement projects and that anchoring the project to National Apprenticeship Week helped to improve awareness of vocational and technical qualifications. As we found locally, they also saw value in the focused information and staff confidence increased nationally.



Our Future Young Ambassador Programme

Cumbria Careers Hub successfully secured a Hub Innovation Project (HIP) grant from the Careers and Enterprise Company to explore why youth unemployment (those aged 18-24) in Barrow is above national average, in an area with high demand for employees.

Barrow has one of the highest rates of 18-24-year-olds who are not working. Figures from November 2022 found that 6.3% of young people in Barrow are claiming benefits against a Cumbria-wide average of 3.8% and 4.8% in the UK.

Working in partnership with Furness College and their students from the construction, motor vehicle and hair and beauty courses, the project invited employers into the college to bring learning to life, support the development of the skills needed for successful employment and build business relationships to help the young students secure a job on completion of their course.

In April we launched the [Our Future Young Ambassador programme](#) with over 30 Young Ambassadors from Morgan and Sindall, BAE and the Lakeside Hotel and Spa. The Ambassadors are all from a range of backgrounds in Barrow and are close in age to the students to offer relatable peer to peer support.

The programme is designed to support the students by raising their aspirations and developing their knowledge about their available opportunities. Over the six week programme the Young Ambassadors have covered a range of topics including identifying strengths, understanding communication skills in the workplace, team working and the importance of personal branding.

While working with our Young Ambassadors, the students had access to one-to-one careers advice and guidance and CV writing workshops. Each student completed a baseline questionnaire at the start of the project and will complete a further questionnaire on completion to help determine whether the programme has been successful.

To deliver the project we appointed Hub Innovation Project Manager Rachelle Poyntz who is based at the Furness College's Channelside campus.

On completion of the project we will undertake a thorough evaluation to assess whether it can continue to be delivered at Furness College and potentially in other areas where youth unemployment is increasing.

"I've really enjoyed the sessions. They've been fun, but educational at the same time. The most important thing that I've taken from the sessions is that I've learned what I need to work on in terms of my employability skills, but also, that communication is one of my real strengths!"

Natasha – L1 Motor Vehicle student

"For me, getting involved in the Ambassador programme was about supporting students, not just in terms of routes into employment, but also to help go confidently into employment, sure of their own abilities."

Young Ambassador Ella Hewson – Senior HR Project Professional, BAE Systems

"I am deeply concerned that there is a higher level of young people, who are unemployed in Barrow than there is in the rest of Cumbria or the UK. The pandemic meant that many young people missed out on the opportunity to have a work placement or visit businesses to find out more about work and the workplace. This project looks to make sure that that doesn't happen in the future and that all our young people have the opportunity to know what exciting careers are available to them.

"We want to ensure that young people are excited about work, have the opportunity to explore all of their options and are ready for work by the time they leave college. I'm really pleased that the LEP is going to be working with Furness College on this important project. We want all our young people to be ambitious about their future and ready for work when they finish their studies.

"For me, it's not only about ensuring that we have a prosperous local economy, but also about making sure that our young people have the necessary skills and opportunities to build a great career here, whatever they want to do. More generally, we are looking at how we can support those that are unemployed back into work as there are lots of jobs available – we just need to support young people to get these."

Jo Lappin,
Chief Executive at Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership

"It has been so beneficial for students to have access to ambassadors from various local businesses. Rachelle and the team have provided interesting activities and the students have engaged well."

Faye Spiers
– Learning Resources Supervisor, Furness College

"I was keen to get involved in the Ambassador programme as I felt that the 'mission' – to give students an insight into business and industry – was really important. I wasn't lucky enough to have that opportunity at school or college. I have really enjoyed the time out of my busy work life to share my experiences and see how much the students are gaining from the programme."

Young Ambassador Zach Mooney
– Lead Project Professional (Data and Analytics), BAE Systems

Connecting classroom learning to real life construction projects

Cumbria Careers Hub is leading a new and inspirational project to help teachers learn more about the vast number of careers available within the construction industry.

21 teachers, from 18 secondary schools, and over 20 employers have joined forces to create teaching resources to help year 9 students understand how their learning can lead to a variety of different careers in the construction industry.

The project, which will benefit over 5,000 year 9 pupils, is funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company and designed in partnership with Cumbria Careers Hub.

The collaboration sees construction industry employers working with teachers to explore ways of enriching the curriculum. They are helping to connect learning in lessons to real life workplace applications and demonstrate how subjects such as English, Maths, Geography, History and Science are used in shaping and constructing major projects.

Teachers have been able to create engaging resources and content for their pupils, while raising awareness of the various educational avenues that could lead to a career in designing, developing and building roads.

A conference brought employers and teachers together to learn about the Year 9 curriculum and how that links to the world of work. In May and June, the teachers took part in an Industry Day hosted by National Highways and their delivery partners including Balfour Beatty, Kier, Costain and Keltbray.

Recent studies have shown teachers to be a key source of career inspiration for students. However, they want more information about the range of future options - in particular, vocational and apprenticeship pathways - which do not feature in their current training:

- Research by [The Sutton Trust](#) shows nearly nine in ten teachers (88%) feel their training doesn't currently prepare them to deliver careers support to students.

- A report by PLMR identified that 70% of teachers agree apprenticeships provide excellent future opportunities, only 26% feel confident advising students about how to find an apprenticeship. In contrast, 90% feel confident giving advice about university applications.

"Career Leads can often operate in isolation from subject teachers in their schools and it really is time to start bringing their provision together. It's beneficial to meet employers who can give us a real insight into genuine pathways available, and the skill sets and abilities we need to develop in our young people."

Ken Pickering, Lakes School

"The partnership with Cumbria Careers Hub is vital to ensure young people in the region understand what career opportunities are available to them when they leave education."

There is a misconception that the construction industry is all about wearing a hi-vis jacket and digging but it is much more varied. There are opportunities for data analysts, stakeholder and communication experts, archaeologists and much more. Industry days like this really help us engage with teachers who can open the eyes of their students and help shape their futures."

Lee Hillyard, National Highways' A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Project Director

"The Cumbria LEP and Careers Hub is delighted to be working with National Highways, and all of its supply chain, to showcase to our teaching staff the excellent careers that are available in the construction industry.

In turn, our teachers will be able to inform our young people about the breadth of careers available to them in construction, one of the sectors that is forecasted to grow in Cumbria over the coming decade.

It was a great day delivering on one of the LEP's strategic priorities - bringing the world of work and the world of education closer together to develop the skills needed by our economy and businesses."

Jo Lappin, Chief Executive of Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)



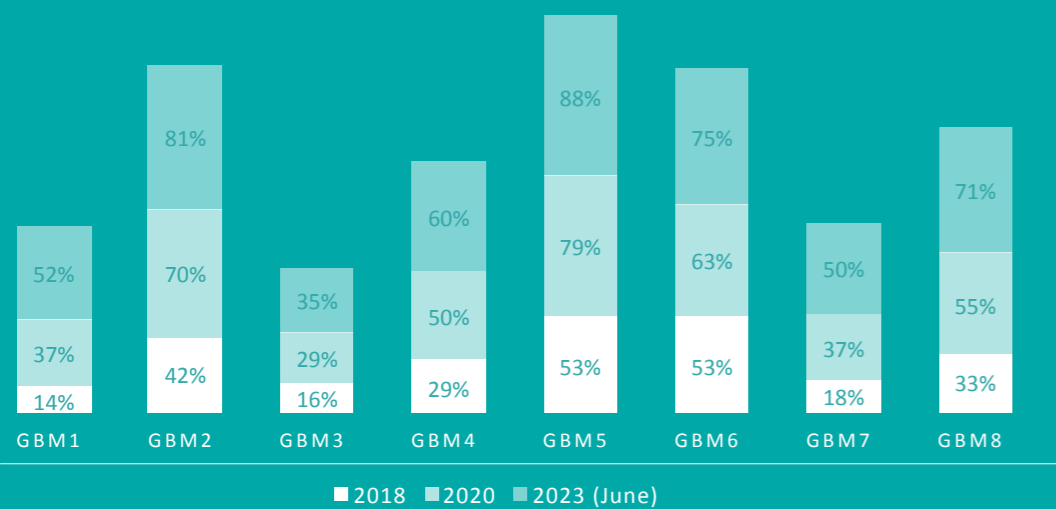
Gatsby Benchmark Progress

The 8 Gatsby Benchmarks are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from careers 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

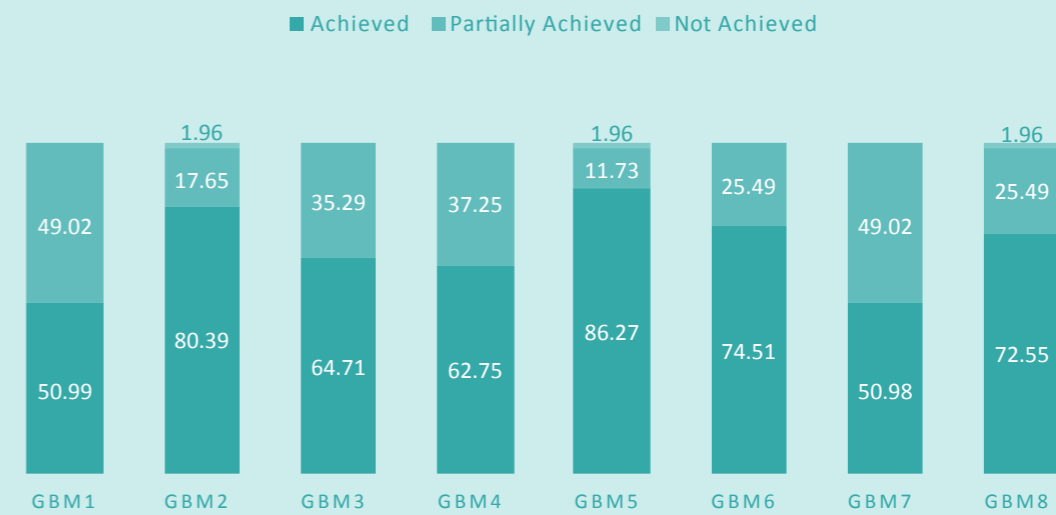
Each school and college complete a termly review of their Gatsby Benchmark progress and the results are collated at a Cumbria level. The Careers Hub also has access to individual school and college data as well as understanding where we are positioned against all other schools and colleges in Hubs in England.

Gatsby Benchmark Progress since 2018



This chart shows you how schools and colleges have progressed since the development of the Careers Hub in 2018.

Gatsby Benchmark Progress Academic Year 2022-23



This chart shows progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks this academic year after two returns. The schools and colleges will submit a final return mid-July and we expect to see an increase in each of the Benchmarks based on the fact that all schools will have delivered their annual careers programme which will include, but won't be limited to collection of destination data (GBM3), further Employer Encounters (GBM5), their work experience programmes for Year 10 students (GBM6) and the personal guidance (GBM8).

10 of our Schools have achieved 100% against all Gatsby Benchmarks, which is an incredible achievement and it's great that we continue to work with those schools to look at how they can further enhance their careers programme.

Careers Strategy Meetings to Support Gatsby Benchmark 1

A number of our schools struggle to fully achieve Gatsby Benchmark 1, which is not surprising given it has 17 sub-benchmarks! Supporting this challenging benchmark has been a key focus for the Careers Hub this year. Some great progress has been made but there is still work to be done.

Benchmark 1 provides the foundation for careers provision across a school, special school or college and supports the linking of careers provision to the vision and priorities of the school or college.

Developing a progressive careers programme shaped and driven by a strategic careers plan, enables students to make well informed decisions about education, training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities and supports them to cope with challenging labour market conditions.

Gatsby Benchmark 1 focuses on the provision of A Stable Careers Programme.

What does good look like?

- Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by pupils, parents, teachers, governors, employers and other agencies.
- Every school and college should have a stable, structured careers programme that has the explicit backing of the senior management team and has an identified and appropriately trained person responsible for it.
- The careers programme should be published on the school or college website in a way that enables students, parents, school/college staff and employers to access and understand it.
- The programme should be regularly evaluated with feedback from students, parents, school/college staff and employers as part of the evaluation process.
- Providers of technical (including higher technical) education, vocational education and apprenticeships should be given the opportunity to engage.

Supporting improvement

At the request of several of our schools, we held additional strategy meetings with them focused on supporting them to address their challenges. Because the school Careers Strategy requires sign off by the Board of Governors, many of the meetings included a member of Senior Leadership Team and a Governor as well as their volunteer Enterprise Adviser.

These meetings have provided an excellent opportunity to explore how the careers programme is adding value in the school. We discussed the common benchmark blockers, which are usually demonstrating impact and undertaking evaluation with teachers and parents. We then explore the benchmark in more depth to consider the learner journey in relationship to the local jobs market. Most importantly, the meetings are action driven to achieve outcomes.

Strategy meeting examples

The Nelson Thomlinson School

Attended by: Careers Link Governor, Careers Leader and Enterprise Adviser

About the meeting: Reviewed and refreshed the careers strategy and discussed what was working well and how to introduce new activities to meet some of the current gaps. The conversation was informed by destination data to review progression pathways, along with labour market information and opportunities for students to engage with local employers.

Outcome: Developed a timebound action plan to address the gaps and better achieve Gatsby Benchmark 1.

Samuel Kings School

Attended by: Deputy Head Teacher and Careers Leader

About the meeting: Focused on reviewing and rewriting the careers strategy together, and embedding the learning gained from the L6 Career Leader training which was underway. Key priorities were identified to develop the strategy while ensuring the objectives fed into the whole school strategic plan.

Outcome: Produced an up-to-date Careers Strategy and a timebound action plan to help the school improve their Gatsby Benchmark scores.

Sandside Lodge (SEND) School

Attended by: Assistant Head Teacher and Careers Leader and the Careers Link Governor.

About the meeting: Having recently achieved 100% against all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, the meeting focused on stretch and challenge. Together we considered each of the sub benchmarks, the evidence the school had to support each Benchmark and how further support could be introduced to ensure that all plans and activities are inclusive and differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.

Outcome: Fully embedded careers strategy for the school supported by all Senior Leaders, Governors and staff.

“ I found the meeting really useful to get together and evaluate what is already working really well, and how further improvements can be made and explored. Working with a cross sector of stakeholders and the Cumbria Careers Hub ensures there is a balanced vision, and I look forward to continuing working together.

Julia Mullarkey, Careers Leader, The Nelson Thomlinson School

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Improving Gatsby Benchmark 4 scores through staff CPD

Gatsby Benchmark 4 is another of the more challenging benchmarks to achieve and an area where we have focused support to help our schools increase their percentage score.

Gatsby Benchmark 4 focuses on linking curriculum learning to careers.

What does good look like?

- All subject staff should link curriculum with careers, even on courses that are not specifically occupation led. For example, STEM subject staff should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of career paths. Study programmes should also reflect the importance of maths and English as a key expectation from employers.
- By the age of 14, every pupil should have had the opportunity to learn how the different STEM subjects help people to gain entry to, and be more effective workers within, a wide range of careers.
- Throughout their programme of study (and by the end of their course) every student should have had the opportunity to experience how their subjects help people gain entry to (and be more effective workers within) a wide range of occupations.

Why is Gatsby Benchmark 4 important?

Students feel more engaged in their learning when they feel that their studies are **relevant** to their own and other people's lives.

Students are **18 times more likely to be motivated** to learn if their teachers know their hopes and dreams.

Improving career guidance in secondary schools and colleges can **lead to better student** outcomes, while also raising aspirations and increasing engagement with education.¹

What is the stumbling block for some of our schools?

To fully achieve Gatsby Benchmark 4, careers needs to be integrated into other curriculum areas but research tells us that 70% of teachers are not confident talking about careers linked to their subject area.

What have we done?

We have delivered Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions for staff focused on how they can include careers information in lessons. The feedback has been excellent from both Senior Leaders and subject teachers with over 125 teachers taking part to date.

The CPD sessions have been delivered to all staff in some schools, or to Heads of Department or Careers Champions in others.

Thanks to our combined efforts, 62.75% of our schools and colleges are fully achieving Gatsby Benchmark 4, with just over 37% having partially achieved it.

1.Source ICEGS a research centre with expertise in Career Development and Widening Access.

Personalising careers information for students

U-Explore in Cumbria is a free-to-use website designed to inspire, excite and inform students about careers and study as part of a wider, holistic careers programme.

Developed in partnership with START, U-Explore Cumbria simplifies and enhances the student experience. It provides up to date and relevant learning and work information in an accessible and engaging way. It helps students consider their options and explore the opportunities available in their local area and should be used in addition to Unifrog and other careers information platforms.

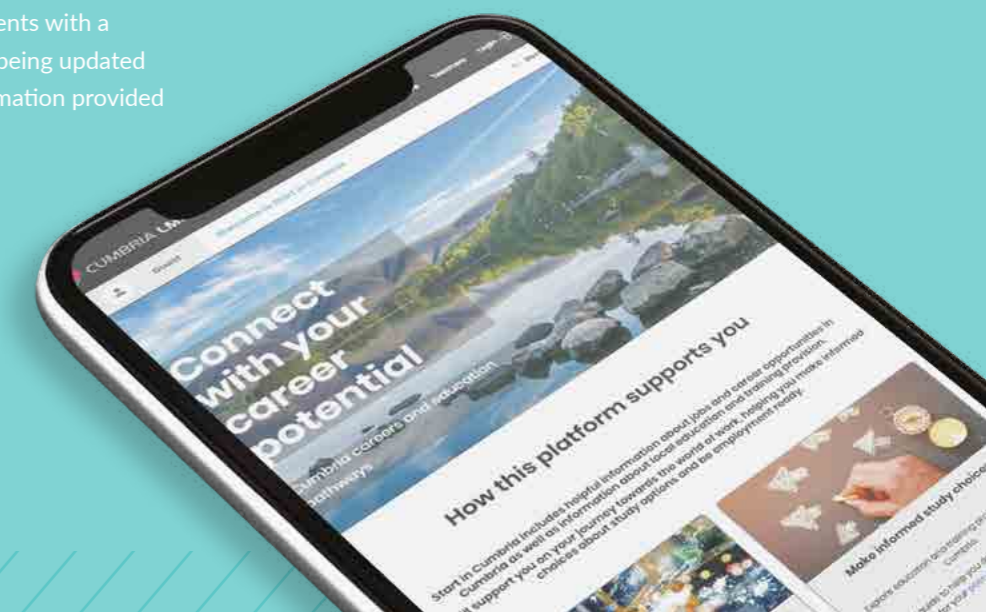
Students can develop their own Profile and populate it with information about their current career aspirations. They can then access personalised information to inform their study choices and longer-term career decisions, based on where they live and tailored to their interests. By continuing to use the platform as they progress through school, students will be able to build their CV, assess and develop their skills using the Skills Builder Framework and record their careers experiences.

The information is kept up to date by a wide range of trusted industry partners to provide educators and students with a reliable resource. Examples include job profiles being updated in real time via LMI for All and job vacancy information provided via an integration with Indeed.

U-Explore also provides a wide range of teaching and learning resources, such as customisable subject lesson plans, slide decks and activity worksheets, designed to support schools to embed careers education within the curriculum. The resources have been developed to be used in standalone sessions, perhaps within PSHE or tutor times, or as part of an ongoing scheme of work to build understanding over time.

Developed to be a key part of the ongoing support provided to schools by the Cumbria Careers Hub, U-Explore will also help careers leaders to evidence progression against the Gatsby Benchmarks. Our Enterprise Coordinators have received training on the platform's many features and will support schools with its integration into existing careers provision.

Through U-Explore we are helping schools, colleges, local authorities and employers to engage with young people about their future careers, and ensure they find their best next step.



Valuable Insights to Support Students

The **Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ)** was launched in September 2021 and is available free of charge to all secondary schools.

Designed to support and improve careers education delivery, the online questionnaire asks students to reflect on their career-related knowledge and skills to assess their individual understanding.

The results are used by Careers Leaders to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of their provision and inform continuous improvement. It enables them to identify the gaps in a student's knowledge about the pathways and opportunities available to them.

Careers Leaders can then effect meaningful change and interventions to increase a student's knowledge and understanding and increase confidence in their essential skills.

Importantly, the questionnaire can also help to support those students who may be at risk of NEET if they consistently provide negative responses about their career knowledge and future opportunities. Careers Leaders can then target support into the areas the students have identified as particularly challenging.

Our Careers Leaders said:

“The FSQ has been really useful to help me make changes to fill in the gaps in a student’s knowledge.”

“When Ofsted came in, I printed off pupil profiles from each year group to share.”

“The data told me they knew about Apprenticeships but not Traineeships, I will bring in a provider to support that gap.”

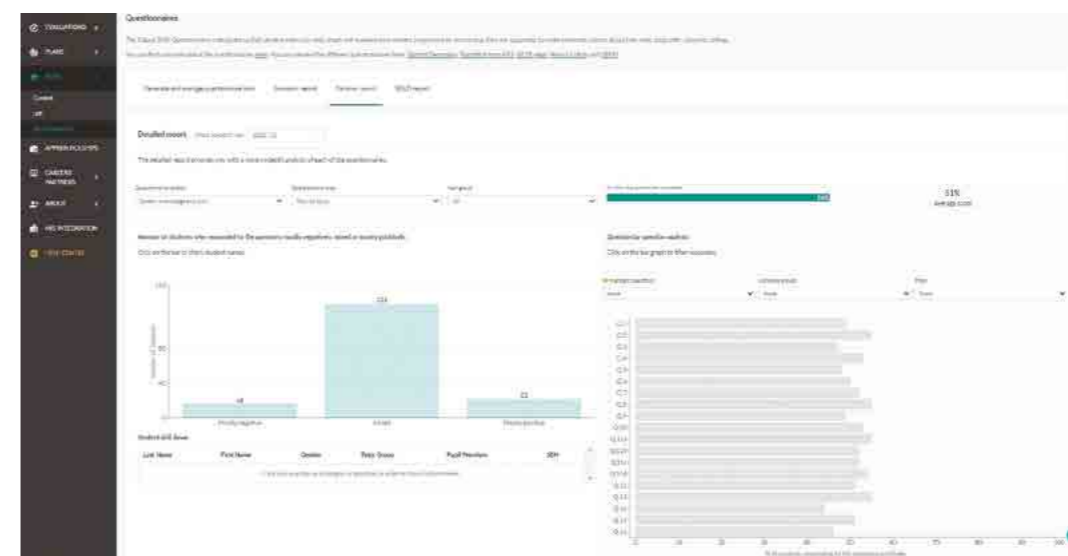
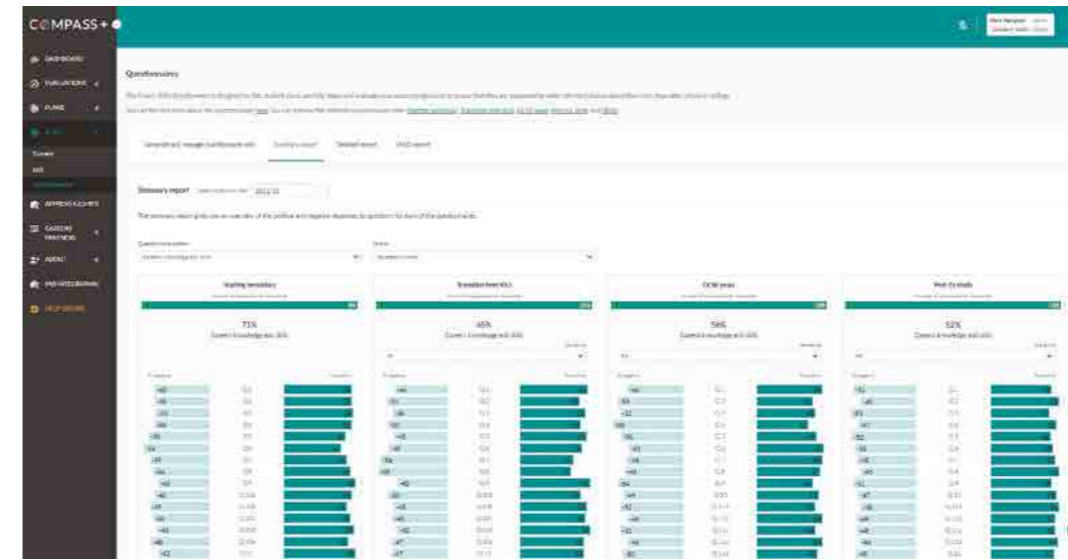
How does the Future Skills Questionnaire work?

There are five versions of the questionnaire to allow schools to assess the skills and knowledge of their students at specific points of transition (Year 7, 9, 11 and 13) with a specific version for SEND.

The FSQ also asks students about their plans post-16 or post-18 to easily identify those who are unsure about their next step. Support can then be targeted to those at risk of an unsuccessful transition from Year 11 and 13 in addition to considering longer term continuous improvement to your provision.

The Future Skills Questionnaire data visualisation tools enable Careers Leaders to quickly identify areas of strength and weaknesses in their careers programme. This data intelligence can then be used to help plan activities to meet the requirements of larger groups, smaller cohorts, or individuals.

Each school that completes the questionnaire has instant access to their results and the team at Cumbria Careers Hub also receives a County overview report each term. The Spring report is already proving to be a valuable resource, highlighting strengths and gaps in our careers delivery across the region enabling us to focus our support where it is most needed.



If every pupil completed the Future Skills Questionnaire our future careers delivery across Cumbria could be even better focused and more impactful.

Ensuring work experience works for everyone

Every young person should be given equal opportunities to succeed in life, yet currently that doesn't happen.

Almost all students in Cumbria are responsible for finding their own work experience placements in year 10. For some, this prepares them for their future job seeking and application process. However, for many young people this task proves impossible to achieve for a variety of reasons.

- A young person from an area of high deprivation and third generation unemployment is less likely to have parents connected to business networks.
- A young person living in a rural area of Cumbria may have no access to public transport and no means of getting to their work experience.
- A young person with special educational needs may be unable to find an employer willing to offer them an opportunity because some employers don't understand enough about their needs and how to support them.
- A young person with caring responsibilities may have to be home by 3.30 pm each day while their placement demands a 5.00 pm finish.
- A young person who is eligible for free school meals may not be able to afford a packed lunch or money for the canteen during their placement.

Through no fault of their own, these young people do not have an equal opportunity to experience the world of work which will influence their future.

To consider and address these challenges the Careers Hub has established a [Work Experience Task and Finish group](#) comprising employers, career professionals and schools. We also undertook a survey with our schools and colleges to understand the reality of work experience in Cumbria.

The task and finish group has agreed three areas of priority:

1. Making it easier for employers to offer work experience
2. Making it easier, and potentially more cost effective, for schools to manage their work experience programme, and
3. Encourage more employers to offer inclusive work experience opportunities to students with special educational needs.

They will address the priorities by:

- Creating an employer's work experience 'myth busting, at a glance guide' to be launched ready for the next Academic Year.
- Providing schools and colleges with support to help them manage a work experience programme which will support every young person to secure a placement.
- Creating resources for small to medium businesses to show how they can offer a meaningful work experience.
- Exploring whether a three-day work experience placement would better suit businesses who offer flexible working, allow for preparation and reflection by the school and be a meaningful opportunity for a student.

A deeper discussion with Careers Leaders, Enterprise Advisers and Careers Partners will take place in June with a view to implementing the actions in the next academic year.

Attending work experience reduces the risk of a young person becoming not in employment, education or employment (NEET) from 11% to 7%

(Based on the results of a recent YouGov survey of 2,098 18-30-year-olds).

Apprenticeship Strategy

Apprenticeships are an important component of skills development for young people in Cumbria. They are a key route to qualifications and an entry point into careers. Historically, Cumbria has had one of the highest apprenticeship participation rates in the country, reflecting our economic structure, traditions and strong vocational training infrastructure. This trend is continuing particularly for those aged 16 to 20.

We can be proud of the many strengths of the apprenticeship system in Cumbria. Every year around 2,000 people complete apprenticeships across the county and join the workforce with the skills our employers' need.

However, our economy and labour market faces considerable turbulence - the available workforce is reducing, skills needs are changing and there is an increased need for higher skill levels. Apprenticeships will play a critical role to help meet these challenges and opportunities.

To ensure our apprenticeship system in Cumbria is fit for the future, Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership launched its [Apprenticeship Strategy](#) in April. It aims to:

- Ensure the future workforce has the skills the Cumbrian economy and its businesses need by creating high quality opportunities which develop, attract and retain skilled people.
- Contribute to enhancing diversity and social mobility.

To achieve its aims, the strategy will:

- Develop more quality apprenticeships in skill areas which meet the current and future needs of the economy
- Improve participation in apprenticeships overall
- Better prepare young people for apprenticeships
- Improve the delivery of apprenticeships

Cumbria Careers Hub will work closely with Rachel Wlodarczak, Head of Employment and Skills at CLEP, to deliver the recommendations in the strategy. We have already met with employers and providers to agree our delivery priorities. We will also support Careers Leaders in schools and colleges to achieve compliance with the Provider Access Legislation.

Parental engagement will be a key area of activity in the next 12 months to increase awareness and knowledge of vocational and technical qualifications. The parental engagement pilot programme, [Talking Futures](#), delivered with Queen Elizabeth Grammar School could be rolled out to other areas.



Allison's a Champion Careers Leader

Allison Redshaw, Deputy Head Teacher at Walney School has been recognised as a Compass+ Champion by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) for her pro-active use of Compass+ to deliver her Careers Programme.

We know that lots of our Careers Leaders use Compass+ productively and Allison was one of a number of Careers Leaders nominated for this recognition.

Allison uses Compass+ daily to store and monitor all elements of the careers programme at the school which includes:

STRATEGIC SUPPORT

- To implement the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ)
- To support an Ofsted inspection
- To comply with updated PAL legislation

CORE USE

- Completing Compass evaluation and then, based on evaluation results, effectively using Compass+ to help improve future evaluations
- A whole school adoption of the product; from Principal to Senior Leadership Team to Careers leader, curriculum staff and Careers Adviser
- To help support the process to reduce the number of young people at risk of becoming NEET (Free School Meals, Pupil Premium, Custom groups etc.)
- Recording all of the careers activity from years 7-11 (with over 100 different activities and opportunities logged this year in the plans section)
- Maintaining an Employer Directory to ensure easy access to employers to support Employer Encounters and Workplace Experiences

Allison also delivered a CPD session to our Careers Leaders demonstrating how the Compass tools help her in her day to day and strategic role to further develop the careers programme at Walney.

Having been selected as a Compass Champion, the CEC now plan to visit Walney School to take a closer look and make a video showing how Allison uses Compass+. We are proud that a Careers Leader from Cumbria has gained this recognition and look forward to seeing the video.

“

I had been looking for a tool to support all of my careers activity and plans and then Compass arrived and answered my prayers – it is fantastic to be able to have everything in one place. I can't believe that some Careers Leaders don't use it as I really believe that it is such a useful platform.

Allison Redshaw, Walney School

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27 Fully Qualified Careers Leaders

Recognition of the importance of careers education is gaining momentum as more of our teachers gain their Level 6 or 7 Careers Leader training qualification which they are using to improve and develop their career programmes.

We are delighted that since the introduction of the Careers Hub in Cumbria, 27 Career Leaders have completed their Careers Leader training, with several others currently partway through their course.

We realise that the demands of completing the training can have an impact on our colleagues' daily routines and overall work life balance. It's been helpful that our Careers Leaders have been able to choose from a range of learning methods to suit their own circumstances, whether that's distance learning, choosing the non-qualification route or attending an in-person course. It's been great to see some of our Careers Leaders choosing the same method of learning so that they can benefit from peer-to-peer support.

The training is fully funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company and on completion the school receives a £1,000 bursary to spend how it wants. Some of our Careers Leaders have used the bursary to pay for cover costs, while others have used it to support their careers programme.

Further funding for [Careers Leader training](#) has been confirmed for the 2023-24 academic year.

“

I am currently accessing the Level 6 careers leader course through the CEC. I am now more than halfway through the course and have found the process useful to support the development of careers at Sandside. The course has allowed me to reflect on things already in place and how this could be improved. It has given me the tools to plan careers development strategically. I am more aware of resources available and the networking with others has given me an oversight to how the role of Careers Leader looks in a variety of different settings.

Mark, who offers feedback from assignments has been brilliant. He is very responsive and supportive. It does mean I am spending a lot of my own time studying, but I am sure it will be worth it.

Rebecca Noble, Assistant Headteacher and Careers Leader, Sandside Lodge

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Focusing on inclusion

Our [Cornerstone Employers](#) are a flagship community and they work with us to support world class careers education at scale in Cumbria. This group is chaired by Jayne Moorby of Oxley Development. The groups focus this academic year has been to improve social mobility by creating a business environment that will support those who face the most barriers to reach their potential.

To do this we set up a focus group to look at inclusion in partnership with what was Cumbria County Council (now Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Councils). The aim of the group was to help employers get to a place where they were confident to offer inclusive opportunities for young people who were either on the career journey or seeking employment opportunities.

Since its inception, the focus group has evolved to include many partners who operate in this area such as Right to Work, Inspira, Cumbria Youth Alliance, People First, the Further Education providers and Career Leaders. In May this year, a meeting was held with the two new local authorities and members of the focus group to create an action plan for partners to deliver over the next two years. One of the key outcomes from this action plan will be to double the number of supported Internships available to young people in Cumbria.



'The Cumbria Cornerstone Employers are a committed group of ambassadors, dedicated to taking a strategic approach to deliver excellence in careers in Cumbria, the group utilise their networks to raise the profile of the work of the Careers Hub and are trail blazers in adopting new initiatives as can be seen from the success of the Inclusive Employer programme and the Employer Standards pilot'.

Employer Standards for Careers Education: Shaping the workforce of tomorrow

When it comes to assessing the skills required to deliver the objectives businesses need now and in the future, employers are asking themselves similar questions:

- How do I build a strong talent pipeline?
- How do I increase diversity in my workforce?
- How do I best deliver against our environmental, social and governance (ESG) or social value commitments?

The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) has developed a clear and practical framework for employers to effectively engage their future workforce and their educators: The Employer Standards for Careers Education. Our Cornerstone Employer Group has been a part of the pilot programme and were integral to ensuring it met the needs of businesses.

This framework outlines what best practice in employer engagement with education looks like and allows businesses to continuously learn and improve through shared knowledge, practical tools and resources.

The Standards will be launched nationally in the Autumn.

Celebrating our Enterprise Advisers

We have 51 Volunteer [Enterprise Advisers](#) (EA), all matched to a school or college in Cumbria and 12 of our amazing volunteers have been with the Hub over 5 years.

Our Enterprise Advisers roles vary depending which school or college they are matched with, but here is a snapshot of the varied activities they help with:

- Supporting the school or college's senior leadership team strategically to develop and evaluate their careers plan.
- Providing a valuable employer's perspective on how a school or college can embed labour market information and opportunities into the careers programme.
- Engaging with local businesses and employers in your network to put a wide variety of careers opportunities at the heart of young people's education.

In addition, our Enterprise Advisers have

- Helped schools grow their school alumni (this helps the school achieve Gatsby Benchmark 3).
- Developed a Personal Branding training resource for the schools to deliver in-house;
- Reviewed the school's mock interview day to look for areas for improvement.
- Co-created Enterprise Adviser training resources for the Careers Hub to use with new EAs.

“

As an Enterprise Advisor for a secondary school in West Cumbria, I feel my role is to support school career staff in bringing in a wide range of people to interact with their students. This is vital to students future success, as it helps them understand the range of opportunities out there, as well as introducing them to careers less visible which can help inform their future.

Cath Howard, Environmental Sustainability Manager, Balfour Beatty Kilpatrick

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We would like to thank our Volunteer EAs who are

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| ★ Judith Mitchell | ★ Stacey White |
| ★ Antonette Cullen | ★ Sarah Peak |
| ★ Mark Johnson | ★ Peter Fleming |
| ★ Kathryn Walker | ★ Emily McDonnell |
| ★ Roger Wilson | ★ Michelle Wiggins |
| ★ Beth Nicholls | ★ Alan Wilson |
| ★ Matt Williams | ★ Emma Sumner |
| ★ Dawn Watson | ★ Nigel Thomason |
| ★ Sarah Graham | ★ Sharon Brook |
| ★ Michael Jeschke | ★ Laura Priestly |
| ★ Kathryn Simpson | ★ Debbie Kavanagh |
| ★ Martin Norris | ★ Ben Whiteley |
| ★ Joanne Slater | ★ Maxine Reynolds |
| ★ Emma Lindsay | ★ Mandy Morland |
| ★ Cath Howard | ★ Mike Nichols |
| ★ Martin Ewin | ★ Robert Walker |
| ★ Claire Dunn | ★ Christina Jones |
| ★ Mike Smith | ★ Elizabeth Atkinson |
| ★ Lyndsey Fitheridge | ★ Jayne Moorby |
| ★ Rachel Melton | ★ Amy Lamph |
| ★ Juliet Eyre | ★ Gary Martin |
| ★ Claire Urquart | ★ Bill Harper |
| ★ Andrew Gordan | ★ Godfrey Owen |
| ★ Claire Roper | ★ Becky Linton |
| ★ Alison Beard | ★ Jimmy White |

If you are interested in becoming an EA with Cumbria Careers Hub take a look here for more information
<https://www.careershubcumbria.co.uk/employers-volunteers/>

Looking forward to the next academic year

Without doubt 2022/23 has been busy and as a Community of Practice we have achieved some great outcomes which evidence our activities are having a positive impact on Cumbria's young people. However, there is more to be done.

The Strategic Priorities for 2023/24 set by the Careers and Enterprise Company are welcomed in Cumbria as they resonate with the issues we face. They will provide our areas of focus in order to continue to improve the outcomes for our young people.

Priority 1: Raise the quality of careers provision in schools and colleges against the Gatsby Benchmarks through training for the education workforce, targeted support and quality assurance

Priority 2: Provide more high-quality experiences with employers for students and teachers – with a focus on current areas of need

Priority 3: Amplify apprenticeships, technical and vocational routes – including by supporting the implementation of the Provider Access Legislation (PAL)

Priority 4: Target interventions for economically disadvantaged young people (Free School Meals (FSM)) and those who face barriers

Priority 5: Connect careers provision in schools and colleges to the needs of the local economy (as articulated through the Cumbria Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP))

Over the next few weeks, we will be working with our Careers Leaders, Enterprise Advisers, Cornerstone Employers and key partners to create the Careers Hub Strategy for 2023-24. The final iteration will go to the Cumbria Local Enterprise Board

(Cumbria LEP) for sign off on the 28 July 2023.

We expect to see focussed activity on parental engagement, improved experiences of the workplace and targeted support for young people from economically disadvantaged areas and targeted support for our SEND students and young people in alternative provision.

We will support delivery of the recommendations in the Apprenticeship Strategy as well as delivering the Our Future campaign.

On the back of the success of the Our Future Young Ambassador Programme pilot programme with Furness College, we will explore the options of developing the Young Ambassador programme to support young people in education by ensuring they are work ready.

On behalf of the Careers Hub at Cumbria LEP, we would like to thank the Community of Practice for all your cooperation and support in delivering this year's careers education programme. We look forward to working with you next year.





Cumbria
CAREERS HUB

CLEP
CUMBRIA
LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

THE **CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE**
COMPANY