



Careers Programme Strategy 2026/2027

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1. Skills4 contact details

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2. Introduction

The Skills4 Group is a Skills Bootcamps and Apprenticeship Training Provider dedicated to initiating and furthering the careers of Pharmacy Technicians, Pharmacy Services Assistants, Dental Nurses, and Science Professionals in England and Wales. We take pride in delivering high-quality training programmes to learners and have a team of tutors who guide and support learners on their journey to success.

At Skills4, we believe that making informed decisions about career pathways is essential for every learner. We deliver a high-quality, impartial Careers Service that operates with integrity, helping learners select the right courses and prepare effectively for sustainable education, training, and employment that align with their ambitions. This inclusive approach supports learners at all levels and in all programmes of study, whilst meeting the statutory requirements for the provision of career education for 16-18 year olds and those aged 19 of 25 on an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Every learner deserves high-quality careers education that inspires ambition, builds confidence and opens doors to meaningful destinations. We don't just prepare learners for qualifications - we prepare them for life. Our career promise is built around learners; their goals, their growth and their next steps.

Overall, Skills4 aim is:

"To empower every Skills4 learner with impartial, high-quality careers guidance that enables informed choices and sustainable progression."

3. Key Principles

We always place learners at the heart of everything we do. Our Careers Service is built around the eight Gatsby Benchmarks:

1. A Stable Careers Programme: We implement a structured, carefully designed careers service backed by senior leadership and led by a trained Careers Leader. The programme is transparent, published, and regularly evaluated with learner and stakeholder input.
2. Labour Market & Career Information: Learners receive reliable, up to date information on labour markets, qualifications, and progress routes to support informed decision-making.
3. Personalised Support: We tailor guidance to each Learner's needs, ensuring inclusivity, with additional support for SEND and disadvantaged learners.
4. Linking Curriculum to Careers: Subject teaching is connected back to their programme of study, helping learners understand why their learning matters.
5. Employer Engagement: We create meaningful encounters between Learners and employers or employees. This is achieved through events, mentoring, and talks - enhancing understanding of the world of work.
6. Workplace Experiences: Every learner has access to quality workplace experiences via their apprenticeship, commercial programme of Skills Bootcamps, developing employability skills and deeper insight into their potential future environments. We will also facilitate every opportunity for our learners to be exposed to other work-related experiences.
7. Exposure to Further & Higher Education – We facilitate awareness and develop learners knowledge concerning wider opportunities such as universities, apprenticeships, and further training.

8. Personal Guidance: All learners can access at least one session with a qualified, impartial careers adviser by age 16 and again by age 18. Careers advisers are also available for learners aged 19+. These sessions help learners clarify goals, understand progression pathways, and combat misconceptions.

We are proud to:

- Support individual aspirations, interests, and needs.
- Ensure careers information, advice and guidance are accessible to learners of all backgrounds, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Work with employers, training providers, and other stakeholders.
- Meet the requirements section 45A of the Education Act 1997 and the updated 2024 DfE statutory guidance.

4. Purpose

This strategy outlines the Skills4 approach and practice for offering careers education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG) to current and prospective learners.

It aims to provide effective and fair access to advice, in accordance with the Skills4 Group's Diversity and Inclusion policy. The strategy aims to make sure all potential learners are well informed about courses and the career pathways related to that course and that all learners at Skills4Pharmacy, Skills4Dental and Skills4Science have access to careers advice and guidance on progression. For the purposes of this strategy the definition of CEIAG is informed by the following publications and national bodies:

- FE White Paper: Skills for Jobs Lifelong learning for Opportunity and Growth. Available at: [Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth](#)
- Good Careers Guidance 2025- Gatsby Benchmark. Available at: [Gatsby Benchmarks | Good Career Guidance | Gatsby Education](#)
[Gatsby Benchmarks Explained](#)
- Career guidance and access 2025
[Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK](#)

- Matrix Quality Standard Recognised quality standard for IAG services. Available at: [Main home - The matrix Standard](#)
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework . Available at: [Further education and skills inspection handbook - GOV.UK](#)
- Career Development Framework, CDI, April 2021. Available at: [CDI Framework - Career Development Institute](#)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board

It is the Board's responsibility to support the business and its leaders in ensuring we meet the requirements of the statutory guidance for ITPs .

Senior Leadership

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership to:

- Lead on the development of the strategy and support the implementation of the careers action plan.
- Oversee the appointment of a designated Career Lead and Champions.

Safeguarding and Inclusion Lead

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding and Inclusion Lead to:

- Provide guidance to colleagues in meeting the needs of individuals including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and learners with vulnerabilities.

Career Lead

It is the responsibility of the Career Lead to:

- Ensure that the policy is effectively implemented, and appropriate resources are allocated to support its delivery.
- Develop, implement and evaluate the impact of our Careers programme
- Liaise with appropriate departments on creating links with external organisations, employers, and professionals to facilitate work-related learning experiences and careers-related activities.
- Create a training programme to provide training and support to teaching staff and coaches to enhance their ability to provide appropriate guidance to learners, across the provisions.
- Provide one to one advisor session to learners, where a statutory requirement is needed.
- Make use of the Careers database and ensure it's up to date
- Attend Network events, creating links with key agencies and sector/regional specific employers, and cascade relevant guidance to relevant areas of the business.
- Provide accurate reports and action plan updates to Leaders.

Careers Champions

It is the responsibility of the Careers Champions to:

- Attend Network events, creating links with key agencies and sector/regional specific employers, and cascade relevant guidance
- Provide support to colleagues, working with relevant departments
- Support Tutors with integrating Careers opportunities into the curriculum/training and provide guidance and support to learners in exploring career options.
- Be a champion for progression by supporting learners to develop ambition career plans and assist them in setting realistic and achievable career goals.
- Make use of the careers database.
- To act as a guide and a point of contact for careers learning resources

Tutors

It is the responsibility of Tutors to:

- Integrate opportunities into the curriculum/training and provide guidance and support to learners in exploring career options and next steps.
- Manage performance of learners who do not engage with activities, recording on the e portfolio all actions taken to re-engage.
- Tracking and correctly recording all activities that fall under Careers Guidance. Recording on the e portfolio where appropriate.
- Complete progress reviews and offer bespoke careers advice and guidance.
- Celebrating achievements and the capture of positive destinations
- Make use of the careers database .

6. Delivery of Careers Guidance

Commented [GU1]: is this all still current ?

The delivery of Careers Guidance will involve a range of activities and interventions, including but not limited to:

- Initial pre-course discussions
- Induction Process.
- Completion of Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- On-going assessment, enrichment activities and progress reviews
- Learner destination aspirations, actual and sustained
- Career workshops and activities.
- Exploration of regulatory bodies and accessing support and resources.
- Use of career database
- Career fairs and employer engagement events.
- One-to-one careers guidance sessions.
- Resources and tools on the Skills4 website
- Industry-specific visits and guest speakers.

- Exit Careers Guidance

7. Implementation/Impact

- Careers Programme: Published on The Skills 4 website and accessible to learners, parents, and employers.
- Feedback: Gather learner, parent/carer/key worker, and employer feedback to refine and improve the programme.
- Review: Conduct annual reviews of the programme, adapting to changes in the local labour market and learner needs.
- Evaluate: using Compass tool or internal processes.
- Data Monitoring: Tracking of attendance, progress, achievement, and destinations.
- Curriculum Reviews: Annual and mid-programme reviews to ensure content remains current and aligned with industry trends.
- Staff CPD Logs and Reviews: Monitored to ensure ongoing development, especially around new standards or delivery methods.

Appendix 1

Strategic Careers Action

Commented [GU2]: Suggest we add the headline actions here but keep the plan with informal progress comments stand alone

Component	Action	Who/When	Gatsby Benchmark(s)
1. Careers Leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoint a Careers Leader responsible for strategy and delivery. 2. Ensure they are appropriately trained and supported. 3. Become a member of CECs Community of improvement for ITPs 	SC RK	Benchmark 1 <i>A Stable Careers Programme</i>
2. Careers Programme	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map our current Career activity. 2. Prepare a written Careers Programme around the eight Gatsby Benchmarks and consider how we support learners to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Make aspirational and informed decisions' 'Make effective and sustained transitions' 'Develop career readiness'. <p>When designing the programme consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to one-to-one support 	SC ST JC	Benchmarks 1 <i>A Stable Careers Programme</i> Benchmark 2 <i>Learning for Career and LMI</i> Benchmark 4 <i>Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers</i> Benchmark 5 <i>Encounters with employers and employees</i> Benchmark 6

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to guidance tools and resources • Provide up-to-date and local LMI, including salary data and future skills needs. • Use resources like the National Careers Service. • Meaningful access to information on vocational, academic and technical routes • Provide work experience and workplace visits to develop practical skills and understanding of work environments. • Facilitate encounters with employers at least twice (e.g., guest speakers, workplace visits). • Cover a range of sectors and job roles. <p>Understanding how to develop progressive and responsive careers provision (Careers Learning Journeys) CEC Resource Directory</p>		<p>Experiences of workplace</p> <p>Benchmark 7</p> <p>Encounters with further and higher education</p> <p>Benchmark 8</p> <p>Personal guidance</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Promote the programme on the website. 4. Careers is part of the CPD programme for staff. 5. Qualified Careers Lead and training for Career Champions (as 1.2). Careers Leader Induction: Free Online Learning CEC Resource Directory Careers Leader training CEC Resource Directory 		
3. Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a strategic career action plan. 2. Explore Compass tool to support mapping to Gatsby Benchmarks. 	SC	
4. Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake a careers impact leadership review. Careers Impact system internal leadership review CEC Resource Directory 2. Maintain Matrix accreditation 3. Regularly update Leaders and the Board on progress 	SC	

5. Destination Data	1. Learner destination approach to be reviewed and extend (including aspirations, intended destinations, sustained destination and long-term plans)	KW	Benchmark 3 <i>Meeting the needs of each young person</i>
6. Meeting the needs of all learners and tackling disadvantage	1. Careers education to be embedded into our programmes with a focus on tackling disadvantage, stereotyping 2. Use tools to track learner aspirations, encounters, and progression. (quantitative data tools) 3. Use e portfolio or similar to track engagement and advice given (qualitative driven) 4. Evaluate the programme's effectiveness. Driving equity and tackling disadvantage through your careers provision: Educator Guide CEC Resource Directory Understanding how to effectively evaluate your careers provision CEC Resource Directory	SC ST	Benchmark 3 <i>Meeting the needs of each young person</i>

7. Parent and Carer Engagement	1) Prepare information and guidance for Parents/Carers/Key Workers to be given at onboarding/ induction of their young person	ST	Benchmark 8 <i>Personal guidance</i>
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Appendix 2
Career Programme

