



MacIntyre Academies Discovery Academy

Discovery Careers Related Learning Policy

Version:	Changes/Updates		Responsibility:	Date:
V1	Section /Page	Change	Principal	Nov 2025

Person Responsible:	Principal
Type of policy	Statutory
Date of first draft:	November 2025
Date of staff consultation:	-
Date adopted by the Trust Board:	December 2025
Date of implementation:	December 2025
Date reviewed:	n/a
Date of next review:	November 2028

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Discovery Careers Related Learning Policy V1
Adopted by Trust Board: Dec 2025

Reviewed: n/a

Next Review: Nov 2028

1. Vision and Ethos

At the heart of our career's education is the belief that every young person, regardless of their individual challenges, deserves the opportunity to explore, aspire, and achieve a fulfilling future.

Inspired by The Discovery Academy's commitment to creating "a place where everybody feels safe, valued and belongs," our careers programme is designed to:

- Provide a nurturing environment that supports individual growth.
- Offer quality-first provision tailored to each learner's needs.
- Prepare learners to be ready for life beyond school.

Discovery Academy believes it is vitally important to deliver a comprehensive careers education and guidance programme across the school so that learners can build self-awareness and have the information and guidance needed to make informed decisions about their future pathways.

2. Objectives

Our careers programme aims to:

- Deliver a stable and structured careers education from Year 5 to Year 14
- Incorporate careers learning into our whole school curriculum
- Ensure compliance with the updated 2025 Gatsby Benchmarks
- Ensure guidance is impartial, confidential (within policy guidelines), responsive to learner's needs and based on the principles of equal opportunities and diversity
- Facilitate meaningful encounters with employers, employees, and education providers. Including apprenticeship and internship providers
- Provide every learner with meaningful work experience opportunities
- Support learners in making informed decisions about their future pathways
- Facilitate 1:1 careers interviews with a qualified level 6 careers advisor for Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 learners
- Self-development – Learners are able to understand themselves and the influences on their self-development. They are able to investigate opportunities in learning and work as well as making adjustment plans to manage change and transitions

3. Implementation of the Updated 2025 Gatsby Benchmarks

The Gatsby Benchmarks are a key measure of the effectiveness of career advice. They are also an important part of the Government's career strategy. Our careers programme aligns with the eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks, ensuring high quality careers guidance and expectations:

1. **A Stable Careers Programme:** We maintain a structured programme with clear leadership and regular evaluation.
2. **Learning from Career and Labour Market Information:** Learners access up-to-date information to make informed decisions.
3. **Addressing the Needs of Each Learner:** Personalised guidance ensures inclusivity and equity.
4. **Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers:** Curriculum subjects are connected to real-world careers.
5. **Encounters with Employers and Employees:** Regular interactions provide insights into various professions.
6. **Experiences of Workplaces:** Learners engage in work experiences to understand workplace environments.

7. **Encounters with Further and Higher Education:** Information sessions and visits expose learners to post-secondary options.
8. **Personal Guidance:** Qualified advisers offer one-on-one support to learners.

These benchmarks have been updated to reflect the evolving educational and employment landscape, ensuring relevance and effectiveness in preparing learners for their futures.

4. Provider Access Legislation (PAL) Compliance

In line with the updated Provider Access Legislation, we aim to provide all learners from Years 7 to 14 with at least six encounters of approved providers of apprenticeships and technical education.

Implementation Strategy:

- **Scheduled Encounters:** Organise sessions with providers at key stages of education.
- **Diverse Representation:** Ensure a range of providers, including colleges, training organisations, and employers, are represented.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Collect learner feedback to assess the effectiveness of these encounters.

5. Work experience guarantee

Work experience forms a vital part of the careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) provision at our school. In line with the 2025 Labour Government guidance, which increases the national expectation for all learners to access meaningful work experience prior to leaving school, we are committed to ensuring that every learner—regardless of their needs or starting point—has access to high-quality, tailored opportunities that prepare them for life beyond education.

Entitlement and Scope

- All Year 11 and Post-16 learners will be offered a **minimum of one extended work experience placement**, aligned with their interests, aspirations, and individual education plans (EHCPs where applicable).
- In accordance with new government policy, our school will **broaden the number and type of placements offered**, actively engaging local employers, charities, and supported employment services to ensure a diverse and inclusive offer.
- Work experience placements may take the form of traditional employer-based placements, supported internships, enterprise activities, or internal placements where external settings are not currently appropriate.

Personalised and Adaptive Provision

- We recognise that learners with SEND may require additional preparation and adaptive approaches to benefit fully from work experience. Placements will therefore be personalised and risk-assessed to ensure they are accessible, safe, and beneficial.
- Where necessary, learners will be supported by school staff to scaffold their experience and promote confidence and independence.
- Placement settings will receive guidance and training on inclusive practice and reasonable adjustments, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice.
- Prior to placement, learners will have the opportunity to discuss placement options with the designated careers lead to ensure the experience aligns with the learner's interests.

- Post-placement, learners will engage in reflective activities to consolidate learning, identify strengths, and inform future goals. Feedback from employers, staff, and the learner will feed into ongoing career planning and EHCP reviews.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- All placements will be quality assured in line with Gatsby Benchmark 6 (Experiences of Workplaces) and informed by the latest national guidance.
- The school will regularly review the impact of its work experience programme through learner voice, destination data, and engagement with parents, carers, and employers.

6. Statutory Guidance and Legal Framework

In line with the *Education Act 1997*, the *Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers Statutory Guidance (2023)*, and Section 42A of the *Education Act 1997*, we ensure that:

- All Key Stage 4 (Years 10–11) and Key Stage 5 (Years 12–14) learners have at least one meaningful personal guidance interview with a qualified Level 6 or above careers adviser, independent and impartial, by the end of each Key Stage.
- These interviews are tailored to meet the individual needs of our learners and are planned in a supportive, SEND-aware environment, with adaptations and support where required.
- Additional guidance is offered where needed, particularly for learners at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

This provision supports Gatsby Benchmark 8: Personal Guidance, and is part of our whole-school approach to fulfilling the requirements of the Baker Clause, ensuring access to training and apprenticeship providers.

Year 9 – Support with Options Choices

Year 9 represents a key transition point in our careers programme, where learners begin to make decisions about Key Stage 4 subject options.

To support this:

- All Year 9 learners and their families receive clear and accessible information about option choices and how these may impact future pathways (including further education, employment, and training routes).
- Where appropriate, Year 9 learners will also have access to early careers guidance interviews, especially if they are undecided or require additional support to make informed choices.
- Learners are encouraged to explore their interests and strengths, and take part in careers-focused activities and experiences, supported by teaching staff and the Careers Lead.

7. Personalised Support for SEND Learners

Recognising the unique challenges faced by SEND learners, our programme includes:

- **Individual Career Plans:** Develop tailored plans considering each learner's strengths and aspirations.
- **Parental Engagement:** Involve families in the career planning process to ensure a supportive environment.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the effectiveness, inclusivity, and continuous improvement of our careers programme, Discovery Academy is committed to robust and ongoing monitoring and evaluation practices. These practices are designed not only to assess the impact of our provision but also to ensure it aligns with the diverse needs of our SEND learners and remains compliant with statutory guidance, Gatsby Benchmarks, and wider school policies.

Regular Reviews

- The careers programme will be formally reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis by the Careers Lead in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- This evaluation will include analysis of key performance indicators (KPIs) such as learner progression data, employer engagement levels, and curriculum integration.
- A mid-year review will also be conducted to ensure that the programme remains relevant, responsive and flexible to emerging needs or changes in legislation.

Use of Compass+

We will use the Compass+ platform to:

- Track the delivery and effectiveness of careers-related learning and employer encounters across all year groups.
- Monitor progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Analyse learner destinations post-16 and post-19 to evaluate how effectively the programme is supporting transitions into further education, training or employment.
- Identify any gaps or trends, including learners at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), and implement early interventions.

Stakeholder Feedback

Regular feedback will be gathered from key stakeholders, including:

- Learners – through learner voice activities, EHCP reviews, and learner feedback forms.
- Parents and carers – via annual surveys, parent/carer events, and SEND review meetings.
- Staff – including subject teachers, pastoral staff, and support staff, to ensure a whole-school approach to careers education.
- Local Advisory Board (LAB) members – who will receive regular updates and be invited to contribute strategic oversight.
- External partners and employers – to assess the quality and relevance of careers interventions and work-related learning.

Continuous Improvement

The programme will be refined in response to:

- Stakeholder feedback and engagement outcomes.
- Evolving national and local labour market information (LMI).
- Changes in statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC).
- Recommendations from internal audits, Ofsted reports, and governance reviews.

Best practices will be shared across the school and implemented to ensure that all learners, including those with complex needs, receive high-quality careers education.

Inclusion and SEND-Specific Monitoring

- Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) will be monitored through an inclusive lens to ensure accessibility for all learners, regardless of ability or background.
- Adaptations and differentiated resources will be reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of a wide range of SEND profiles.
- EHCP outcomes related to employment, independence and community participation will be tracked as part of careers monitoring processes.
- Transition planning (including to Supported Internships, College, or adult services) will be monitored to ensure positive progression and reduce the risk of disengagement.

Alignment with School Policies

- Monitoring of the careers programme will be embedded within wider school quality assurance processes, including safeguarding, equality and diversity, curriculum planning, and data protection policies.
- Careers education is delivered in alignment with the school's inclusive ethos and child-centred approach, as outlined in Discovery Academy's mission and values.

Reporting and Accountability

- The Careers Lead will produce an annual Careers Impact Report summarising progress, destinations, stakeholder feedback, and development priorities.
- This report will be shared with SLT, LAB members, and other relevant stakeholders, and will contribute to the school's Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF).
- Monitoring outcomes will inform the Careers Development Plan and contribute to the school's overall improvement priorities.

9. Parental and Carer Involvement

We recognise the vital role that parents and carers play in supporting their child's aspirations and preparing them for their future. We are committed to working in partnership with families to ensure that all learners have access to high-quality, person-centred careers guidance and support that reflects their individual needs and ambitions.

To support this, we provide Transition Booklets at transition key stages, which contain up-to-date and accessible information about future pathways, including education, training, supported internships, employment opportunities, and local provision. These booklets are designed to help families make informed decisions in collaboration with the school and other professionals involved in the young person's transition.

We ensure ongoing and transparent communication through multiple platforms, including Class Charts, regular school newsletters, and direct communication from SLT, the Careers Lead, and class teams. This ensures parents and carers are kept informed about careers events, employer visits, post-16/19 options, and curriculum developments related to preparing for adulthood.

Parents and carers are invited to take an active role in shaping our careers curriculum by completing relevant questionnaires and feedback forms. These help us to understand the needs and aspirations of each learner more clearly and to refine the careers programme to reflect their goals.

Opportunities for discussion and questions are built into existing structures, including Parents' Evenings and EHCP Annual Review Meetings, where families can explore career pathways, discuss progress, and raise any queries about post-school transitions. We aim to ensure these meetings are collaborative, forward-thinking, and fully reflective of each learner's strengths, interests, and support needs.

By fostering strong, two-way communication and co-production with families, we aim to create a careers programme that is holistic, inclusive, and truly supportive of every young person's journey into adulthood.

10. Staff Training and Development

To ensure the delivery of a high-quality and effective careers programme that meets the diverse needs of our SEND learners, we place a strong emphasis on ongoing staff development and training.

Whole School Training

All staff, including teaching and support staff, play a vital role in supporting learners' career-related learning and aspirations. Whole-school training sessions are delivered regularly, including through collaboration with external training providers, to ensure that staff have a consistent understanding of the careers programme and how it aligns with learners' Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), individual learning pathways, and aspirations for adulthood.

Careers Lead Training

Our named Careers Lead has successfully completed a Level 6 Careers Leadership qualification, demonstrating a high level of knowledge and strategic oversight of the careers provision. The Careers Lead will continue to engage in ongoing professional development through:

- Attending regular briefings, CPD sessions, and networking events coordinated by the Warwickshire SEN Hub Careers Team
- Participating in training aligned with updates to statutory guidance, Gatsby Benchmarks, and government policy changes
- Engaging with national and local initiatives from the Careers & Enterprise Company, Department for Education (DfE), and relevant SEND-focused organisations to ensure best practice is maintained

Keeping Up to Date with Guidance

The school actively monitors and responds to national careers education guidance, including the latest developments in statutory frameworks, Careers Guidance and Access for Education and Training Providers (DfE), and relevant legislation relating to young people with SEND. This ensures our provision remains current, compliant, and impactful.

Regular evaluation of staff training needs and access to CPD ensures that the entire school community is equipped to deliver and support a meaningful, aspirational, and accessible careers programme.

11. Key Policies and Statutory Guidance

The Careers Curriculum at Discovery Academy is underpinned by and aligned with several key school policies and national statutory guidance to ensure a holistic, inclusive, and safe approach to careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). These policies ensure that our

careers provision supports all pupils, particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), to prepare effectively for their next steps in education, employment, or training.

SEND Policy

Our Careers Curriculum is closely linked with the school's SEND Policy to ensure that all learners, regardless of need or ability, are given equitable access to careers education and support. The careers programme is personalised and differentiated to meet individual needs, and informed by Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), annual reviews, and multi-agency working.

PSHE Policy

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education provides the foundation for understanding the world of work, life skills, and making informed choices about the future. The careers curriculum is embedded within the PSHE framework and supports the development of employability skills, economic understanding, and independent living skills. Careers education is planned in a way that complements PSHE learning outcomes and is delivered in an age-appropriate, accessible format for all learners.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The careers programme fully supports the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Careers staff and visiting providers are subject to the same safeguarding procedures and protocols as all school staff. All external visitors engaging with learners as part of careers activities undergo safeguarding checks and are briefed on the school's safeguarding expectations. Careers education is delivered in a way that protects learners' welfare and promotes their rights and safety.

Provider Access Policy (Baker Clause)

In line with the requirements of the *Provider Access Legislation* (updated January 2023), Discovery ensures that a range of education and training providers are given access to all learners in Years 8 to 13 to inform them about approved technical education qualifications, apprenticeships, and training opportunities. This is detailed in our Provider Access Policy, which ensures learners and parents receive meaningful opportunities to engage with providers of post-14, post-16, and post-18 pathways.

Relevant Legislation and Statutory Guidance

Our careers programme is informed by the following national guidance and legislation:

- *Education Act 1997* and *Education and Skills Act 2008*
- *Children and Families Act 2014* and the *SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)*
- *Careers Strategy (2017)* and *Statutory Guidance for Schools on Careers Guidance (DfE, January 2023)*
- *Technical and Further Education Act 2017 (Baker Clause)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024*
- *Equality Act 2010* – ensuring equality of opportunity in careers access and guidance

12. Complaints procedure

Any complaints about this policy should be raised to Matt Clark, Deputy Principal, email:

Matt.clark@macintyreacademies.org

Matt will raise the complaint to Tony Leigh, Principal.

Conclusion

Our Careers Curriculum Policy is dedicated to empowering SEND learners to envision and achieve their future goals. By integrating the latest statutory guidance and embracing the values of inclusivity and personalised support, we strive to provide a comprehensive and effective careers education programme.

For more information or to discuss our careers programme further, please contact our Careers team at discovery.careers@macintyreacademies.org

Roxanne Ashby – Family Footings Team / Careers Lead
Matt Clark – Deputy Principal / Careers Lead

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Reviewed: n/a

Next Review: Nov 2028