



Compass is a free online tool that helps Colleges understand how their careers education and guidance compares to best practice. Completing a **Compass evaluation** can help Colleges identify strengths and discover areas for improvement within their careers provision.

Compass enables Colleges to quickly and easily evaluate careers activity against the eight benchmarks of best practice – known as the **Gatsby Benchmarks**.

The Gatsby Benchmarks were developed by Sir John Holman and the [Gatsby Foundation](#), they aim to highlight what good career guidance looks like for young people. In this context, careers guidance is defined as the full range of activity delivered under the eight Gatsby Benchmarks.

The Gatsby Benchmark framework is at the heart of statutory guidance for careers education in England. The Department for Education encourages providers of Post-16 education and training to follow the statutory guidance, including the Gatsby Benchmarks, as a 'statement of good practice.'

More support and information about the framework, including how the Gatsby Benchmarks can be applied in your setting, can be found in [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers](#).

Compass evaluations

To evaluate your careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks, a College must create a Compass account, then complete a **Compass evaluation**. A Compass evaluation takes around 30 minutes to complete.

To get the best results, you will need to know details of learner numbers in your cohorts, and it is also a good idea to talk to colleagues involved in careers.

Further guidance on creating a Compass account and completing a Compass evaluation can be found in the Help Centre articles listed below:

[How to create a Compass account for Colleges](#)

[How to complete a Compass evaluation for Post 16 \(Colleges\)](#)

The Compass tool is jointly funded by [The Careers & Enterprise Company](#) and the [Gatsby Charitable Foundation](#). The questions and results are based on the [Gatsby Good Career Guidance Benchmarks for Colleges](#), which are used to support best practice in a range of education settings.

Compass evaluation questions for Post-16.

Introduction – Your College

Institution name:

Please select which part of the College you are evaluating:

- a) Whole College
- b) A site
- c) A faculty
- d) A department

If b), c) or d) above, name the part of the College that you are evaluating:

Please state your job title:

How many learners do you have on roll in each of the following age groups?

Pre-16

16-18

19-24 (with EHCP)

Enter the number of learners:

Enter the number of learners:

Enter the number of learners:

Benchmark 1 – Stable careers programme

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark for a 'Stable careers programme'.

Colleges should have an established programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by learners, parents, College staff, Governors, employers and other agencies.

1.1 Does your College have a careers programme that:

Is written down?	Yes No Don't know
Is approved by the board of Governors?	Yes No Don't know
Has the explicit backing of Senior Leadership?	Yes No Don't know
Has resources/funding allocated to it?	Yes No Don't know
Is regularly monitored?	Yes No Don't know
Has both strategic and operational elements?	Yes No Don't know

1.2 Does your College publish its careers programme on its website?

Yes
No
Don't know

IF 1.2 No/ Don't know : skip to 1.4

IF 1.2 Yes : skip to 1.3

1.3 Is there information on your website about the careers programme specifically aimed at:

Learners?	Yes No Don't know
College staff?	Yes No Don't know
Employers?	Yes No Don't know
Parents/carers?	Yes No Don't know
Other agencies (e.g. local authorities, other post-secondary providers)?	Yes No Don't know

1.4 Does your College evaluate the effectiveness of its careers programme at least every three years?

Yes
No
Don't know

IF 1.4 No/ Don't know: skip to 1.6

1.5 Does the evaluation of your careers programme take into account feedback from:

Learners?	Yes No Don't know
College staff?	Yes No Don't know
Employers?	Yes No Don't know
Parents/carers?	Yes No Don't know

1.6 Does your College have a Careers Leader?

Yes
No
Don't know

Benchmark 2 – Learning from career and labour market information

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark around the importance of 'Learning from career and labour market information'.

Every learner, and their parents (where appropriate), should have access to good-quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.

2.1 Approximately what proportion of learners access and use up-to-date information about career paths and the labour market during their programme of study:

None
A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All
Don't know

2.2. Does your College encourage parents and carers (where appropriate) to access and use up-to-date information about the labour market, future study options and career paths to inform the support they give to their children?

Yes
No
Don't know

Benchmark 3 – Learner needs

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark around 'Addressing the needs of each learner'.

Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each learner. A College's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

3.1 How strongly do you agree or disagree that your College's careers programme addresses the following issues?

It actively seeks to raise the aspirations of all learners

Rate on scale of 1 (strongly disagree) – 5 (strongly agree):

It challenges stereotypical thinking (in terms of gender, etc)

Rate on scale of 1 (strongly disagree) – 5 (strongly agree):

3.2 Does your College?

Keep systematic records on each learner's experiences of career and enterprise activity?

Yes | No | Don't know

Enable learners to have access to accurate records about their own careers and enterprise experiences?

Yes | No | Don't know

Integrate records of a learner's participation in careers programmes at previous stages of the learner's education (including their secondary school) where these are made available?

Yes | Not available | No | Don't know

Collect and maintain accurate data for each learner on their destinations after they leave your College?

Yes | No | Don't know

Share accurate and timely data with the local authority on learner transitions and destinations?

Yes | No | Don't know

Work pro-actively with the local authority and careers advisers around the careers guidance and progression of vulnerable and special educational needs and disability (SEND) learners?

Yes | No | Don't know

Benchmark 4 – Curriculum

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark recommending 'Linking curriculum learning to careers'.

All subject staff should link curriculum learning 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 future career paths. Programmes of study should also reflect the importance of Maths and English as a key expectation from employers.

4.1 By the end of their programme of study, approximately what proportion of learners have experienced curriculum learning that highlights the relevance of their subject to future career paths?

None
A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All
Don't know

What proportion of learners are aware of the importance of Maths for their career?

None
A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All
Don't know

What proportion of learners are aware of the importance of English for their career?

None
A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All
Don't know

Benchmark 5 – Employer encounters

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark recommending 'Encounters with employers and employees'.

Every learner should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes, and should include learners' own part-time employment where it exists.

5.1 In which of the following groups of learners do the overwhelming majority (76-100%) have at least two encounters with an employer or employee?

Pre-16
16-18
19-24 (with EHCP)

5.2 What proportion of your learners have at least one encounter with an employer through the curriculum every year they are at provision?

None
A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All
Don't know

5.3 What proportion of your learners have at least two encounters with an employer every year they are at your provision?

None
A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All
Don't know

5.4 On average, how many encounters with an employer will your learners have had by the time they leave your College?

Choose an average number from 0 to '10 or more':

5.5 How many businesses will you involve in careers activity in the current academic year?

Choose a number from 0 to '10 or more':

5.6 Does your College record and take account of learners' part-time employment and the influence this has had on their development?

Yes

No

Don't know

Benchmark 6 – Workplace experiences

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark recommending 'Experiences of workplaces'.

Every learner should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

6.1 Approximately what proportion of learners have had an experience of a workplace (excluding part-time jobs they have) by the time they finish their programme of study?

None

A few (1-25%)

Some (26-50%)

Most (51-75%)

Overwhelming majority (76-99%)

All

Don't know

Benchmark 7 – Educational encounters

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark recommending 'Encounters with further and higher education'.

All learners should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning.

While the Provider Access Legislation only applies to schools and schools that have sixth forms, Colleges are encouraged to follow the guidance and complete these activities as good practice.

Further support and guidance on meeting the Provider Access Legislation is available in our Help Centre: [Provider Access Legislation \(PAL\) guidance](#).

7.1 By the end of their programme of study, approximately what proportion of learners have had the following experiences:

Meaningful encounters with a range of apprenticeship providers?

- None
- A few (1-25%)
- Some (26-50%)
- Most (51-75%)
- Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
- All
- Don't know

Meaningful encounters with a range of Further Education providers?

- None
- A few (1-25%)
- Some (26-50%)
- Most (51-75%)
- Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
- All
- Don't know

Meaningful encounters with a range of universities?

- None
- A few (1-25%)
- Some (26-50%)
- Most (51-75%)
- Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
- All
- Don't know

7.2 What proportion of students in Year 12/13 have been offered at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during Post 16 study that meet the requirements of PAL?

The answer to this question does not count towards your score for Gatsby Benchmark 7.

- None (0%)
- A few (1-25%)
- Some (26-50%)
- Most (51-75%)
- Overwhelming majority (76-90%)
- All or nearly all (91 - 100%)

7.3 What proportion of learners in Year 12/13 have attended at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during Post 16 study that meet the requirements of PAL?

The answer to this question does not count towards your score for Gatsby Benchmark 7.

- None (0%)
- A few (1-25%)
- Some (26-50%)
- Most (51-75%)
- Overwhelming majority (76-90%)
- All or nearly all (91 - 100%)

Please list the providers who conducted these encounters:

The answer to this question does not count towards your score for Gatsby Benchmark 7.

Benchmark 8 – Personal guidance

These questions are about the Gatsby Benchmark around the need for 'Personal guidance' for learners.

Every learner should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of College staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all learners but should be timed to meet their individual needs.

8.1 Are interviews with a qualified careers adviser made available to all learners whenever significant study or career choices are being made?

Yes
No
Don't know

8.2 What proportion of learners have had at least one interview with a qualified careers adviser by the end of their programme of study?

None
A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All
Don't know

Thank you for taking the time to evaluate your careers provision.