



Careers Strategy

2025 - 2028

Welcome from the Careers Lead

Hello and a warm welcome to our Careers Strategy.

We are delighted to share our vision for empowering every individual to explore, plan and achieve their career goals. At Bishop Auckland College Group, we are deeply committed to helping every learner make confident, informed decisions about their future.

Our Careers Strategy is central to our mission – preparing students not just for qualifications, but for life beyond college by creating new opportunities and pathways for success. Whether you are just starting out, looking to progress or exploring new directions, this strategy outlines how we will support you at every stage of your journey.

Our careers programme is inclusive, ambitious and responsive to a rapidly changing world of work. Whether your next step is employment, an apprenticeship, university or further training, our intent remains the same; from the moment you join our College community, we aim to transform the life chances of every individual by equipping you with the skills, knowledge and experiences to succeed.

We recognise that every learner is unique. That is why our careers programme is personalised to reflect your talents, goals and individual circumstances. From your very first day, we aim to raise your aspirations, unlock your potential and support your journey towards a successful and exciting future.

Our team of professionally trained Career Progression Coaches are here to help you make the right decisions for your career path. The team provide a highly personalised mentoring service to each individual learner across the Group, supporting you with career development skills, CVs, job and university applications, personal statements, interview preparation, work placements and job search skills.

Partnerships with employers are at the heart of what we do. Through industry speakers, site visits, social action projects, volunteering and work experience, you will have access to a wealth of opportunities to connect classroom learning with the world of work.

I encourage you to make the most of everything we offer - your future starts here, and we are excited to be part of your journey.

Jennifer Phillips

*Head of Community & Careers
Bishop Auckland College Group*

Mission and Vision of Bishop Auckland College Group

Our Mission:

To create **positive change** through **education and learning**.

We will deliver a coherent, high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) programme that integrates employer engagement, curriculum learning and provides personalised pathways into employment, apprenticeships, higher education or entrepreneurship.

Our Vision:

We are committed to transforming lives through education by empowering every learner to make informed and aspirational career choices, equipping them with the skills, knowledge and networks to thrive in the evolving North East economy and beyond.

Our Core Values:

Our Careers Strategy is built on three foundational values:

1. Strong foundations

Supporting learners to build confidence, resilience and ambition through high-quality guidance and support.

2. Inspiring environment

Creating a vibrant learning culture where learners are motivated by excellent teaching, inspiring spaces and positive role models.

3. Chance to thrive

Ensuring that every learner has access to opportunities that match their aspirations, enabling them to progress into meaningful destinations.

Our Ambitions:

1. Strong foundations

- Learners develop self-belief and confidence in their future career pathways.
- Engagement with staff, employers and alumni sparks curiosity and ambition.

2. Inspiring environment

- Learners exceed expectations and achieve their full potential.
- Staff are passionate experts, delivering excellence in teaching and careers guidance.
- Facilities and enrichment opportunities reflect our commitment to future-ready education.

3. Chance to thrive

- Learners progress to employment, apprenticeships, higher education or further study.
- Career development skills are embedded throughout the curriculum.
- Our strategy supports economic growth and reflects evolving labour market needs.

The Careers Strategy is tailored towards five groups and aligns with the Gatsby Benchmarks which focus on high-quality, equitable and outcomes-focused careers guidance, alongside the six learning areas of the Career Development Institute (CDI) Framework.

- 14–16 year olds (Home elective students and specialist AP provision)
- 16–18 year olds
- Apprentices
- Adult learners
- Higher Education students

Framework: Gatsby Benchmarks

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each young person
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

Framework: CDI



Grow throughout life



Explore possibilities



Manage career



Create opportunities



Balance life and work



See the big picture

Intent

- Deliver a structured, stable and inclusive careers programme for all learners: 14-16s, post-16 students, apprentices, adult learners and higher education students.
- Provide personalised guidance that reflects the aspirations, needs and backgrounds of each learner.
- Promote equality, challenge stereotypes and support learners with SEND and other additional needs.
- Deliver impartial advice and guidance via highly qualified staff with access to continuous professional development.
- Align careers guidance with local and national priorities, including the Local Skills Improvement Plan for the North East (NELSIP), North East Combined Authority (NECA) Local Growth Plan and New Deal for North East Workers (2025-2030) to meet local and regional needs including current and future skills to support the economy and promote entrepreneurship.
- Embed labour market intelligence and career theory into every learner's journey.
- Maintain rigorous data protection, confidentiality, safeguarding and record-keeping policies.
- Work collaboratively with internal staff and external partners to provide high-impact, aspirational outcomes.
- Align our careers programme and offer to established frameworks such as the Careers Development Institute, Gatsby Benchmarks and matrix Accreditation.
- Ensure careers guidance for learners with high needs or SEND is differentiated, where appropriate, and based on high aspirations and a personalised approach, supporting smooth transitions across educational phases and into the workforce.

Key themes

Theme	Objective	Key outcomes
Quality & Compliance	Fully embed all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks across all departments.	Achieve 100% Gatsby compliance verified through Compass and external validation.
Personal Guidance	Provide every student with access to impartial, qualified careers guidance	100% of students to receive at least two personal guidance meetings during their college journey.
Curriculum Integration	Ensure careers learning is embedded within every subject area.	All curriculum areas to map and deliver career-related learning outcomes annually.
Employer, Alumni & Industry Engagement	Strengthen relationships with employers, alumni and community networks.	2+ employer encounters/ learner/year
Inclusion & Social Mobility	Support disadvantaged and underrepresented learners (SEND, care-experienced, rural, low-income)	Targeted careers interventions for underrepresented groups; improved progression rates for all demographics.
Labour Market Alignment	Align curriculum offer and careers activity to priority sectors and region's growth plans.	Careers programme informed by Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) data and sector trends.
Digital Futures	Subject teachers link learning to real-world careers through a vocational curriculum offer	Integration with digital LMI tools and virtual employer experiences.
Monitoring and Impact	Establish robust data-driven monitoring of destinations, employer engagement, student feedback and equality of progression.	95%+ positive destination rates.

Implementation: How We Deliver Our Vision

Inspiring Futures

Up-to-date, passionate staff guide learners through a modern, ever-changing careers landscape—instilling confidence, curiosity, and ambition.

Curriculum Integration

Careers education is embedded into subject learning. Lecturers draw from real-world industry experience to show learners the relevance of their studies to future jobs.

High-Quality Personal Guidance

All students have access to impartial, Level 6-qualified careers advisers, with personalised career plans and 1:1 support across their career journey.

Inclusive Support

Specialist advice is provided to students with high needs and SEND. We work closely with families, support services, and external partners to create tailored progression plans.

Career Destinations

We track, monitor, and celebrate student progression into education, training, or employment—ensuring that our provision leads to real-world success.

Work-Related Learning

Access to work placements and industry opportunities with employers and workplaces are prioritised across all learner groups.

Implementation of Strategic Actions

1. 14 – 16 year olds (Home elective students and specialist AP provision)

Objective	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Responsibility	Evaluation
Early exposure to careers and LMI	Embed careers lessons into PSHE and tutor time; access to labour market information	Ongoing each term	Curriculum Leads	Student surveys, Compass reports
Raise awareness of career pathways and options	Careers fairs, industry visits, interactive employer talks	Annually	Student Progression team	Attendance and student feedback
Support personal development and skills for work	Workshops on CV writing, communication, digital skills	Termly	Student Progression team	Workshop evaluations
Provide meaningful employer encounters	Job role exploration activities, career role models visits	Termly	Student Progression team and Curriculum Leads	Participation data
Initial experience of workplaces	Short work experience or virtual placements (1 week minimum)	Annually	Progression Coach (Work Placement Specialist)	Reflection tasks, student feedback
Personal guidance and goal setting	1:1 career meetings with a qualified Progression Coach	Annually	Progression Coach (CEIAG Specialist)	Guidance records
Embed careers in curriculum subjects	Subject teachers link learning to real-world careers through a vocational curriculum offer	Ongoing	Curriculum Leads	Curriculum review, lesson observations

2. 16 – 18 year olds

Objective	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Responsibility	Evaluation
Embed a stable, progressive careers programme	Annual careers calendar integrated into Future Ready programme	Ongoing	Careers Lead, Group Tutorial Coordinator, Progression Coaches	Student surveys, Compass reports
Access to up-to-date labour market information (LMI)	LMI sessions and workshops; regional industry spotlight events	Termly	Progression Coach (CEIAG Specialist), NECA	Student voice
Ensure every young person has tailored guidance	1:1 career guidance (at least twice during course)	Ongoing	Progression Coach (CEIAG Specialist)	Careers guidance records, destinations data
Provide diverse employer engagement	At least 2 employer encounters per year	Annually	Progression Coach (Work Placement Specialist)	Attendance records, employer feedback, Grofar records
Workplace experience	One meaningful workplace experience per year (e.g. work placement)	Annually	Progression Coach (Work Placement Specialist)	Grofar records
Exposure to all post-18 options	HE and apprenticeship fairs, employer talks, university visits	Ongoing	Student Progression Team	Student voice
Embed careers in subject delivery	Careers links in SoW; guest speakers in lessons	Ongoing	Curriculum Leads	Curriculum audits, lesson observations

3. Apprentices

Objective	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Responsibility	Evaluation
Tailored careers support for apprentices	Apprenticeship-specific career sessions and 1:1 personal guidance	Termly	Student Progression team	Apprentice feedback
Support career progression and upskilling	Progression pathways sessions (e.g. L3 to L4, degree apprenticeships, HTQs)	Annually	Student Progression team	Progression data
Employer involvement in skills development	Employer-led workshops on future skills, industry trends and career growth	Termly	Apprenticeship team and Curriculum Leads	Employer participation logs
Promote wider career options beyond apprenticeship	Alumni talks, industry networking events and career planning for advancement	Yearly	Student Progression team and Curriculum Leads	Apprentice feedback

4. Adult Learners

Objective	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Responsibility	Evaluation
Flexible, accessible careers guidance	Community, evening/online 1:1 guidance sessions	Monthly	Progression Coach (CEIAG Specialist)	eTrackr records, learner feedback
Upskilling and re-entry to workforce support	CV, job application and interview support tailored to adult learners	Termly	Student Progression team, Adult Skills training team	Workshop evaluation forms
Sector-specific LMI and pathways	Digital LMI toolkit for key growth sectors in health, construction, Green technologies and Digital Services	Termly updates	Progression Coach (CEIAG Specialist)	Learner feedback
Support for career changers	Case study series: career changers and alumni success	Annually	Marketing & Student Progression team	Engagement metrics

5. Higher Education Students

Objective	Strategic Actions	Timeline	Responsibility	Evaluation
Careers guidance and planning	1:1 career coaching, personal development planning, structured road map for career and skills growth, Alumni careers service	Ongoing	HE Student Mentor Progression Coach (CEIAG Specialist)	Career action plans, Graduate tracking
Career development skills	Placement support, CVs, LinkedIn profiles, job applications, interview prep and online branding	Termly	Student Progression team	Graduate Outcomes data
Work experience and Industry connections	Internships and placements, work shadowing and volunteering, employer network events	Annually	Student Progression team	Employer feedback, participation rates, student voice
Career information resources	Online careers portal, sector guide and labour market insights	Ongoing	Student Progression team	Graduate destination data
Academic and career integration	Embedding career learning in the curriculum, real world projects, mentoring programme, entrepreneurship support	Ongoing	Course Leaders	Module evaluations
Global career awareness	Sessions on international graduate routes, remote work, global employers, growing sectors	Annually	Curriculum leads	Participation rates, student interest

Assessing Impact

To ensure ongoing improvement, we monitor the impact of our Careers Strategy using the following methods:

Area	Measure	Frequency
Gatsby Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compass reports to assess performance against the Gatsby Benchmarks • CDI audits • Monitoring usage of Student Progression services 	Termly
Student Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student surveys • Focus Groups 	Annual
Destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination tracking (progression data to employment, apprenticeships, higher education, NEET rates) • UCAS outcomes and employment data • Alumni success • Reporting to Senior Leadership and Governors 	Annual
Employer Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder engagement • Number and quality of encounters and work placements • Employer feedback on engagement and impact 	Termly
Inclusion Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression by demographic subgroup • NEET reduction, SEND and rural learner progression 	Annual
External Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matrix Accreditation to demonstrate high-quality IAG services 	3 yearly

Inclusion and Equity

We are committed to delivering careers education that is inclusive, accessible and equitable for all learners:

- Specialist guidance for learners with SEND
- Targeted support for disadvantaged and underrepresented learners
- Culturally responsive careers resources
- Translation services and ESOL accessibility for adult learners

Strategic Partnerships

Our Careers Strategy is strengthened through collaboration with:

- North East Combined Authority (NECA)
- Careers Enterprise Company & North East Careers Hub
- North East Colleges Careers Strategic Group
- Employers and Community Partners
- Universities and Apprenticeship Providers
- Durham Learning Alliance
- County Durham Learning and Skills team
- North East Chamber of Commerce
- Business Durham
- DurhamWorks
- National Careers Service
- Jobcentre Plus

Success Measures

- 100% Gatsby Benchmark compliance
- 95%+ positive destinations
- 95%+ student satisfaction with careers provision
- 98% of students access work related experience
- Maintain matrix standard accreditation for high quality information, advice and guidance services and Ofsted 'outstanding' personal development



Your Future Starts **Here**

At Bishop Auckland College Group, we believe in unlocking potential and opening doors to opportunity.

Our Careers Strategy is your roadmap to a brighter future – wherever you are headed next, we are with you every step of the way.

