

Athena Learning Trust

Trust-wide

Careers Guidance Policy

Review

Reviewed on: April 2026

Reviewed by: Education performance committee

Review Period: 3 years

The Trustees, Governors, Chief Executive Officer, Principals and Staff at the Athena Learning Trust (the Trust) are committed to delivering high quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) across all the establishments within the trust. We firmly believe that it will help to develop the students' self-awareness and knowledge of opportunities which will enable them to make decisions and develop the skills to cope with the changes in education, training and employment in a modern society.

Purpose

Careers education within the Trust serves to prepare students for choices, changes and transitions affecting their future education, training and employment in accordance with the National Framework for Careers Education and Guidance and the Trust's mission statement.

The Trust Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance policy aims to meet the eight Gatsby Benchmarks for Careers Excellence:

- To plan and provide a stable careers programme for our learners
- To expose students to relevant Labour Market Information (LMI)
- To address the needs of all students
- To link curriculum learning to careers
- To provide opportunities for students to encounter employers and employees
- To support students to obtain work experience placements at years 10 and 12
- To provide opportunities for students to encounter further and higher education
- To provide personal guidance to students on careers education

Broad Aims

Our aims are:

- To have a nominated member of the Local Governing Body (LGB) within each educational setting who takes a strategic interest in careers education and guidance and encourages employer engagement
- To ensure that all students have equity of access to receive a careers programme of impartial advice and guidance, ensuring that our statutory duties are delivered by suitably trained staff with the appropriate skills and experience to secure independent, impartial and face-to-face careers guidance for pupils in years 8-13.
- To provide Key Stage 2 (KS2) pupils with access to careers-related learning to generate the opportunity to connect their learning with their future.
- To improve careers provision by working towards meeting all eight Gatsby Benchmarks, and to commit to achieving excellence in this area of the curriculum.
- To encourage students to develop an understanding of themselves and others as individuals,



including their own and others' strengths, limitations, abilities, potential, personal qualities, needs, attitudes and values; to develop a knowledge and understanding of the education, training and employment opportunities available to them locally, nationally and internationally; to enable all students to achieve their full potential to plan and manage their own futures; to raise aspirations, promote equality, diversity, social mobility and challenge stereotypes.

- Students should understand, both through personal development activities and work-based experience, the general skills required by employers as well as the more specialist skills required for specific careers.
- Students should have good access to information about a broad range of careers, either in printed or electronic form.
- To deliver high quality weekly Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance lessons throughout our secondary schools.

Key Stage 2

By the end of KS2, pupils should have been given access to career-related learning to engage them with the importance of careers to help broaden their horizons, challenge stereotypes and provide the opportunity to connect their learning with their future. We aim to support pupils to recognise their strengths and areas for further development to equip them for Secondary Career opportunities.

Key Stage 3

Objectives for Careers Education and Guidance

By the end of Key Stage 3 (KS3), students will have been given the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to:

- Undertake a realistic self-assessment of their achievements, qualities, aptitudes and abilities and present this in an appropriate format.
- Use the outcomes of self-assessment to identify areas for development, build self-confidence and develop a positive self-image.
- Use goal setting, review, reflection and action planning to support progress and achievement, and to set short- and medium-term goals.
- Recognise stereotyped and misrepresented images of people, careers and work, and how their own views of these issues affect their decision making.
- Recognise and respond to the main influences on their attitudes and values in relation to



learning, work and equality of opportunity.

- Recognise that work is more than just paid employment and that there is considerable variation in the value individuals and society attach to different kinds of work.
- Describe how the world of work is changing and the skills that promote employability.
- Use appropriate vocabulary and organise information about work into standard and personally devised groupings.
- Use information handling and research skills to locate, select, analyse, integrate, present and evaluate careers information relevant to their needs.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the options open to them including opportunities provided through vocational pathways.
- Use a straightforward decision-making technique.
- Identify, access and use the help and advice they need from a variety of sources including parents or carers, teachers, careers advisers and external agencies.
- Manage change and transition, considering the longer-term implications and potential progression opportunities.
- Make realistic and informed choices of options available post-14 years.
- Organise and present personal information in an appropriate format.
- Consider alternatives and make changes in response to successes and failures.

Key Stage 4

By the end of Key Stage 4 (KS4), students will have been given the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to:

- Use self-assessment and career-related questionnaires to help identify and set short- and medium-term goals, and career and learning targets.
- Review and reflect on how their experiences have added to their knowledge, understanding and skills and use this information when developing career plans.
- Use review, reflection and action planning to make progress and support career development.
- Explain why it is important to develop personal values to combat stereotyping, tackle discrimination in learning and work and suggest ways of doing this.
- Use guided self-exploration to recognise and respond appropriately to the main influences on their attitudes, values and behaviour in relation to learning and work.
- Explain the term 'career' and its relevance to their own lives.
- Describe employment trends and associated learning opportunities at different levels.
- Identify, select and use a wide range of careers information and distinguish between objectivity and bias.



- Understand the qualifications available post 16, and the similarities and differences between sixth form, further education and work-based training to explore the progression routes open to them in order to critically compare, explain and justify
- the range of opportunities they are considering.
- Use work-related learning and direct experience of work to improve their opportunities.
- Select and use decision-making techniques that are fit for purpose, including preparing and using action plans, which incorporate contingencies.
- Take finance and other factors into account when making decisions about the future.
- Understand and follow application procedures recognising the need for, and how to produce, CVs, personal statements and application letters for a range of different scenarios.
- Understand the purpose of interviews; be select and present personal information to make targeted applications.
- Understand what employers look for in relation to behaviour and work, appreciate their rights and responsibilities in learning and work, and know where to get help, guidance and support.
- Experience a minimum of two meaningful employer interactions each year through visiting guest speakers and by engaging with local employers during annual Careers Fairs.
- Evaluate yearly careers' progress with a tutor, establishing experiences, interactions and progress to date and exploring areas for further development.

Key Stage 5

By the end of Key Stage 5 (KS5) students will have been given the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to leave the Sixth Form fully rounded and ready for the world of work.

Students will:

- Have access to a tutor who will give them guidance and support throughout their time in the Sixth Form and support their career action plan.
- Have access to independent and impartial careers advice.
- Develop greater understanding of the current labour market.
- Be informed about the full range of education, training and employment opportunities available to students.
- Have access to a wide range of apprenticeship and employment resources.
- Have access to the South West Apprenticeship Show.
- Receive guidance on CV and letter writing and on preparing for interviews; be given access to mock interview practice.
- Receive support when applying for apprenticeships and jobs.
- Have access to a wide range of university resources including information about International and European universities.
- Have full support with the UCAS application process, including applying for Oxbridge, other



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Russell group universities and applying for Student Finance.

- Receive support for university Open Days and interviews.
- Be made aware of volunteering opportunities both in the UK and abroad.
- Have the opportunity to undertake work experience at the end of year 12.
- Have access to CV-building opportunities such as trips, volunteering, mentoring and leadership opportunities and a wide range of subject-related extra- curricular activities.

Work Experience

All Year 10 and Year 12 students are given the opportunity to undertake a week of work experience which allows them to gain first-hand knowledge of the world of work. It features as an integral part of other courses at Key Stage 4 and at Key Stage 5.

Objectives

By the end of the placement students should:

- Develop key skills in the application of number, communication, information technology and personal skills.
- Understand what it is like to attend work as an employee every day.
- Gain a greater insight into the kinds of skills and attitudes required by employers.
- Gain an insight into factors which may determine career choices and the requirements of different sectors and employers.
- Become aware of the issues affecting the individual at work.
- Understand Health and Safety issues at work.
- Have experience of sourcing, applying and being interviewed for a job role.

Learning Outcomes

Students:

- Review their learning from experience.
- Show their understanding of roles at work by successfully managing their work placement.
- Comply with Health and Safety procedures at work.

Visits by Tutors

Students on placement locally will be visited by Trust staff, usually tutors, at least once to find out how the students are getting on, to deal with any queries, to monitor Health and Safety and to report on the suitability of placement activities.

Post-Placement Review

- During tutor time, students will discuss their learning outcomes and how the placement experience may affect their career action plan.
- Each secondary school within the Trust maintains a list of placement employers, which is revised each year. Students are, nevertheless, encouraged to find and organise their own placements. Although local choice is limited, we are normally able to find placements for the majority of students in the cohort.

Primary Delivery of the Careers Education, Information and Guidance Programme

- Primary schools are committed to delivering careers-related learning in an age- appropriate manner, taking into consideration pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), through activities and programmes provided from an early age.
- Schools are encouraged to develop policies, a curriculum and practices which best suit their local circumstances and give impetus to building strong local partnerships.
- Schools develop careers education programmes which maintain their identity and individual characteristics.

Secondary Delivery of the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Programme

The Careers Education, Information and Guidance Programme (CEIAG) is delivered in the following ways:

- A programme of regular scheduled lessons built into the CEIAG programme at KS3, KS4 and KS5. These are delivered by experienced form tutors who have a long-standing relationship and insight into their tutee groups.
- Guidance interviews at KS3, KS4 and KS5 with School Advisers and CSW Group, who work with selected pupils.
- A well-established Work Experience programme for Year 10 and Year 12 students.
- Other work-related vocational courses which cater for specific groups of students through immersive curriculum provision.
- Through work-related learning across a range of subjects, quality assured through Faculty Review programmes, which include the promotion and development of careers in each Faculty Area.
- Use of software and online tools such as Careers Pilot, to enhance learning.
- Tracking coverage of careers lessons, opportunities and events to ensure that the needs of disadvantaged pupils are met and that targeted careers opportunities are sought which aim to help



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pupils raise aspirations, cultural capital and overcome personal barriers to future success.

- Staff Roles and responsibilities in Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance: KS3/KS4/KS5, the nominated members of staff responsible for careers education, Careers Co-ordinator
- To develop a whole school approach to CEIAG and careers education from year 7 through to year 13 which supports students, including students with SEND, with their individual progression routes.
- Support and liaise with any students studying off-site at another provider, to ensure that their needs are fully met.
- Support the programme of extended work experience for a small group of students on an alternative curriculum provision.
- Ensure that work experience meets all legal requirements.
- Liaise with employers and training providers to provide meaningful encounters and work-based experiences.
- Manage and liaise with the support of external agencies such as CSW Group, Next Steps South West, Careers and Enterprise Agency and Bideford Job Centre Plus, to ensure that partnership working is effective in meeting the needs of pupils.
- Ensure that partnerships with industry and local providers are consistent across the Trust.
- To ensure that careers education and guidance is enhanced through the practical involvement of employers/training providers e.g. through special events, industry days/careers conventions and fairs, inspirational speakers and visits.
- To conduct a formal annual review of careers education and guidance using feedback from a range of people including students.
- To provide Trustees, School Improvement Monitoring Group (SIMG) previously known as the Local Governing Body (LGB) and the Principal with reports and information as requested, e.g. student opportunities and student destinations.
- To use data effectively: to support students to identify their strengths and areas for further development; and to support staff to identify key pupils and ensure that all pupils have equal access to careers-based opportunities and experiences.
- To develop and maintain partnerships, connections with industry and local providers.
- To develop programmes/workshops within the school to meet the requirements of independent advice.
- To ensure that links are established and maintained to promote each school in the Trust within the local community.
- Develop and resource programmes of study and schemes of work.

Heads of House/Teaching staff

Assist with and support Careers Education and Guidance activity as appropriate within the CEIAG and

personal development programme.

Resources

Careers information is available in all Trust school libraries.

- Teaching resources are provided/obtained/introduced by the nominated members of staff responsible for careers education, Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, and the Careers Co-ordinator within secondary schools.
- Students are advised re: online resources which can be accessed at home. Links are made available through the Trust and individual school websites.

Industry Links/Partnerships/Service Level Agreements

The Athena Learning Trust attaches a great deal of importance to the maintenance and development of industry links and partnerships, which will have a positive benefit to the curriculum as a whole, and to careers education and guidance in particular. Such links form a backdrop for the development of the work-related curriculum. As well as having numerous links with individual companies, the Athena Learning Trust works with local employers' organisations and enterprises. Service Level Agreements are monitored and reviewed annually.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The work of the Careers Education Guidance programme is subject to quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation systems.

Feedback from employers, parents, carers and students is always welcome. This is encouraged through questionnaires and parental meetings following events and visits from external organisations.