

Compass+ is a free digital product that features the **Compass evaluation**. Complete a Compass evaluation every term to quickly and easily evaluate your careers provision against the eight Gatsby Benchmarks.

Further guidance on completing Compass evaluations can be found in the [Compass+ Help Centre](#).

Compass evaluation questions – Compass for Special Schools

Introduction

Institution name:

Please state your job title:

Which year groups attend your school?

Year Group	Enter the number of students in each year group:
Below year 6	
Year 6	
Year 7	
Year 8	
Year 9	
Year 10	
Year 11	
Year 12	
Year 13	
Above Year 13	

Do the majority of your students (more than 75%) typically take Level 2/GCSE qualifications?

Yes / No

Benchmark 1 – Stable careers programme

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

Schools should have an established programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, Governors, employers and other agencies.

'Career' is defined as a purposeful destination on leaving school or college, and does not necessarily mean paid employment.

Question 1.1

Does your special school 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

Question 1.2

Does your special school publish its careers programme on its website?	Yes / No / Don't know
---	-----------------------

If you answered No or Don't know : skip to Question 1.4

Question 1.3

Is there information on your website about the careers programme specifically aimed at:	
Students	Yes / No / Don't know
Teachers	Yes / No / Don't know

Employers	Yes / No / Don't know
Parents/Carers	Yes / No / Don't know

Question 1.4

Does your special school evaluate the effectiveness of its careers programme at least every three years?	Yes / No / Don't know
---	-----------------------

If you answered No or Don't know : skip to Question 1.6

Question 1.5

Does the evaluation of your careers programme take into account feedback from:	
Students	Yes / No / Don't know
Teachers	Yes / No / Don't know
Employers	Yes / No / Don't know
Parents/Carers	Yes / No / Don't know

Question 1.6

Does your special school have a lead person with strategic responsibility for overseeing your schools' careers programme	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'.

'LMI' is defined as information that is pertinent to the achievement of the optimum destination on leaving school/college and will be needed by the student or/and their representatives.

Every student, and their parents/carers/families, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need support to make best use of available information.

Question 2.1

Approximately what proportion of students have been provided with or have been supported to use up-to-date information about appropriate career or progression paths and the labour market (this may include awareness of 'the local offer') by:			
The age of 14	The age of 16	The age of 18	Above the age of 18
None	None	None	None
A few (1-25%)	A few (1-25%)	A few (1-25%)	A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)	Some (26-50%)	Some (26-50%)	Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)	Most (51-75%)	Most (51-75%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All	All	All	All
Don't know	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know

Question 2.2

Does your special school 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 – Student needs

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

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

When questions asked about students directly, those questions can be interpreted as being asked of the students' representatives too, if relevant.

Question 3.1

How strongly do you agree or disagree that your special school's careers programme addresses the following issues? <i>Rate on scale of 1 (strongly disagree) – 5 (strongly agree)</i>	
It actively seeks to raise the aspirations of all students	
It challenges stereotypical thinking (in terms of gender, etc)	

Question 3.2

Does your special school:	
Keep systematic records on each student's experiences of career and enterprise activity?	Yes / No / Don't know
Enable students and parents/carers/families to have access to accurate records about their own careers and enterprise experiences and decisions on future pathways?	Yes / No / Don't know
Collect and maintain accurate data for each student on their destinations after they leave your special school (whenever that may be) ?	Yes / No / Don't know
Share accurate and timely data with the local authority on student 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 your students?	Yes / No / Don't know

Benchmark 4 – Linking curriculum learning to careers

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

*All subject staff should link curriculum learning with careers and transition.
Where appropriate, STEM subject staff should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career and progression paths.*

When considering the curriculum, the levels can include pre-formal students and you can relate your answers to however you describe levels of learning.

Question 4.1

By the time they leave school, approximately what proportion of students have experienced person-centred curriculum learning that highlights the relevance of subjects and programmes to future career or progression paths?			
English – including functional English	Maths – including functional Maths	Science – both accredited and/or non-accredited learning	PHSE – including for example, Life Skills, Soft Skills, Personal and/or Social Development, Independent Travel support
None	None	None	None
A few (1-25%)	A few (1-25%)	A few (1-25%)	A few (1-25%)
Some (26-50%)	Some (26-50%)	Some (26-50%)	Some (26-50%)
Most (51-75%)	Most (51-75%)	Most (51-75%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)
All	All	All	All
Don't know	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know

Benchmark 5 – Employer encounters

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

Every student, for whom it is deemed appropriate, 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, employer visits and experiences. These activities may be delivered in the special school setting where students are unable to access settings outside of the school. The special school can also be considered as an employer when planning these activities.

The term 'for whom it is deemed appropriate' should encourage staff to consider how employer encounters and/or work experience can be more relevant for everyone, and not exclude groups of students.

We know that it will not always be appropriate for all students to receive the following encounters with employers and employees. Therefore, rather than working out your answers to the following questions based on the total number of students in your institution, please work out the percentage range based on the number of students you think these types of encounters would be most appropriate for. This will provide you with a more accurate score.

Question 5.1

For whom it is deemed appropriate, select the years during which 76-100% of students have at least one encounter with an employer or employee:	
Below year 6	
Year 6	
Year 7	
Year 8	
Year 9	
Year 10	
Year 11	
Year 12	

Year 13	
Above Year 13	
Don't know	
None of the above	

Question 5.2

For whom it is deemed appropriate, what proportion of your students have at least one encounter with an employer every year they are at school?						
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	All	Don't know

Question 5.3

For whom it is deemed appropriate, on average how many encounters with an employer will your students have had by the time they leave your special school?	
Choose an average number from 0 to 10 or more	

Question 5.4

How many employers will you involve in careers activity in the current academic year?	
Choose an average number from 0 to 10 or more	

Benchmark 6 – Workplace experiences

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

Every student, for whom it is deemed appropriate, should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience, employer visits and experiences in school (as an employing organisation) to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks. Workplace experiences may be delivered within the special school setting especially when students are unable to access settings outside of the school.

The term 'for whom it is deemed appropriate' should encourage staff to consider how the encounter and/or work experience can be more relevant for everyone, and not exclude groups of students.

We know that it will not always be appropriate for all students to receive the following workplace experiences. Therefore, rather than working out your answers to the following questions based on the total number of students in your institution, please work out the percentage range based on the number of students you think these types of encounters would be most appropriate for. This will provide you with a more accurate score.

Question 6.1

For whom it is deemed appropriate, approximately what proportion of students have had an experience of a workplace or community-based setting by the end of Year 11?						
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	All	Don't know

If you do not have any Year 12-13 students in your school : skip to 7.1

Question 6.2

For whom it is deemed appropriate, during Years 12 and 13 and for students still attending above Year 13, what proportion of students have had an experience of a workplace or community-based setting?						
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	All	Don't know

Update for Spring 2025

In order to establish a baseline data set for the government's future vision of a work experience guarantee for every young person, four supplementary questions have been added to the Compass evaluation under Gatsby Benchmark 6.

The data gathered from these questions will be aggregated nationally to help measure progress towards the guarantee for every young person. It will also provide valuable insight to CEC and policy makers to help shape future systemwide investment and support for schools and employers. These questions will not contribute to your overall score.

You can find out more about these questions [here](#).

Question 6.3

The answer to this question will not count towards your score for Gatsby Benchmark 6.

Approximately what proportion of pupils have accessed a variety of meaningful workplace experiences by the end of KS3 totalling:			
5 or more days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
3-4 days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
2 or less days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
No workplace experiences:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know

Question 6.4

The answer to this question will not count towards your score for Gatsby Benchmark 6.

Approximately what proportion of FSM (free school meals) pupils have accessed a variety of meaningful workplace experiences by the end of KS3 totalling:			
5 or more days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
3-4 days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
2 or less days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
No workplace experiences:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know

Question 6.5

The answer to this question will not count towards your score for Gatsby Benchmark 6.

Approximately what proportion of pupils have accessed a variety of meaningful workplace experiences by the end of KS4 totalling:			
5 or more days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
3-4 days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
2 or less days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
No workplace experiences:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know

Question 6.6

The answer to this question will not count towards your score for Gatsby Benchmark 6.

Approximately what proportion of FSM pupils have accessed a variety of meaningful workplace experiences by the end of KS4 totalling:			
5 or more days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
3-4 days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
2 or less days, or equivalent:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know
No workplace experiences:			
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)
Overwhelming majority (76-90%)	Almost All (91-99%)	All (100%)	Don't know

Benchmark 7 – Educational encounters

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

Educational encounters include any and all destinations that students will go onto from leaving school and college.

All students, for whom it is deemed appropriate, should have an awareness of the full range of learning and progression opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning.

We know that it will not always be appropriate for all students to receive the following encounters. Therefore, rather than working out your answers to the following questions based on the total number of students in your institution, please work out the percentage range based on the number of students you think these types of encounters would be most appropriate for. This will provide you with a more accurate score.

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

Question 7.1

By the time they leave school, approximately what proportion of students, for whom it is deemed appropriate, have had the following experiences: Meaningful encounters with Sixth Form Colleges?						
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	All	Don't know
Information about the full range of supported internships, internships, traineeships and supported or inclusive apprenticeships, apprenticeships (including higher level apprenticeships)?						
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	All	Don't know
Meaningful encounters with Further Education Providers (including land-based colleges where appropriate)?						
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	All	Don't know

Meaningful encounters with Independent Training Providers (ITPs) or other progression providers?						
None	A few (1-25%)	Some (26-50%)	Most (51-75%)	Overwhelming majority (76-99%)	All	Don't know

If the majority of your students (more than 75%) typically **do not** take Level 2/GCSE qualifications: skip to 7.2

If the majority of your students (more than 75%) typically **do** take Level 2/GCSE qualifications:

For whom it is deemed appropriate meaningful encounters with Higher Education providers?						
None of the students who can access HE	A few (1-25%) of the students who can access HE	Some (26-50%) of the students who can access HE	Most (51-75%) of the students who can access HE	Overwhelming majority (76-99%) of the students who can access HE	All of the students who can access HE	Don't know

If you have students in Years 12 and above:

For whom it is deemed appropriate at least two visits to a Higher Education provider?						
None of the students who can access HE	A few (1-25%) of the students who can access HE	Some (26-50%) of the students who can access HE	Most (51-75%) of the students who can access HE	Overwhelming majority (76-99%) of the students who can access HE	All of the students who can access HE	Don't know

Please note: Questions 7.2 to 7.9 do not count towards your Benchmark 7 score.

Question 7.2

What proportion of students in Year 8/9 have had at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during KS3 that meet the requirements of PAL?

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

Question 7.3

What proportion of students in Year 10/11 have had at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during KS4 that meet the requirements of PAL?

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

If you do not have any Year 12-13 students in your school : skip to Question 7.6

Question 7.4

What proportion of students in Year 12/13 have been offered at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during KS5 that meet the requirements of PAL?

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

Question 7.5

What proportion of students in Year 12/13 have attended at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during KS5 that meet the requirements of PAL?

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

If your special school **does not** have a Post 16 provision: answer Questions 7.6 and 7.7 only.

If your special school **does** have a Post 16 provision : answer Questions 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8

Question 7.6

What proportion of students of the year group who most recently completed the 'first key phase' as defined in the updated [Provider Access Legislation](#) (period covering 1st September in Year 8 to 28th February in Year 9) had at least two encounters that met the requirements of PAL within that key phase?

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

Question 7.7

What proportion of students of the year group who most recently completed the 'second key phase' as defined in the updated [Provider Access Legislation](#) (period covering 1st September in Year 10 to 28th February in Year 11) had at least two encounters that met the requirements of PAL within that key phase?

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

Question 7.8

What proportion of students of the year group who most recently completed the 'third key phase' as defined in the updated [Provider Access Legislation](#) (period covering 1st September in Year 12 to 28th February in Year 13) were offered at least two encounters that met the requirements of PAL within that key phase?

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

Question 7.9

Please list the providers who conducted these encounters:

Further support and guidance on meeting the Provider Access Legislation can be found in the [Help Centre](#).

Benchmark 8 – Personal guidance

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

Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of school 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 students, but should be timed to meet their individual needs. The arrangements for personal guidance meetings for students with SEND should reflect their individual needs.

Personal guidance can be any meeting where a Level 6 qualified Careers Adviser is present including annual reviews, transition reviews, as well as discreet careers guidance 'interviews'. The expectation is that students will attend with support and/or that decisions will be taken based on the ambitions of that student whether expressed by them or on their behalf.

Question 8.1

What proportion of students have had an interview with a qualified careers adviser by the end of Year 11?

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

Only answer Question 8.2 if you have any Year 12-13 students in your special school.

Question 8.2

What proportion of students have had at least two interviews with a qualified careers adviser by the end of Year 13, or for those students who stay on above Year 13, by the end of their time at your special school?

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.