

Provider Access in Schools

Statutory Duty & Legal Compliance

Since January 2023, the *Provider Access Legislation* mandates schools to offer students at least six structured encounters with approved providers of technical education and apprenticeships. These encounters ensure pupils learn about diverse post-16 and 18 options including A-levels, apprenticeships, T-levels, HTQs, and vocational routes

The Gatsby Benchmarks emphasise that such provider access supports meaningful encounters that help students understand what work and different qualifications actually look like.

Good careers provision has data-backed outcomes. Pupils in schools with strong careers programmes are **8% less likely** to become NEET*, rising to a 20% reduction in disadvantaged settings

Provider access directly supports tackling inequality and closing skills gaps.

*Not In Employment, Education or Training

Alignment with Gatsby Benchmarks (May 2025 Revision)

- **Benchmark 5 – Encounters with employers / employees**
Provider access activities deepen students' understanding of the world of work through guest presentations, sector insights, and mentorships.
- **Benchmark 6 – Experiences of workplaces**
Reinforces workplace exposure via placements or site visits, preparing the way for Level 6–7 and supporting the upcoming 2-week work-experience guarantee from Sept 2025
- **Benchmark 7 – Encounters with FE/HE providers**
- Overlaps meaningfully with provider access by ensuring students explore technical and academic learning routes

Provision to be Provided

At least **six** provider encounters per student should be provided between years 8 and 13.

Schools must publish a Provider Access Policy, specifying arrangements and ensuring each year group attends the required encounters

KS3 (Years 8–9) 2 provider encounters in KS3, examples:

- In-school apprenticeship roadshows
- College taster days
- Technical qualification introductions tailored to foundation stages

KS4 (Years 10–11) 2 provider encounters in KS4, examples:

- Provider stand at careers fairs
- Workshops on apprenticeships or T-levels
- Application and interview skills sessions delivered by providers

KS5 (Years 12 -14) 2 in KS5 (optional attendance).

Review July 2026