

Bitesize Careers: Improving the uptake in physics

The Gatsby Careers benchmarks

This section focusses on the ***Gatsby Careers Benchmarks***. These were produced by Sir John Holman a former headteacher and founder of the National STEM Centre in York. They followed an extensive review of careers guidance; good careers practice in English schools as well as in six other countries. The result was a framework of eight benchmarks which characterises the best careers guidance. These are summarised as follows:

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

Most schools should already be aware of the Gatsby benchmarks and will be working towards developing some or all of the 8 benchmarks. The Department for Education in their publication, [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers](#)¹ (Jan 2023) state that it expects all schools to use the Gatsby Benchmarks. They are non-statutory but importantly, can help school and colleges fulfil their legal requirements in providing independent careers information for their pupils. You may find that other colleagues in your school have already implemented some of the benchmarks, but it would be useful to consider how they impact on physics in particular.

An **Activity** asks you to draw together the ideas in the Gatsby benchmarks and apply them to physics. More specifically it asks how the Gatsby benchmarks fit with physics and your physics careers planning. What specific actions could you take to improve physics uptake for each of the benchmarks?

The accompanying PowerPoint slides include a [link](#)² to a poster created by STEM Learning which may help with your discussions.

You may also wish to explore the [Compass](#)³ resource provided by the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) which quickly and easily helps you to evaluate your careers activity against the eight benchmarks.

CEC has also established networks between employers and schools and colleges to increase students' exposure to the world of work. The Enterprise Adviser Network recruits volunteers from a range of business sectors to work with schools and colleges to strengthen employer links and deliver high-quality careers education plans.

The clip from the [Gatsby Foundation](#) provides a useful summary of the benchmarks and their impact.

Links:

1. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63b69f3fe90e077246c83323/Careers_guidance_and_access_for_education_and_training_providers_.pdf
2. <https://www.stem.org.uk/resources/elibrary/resource/443831/helping-you-meet-gatsby-career-benchmarks#&gid=undefined&pid=1>
3. <https://compass.careersandenterprise.co.uk/info>
4. <https://www.goodcareerguidance.org.uk/benchmarks-and-background>