



Middlesbrough College



Taking **careers** higher

**NORTHERN  
SKILLS**

**M C**  
Middlesbrough  
College Group

**TTE**



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Middlesbrough College offers courses from entry level to level 7 covering all sectors of the economy and supports 13,000 school leavers, adults, and apprentices to develop their skills, qualifications and industry experience each year.

We are committed to providing impartial information, advice and guidance on education, training, and employment opportunities to our prospective, current, and former learners.

Middlesbrough College believes that an offer of high-quality careers education, information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) ensures positive attainment for learners and raises learner aspirations, which is vital in supporting young people and adults in their transition from education and supporting them to achieve their full potential, regardless of starting point or where they are on their journey.

This strategy aims to look at the current positioning of careers education, information, advice and guidance at Middlesbrough College, its relationship to the wider college group and the needs of its stakeholders and will determine the priorities of our careers services for the next five years.

The strategy aligns closely with other strategies within and outwith the College, including the college's Curriculum Intent and Taking Teaching Higher Strategy, the Tees Valley Combined Authority Strategic Economic Plan and the Department for Education Careers Guidance (July 21).

Whilst the college currently holds Matrix accreditation and fully meets the Gatsby benchmarks, we believe there is more we can do.

Through delivering this strategy, we aim to provide an innovative, comprehensive, and transformative offering that inspires learners and enables them to reach their full potential at every stage of the student journey from initial engagement in secondary schools all the way through to individuals leaving education and joining the workforce.

'Taking Careers Higher' will be key to driving forward and setting out the expectations of how Middlesbrough College supports its students and apprentices to meet their aspirations, ultimately achieving our mission 'to provide education and skills that enhance the region's economic & social prosperity.'

The following appendices set out:

- A. The services offered by the various teams across college
- B. Our action plan to deliver this strategy
- C. How we deliver and exceed Gatsby benchmarks
- D. Staff teams and qualification expectations

## 2. STRATEGIC INTENT

- Our Vision
- Our Values
- Our Strategic Priorities
- Our Careers Vision
- External Environment

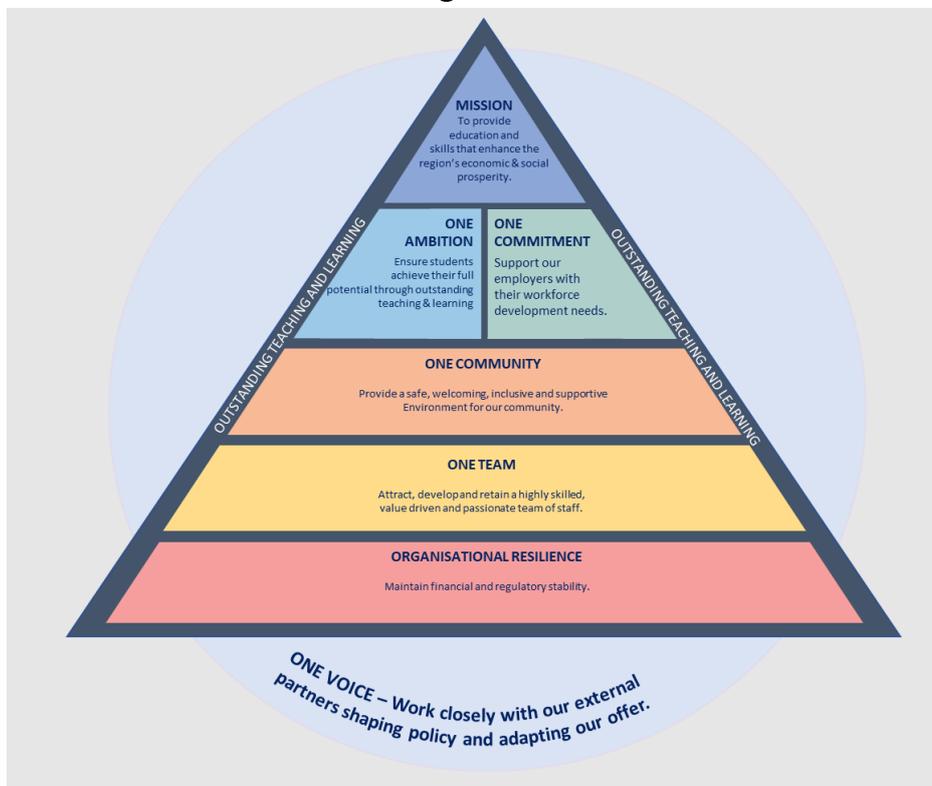
### Our Vision

*To be an outstanding provider of education and training, which improves educational outcomes, employment prospects and lifetime opportunities for our students.*

### Our Values



### Our Strategic Priorities



Our careers vision:

## ***Taking Careers Higher***

***Highly skilled and trained staff from across our Group will use accurate and up to date labour market information alongside regular formal and informal advice from employers to ensure that impartial careers education, information, advice, and guidance is provided at every step of our students' journey, and that this supports the transition of our students into meaningful, sustainable further education, employment or greater independence at the end of their time with us.***

### **Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance**

The availability of good careers education, information, advice and guidance is critical to successful progression pathways. People can make a poor choice about courses of study due to a lack of advice on their choice of subject, where it will lead and if it is required for entry to certain courses and institutions. Careers advice and guidance is complex and often misunderstood therefore it is important to understand the meaning of each element in relation to this strategy:

***Impartial*** – treating everyone equally and providing unbiased, confidential Information, Advice and Guidance.

***Career*** - an occupation undertaken for a period of a person's life with opportunities to take advantage of both planned and unplanned events.

***Education*** - the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university.

***Information*** - facts provided or learned about a course or career.

***Advice*** - recommendations offered with regard to potential future action.

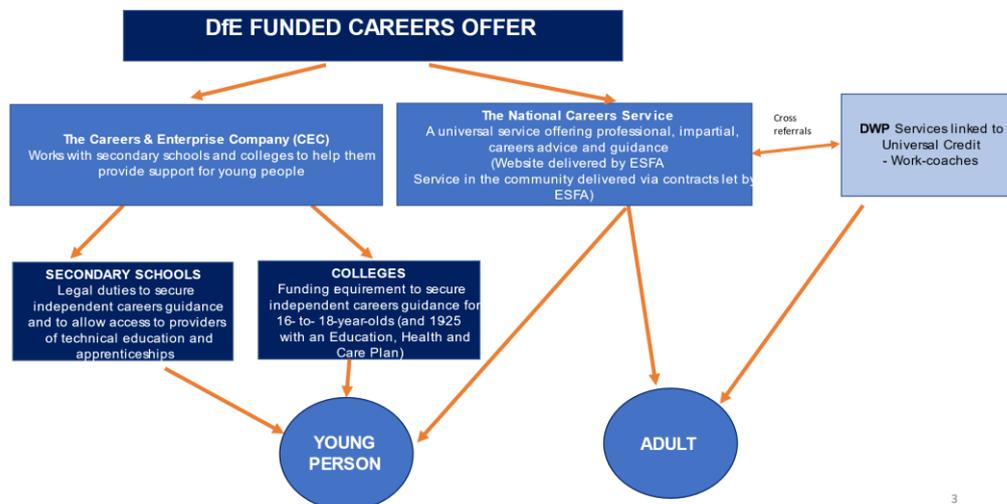
***Guidance*** – guidance provided by a trained professional aimed at providing more certainty about future next steps

## The External Environment

### **OFSTED definition:**

Careers advice and guidance refers to a coherent programme of activities that inform, inspire, and motivate young people, preparing them for work and helping them to understand where different education and training choices could take them in the future.

### The current landscape



The Skills for Jobs White Paper published in January 2021 set out a reform agenda for Further Education that is employer led – skills focussed through technical education - and cites that careers education will continue to provide a strong underpinning to this agenda in three ways:

- Framework and Infrastructure: Gatsby benchmarks, careers hubs
- Accountability: Increased focus on student destinations
- Quality and Consistency: Availability of government assured careers information for young people and alignment between the Careers Enterprise Company and National Careers Service to provide all age support.

### **Statutory Requirements**

Middlesbrough College aligns its services to specific guidance from the Department of Education for college leaders and governing bodies: [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90421/careers_guidance_and_access_for_education_and_training_providers_-_gov_uk.pdf)

The guidance states that whilst the Gatsby Benchmarks are not a statutory framework, by adopting them, colleges can be confident that they are complying with the careers guidance requirements set out in their funding agreement. The Benchmarks go further by defining all elements of a high quality careers education programme, that increases opportunities for students to access everything from experiences of the

workplace, personal guidance with a careers adviser, to engagement with employers, colleges, training providers and universities based on the best national and international research.

Middlesbrough College is required to set out our careers programme on our website as part of the Gatsby Benchmarks and the version at the time of writing is attached in **Appendix C**.

### **Changes proposed through the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill include:**

- Potential to strengthen the duty so that maintained schools and academies must make sure that all pupils have two mandatory encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships. One encounter in either year 8 or year 9 (before 28 February if in year 9) and again in either year 10 or year 11 (before 28 February if in year 11).
- Schools will also be required to offer a third encounter with providers of approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships, in either year 12 or year 13 (before 28 February if in year 13) which will be optional for pupils to attend.

### **Research on good practice:**

The Institute of Employment Studies carried out a review in 2018 on behalf of the Careers and Enterprise Company which identified the following common features of effective careers practice in colleges:

- Effective careers leadership at a strategic level, holistic approach across the college and shared ownership.
- Well-resourced provision and visibility of careers teams and the support on offer
- Impartial guidance so that students are aware of all the options open to them
- Evaluation and review to ensure that careers provision responds to student need
- Use of technology for communication, accurate data and measuring the impact
- Tailored and targeted provision to address the individual needs of students
- Collaboration with employers and local networks

The report goes on to suggest areas of good practice identified in colleges where careers advice was strong. Middlesbrough College has assessed strengths and weaknesses in the learner journey with an associated action plan being included in Appendix B.

### **External Accreditations**

Matrix Standard:

Colleges are expected to hold the Matrix Standard when in receipt of Education and Skills Funding Agency adult education budget. The Matrix Standard is a national quality standard that supports organisations to assess, measure and improve their Information, Advice and Guidance services.

Middlesbrough College has maintained the Matrix Standard for our central careers service for over 8 years.

A new standard is now available called 'Quality in Careers' and the College holds an ambition to achieve this alongside Matrix during this strategy period.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION

Middlesbrough College has the following strategic careers leadership in place:

1. SLT level Aimey Adamson – Vice Principal Students and Communications
2. CMT lead Joanne Fields – Director of Student Services and Careers
3. Governor Petrina Lynn – FE consultant and ex skills funding agency senior manager

The following resource and services are dedicated to providing holistic, professional and impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance across the college:

- Careers Team
- Employer Engagement Team
- Work Placement and Work Experience Team
- Schools and Admissions Team
- Curriculum Teams

### Careers Entitlement

Middlesbrough College is committed to providing impartial information, advice and guidance on education, training, and employment opportunities to prospective, current, and former learners. The College ensures high quality, timely, accurate and impartial careers education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG) is provided to support individuals make informed decisions about their next steps in order for them to achieve personal and economic wellbeing throughout their lives.

A typical careers entitlement offer per learner will consist of:

- A minimum of one 45 minute 1:1 careers interview with every student during their time at college
- A meaningful and relevant work experience placement of between 34 and 315 hours dependent on their course
- A minimum of 4 relevant employer encounters per year
- Vocational information, advice and guidance from curriculum staff at interview, enrolment and throughout their course
- Careers education, advice and LMI sessions as part of their Thrive and 1:1 tutorial programme
- A 1:1 progression interview which formalises their next steps and tailored Thrive programme which include the following services depending on their intended destination:
  - CV / Interview skills workshops for those seeking employment or an apprenticeship
  - Entrepreneurial support for those wishing to set out their own business
  - UCAS and personal statement advice and support for those wishing to progress to Higher Education
  - 1:1 Apprenticeship guidance sessions for those seeking an apprenticeship

## Gatsby Benchmarks:

The table below details the Gatsby benchmarks which the college meets according to the monitoring body Tees Valley Combined Authority. The programme of delivery is in Appendix C.

Gatsby Benchmark	Overview	Benchmark Met
1. A stable careers programme	Middlesbrough College has a stable and structured careers programme which is available to view on our website, including a comprehensive Thrive tutorial programme for full-time students.	Yes
2. Learning from career and labour market information	All students access and use information about career paths and the labour market to inform their own decisions on study options. Through the curriculum and careers services, they have access to high quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities.	Yes
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil	All students have access to high quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities at a time in the year that is best for them. The college careers programme actively seeks to challenge stereotypical thinking and raise aspirations. Middlesbrough College keeps systematic records of the individual advice given to each learner, and subsequent agreed decisions. All learners have access to these records to support their career development. Middlesbrough College collects and maintains accurate data for each learner on their education, training, or employment destinations.	Yes
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	Throughout their programme of study (and by the end of their course) every student will gain knowledge and experience as to how their subject assists people gain entry to (and be more effective workers within) a wide range of occupations.	Yes
5. Encounters with employers and employees	Every student will gain 34 – 315 hours work experience dependent on their course and level.  Middlesbrough College provides students with multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This is provided via a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.	Yes
6. Experiences of workplaces	Every student has a minimum of 4 first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.	Yes
7. Encounters with further and higher education	By the end of their programme of study, every student has meaningful encounters with a range of providers of learning and training that may form the next stage of their career. This includes as appropriate, further education colleges and higher education, apprenticeship, and training providers.	Yes
8. Personal guidance	Every student will receive a one-to-one 45 minute impartial and confidential guidance interview with a careers adviser, who is either internal (a member of college staff) or external, but who is trained to an appropriate level. These interviews are available whenever significant study or career choices are being made for an individual.	Yes

The Middlesbrough College careers programme is differentiated by learner type as follows:

### Care Experienced and Vulnerable Young People

The College vision for Care Experienced Young People is to provide them with the necessary support and guidance to achieve an equality of opportunity, so that they are able to achieve and progress to further education, higher education, apprenticeships, and employment as well as preparation for wider life experiences.

In order to provide Care Experienced Young People with an equal opportunity, there is a need to identify them at the earliest opportunity to provide them with a tailored experience from pre-entry guidance through to post-college progression.

The College aims to provide the following support to all Care Experienced Young People:

- Provide impartial guidance at open evenings and interviews
- Ensure early identification of applicants and establish contact with them as appropriate through the schools and transitions team.
- Offer flexible application arrangements and interviews.
- Ensure that the individual's circumstances and views are reflected in the support offered to them.
- Provide impartial progression guidance relating to further study or progression routes into employment and to support transition to higher education.

### Adult and Community Learning

Our commitment to Adult and Community Learning is to support the transformation of the skills system so everyone, no matter where they live or their background, can gain the skills they need to progress in work at any stage of their life.

This will be critical in ensuring we play our part in providing employers with the access to the skilled workforce they need, and that more people are trained to fill the skills gaps that exist now, as well as in the future.

Middlesbrough College will provide an inclusive careers service to enable adults to understand the range of opportunities available to them, to acquire the skills and qualifications they need to succeed.

To achieve this, the College will:

- Increase accessibility to careers advice for adults.
- Embed CEIAG into adult programmes.
- Provide CV and Interview Skill support.
- Work with external agencies/employers to showcase opportunities to students.

### Apprenticeships

Middlesbrough College offer impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance to all students including apprentices. Apprentices have access to the wider college services alongside specialist vocational support from their Training Advisors\*. This ensures that apprentices develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours that they require to succeed not only in their apprenticeship but for their future work and life.

To achieve this, the College will:

- Provide appropriate IAG to ensure that apprentices understand the requirements of the apprenticeship and follow the correct pathway to meet their aspirations
- Provide initial CV, application and interview advice and guidance
- Increase accessibility to careers advice for apprentices.
- Embed CEIAG into apprenticeship programmes.
- Provide specialist vocational careers advice and guidance.
- Ensure that apprentices develop the wider knowledge, skills and behaviours for work and life.
- Raise aspirations by highlighting a broad range of accessible progression routes both within employment and with FE/Higher education

*\* Includes Assessors, Trainers, Tutors and Lecturers involved in apprenticeship delivery.*

## Higher Education

The focus on future careers for college graduates begins with the design of employment focussed higher qualifications through the University Centre Middlesbrough and the North East Institute of Technology. We engage with employers to ensure that our higher qualifications meet their needs and all programmes of study have at least 25% work-related content, including placements, masterclasses, projects, assessment and projects. Wherever possible, programmes are mapped to professional, statutory, or regulatory body standards to allow dual awarding opportunities.

To achieve this the College will:

- Ensure all applicants are invited in for a discussion prior to enrolment about their future career aspirations to ensure the programme of study they are interested in matches their plans.
- Provide continued guidance and support to assist students with progression to continuing study whether at the College or other institutions.
- Provide CV, application, and interview guidance alongside skills gap identification.
- Provide free access to national governing body qualifications to allow progression into employment.

## SEND

Young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) face challenges in finding employment. With only 5.7% of people with a learning difficulty in employment nationally, and 71% of those working part-time, there is a clear need to increase this statistic nationally and regionally.

Many learners with SEND face unique challenges in progressing from school to further learning and the workplace, with research identifying that they can and do want to work but are often denied the opportunity because there are many barriers to finding meaningful paid work. Therefore, establishing a sustainable model of support which can continue long-term across the area will be a key focus.

Many young people with SEND benefit from careers support such as supported internships, independent living opportunities, further education, and employment. In addition, interview support, job profiling and coaching alongside accessing real-work environments preparation through supported enterprise activities and volunteering.

With the right support, encouragement, and empowerment through specialist interventions, many of these students can access the broad range of career outcomes available to their peers which lead to successful outcomes.

To achieve this the college will:

- Ensure that careers guidance for students with SEND is differentiated and based on high aspirations and a personalised approach. Middlesbrough College Careers Team work in collaboration with the ALS team to ensure that careers guidance for students with SEND is based on the students' own aspirations, abilities, and needs.
- Investing in high-quality specialist practitioners who are highly qualified and skilled in SEND
- Continue to develop individualised pathways that will lead to positive outcomes
- Pitch real-life work experience at the right level
- Support employers closely by providing extra support and dedicated advice.

## 4. LMI

LMI is pivotal to effective CEIAG because high quality, current, expert knowledge helps learners prepare effectively for the world of work. It provides them with a clearer understanding about changing economic circumstances, alongside more specific aspects of the sector they are preparing to progress to such as typical earnings, where local vacancies can be found, what are the 'hot jobs' when they leave education.

LMI supports learners to demystify the world of work and is therefore embedded throughout the curriculum and careers experiences at Middlesbrough College.

LMI currently comes into the college via many routes and this strategy aims to provide a more coordinated approach to receiving and dissemination of LMI to the relevant staff, students, and parents. See action plan in Appendix B for further details.



## 5. The Student Journey



## 6. MEASURING IMPACT

Success will see CEIAG services being fully embedded within the wider College Group to enable success for all. All CEIAG services will be highly responsive, well resourced, digitally-savvy and deliver an outstanding service.

This will be evidenced by:

- Improved attainment outcomes for college learners
- Improved progression and destination outcomes
- Increased employment encounters evidenced through Grofar
- Careers service engagement figures evidence through Grofar
- Reduced NEET figures and as a result, increased retention statistics
- Maintaining quality standards e.g., Matrix
- Meeting all service standards of the Careers Advice Team
- Quality in Careers Accreditation from 2023
- QDP and other learner voice outcomes

Middlesbrough CEIAG services are monitored through regular, annual observations of both one-to-one guidance and educational groupwork delivery to ensure students receive education, information, advice and guidance that is up-to-date, underpinned by knowledge, and delivered in a way that considers the needs of the learner taking into account a wide range of techniques, strategies and delivery models. These observations are conducted by an experienced Career Development Practitioner who has an up-to-date working knowledge and experience of best practice in career development activities and is sufficiently objective.

Specific targets to demonstrate impact are as follows:

	Current 2022	Target 2025
QDP induction survey results –		
- the IAG I received at enrolment was helpful	89%	95%
- aware of arrangements for work experience	81%	90%
- I feel I am on the right course	94%	95%
QDP exit survey results	90%	95%
- I am provided with IAG regarding future career progression		
- I feel prepared for my next steps	NEW	95%
Positive destinations of leavers:		
- Study Programmes	91.5%	93%
- Adults	81.3%	83%
- Apprenticeships	97%	98%
- SEN	88.2%	90%
- Higher Education students	95.6%	96%

## **Ownership and review:**

This strategy is owned by the Vice Principal for Students and Communication and Director of Student Services as the College's Careers Leads. The aims of this strategy and operational objectives and quality improvement plans will be monitored by the College's Careers Leads who will also work closely with the link governor for careers.

The strategy will be judged and resourced through the following annual college processes

- Self-assessment report (SAR)
- Departmental Strategic Plans

The College's commitment to a coherent programme of activity throughout the curriculum is recognised by Matrix Quality Standard accreditation, assuring the provision of high-quality information, advice, and guidance for all our students.

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## 7. Appendices

### Appendix A - Services offered and annual targets

Services offered and annual targets			
Careers team	Employer careers engagement	Schools and admissions team	Curriculum staff
2000 careers guidance consultations per year	3000 apprentice applicants (internal and external) supported each year to navigate NAS, search for vacancies, cv and interview prep, guidance sessions	120 school careers presentations / assemblies per year	A comprehensive and tailored thrive tutorial programme
1000 UCAS support sessions per year	>300 MC students placed in apps vacancies each year	80 parent / options evening presentations / stands per year	Regular 1:1 meetings with personal tutor and a designated progression interview
All students who indicate a desire to set up their own business receive high quality entrepreneurial / business start-up support	100% of students who indicate an apprenticeship as their preferred next step – receive a 1:1 apprenticeship application guidance and support session and CV/ interview preparation if required	1 external careers advisor professional update workshop per year	Relevant trips and visits including university visits where appropriate
External careers guidance offer to >100 adults per annum (mainly Access)		Provide >3300 year 10's a taster day opportunity to trial 2 course areas per year	Vocational Careers Advice and Guidance by vocational experts

<p>&gt;50 group CV, interview and job search guidance sessions per year.</p>		<p>Provide 1500 year 11's a bridging opportunity to trial course areas per year</p>	<p>Vocational Employment Encounters &amp; guest speakers</p>
<p>10+ careers focussed events</p>		<p>Coordinate 5500 student applications and 4500 interviews per year and quality assure the content</p>	<p>All students to access meaningful work experience</p>
<p>Monthly LMI bulletins for all relevant staff</p>			

## Appendix B - Action Plan

Touchpoint	Action
<b>MARKETING AND STUDENT RECRUITMENT</b>	Utilise LMI including Megatrends on website and in prospectus
	Utilise final student destinations for schools and marketing
	Improve careers ladders and their use
	Ensure detailed careers advice is included in interviews and quality assure this.
	Gather alumni careers stories
<b>TEACHING STAFF</b>	Ensure careers advice is embedded throughout the course
	Improve referrals across departments during course / between levels
	Provide detailed LMI for relevant industry sectors
	Understand more readily student destinations
	Ensure teaching staff understand the importance of work experience and expand opportunities for this
	Expand encounters with employers
	Encourage teaching staff to keep up to date with industry trends through active research, memberships, back to industry refresh periods
<b>PERSONAL TUTORS</b>	Implement new tailored thrive pathways
	Improve support for next steps including access to Thrive Pod for all students
	Log and improve all encounters through Grofar
	Capture intended destinations earlier
<b>CAREERS TEAM</b>	Create and raise awareness of one stop shop services for all students
	Expand services to ensure tailored pathways for all progressing students
	Ensure professional training is in place for all cross college IAG and careers roles
	Improve transitions from school to college and between years
	Expand industry related experiences and information with curriculum
	Continue to meet 100% of 8 Gatsby Benchmarks verified by TVCA / Compass Tracker
	Embed careers as a golden thread throughout the learner journey utilising Careers Excellence Hubs
<b>APPRENTICESHIP GUIDANCE TEAM</b>	Expand services to include all students seeking an apprenticeship – whether we have vacancy or not
	Carry out staff training and professional development for this team
	Work with careers to offer one stop shop for CV/ Interview/ job search
	Increase accessibility to careers advice for apprentices
	Embed CEIAG into apprenticeship programmes
<b>DESTINATION REPORTING AND ANALYSIS</b>	Ensure course review and performance review process targets improving careers support and destinations
	More timely production and distribution of destinations including summary trends and better analysis of ‘related’, ‘sustained’ and ‘high value’ jobs





## Appendix D - Careers Team Qualification Level

Taking Careers Higher – Staff Structure		
Careers team	Employer careers engagement	Schools and admissions team
Director L6	Heads of Service L4 X 2	Head of Service L4
2 Careers Advisers L6 2 Trainee Careers Advisers (to L6)	Apprenticeship recruitment consultants (working towards L4)	4 school liaison officers L4
Course Information Officer L4	2 Apprentices L3 1 administrator L3	1 admissions team leader L4 2 admissions team L2
Adult and pre apprenticeship information and advice at 2QS x 3 L2	External support: Tees Valley Learner Provider Network to provide IAG for apprenticeships	
External support e.g., National Careers Service L6		