

# Evaluation of The Careers & Enterprise Company's *Teacher Encounters Programme*



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## Executive summary

Teachers and the wider education workforce play a key role in supporting young people's career decision making. However, the pace of change in the economy and industries can make it challenging for teachers to stay up to date with the skills employers need from a future workforce and the variety of opportunities and career pathways available to their students.

The *Teacher Encounters Programme* is designed to help teachers increase their confidence and knowledge of the range of opportunities in today's world of work. It provides an opportunity for teachers to engage directly with employers to see and learn about the different career pathways relevant to their subject and how that subject is applied practically in the workplace of today.

The aims of the programme are:

- to build teachers' confidence and knowledge to hold careers conversations with students and parents;
- to bring the curriculum to life by relating it to real world examples;
- to provide an evidence based model for teacher encounters with employers; and
- to demonstrate the value of teacher encounters and the importance of teachers building stronger connections to the labour market. Why teacher encounters matter

Teacher encounters help to expand the careers conversation across schools, linking subjects with their application in the workplace and building a bridge between the worlds of education and employment.

These encounters can inspire teachers and employers. Teachers see first-hand how local businesses work, including learning about pathways to employment such as apprenticeships. Employers benefit through learning more about schools and how to work with them effectively.

This report is an analysis of the impact of the year-long national pilot programme which delivered over 1000 encounters between teachers and employers. The programme was operated through The Careers & Enterprise Company's Careers Hubs in partnership with combined authorities, local authorities and LEAs. The Careers Hubs bring together schools, colleges, employers, apprenticeship providers, combined and local authorities and LEAs to increase the ability of education providers to improve how they prepare young people for their next steps and their career.

The report finds evidence of strong support for teacher encounters amongst both teachers and employers. It also reports impacts on:

- teachers' confidence in working with employers;
- employers' confidence in working with teachers, schools and young people;
- the provision of career support for young people; and
- the engagement of employers with education.

#### Impacts on teachers

- 93% of teachers said engaging with employers was a good use of their time and they would like to do it more frequently. This is important given the time and curriculum pressures facing teachers.
- 91% said it had improved their confidence in having careers-related conversations with their students.
- 78% said their experience of engaging with employers made them better able to deliver their subject.

#### Impacts on employers

- 97% said it helped them explain to teachers and young people their future skills needs.
- 96% of employers said they are keen to engage with teachers more frequently.
- 91% said teacher encounters had been beneficial to their organisation.

#### Impacts on the provision of career support.

- 96% of teachers said they had improved their abilities in key areas like being able to better support their students, link their subjects with careers and improve their knowledge of different pathways into work.
- Teacher's confidence in bringing the careers conversation into their day-to-day work rose significantly as a result of the programme. Confidence levels in engaging with employers rose by 92%, talking to parents about their children's careers and pathways rose by 63% and delivering career-related learning and talking to students about careers and pathways rose by 47% and 27% respectively.
- Teachers also reported increases in career-related knowledge as a consequence of the programme, with knowledge of technical and vocational

pathways and use of labour market information (LMI) both up 19% and understanding the skills employers are looking for up 14%.

- There was also a direct impact on classroom practice with a 37% increase in the number of teachers saying they now know how to develop curriculum materials relevant to the world of work (up from 57% to 78%).

#### Impacts on employer engagement with education

- 77% of employers said they were now much more able to engage with schools effectively and a similar proportion (76%) said they now know how to deliver more effective teacher encounters in the future.
- 68% of employers said they had learned useful skills through working with teachers and more than three in five said they now had a better understanding of what young people needed to move successfully into work (67%) and the barriers they faced (63%).
- 49% of employers said their organisation was now more likely to recruit young people and 45% said it would increase diversity in recruitment.

#### Support for the *Teacher Encounters Programme*

- 95% of employers said they would recommend the programme to colleagues and other businesses.
- 87% of teachers said they would recommend the programme to other teachers and schools.

#### Next steps

The *Teacher Encounters Programme* was successfully delivered, well received and led to a range of positive impacts for both teachers and employers. This is important as it demonstrates that well-orchestrated encounters between teachers and employers can have a powerful impact on practice. While the existing research evidence has focused on long, placement-style encounters, this evaluation has found strong evidence for shorter encounters.

The evaluation of the *Teacher Encounters Programme* highlighted several key areas where the programme could be developed in the future. These include:

- ensuring activities align with stakeholder expectations regarding unavoidable cancellations;
- streamlining the administrative process for Careers Hubs;
- the importance of engaging senior leadership teams (SLT) to gain buy-in and unlock the opportunity for teachers to participate;

- providing more hands-on elements as part of the encounters;
- developing subject-specific encounters where this is possible;
- the allocation of dedicated time for participants to reflect on and plan how they can implement the insights that they gain through the encounter;
- optimising the group size in encounters – with some larger groups showing enhanced impact.

Further evaluation of The Careers & Enterprise Company's *Teacher Encounters Programme* could provide an opportunity for a deeper dive into the impacts, and an understanding of what elements and approaches are most effective. It would also be interesting to conduct follow up research with the 2022/23 'graduates' to measure the long-term impact of their encounter(s) and how they have used the knowledge they have gained.



## 1. Introduction

Young people face a world of increasing complexity and uncertainty. Reforms to the education system, a turbulent labour market and the educational and psycho-social impacts of the Covid pandemic all pose challenges for young people as they build their careers. Making a choice about whether to transition from school to further or higher education or into the world of work is especially daunting. As young people consider their options, they are likely to turn to trusted adults such as teachers for help and support.

Teachers play a critical role in the development of young people. They pass on their knowledge and expertise, provide pastoral support and serve as an inspiration and role model for the students that they work with. For many young people, teachers provide their first, and most important, bridge into the adult world.

A great deal of research has emphasised the powerful role that career learning, particularly career learning that comes directly from those with authentic experiences of the workplace, can have.<sup>1</sup> Yet, such encounters with the world of work will always be brief in comparison to the day-to-day interactions that young people have with their teachers. Given this, teachers have an important role in supporting the careers education of young people, both through their pastoral role and through their ability to link the subject curriculum that they teach with careers.<sup>2</sup>

Gatsby Benchmark 4 highlights teachers' roles in relation to linking the curriculum to careers, but the role of teachers is also implied in many of the other Benchmarks, as they have a role in engaging young people with labour market information, preparing them for encounters and experiences of the workplace and further learning, referring them for career guidance and helping them to unpack all of this learning.<sup>3</sup>

Teachers' ability to successfully fulfil their role in supporting the career development of young people is dependent on their ability to make connections between students' experiences, their subject and the world of work. Where this works well, it can infuse teachers' practice with insights, ideas and information that both support students in their career development and enhance the curriculum in ways that motivate and inspire.

All teachers have real life experience that they can use to provide insights for their students. This includes making educational decisions and choosing and moving into a profession. Many have experience of working outside of the education system, but

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<sup>1</sup> Hughes, D., Mann, A., Barnes, S. A., Baldauf, B., & McKeown, R. (2016). *Careers education: International literature review*. Education Endowment Foundation; Kashefpakdel, E. T., & Percy, C. (2017). Career education that works: An economic analysis using the British Cohort Study. *Journal of Education and Work*, 30(3), 217-234. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2016.1177636>; Musset, P., & Kurekova, L. M. (2018). *Working it out: Career guidance and employer engagement*. OECD. [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/working-it-out\\_51c9d18d-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/working-it-out_51c9d18d-en)

<sup>2</sup> Hooley, T., Watts, A.G., & Andrews, D. (2015). *Teachers and careers*. International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

<sup>3</sup> Gatsby Charitable Foundation. (2014). *Good career guidance*. Gatsby Charitable Foundation. <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance>

others who have followed a more conventional pathway into teaching may have spent most of their life in education. Whether teachers' experience is confined to the education system or broader, their ability to support young people and make connections with the curriculum is likely to be enhanced by expanding their experience of the world of work.

To this end, The Careers & Enterprise Company developed a new programme of teacher continuing professional development (CPD), which it describes as '*teacher encounters*'. Teacher encounters bring teachers together with employers for mutual exchange and learning. Where they differ from previous attempts to engage employers directly in the labour market (discussed in *chapter two* of this report), is that they are typically relatively short. Whereas previous work has tended to emphasise the value of giving teachers extended periods in industry, the teacher encounter model builds on the existing evidence that shows that young people benefit from relatively short encounters with the world of work and applies a similar approach to teacher CPD.

This paper discusses the *Teacher Encounters Programme* and provides an evaluation of its impact. It is based on an evaluation of the programme, commissioned by The Careers & Enterprise Company and undertaken by the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS). In *chapter three*, we discuss how the *Teacher Encounters Programme* was organised. *Chapter four* sets out the evaluation approach, *chapter five* explores the participant experience and then *chapter six* discusses the impacts that were observed from the programme. Finally, in *chapter seven* we explore the lessons learnt from the programme.

## 2. Existing evidence on teacher encounters

Teachers can play an important role in the career development of young people.<sup>4</sup> The argument that teachers can and should play such a role is nothing new, with more than a century of career education practice supporting this idea.<sup>5</sup> Yet, many teachers comment that they do not have the knowledge and skills needed to support young people in this way. Recent research by the Sutton Trust found that only 6% of teachers agree that their initial training prepared them to support the career development of their students.<sup>6</sup> This therefore creates a strong rationale for increasing and improving the professional development opportunities that are available to teachers to help them to support the careers of their students.

One option for the professional development of teachers in this area is to facilitate encounters between teachers and employers to enhance their knowledge of the world of work and provide opportunities for them to explore how to integrate this knowledge with their practice. Previous work undertaken for The Careers & Enterprise Company by iCeGS suggests that there is evidence to support the idea that employer encounters can provide effective CPD for teachers.<sup>7</sup>

Various forms of partnerships aimed at creating encounters between education and employers have been a feature of UK policy since the 1970s through programmes such as the Teacher Placement Service (TPS) and the Enterprise Awareness in Teacher Education (EATE) programme. More recently, projects such as STEM Insight (delivered by STEM Learning Ltd) and Business in Classrooms (delivered by Edge Foundation) have provided teachers in some areas the opportunity to experience industry.

Previous evaluations of employer engaged teacher CPD suggest that teacher placements can support professional development and employer engagement through improved partnerships, the development of curriculum materials linked to the world of work and the provision of experiential learning opportunities.<sup>8</sup> Other work has demonstrated how facilitated co-working between employers and subject teachers can enhance the subject curriculum as well as support career learning.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Wong, L.P.W., Yuen, M. & Chen, G. (2020). Career-related teacher support: A review of roles that teachers play in supporting students' career planning. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*, 31(1), 130-141. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jgc.2020.30>

<sup>5</sup> Andrews, D. (2019). *Careers education in schools*. David Andrews.

<sup>6</sup> Holt-White, E., Montacute, E., & Tibbs, L. (2022). Paving the way: Career guidance in secondary schools. The Sutton Trust. <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Paving-the-Way.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Dodd, V. (2017). *Teacher CPD delivered by employers. What works?* The Careers & Enterprise Company. <https://repository.derby.ac.uk/item/9522y/what-works-the-evidence-base-for-teacher-cpd-delivered-by-employers>

<sup>8</sup> Dodd, V., & Hanson, J. (2018). *Give yourself the edge. Evaluation report*. International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

<sup>9</sup> Artess, J., Hooley, T. & Shepherd, C. (2017). *Future First: Alumni in the curriculum evaluation 2015*. International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby.

The limited research that exists on teacher engagement with industry in the UK can be supplemented by wider international research which has explored a range of programmes that provide teachers with opportunities to engage with actual places where the knowledge and skills that are developed in the school curriculum are used. Research in France found that teachers undertaking one-year placements in industry increased their self-confidence, acquired technical skills, developed new perspectives and built a new network of businesses to engage with.<sup>10</sup> Through such placements, teachers learn how classroom content and learning strategies are applied in the workplace and increase their knowledge of the labour market and the requirements of employers. It is also suggested by the Career Academy Support Network in the USA that teacher placements (which they call externships) build relationships that support a wide range of other employer encounters for students such as guest speakers, mentors, job shadowing and student internships.<sup>11</sup>

Whilst research has found teacher engagement with businesses to be something that can be highly beneficial to teachers, it has also been found to be challenging in terms of resources, finding industry partners willing to get involved and ensuring that teachers receive useful and authentic experiences.<sup>12</sup> Dodd argues that such placements work best when teachers are no longer passive observers, but rather see themselves as employees of the company. But this creates a high bar for successful encounters.

So, while there is an emergent body of literature from both the UK and overseas that endorses the idea that creating encounters between teachers and employers is valuable, most of this literature is focused on *placements*. Placements vary in length but are usually measured in weeks or months rather than in days. Even if such an approach is valuable for some teachers, it remains impractical as a way of upskilling the whole teaching workforce. However, well-evidenced approaches with young people, suggest a host of alternative ways in which encounters with employers can be organised without the need for high commitment and high levels of resources.<sup>13</sup> Possible approaches suggested by this evidence include employer inputs into initial teacher education, employer inputs into teacher CPD, teacher and employer co-design and delivery of programmes and curriculum, visits to employer premises, employer talks and interactive questions, employer mentoring and engagement

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<sup>10</sup> Zaid, A. & Champy-Remoussenard, P. (2015). Extended business work placements for teachers: between lived experience and barriers to professionalization. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 38:2, 180-198. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2015.1022646>

<sup>11</sup> Career Academy Support Network. (2010). *Teacher externship guide*. University of California, Berkeley, Californian Department of Education.

<sup>12</sup> Elmer, R (2002). Learning from a shift of context?: Student teachers on non-school placements. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 25:2-3, 239-250., <https://doi.org/10.1080/0261976022000043387>; Schüller, A & Bergami, R (2020). Teacher industry placement in Australia: Voices from vocational education and training managers. *Journal of Vocational, Adult and Continuing Education and Training*, 3(1), 43-66. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/ejc-jovac-et-v3-n1-a6>.

<sup>13</sup> Mann, A., Huddleston, & Kashefpakdel, E. (2019). *Essays on employer engagement in education*. Routledge; Mann, A., Stanley, J., & Archer, L. (2014). *Understanding employer engagement in education*. Routledge.

through governing bodies and other forms of governance (e.g. employer advisory boards).

The *Teacher Encounters Programme* therefore provided an important opportunity to explore new ways to provide teacher CPD through a variety of different, but relatively resource-light approaches. If impacts can be established from such approaches there will be a strong case for rolling them out widely as part of a strategy to engage, empower and upskill the wider teaching workforce to better support the career development of young people.

### 3. The Teacher Encounters Programme

In September 2022, The Careers & Enterprise Company launched the *Teacher Encounters Programme*. The national pilot programme ran across 32 Careers Hubs for one year until September 2023. It brought together 1,000 teachers and 200 businesses across England. The programme aimed to boost collaboration between education and employment and improve young people's career opportunities.

The programme is delivered by the Careers Hubs. Careers Hubs bring together schools, colleges, employers, and apprenticeship providers in local areas across England to make it easier for schools and colleges to prepare young people for their next steps.<sup>14</sup> The *Teacher Encounters Programme* therefore aligns well with the aims of the Careers Hubs.

Careers Hubs were able to apply for between £3,000 and £20,000 to design and test innovative ideas through a robust framework and logic model. The funding could be used by Hubs to contribute to staff time, travel, and teacher cover costs.

#### **Case Study: West Yorkshire Combined Authority + Arup**

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority built a strong partnership with the engineering consultancy Arup, as part of their participation in the *Teacher Encounters Programme*. Arup is a large multi-national firm focused on sustainability and other challenging engineering and design issues.

In West Yorkshire, Arup offered a series of activities for schools in West Yorkshire.

- **A CPD twilight session** that introduced the teachers to Arup.
- **A half-day trip to Arup's offices** which exposed teachers to the company's work environment and culture.
- **A post-visit CPD twilight session** in which teachers worked with Arup to develop resources which could integrate career education into the science curriculum.

The teachers' visit to Arup gave them the opportunity to interact with a range of employees as well as develop an understanding of how science skills can be used in a professional context. As well as learning about Arup's apprenticeship and internship programmes, teachers were also given practical tasks which demonstrated how careers could be incorporated into science lessons.

As a result of the programme, both the teachers and Arup increased their networks and developed new activities and approaches. This included new school trips for students to Arup's facilities, embedding careers education in science lessons, and encouraging teachers to engage with transferable skills such as teamwork, report writing and presentation skills.

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<sup>14</sup> The Careers & Enterprise Company. (2023). *What are Careers Hubs?*  
<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/careers-hubs/what-are-careers-hubs/>

Careers Hubs across the country developed a range of different kinds of activities. These can broadly be grouped into the following categories.

- Curriculum design or other forms of input into the curriculum.
- Demonstrations of tools, tasks or processes.
- Mentoring opportunities.
- Recruitment insights.
- Site visits/tours of facilities.
- Talks with employers.
- Training and professional development interventions.
- Work shadowing and short placements.

During the evaluation period over 1000 individual encounters took place, with most activities lasting around a day (5-9 hours) and over half (63%) taking place in groups and with multiple employers. The majority of encounters took place with employers in the professional, scientific and technical industries (20%), followed by construction (14%) and manufacturing (14%).

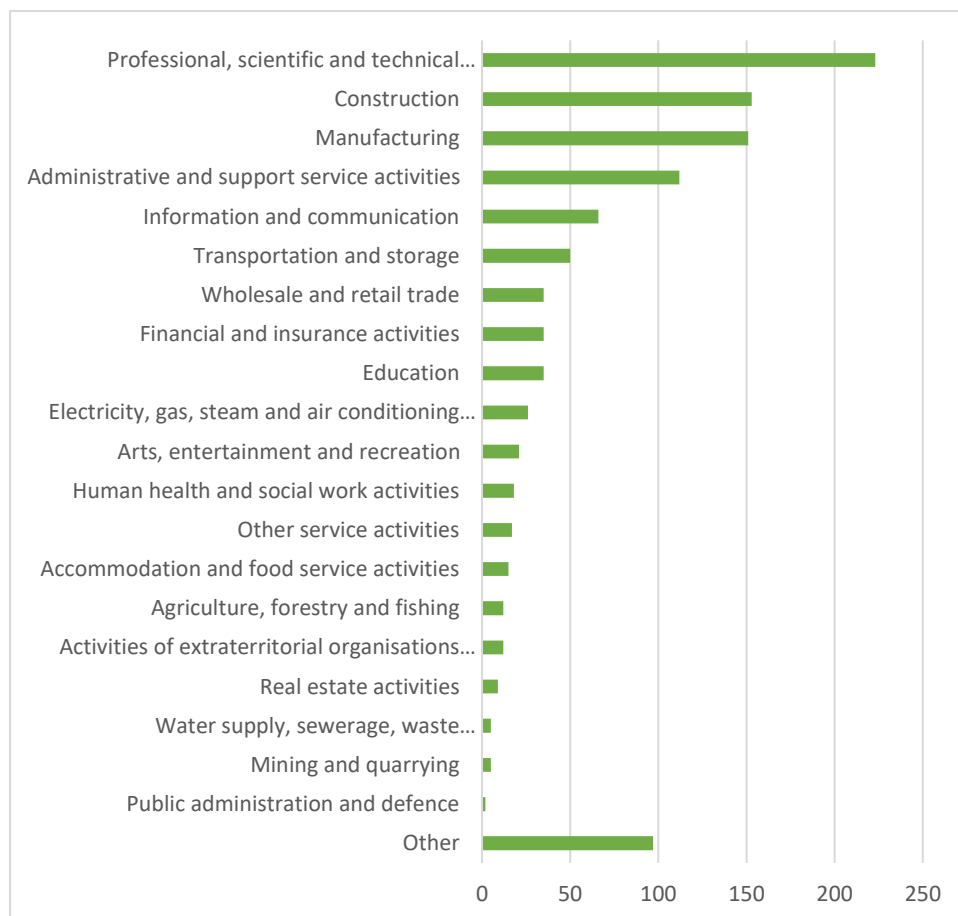


Figure 3.1. Teacher encounters by industry

Of the 1099 encounters that were delivered 49% were delivered by ‘large’ employers with over 250 employees, and 15% were delivered by ‘medium’ employers with 50-249 employees. Of the 810 teachers who completed encounters, 29.8% of the encounters were undertaken with *Cornerstone Employers* (The Careers and Enterprise Company’s community of employers that it has a close relationship with).<sup>15</sup>

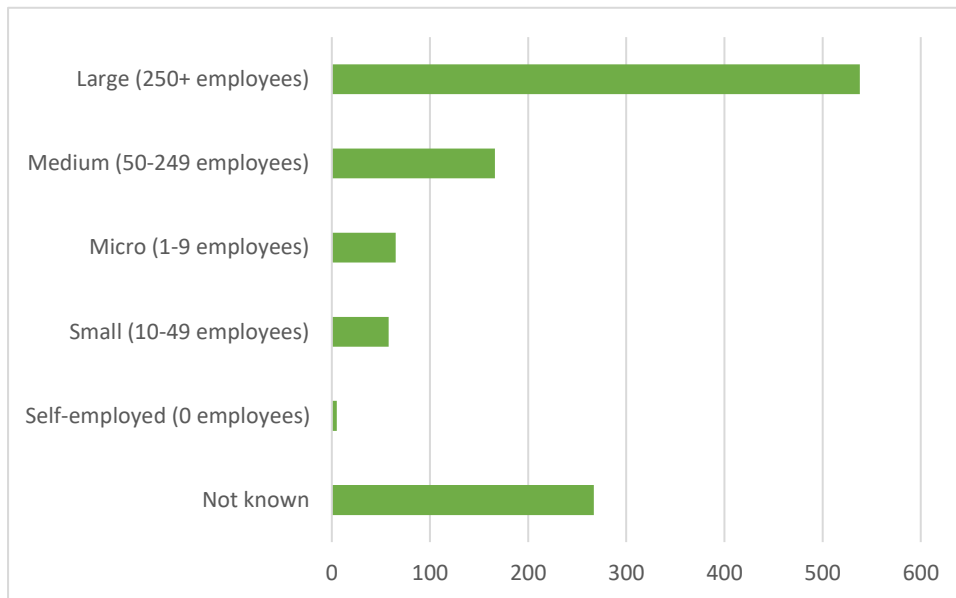


Figure 3.2. Teacher encounters by employer size

Encounters were delivered by employers to teachers from a range of educational settings. Whilst many encounters (50%) were delivered to teachers from mainstream schools, a number were also delivered to FE institutions (12%), SEND schools/colleges (8%), and Alternative Provision schools (4%).

<sup>15</sup> The Careers & Enterprise Company. (2023). *Become a Cornerstone Employer*. <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/employers/become-a-cornerstone-employer/>



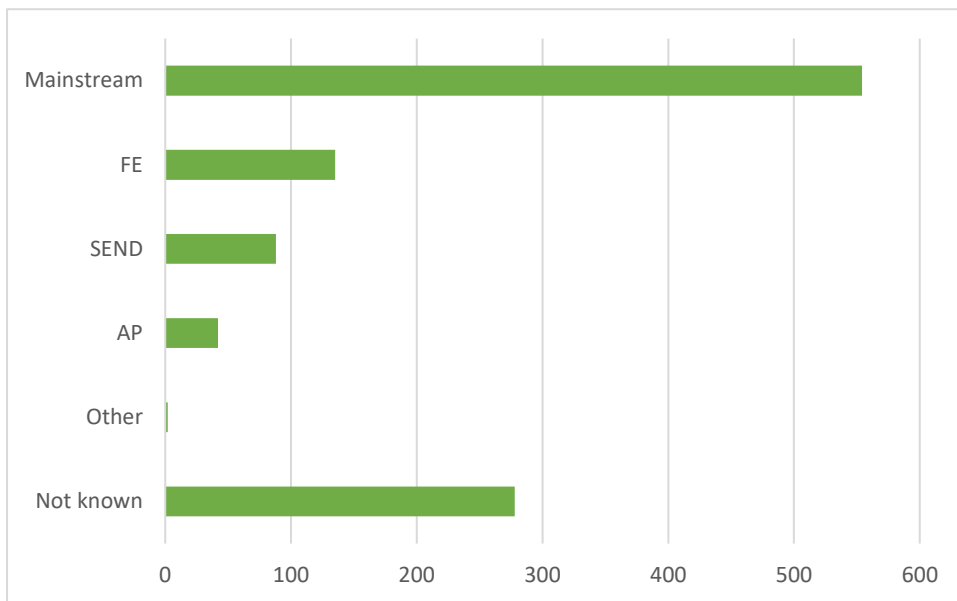


Figure 3.3. Teacher encounters by educational setting

### Case study: Oxfordshire + Oxford Biomedica

The Oxfordshire Careers Hub and OxLEP developed a teacher encounter with Oxford Biomedica, an Oxford-based life sciences company that gave science teachers the opportunity to experience how science subjects are used in industry and learn about local science-related career pathways. The encounter was designed to support schools to embed the Gatsby Benchmarks.

Seven teachers each had two encounters at Oxford Biomedica. In their first encounter, teachers heard from scientists and apprentices about the work that they do and the local career pathways that are on offer. On their second visit, teachers worked with Oxford Biomedica to identify aspects of the curriculum that aligned with what was happening in industry. For example, they explored where in the curriculum it would be possible to discuss the company's work using DNA technology and genetic screening.

Oxford Biomedica is now working to create resources that can be used in schools.

## 4. Evaluation approach

The International Centre for Guidance Studies was invited to evaluate the *Teacher Encounters Programme* prior to the commencement of the programme. The Centre used a mixed methods approach which combined surveys, with interviews and focus groups, as well as the analysis of project materials and outputs.

The methods chosen were designed to investigate:

- the impact of the teacher encounter programme on both teachers and employers;
- the range of different approaches to teacher/employer engagement that could be used; and
- the barriers and facilitators to successful implementation of the programme.

The core of the evaluation consisted of a pre- and post-intervention survey of teachers. This measured levels of knowledge, attitudes, skills and engagement and was designed to give the evaluators a reading on the 'distance travelled' by teacher participants. An employer post-encounter survey was also developed and circulated. The employer survey received 77 responses.

The pre-encounter survey was combined with the programme registration form. This resulted in 796 responses from 32 Hubs. The post-encounter teacher survey received 391 responses from 25 Hubs. Email addresses were used to match pre- and post-encounter survey responses, and duplicates were removed. This led to a sample size of 303 matched pre- / post-surveys drawn from 23 Careers Hubs. Unless otherwise specified the data presented in this report is drawn from the matched data set.

Following the completion of the encounters teachers and Hub leads were invited to participate in separate focus groups to share their experiences of the *Teacher Encounters Programme*. Teachers were asked in their post-encounter survey if they were happy to be contacted to participate in a focus group. Everyone who agreed to participate was invited to an online focus group. Overall, 18 teachers participated in two focus groups and 16 Hub leads participated in two focus groups.

## 5. Participant experience

In this chapter, we provide a summary of the participant experience of the *Teacher Encounters Programme*. We begin by looking at the experience of teachers, before moving on to look at the experience of employers.

### Teachers

The *Teacher Encounters Programme* was targeted at classroom teachers. Of the 303 matched responses the majority of respondents (53%) were from this target group. Other participants were spread across a range of other school-based roles as set out in Figure 5.1.

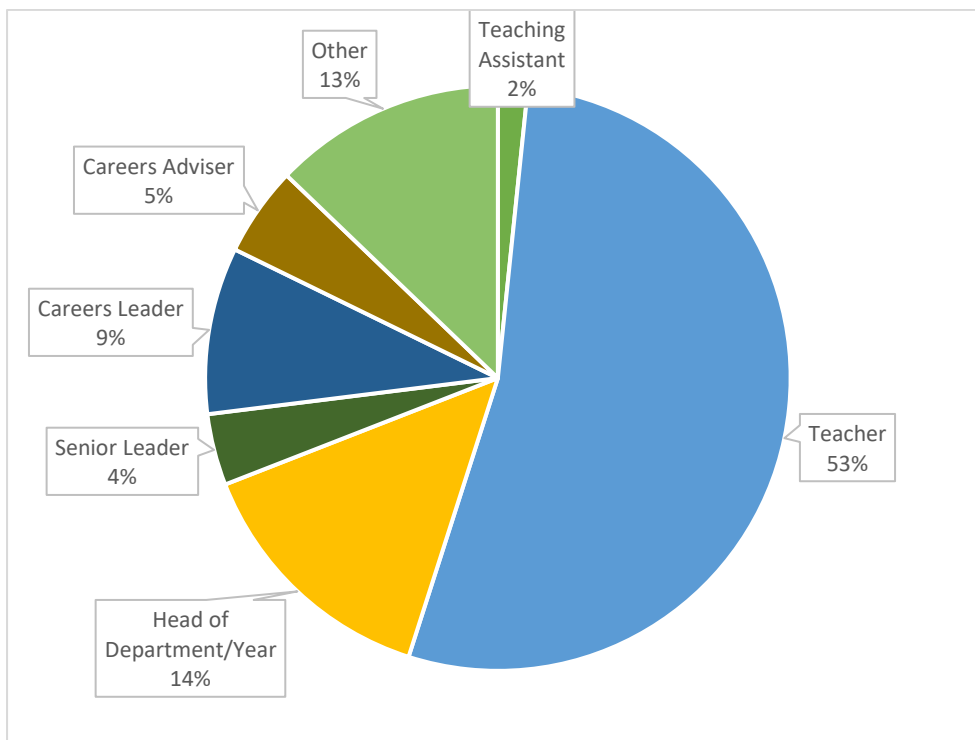
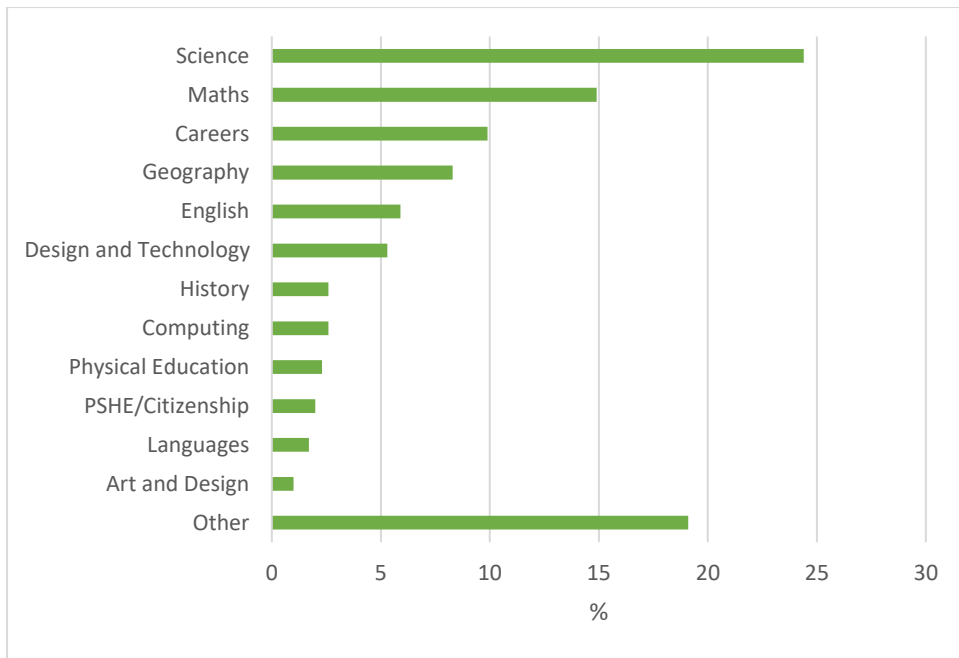


Figure 5.1. Breakdown of participants' main role

**Note:** The terminology of 'teachers' and 'teacher encounters' is used throughout this report to cover all of the educators highlighted in Figure 5.1.

Respondents were most likely to be Science or Maths teachers, but a wide range of subjects were well represented.



*Figure 5.2. Teachers by subject*

Around half (49%) of respondents had over 10 years of teaching experience, while a third (34%) were in their first 5 years of teaching. This can be partially explained by one Hub focussing their encounters on trainee teachers.

*Most (57%) of the 796 respondents to the registration survey stated that they had individually decided to participate in the Teacher Encounters Programme, with the rest (43%) stating that they were asked to participate by their institution. Respondents were asked to identify why they participated, and the overwhelming majority (79%) stated that they engaged with the programme to better support their students to successfully transition*

into education and work (see

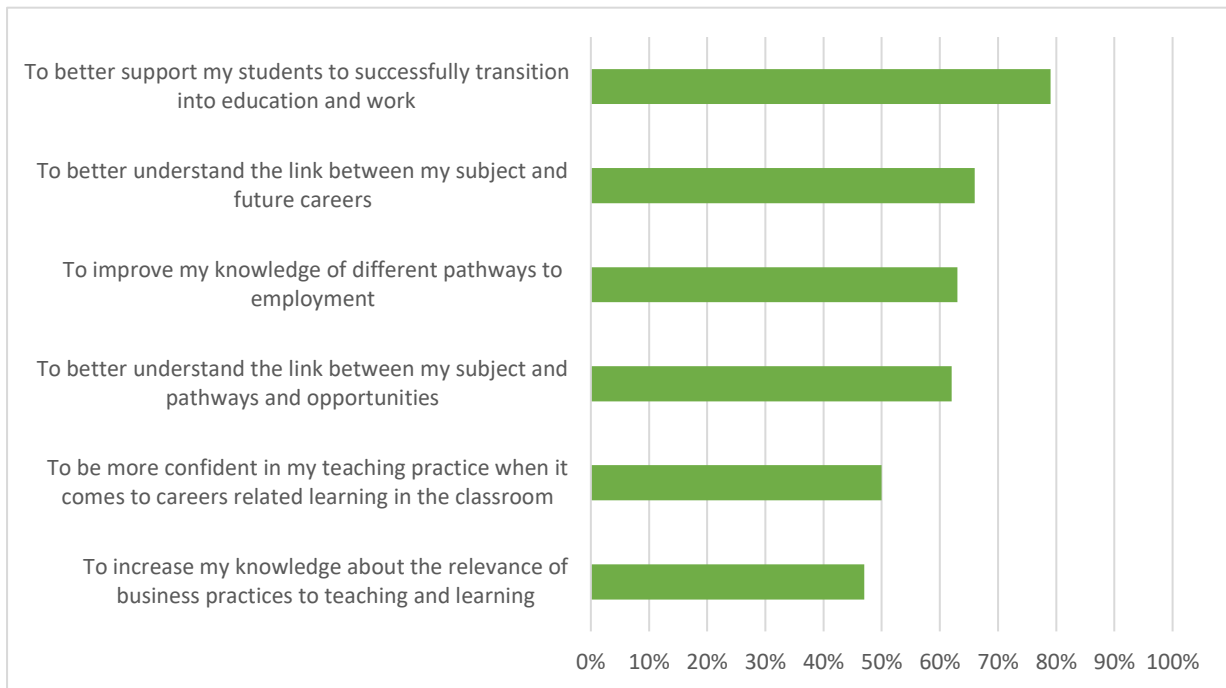


Figure 5.3). Linking their subject to careers and improving their knowledge of employment were also popular reasons for engaging.

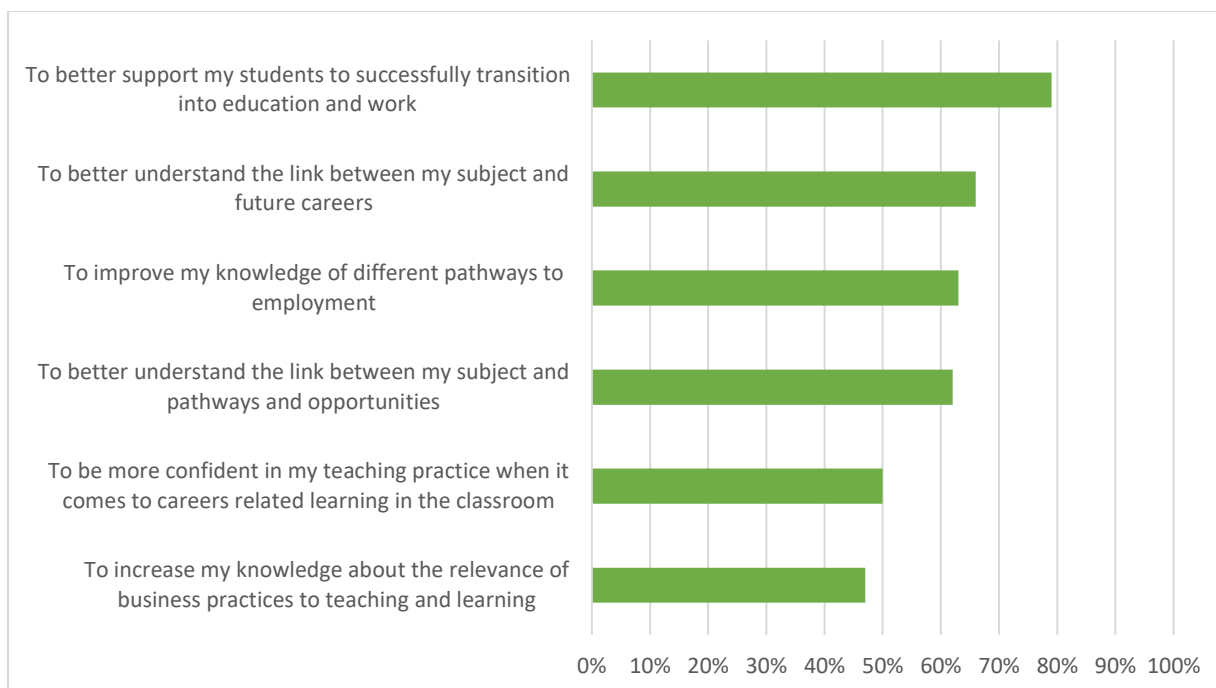


Figure 5.3. Reasons for engaging with the Teacher Encounters Programme. (N= 796, multiple selection allowed)

Respondents to the pre-encounter survey were also given the opportunity to specify the three learning goals that they were hoping to achieve through participation in the programme. Analysis of these learning goals revealed nine main themes which are set out in Figure 5.4. The learning goals, whilst providing teachers the opportunity to think about what they hoped to achieve, also reflect the teacher encounter *making it meaningful* framework which states that all encounters must include impartial information about pathways.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Careers & Enterprise Company. (2023). *Teacher Encounters – Making it meaningful*. [1589 - Teacher encounters framework v2\\_0.pdf \(careersandenterprise.co.uk\)](https://careersandenterprise.co.uk/1589-Teacher-encounters-framework-v2-0.pdf)

<b>Learning goal</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Building relationships and networking</b>	<i>'to build closer relationships with [the business]'</i> <i>'to build our ongoing connection with [the business] and their support of our careers work'</i>
<b>Building self-confidence</b>	<i>'to improve my confidence in teaching and advising students on careers related to Maths'</i> <i>'to increase confidence in knowledge sharing about apprenticeships for my learners'</i>
<b>Improving attainment of Gatsby Benchmarks</b>	<i>'to understand how the employers can support GB4 to 6 for my school'</i> <i>'fulfilling and meeting all of the GBMs'</i> <i>'Gatsby Benchmark 4, linking curriculum to careers'</i>
<b>Linking subjects/lessons to jobs</b>	<i>'to identify ways to improve my teaching to engage learners by making the subjects work focussed'</i> <i>'helping students understand the importance of Maths in the real world with reference to jobs and careers'</i> <i>'to be able to understand the link between science taught within education and how it links with different fields'</i>
<b>Understanding different pathways</b>	<i>'learn more about the options available to students'</i> <i>'to better understand the apprenticeship application process'</i> <i>'increase confidence in knowledge sharing about apprenticeships'</i> <i>'to understand more about non-university paths'</i>
<b>Explore opportunities for students with SEND</b>	<i>'discover potential work experience placements...for learners with SEN'</i> <i>'understand how pupils with significant SEND needs can be accommodated in the workplace'</i>
<b>Understanding recruitment processes</b>	<i>'gaining up-to-date and further insights into recruitment practices'</i> <i>'understanding contemporary recruitment methods'</i>
<b>Understanding employers' needs and expectations</b>	<i>'to understand what employers think our students are lacking'</i> <i>'understand more about modern working practices and how the workplace has changed recently'</i>
<b>Sharing best practice</b>	<i>'liaise with colleagues both from other schools and other subject areas to share best practice and learn from their careers provision'</i>

Figure 5.4. Learning goals identified by teacher participants

In the post-encounter survey respondents were asked about the extent to which they thought they had achieved the learning outcomes that they had set at the beginning of the programme. More than half (54%) of respondents said that they had achieved the learning outcomes they had set themselves to a great extent, and 42% achieved the learning outcomes to some extent.

Most interventions that took place were conducted face-to-face. Teachers were able to take part in multiple encounters and activities. In their post-encounter survey, they were asked to select all types of activities that they took part in during their encounter(s). Whilst most encounters that were delivered included a mix of activities that all teachers would be involved in, we can see that talks with employers (n=323), recruitment insights (n=304) and site visits (n=311) were the activities that were most frequently undertaken. The activities with the lowest response rate were mentoring and work experience.

The overwhelming majority (84%) of respondents also stated that they preferred face-to-face interventions to online (2%) or combination (14%).

Teachers agreed that the registration process was easy, they received sufficient information about the programme beforehand, and the information about the programme was useful. The majority (87%, n=391) of the teachers who answered the post-survey said that they would recommend the programme to colleagues. After participating in the programme 91% of teachers stated that they agreed to some extent that employer engagement is a good use of their time and they would want to do it more frequently.

### Employers

Employers agreed that the registration process was easy, they received sufficient information about the programme beforehand, and the information about the programme was useful.

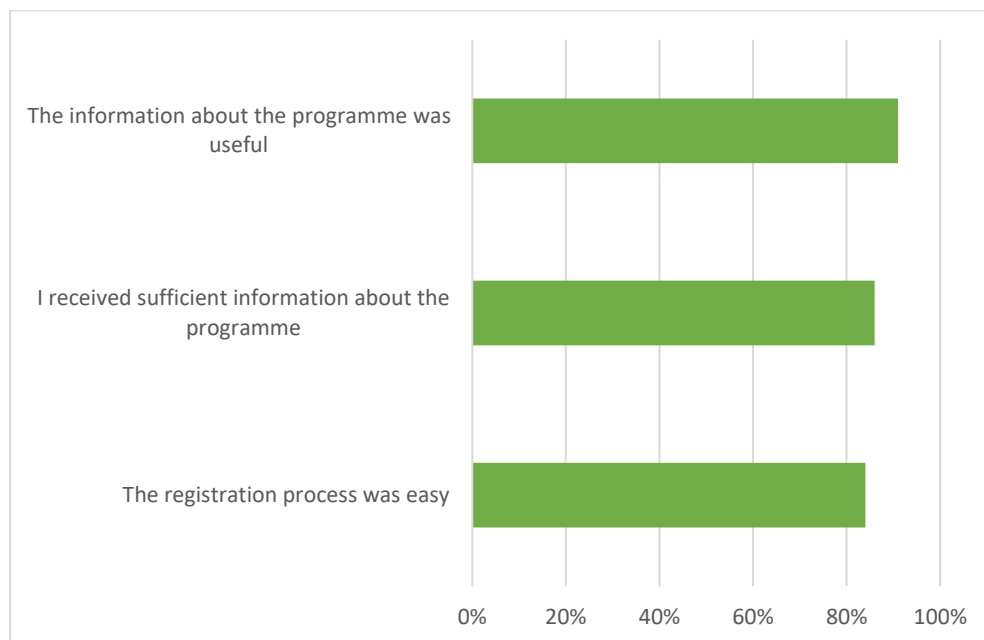


Figure 5.5. Employer feedback on the registration process (n=77)

Participating in the *Teacher Encounters Programme* was considered by employers to be a worthwhile activity with 94% stating that they would be eager to engage with teachers again in the future. 95% of employers (n=71) stated that they would recommend participating in activities like this to a colleague or another employer.



## 6. Impacts

In this chapter, we turn the focus towards the programme's impact. The previous chapter showed that the overwhelming majority of participants valued the experience and that the teachers generally achieved some or all of their learning goals from participating. But in this section, we move on to look at what the concrete impacts of the programme were.

### Teachers

We asked teachers about a variety of different areas of their practice. In almost all areas, there was an observable difference between the way teachers answered the pre-survey and the way that they answered the post-survey. These areas of practice can be broken down into three themes: firstly, whether their *perceptions* of career education improved, secondly whether they increased their *knowledge* about careers, and thirdly whether their *confidence* as careers educators increased.

### Perceptions of career education

When comparing the pre- and post-programme data a positive change in perception is found in some areas. Where there was not a change, it was generally because teachers were already in agreement, for example, 98% of participants reported that 'a cohesive careers programme is important for young people' at the start of the programme and remained unchanged after the programme. However, they were more likely to be able to actually implement this e.g., reporting that they could develop curriculum materials with relevance to the world of work, after attending their encounter (78% post vs 57% pre strongly agree and agree to this statement). Teachers expressed how *'the delivery was very clear and concise on how it can link to school environment'* and *'it has inspired me to discuss skills relating to your industry with other department leaders to reinforce our curriculum'*.

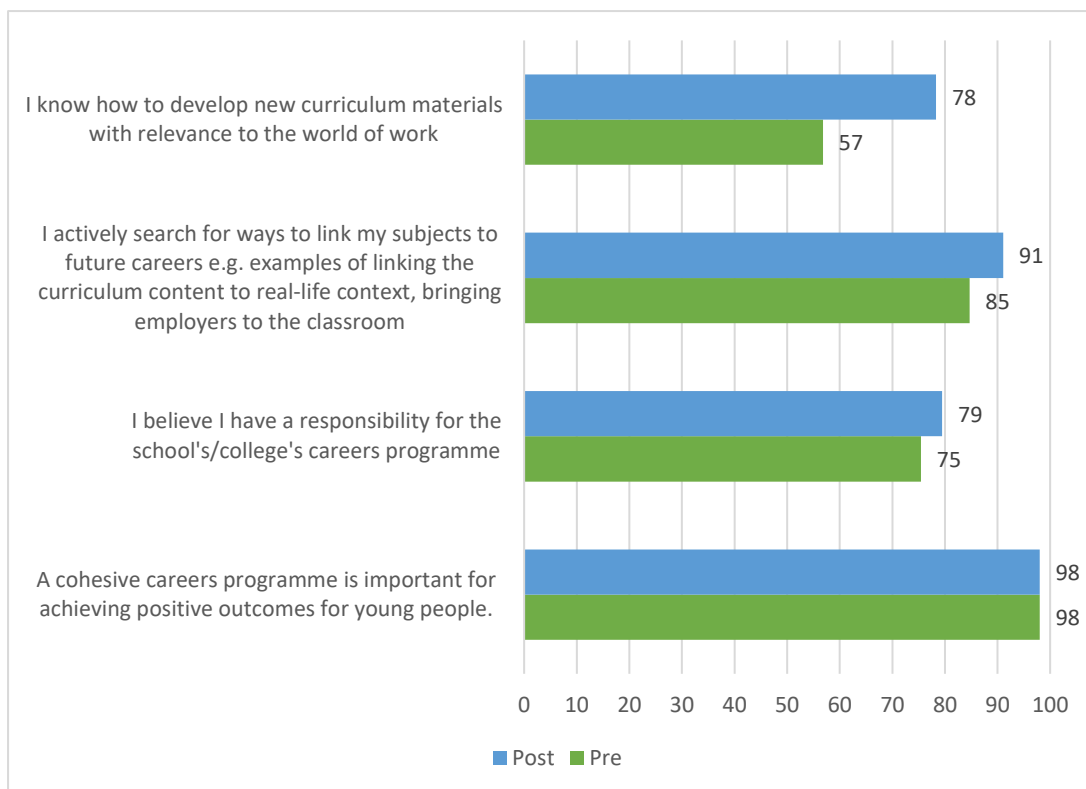


Figure 6.1. Pre- post-encounter comparison of perceptions of careers education<sup>17</sup>

The results were statistically significant in two areas: actively looking for opportunities to link curriculum with careers; and knowledge of developing materials that relate subject to the world of work.<sup>18</sup>

### Knowledge

Teachers also reported that their career-related knowledge had increased following an encounter. A positive change can be seen in all areas of knowledge that we asked about with the largest effects being: knowledge of technical and vocational pathways (19% increase), using labour market information (19% increase), and understanding of the skills that employers are looking for (14% increase).

<sup>17</sup> Responses to these questions were given on a five point Likert scale (Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). For this analysis strongly agree and agree were added together and reported as extent of agreement.

<sup>18</sup> Significance was tested by recording the agreements to binary nominal data and using the McNemar Change Test for paired samples to test significance in different pre- and post-programme values. It is a non-parametric test for nominal data.

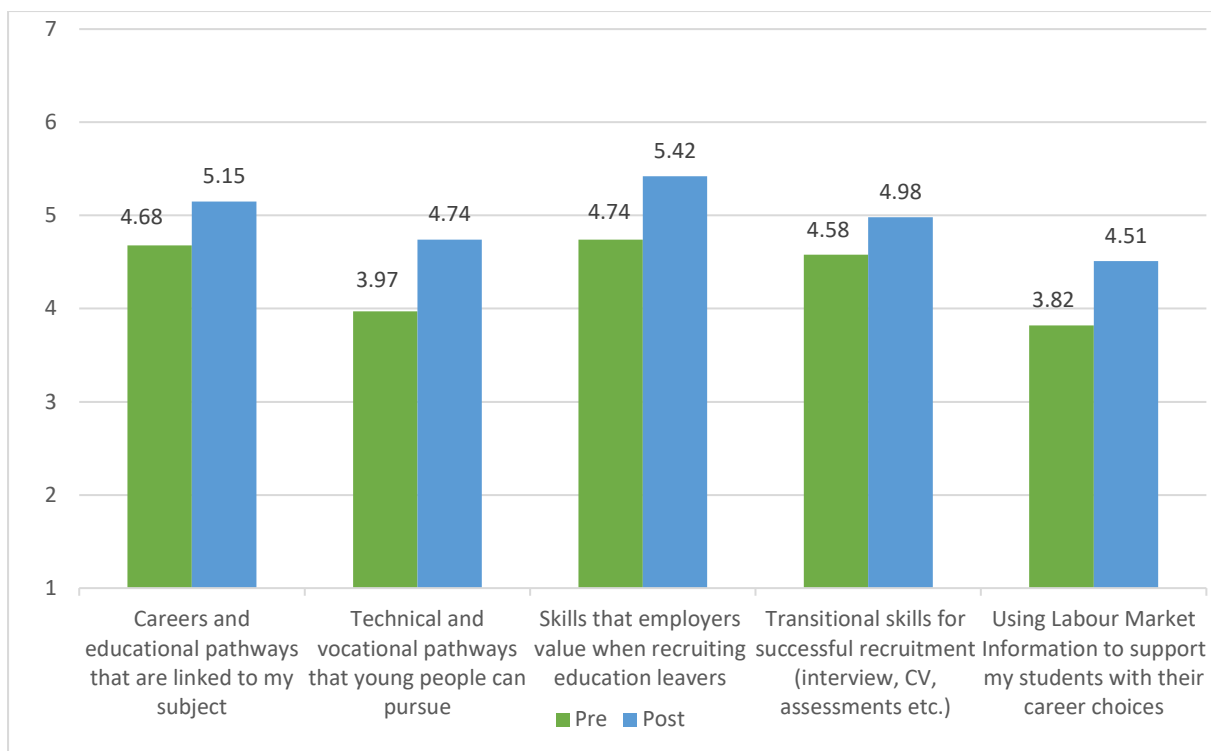


Figure 6.2. Pre- post-encounter change in the level of career-relevant knowledge<sup>19</sup>

All five knowledge areas were found to be statistically significant.<sup>20</sup>

The focus groups with teachers supported these findings with participants stating how *'it was a real insight speaking to the employers and apprentices directly'* and explaining the value that they gained from hearing directly from young apprentices. One teacher explained how they hoped that the links and relationships that had been built through the programme would be sustained and grow stronger with the aim of developing more knowledge about apprenticeships.

#### Confidence

Teachers also reported an increase in confidence in delivering careers in the classroom and communicating with students, parents and employers about career-related issues. The largest changes can be seen in their confidence in *'engaging employers in my practice'* which has seen a 93% increase (44 pp), and their confidence to *'communicate with parents about their children's careers and future pathways'* which increased by 63% (33 pp).

<sup>19</sup> Respondents were asked to rate their knowledge level using a 1-7 scale.

<sup>20</sup> Significance was tested by treating the knowledge variable as continuous data and using a paired sample t-test. All tests had a p-value of less than 0.05.

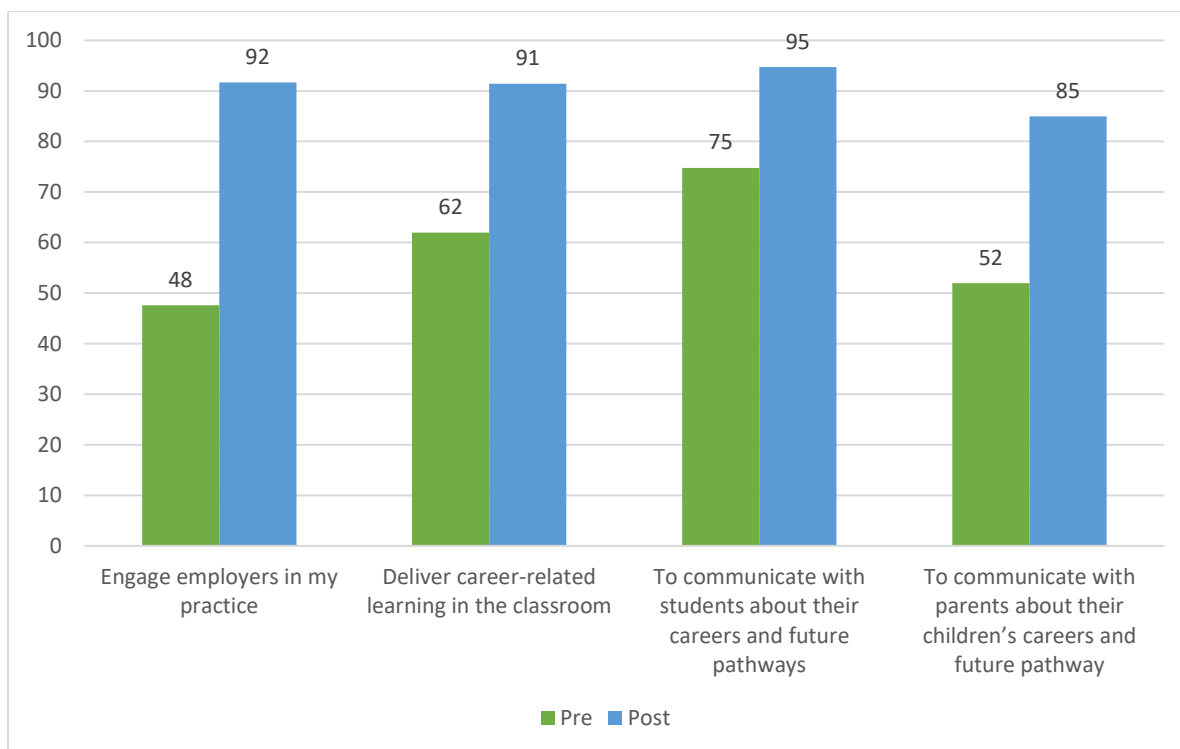


Figure 6.3. Pre- post-encounter change in the level of confidence<sup>21</sup>

All four areas were found to be statistically significant.<sup>22</sup>

The overwhelming majority (91%) agreed to some extent that it has improved their confidence in holding career related conversations, and 78% agreed to some extent that employer engagement improved their skills to deliver their subjects. One teacher expressed how *‘the day was an invaluable use of my time, providing insight which I can use to inform future planning of our career programme’*.

Following their encounters, teachers were eager to continue to build their relationships with the organisations they had engaged with. One teacher stated that they were *‘eager to sit down and learn about other ways we could engage with [the business] as a school’*. Another teacher explained how following their encounter they *‘have a lot of new knowledge and hopefully an employer that we can develop a longer relationship with’*.

### Employers

As with the teachers, the employers were also very positive about the programme and identified a range of impacts.

<sup>21</sup> Responses to these questions were given on a five point Likert scale (Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). For this analysis strongly agree and agree were added together and reported as extent of agreement.

<sup>22</sup> Significance was tested by recording the agreements to binary nominal data and using the McNemar Change Test for paired samples to test significance in different pre and post-programme values. It is a non-parametric test for nominal data.

Most participating employers (77%) were clear that they were now much more able to engage with schools effectively. They reported that due to participating they were better able to explain to schools and young people the skills that they needed (97%) and that they would know how to deliver more effective teacher encounters in the future (76%).

For a minority of employers, the learning went further with 42% reporting that the encounter with a teacher had given them a better idea about how to deliver more effectively to young people, 39% saying that they now had a better idea about the needs of young people from diverse backgrounds, and 35% saying that they now had a better idea about how to get involved in curriculum.

Through the programme, employers gain a greater understanding of schools and teacher responsibilities. One employer stated that participating in the programme has allowed them to *'build better links with schools and understand school challenges'*, whilst others explained that *'we gained a clear insight into the way that teachers view and engage with their students'* and *'there is a better understanding of the challenges teachers face when trying to explain the relevance of their subject to the real world'*.

As well as more effective relationships with schools, the employers who participated in the programme also reported a range of other benefits for themselves and their organisation. Most reported that they had learnt useful skills (68%), while almost all reported that engaging with school or college teachers had been beneficial to their organisation (91%). A breakdown of all of the impacts identified by employers is set out in Figure 6.4.

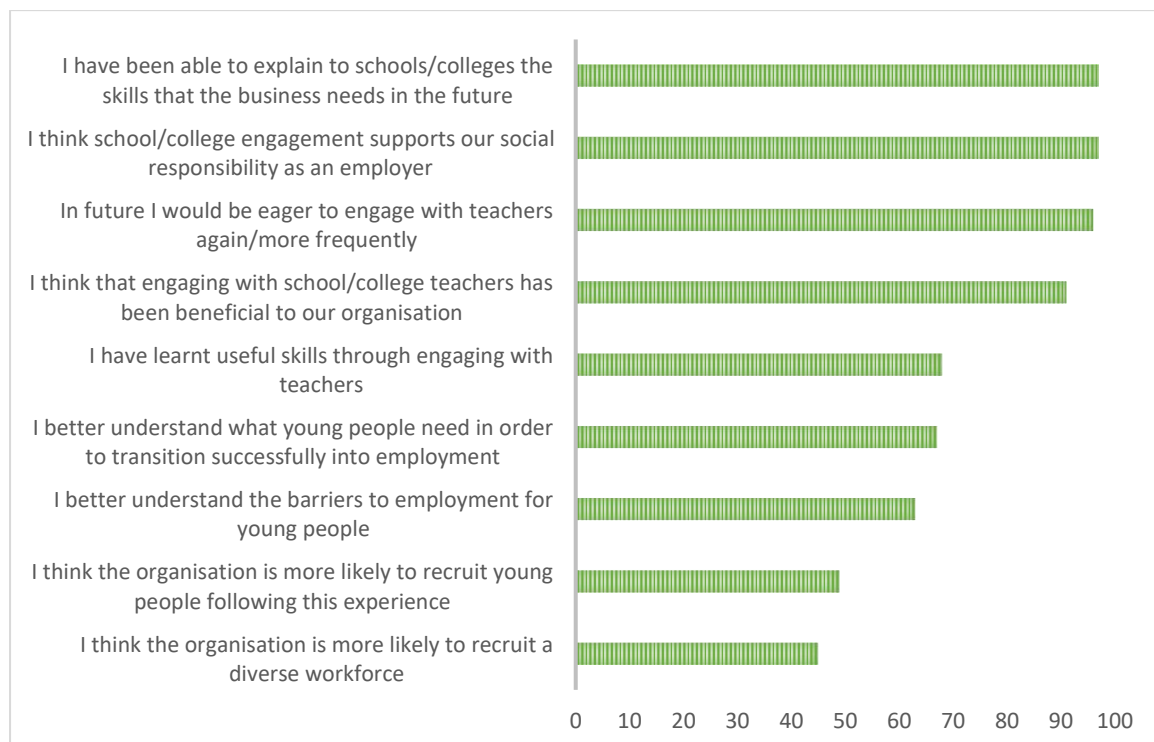


Figure 6.4. Impacts identified by employers

Development of employer knowledge has also been demonstrated in resources that they have developed due to participating in the *Teacher Encounters Programme*. The following example from Ruddocks's in Greater Lincolnshire provides a good example of the kinds of resources that were developed.

## Ruddocks – Creative Production Agency

As part of their participation with the *Teacher Encounters Programme* in Greater Lincolnshire, Ruddocks, a creative production agency, produced an educational handbook which was provided to teachers following their encounter.

The handbook contains several curriculum-related activities that can be used by teachers to bring their subjects to life, with each task being directly related to the work of the company. Tasks include a design brief, providing quote estimates, sales and product pitch and design.

**Educational Workbook**

CREATIVE PRODUCTION AGENCY. **Ruddocks**

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**Estimating**

Estimating is a key part of the design and print process. Whilst you may think that providing customers with an estimate is for their benefit only, in fact, estimating a job also provides you with a repeat of benefits.

A good estimate:

- Provides efficiency
- Ensures accuracy
- Creates consistency
- Forfeits professionalism
- Displays your cost/value ratio

By knowing your anticipated costs before negotiating your price, you have vital information to lower things like the break-even point, an acceptable price point, and a profit point there is both your profit and your loss.

These details are also vital if when you want data on which of your items are or aren't profitable.

Potential tasks required for a design estimate:

- Briefing
- Brand/Style Guideline review
- Mood board creation
- Design concept creation (Multiple)
- Precedents/sets of concepts (Virtual or Physical)
- Page layout creation
- Illustration
- Typography Creation
- Image/Graph Creation
- Photography editing/composition
- Proof reading
- Authoring changes (1 or 2)
- Prepping and creating print-ready artwork

**Design Pricing Structure**

- 20 mins £30.00
- 40 mins £60.00
- 1 hour £90.00

**Day Rate | 7 hours**  
£630.00

**Half Day | 4 hours**  
£360.00

Take about the time it will take to produce, which tasks are required, the illustrations and the value the client places on the production that is being produced. Use the pricing structure to show about how you make estimate this product.

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**Production Pricing**

We print 8 pages of A4 on a sheet of SR42 and we use 2 sets of plates to print these 8 pages (1 set of plates to print 4 pages on the front of the sheet and 1 set of plates to print 4 pages on the back of the sheet).

Therefore to print 1000 copies of a 16 page brochure we would need 4 sets of plates and 2000 sheets of paper (plus more) but then need to include preparing the plates, making the plates, print set up, the print running time, cutting the sheets to size (optional) and then booked making and the delivery cost.

**Paper**  
300gsm Uncoated, recycled - £800.00 per 1000 SR42  
100gsm uncoated recycled - £65.00 per 1000 SR42

**Paper Sizes**  
SR42 - 840mm x 420mm and A4 210mm x 210mm

**Printing Plates**  
Price per set of 4 colour plates - £9.00 each plate - £36.00 per set

**Imposition**  
£45.00 per hour - 15 mins per set of plates

**Prepressing**  
£50.00 per hour - 15 mins per set of plates

**Print Set Up**  
£12.00 minutes per set of plates - £150.00 per hour

**Price Press Running**  
£20.00 sheets per hour - £50.00 per hour

**Wastage and Overs**  
Assumed per set of plates - 300 sheets

**Binding job**  
£100.00 per job for a set of 4 colours / kg of ink covers 1000 sheets of paper (average 250g per colour = needed per 1000 sheets)

**Substrate**  
£80.00 per hour / 10,000 sheets trimmed per hour

**Stitch/Binder (Booklet Maker)**  
£50.00 per hour / 1000 A4 books per hour

**Delivery**  
£30.00 per book (average, 250 books per book)

Produce a quote letter that covers the main responsibilities of the job.

The job price should be based on the above costs when worked out and added together. PLUS a sales profit margin of 10% on the cost of sales (as outlined).

## 7. Lessons learnt

While the programme was highly successful, the evaluation also highlighted some areas where the programme could be developed and improved in future iterations.

### Align stakeholder expectations

Some teachers raised concerns that there were some logistical and communication issues between employers, Hubs and teachers. For example, last minute changes and/or cancellations to encounters caused disruption to teaching arrangements and sometimes meant a full encounter could not be attended. One teacher stated that *'our second encounter got cancelled at the last minute...the message came through at 3pm the day before'*, and another explained how *'the dates were changed an awful lot...it was quite frustrating to have it changed around so many times'*. Arranging time for a day out of school is complex and challenging for teachers and last-minute changes can be disruptive. Whilst cancellations may be unavoidable due to issues such as sickness, it may be valuable to more clearly articulate expectations for all stakeholders and prepare contingency plans and communication protocols to deal with these issues.

### Reduce administrative load for Hubs

For Hubs the issue with logistics was linked to the long process from bid to approval, as well as the administrative side of processing and inputting data into the correct systems. Focus groups with the Hub leads agreed that they felt rushed as the funding was not approved in December which meant that the first term of the academic year was not available for delivery.

Hub leads also expressed frustration with the EANR system which was the process of inputting data on teachers participating in the programme. The external evaluation also created an additional administrative burden and slowed down the flow of information to the Hubs, with the Hubs keen to have data on registrations and completions as quickly as possible, however, these data updates were not received by Hubs as frequently as they hoped which further delayed encounters taking place.

Many of these issues resulted from the fact that the programme was in its pilot year. As the programme develops in year two, systems and processes for managing evaluation and monitoring are being streamlined. A continuation fund for those in year one was developed to allow successful models to continue their delivery and avoid the need to bid for further funding.

### Actively engage SLT

Careers Hub leads found that having Career Leaders involved in the programme *'made a big difference'* in terms of teacher engagement. However, it was also vital that Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) also bought into the programme. Without increasing SLT understanding of and buy-in to the programme it was very difficult to engage large numbers of teachers and get permission for them to participate.

One Hub lead explained how *'buy in took a while...careers leaders were happy to participate however they needed approval from their headteacher'* with another Hub lead stating that *'buy in from SLT was challenging'*. A lack of SLT buy-in was the premier obstacle that the programme faced in terms of scaling up the numbers.



Employers stated that recruiting enough teachers was challenging as *'it was difficult for them to make time in amongst their teaching priorities'*, with one employer stating how *'we offered 20 places on teacher encounters and only two were taken...the programme had to be completely reworked due to lack of uptake'*.

To address this, one option may be for Careers Hubs to start the *Teacher Encounters Programme* by actively engaging with SLT. The aim of such engagement would be to explain to SLT what the purpose of the encounters are and to use the evaluation evidence to demonstrate some of the impacts of the programme.

#### Refine the teacher encounters

The pilot saw a wide range of different approaches to teacher encounters being trialled. While the numbers of participants in each approach are not sufficient to provide us with a definitive quantitative answer on which approaches work most effectively, the data does provide a range of insights about how the intervention could be refined in future years.

**Increase the hands-on components.** Teachers were keen to participate in more hands-on activities and would like to have seen more opportunities for this incorporated in the encounters as opposed to talks/discussions. One teacher explained how *'I would have preferred to do a more hands-on task to help me understand the different roles in the factory, rather than just have a chat about the challenges of recruitment'*, with another teacher stating that *'once we actually went into the workplace, this is when the experience became valuable'*. It was also found that employers were keen to incorporate more hands-on activities into the encounters that they were providing, with one employer stating that *'we would include some more hands-on activities for the teachers to get involved in where possible'*.

**Develop subject-specific encounters.** Teachers were keen to participate in encounters that were tailored to their subject. They commented that *'it would be good to have more subject specific interactions in future'*, it *'would have been better if it was subject organised'* and *'there could be a greater range of businesses/employers for classroom teachers to ensure that the teacher[s] subject matches the employer and the links between them are not tenuous'*. Employers also thought it would have been helpful to know the makeup of the subject teachers participating in each encounter so that they could comment on the encounter more clearly about the subjects that the teachers taught.

**Increase time after the encounter.** For most teachers, the encounter took the form of one day out of the classroom. As has been shown in *chapter six* these encounters had a big impact on teachers. But some teachers argued that they needed time to act on what they had learnt and to fully implement this learning into practice. So, whilst some teachers explained how they had already started to change schemes of work to reflect what they had learnt on their encounter, other teachers expressed how they would value more time being set aside to allow them to work on resource development. One teacher stated that *'the employer had set a programme for the full two days that did not allow time to work on resources together'*, while another said that they would like to see *'more time spent on developing curriculum resources'*,



and how they thought there would be *'more focus on how to work careers into lesson planning to make a resource'*.

This suggests that in future years, time should either be built into an encounter for more purposeful consideration of how to translate it into practice, or teachers should be given some time when they return to school to reflect on the encounter and work through its practical implications.

**Recognise the role of the group in encounters.** There was some quantitative evidence which suggested that teachers who participated in group encounters, especially those with larger group sizes reported a greater impact. Teachers in the focus groups described how they enjoyed the opportunity to be able to engage with other teachers from their own and other schools as part of these encounters. Recognising that for teachers, these were not just encounters with employers, but also with colleagues and a wider teacher community of practice is an important element that could be developed further in future years. In particular thinking about the construction of groups carefully and building in time for mutual learning and knowledge exchange.

*Undertake further evaluation as the programme develops*

This evaluation of the pilot year of the *Teacher Encounters Programme* has shown the positive impact that teacher/employer engagement can have. As the programme goes into its second year, we believe that further evaluation would be beneficial to delve deeper into the impacts that the programme has and to consider what elements and approaches are most effective.

The next phase of the evaluation might include targeted evaluation looking at specific groups of teachers (e.g. Maths teacher or teachers working in Special Schools) and types of encounters taking place to further understand what the ideal encounter looks like and for whom.

Follow up research with 2022/23 *'graduates'* to measure the impact of their encounter(s) and how they have used their knowledge gained through CPD activities, resource development, curriculum activities, and further employer encounters.

## 8. Conclusions

The *Teacher Encounters Programme* was successfully delivered, well received and led to a range of positive impacts. Evidence shows that it improved teachers' perception of careers education, their knowledge about careers and their confidence in working with employers and delivering careers education. There is also evidence that it was a positive experience for employers and has developed their practice and eagerness to work with teachers and schools in the future.

This is important as it demonstrates that low intensity encounters between teachers and employers can have a powerful impact on practice. While the existing research evidence has focused on long, placement-style encounters, this evaluation has found strong evidence for shorter encounters. The Careers & Enterprise Company should feel confident in rolling out this intervention further and continuing to refine it in some of the ways set out in this evaluation.

There remain some important questions, which it would be worth considering further as this intervention develops. Firstly, and based on the evidence on the impact of employer encounters with young people, we would expect there to be benefits from multiple encounters over a teacher's career. In other words, it would be a bad idea to conclude from this evidence that teacher encounters were a single dose intervention and valuable to explore whether the benefits continued to multiply if such encounters between education and employment became a regular part of teacher CPD.

Secondly, it is important to remember that the ultimate aim of this intervention is to transform the skills and knowledge of the teaching workforce. At present, there are around 216,000 teachers in mainstream secondary schools in England so it would take 216 years to engage all teachers at the programme's current size.<sup>23</sup> This creates a clear rationale to grow the size and ambition of the programme over the next few years. This will inevitably mean that further resources are needed to manage the logistics and ensure effective brokerage.

Thirdly it will be critical to evaluate the long-term impacts of the programme more precisely and to examine how teacher encounters lead to impacts on students' career awareness, readiness and success. Teachers who took part in the programme and evaluation indicated that they were eager to embed the learnings of their encounter into their daily practice and so future evaluations should track teachers post-intervention to understand what this could look like.

This evaluation of the *Teacher Encounters Programme* has demonstrated that there is a strong case for the ongoing development of this programme. When teachers have the opportunity to meet with employers, there are observable benefits to teachers and schools as well as to employers and their organisations. These benefits appear to accrue even when interventions are relatively light touch. Whilst teacher encounters should not be considered a replacement for career advice and guidance, there is good reason to believe that teacher encounters are an important

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<sup>23</sup> Gov.UK. (2022). School workforce in England. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>

tool for bringing education and employment into better alignment through empowering a whole school approach, gaining teacher and SLT buy in, and embedding careers in subjects and the curriculum.