

Making destinations data work for careers guidance

Why destinations data is important

As noted in [Skills for Jobs](#), 'data is vital in careers information and guidance'. Timely access to data about the onward destinations of students after school and college supports subsequent cohorts to make informed choices, education leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of careers support and careers professionals to provide evidence-based guidance. The [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) identify destinations data as necessary for tailoring career guidance so that every student achieves good outcomes.

The role of The Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company supports Careers Leaders to deliver world class careers education to inspire and prepare young people for the world of work. Through Careers Hubs and the wider Enterprise Adviser Network, digital tools, training and resources, we equip Careers Leaders to plan, deliver and evaluate career programmes, ensuring that careers activities are impactful for all young people. We recognise that for careers education to be data-driven, Careers Leaders need better access to destinations data.

Our aim

Our aim at CEC is to enable Careers Leaders to access and use destinations data. [Destinations](#) measures are published by the Department for Education for cohorts of young people some years after leaving school and college. To provide more detailed and timely evidence, Gatsby Benchmark 3 encourage schools to: 'Collect and maintain accurate data for *each pupil* on their destinations for 3 years after they leave your school'. We commissioned a review of the collection and sharing of destinations data across England to identify opportunities to better enable this to be achieved.

Headlines from the review

What is working well?

- Careers Leaders recognise the **value of destinations data** and use it to evaluate and plan career programmes, to present to SLT, governors and Ofsted inspections, and to target support at vulnerable groups.
- Some local authorities have systems in place to **share individual-level destinations** data for 16 and 17 year olds (collected as part of the LCCIS) with schools to support their tracking activity.
- **Location-specific projects and partnerships** are developing local solutions to improving access to destinations data.
- Schools succeeding with tracking were adopting a **range of approaches** including effective preparatory work, strong partnerships with colleges, social media and alumni networks.

What are the challenges?

- The majority of schools **lack the resource** needed to meet their responsibilities under Gatsby Benchmark 3.

- Uncertainty about **data protection** is a barrier to destinations data gathering and sharing.
- Inconsistency in the **timeliness, accuracy and frequency** of enrolment data shared by post-16 providers with LAs with knock-on effects for supporting individuals and tracking outcomes.
- Tracking **18 year olds** is a particular challenge (particularly for schools without sixth forms) since they are outside the scope of local authority responsibility.

What is needed to improve the system?

- Updated national **guidance on data protection** requirements and good practice to support the collection, sharing and use of student-level destinations data.
- Support and encouragement to enable local authorities to systematically and efficiently **share destinations data** for 16 and 17 year olds with schools.
- Resources and events to **share local examples of good practice** surfaced through the review.
- Improved use of DfE destinations data for cohorts of students **3 and 5 years** after leaving school or college.
- **Digital tools** to enable Careers Leaders to interpret and use insight from the destinations of former students.

Next steps for The Careers & Enterprise Company

Over the next year, we will start work on the following:

- **Events and resources** to share examples of good practice from across the country to encourage learning and innovation.
- Test, learn and adapt approaches to local partnership building through **Careers Hubs**.
- Resources and training to support Careers Leaders and the wider network to **access guidance on GDPR** and to liaise with their local authority.
- Development of **Compass+** to facilitate collecting and interpreting destinations data.
- Supporting Careers Leaders to **access destinations data** for cohorts of former students, making best use of existing data.

Working together

Improving access to destinations data and its use in supporting students requires collaboration and partnership. If you could like to share examples of effective practice in your local area, please contact: Research@careersandenterprise.co.uk