ACADEMY
GREAT BARR

CEIAG Policy

2026-27



Policy owner	Mr L Price
Approval	Local Governing Body
Effective from	November 2026
Next review	November 2027

1. Purpose and scope

This policy explains the careers education, information, advice, and guidance available at Q3 Academy Great Barr. It applies to students in Years 7 to 13.

The careers programme starts in Year 7 and builds throughout a student's time at the school. It helps students understand their strengths, interests, and aspirations. It also prepares them to make informed choices about education, training, and employment.

The programme covers the full range of academic, technical, vocational, and apprenticeship routes. It uses the updated Gatsby Benchmarks as its framework.

The Mercian Trust is the school's proprietor. In this policy, 'governing board' means the Trust or a body carrying out the relevant function under its governance arrangements.

'Parent' includes carers and anyone with parental responsibility.

2. What students can expect

Every student will have access to a progressive careers programme appropriate to their age and needs. The school will:

- provide independent and impartial careers guidance that considers each student's best interests
- explain education, training, apprenticeship, employment, and higher education options without favouring a particular route or provider
- use current career and labour market information to help students make informed decisions
- challenge stereotypes and present a diverse range of careers and role models
- provide encounters with employers, employees, education providers, training providers, universities, and alumni
- include workplace experiences relevant to students' aspirations and needs
- give every year group opportunities to learn about university
- support students' transition beyond key stage 4 and key stage 5

3. How the programme is provided

Careers education is taught through the school's 'Wellbeing Inspire' programme, including relationships, sex and health education. It includes learning about the world of work and employment rights.

Careers learning is also embedded in subject teaching. Activities for each stage build on this classroom learning and reflect the needs and aspirations of each year group.

Activities may include:

- personal guidance and targeted mentoring
- employer talks, visits, projects, and careers events
- workplace visits, work shadowing, and placements

- encounters with colleges, training providers, and apprenticeship providers
- university and higher education experiences
- preparation for applications, interviews, and transitions

The school works with the Careers & Enterprise Company, colleges, training providers, employers, universities, and alumni. These partners help students understand routes, workplaces, and opportunities beyond the school.

The current programme is published on the school's website. The school also shares activities through its newsletters, social media, and direct communications where appropriate.

4. Personal guidance and targeted support

Personal guidance will be impartial and tailored to the student's needs, strengths, targets, and aspirations.

Year 11 students will receive one-to-one guidance from a careers adviser qualified to Level 6 or above. Students in earlier years may receive guidance where this would help them make a significant choice or overcome a barrier, particularly where they face disadvantage.

The school will offer specialist Connexions support to Year 11 students who have an education, health and care plan. It will also offer this support to students assessed as being at higher risk of not continuing in education, employment, or training.

The school will work with the local authority, including children's social care, and parents to identify students who need targeted support. Students needing this support include those at risk of not participating in post-16 education or training. Looked-after and previously looked-after children, care leavers, and students from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds may need this support.

Targeted early mentoring is available through school support, including counsellors, and external partners such as the Ethos Team. This support helps students overcome barriers to progression.

5. Access to technical and apprenticeship providers

The school will provide at least 6 opportunities for students in Years 8 to 13 to meet providers offering approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships. The first 4 encounters, in Years 8 to 11, are mandatory for students to attend. The encounters will take place as follows:

- The school will provide 2 encounters with different providers in Year 8 or between 1 September and 28 February in Year 9. All students in the relevant cohort must attend.
- The school will provide 2 encounters with different providers in Year 10 or between 1 September and 28 February in Year 11. All students in the relevant cohort must attend.
- The school will provide 2 encounters with different providers in Year 12 or between 1 September and 28 February in Year 13. The school will offer these encounters, but student attendance is optional.

Encounters take place during the standard school day and include an opportunity for students to ask questions.

The separately published 'Provider Access Policy' explains the encounter arrangements, how providers may request access, and how requests are decided.

6. Roles and accountability

The governing board provides strategic oversight. It holds school leaders to account for independent guidance, provider access, and the quality of the careers programme.

Mrs K Soulsby is the careers and aspirations leader and coordinates the programme. Students can contact her through a member of school staff. Parents can use the school's helpdesk. Employers and providers should email careers@GBR.merciantrust.org.uk and follow the 'Provider Access Policy'.

Students should take part in careers activities, consider the information provided, and ask for help when they need it. Parents should discuss options with their child and use the information and opportunities the school provides.

7. Inclusion, safety, and information

Careers opportunities will be available without discrimination. The school will consider disadvantage, protected characteristics, special educational needs and disabilities, health, and individual circumstances when planning support.

Treating students fairly does not always mean providing identical support. The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and provide targeted support where needed.

For students with an education, health and care plan, careers planning will contribute to preparation for adulthood from at least Year 9. It will take account of the student's aspirations and annual review arrangements.

For careers activities on the school site, the school will apply its visitor and safeguarding arrangements in line with current safeguarding guidance.

An employer has primary responsibility for health and safety during a workplace experience or placement. The school will take proportionate steps to satisfy itself that the employer's risk management and safeguarding arrangements are suitable. Safeguarding checks and supervision will reflect the activity, setting, and current guidance.

A student should report any concern during a careers activity to a member of staff or the designated safeguarding lead.

Students can access their careers records through the school's data protection arrangements.

The school will use and share personal information only where there is a lawful reason, including careers support, transition planning, destination tracking, and legal reporting duties.

The school's privacy notices explain how it uses this information. They also explain any applicable right to object where information beyond the minimum statutory data is shared.

8. Measuring and improving the programme

The school reviews its careers programme against the Gatsby Benchmarks using Compass+ to identify priorities and improve provision.

Evaluation will consider:

- student aspirations
- feedback from students, parents, staff, employers, providers, and visitors
- evidence from curriculum review and lesson visits

The senior leader responsible for careers monitors the programme overview and shares findings within the careers team.

Concerns and complaints

Students and parents should raise a concern with the careers and aspirations leader or another appropriate member of staff. Employers and providers should email careers@GBR.merciantrust.org.uk and use the contact route in the 'Provider Access Policy'.

A formal complaint may be made under the Trust's 'Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy and Procedure'. The school will handle requests for personal information under the Trust's 'Data Protection Policy'.