

ANNEX No. 7

Additional Information on CAREERS ADVICE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

The Careers and Enterprise Company provide a range of services to support careers advice within schools and colleges across the Marches. Helping to bring volunteer businesses into the learning environment to ensure students understand the vast array of career paths and training types that are available. Careers advice and support comes through many additional channels, such as local authority skills and careers events, FE colleges and university events for school aged children. Bringing employers into the school environment or providing taster work placements is proven to raise awareness of sectors, increase interest and enthuse pupils to explore the possibilities a sector offers.

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Marches Careers Hub briefing paper for LSIP stage 2.

Useful Links

<https://www.marchescareershup.co.uk/>

MARCHES CAREERS HUB – BRIEFING PAPER FOR MARCHES LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LSIP) STAGE 2

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the Marches Careers Hub project that clearly demonstrates its strategic importance to the local education and business engagement eco system. It also seeks to outline how the project can provide a framework for the delivery of key actions arising from the findings of the LSIP Stage 2 process.

Scope

The Marches Careers Hub was established in 2018. It is funded by a Department for Education (DfE) grant which is awarded through a contract with the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC). This is augmented, as a requirement of the contract, by financial contributions from the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and our local authority partners (Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils).

The Marches Careers Hub is tasked with driving tangible improvements in careers education with schools and colleges across the Marches (as measured through the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#)). This improvement is achieved through separate but complementary actions, including:

- The provision of local support for 65 secondary schools and colleges by employed Enterprise Co-ordinators who are embedded within our local authority partners and, since 2021, led by a full-time Strategic Careers Hub Lead. These act as objective, specialist advisers on achieving best practice within careers education;
- Recruiting and managing business volunteers (Enterprise Advisers) who work with schools and colleges. This ensures that senior education leaders have access to a strong business voice which provides insight into employer needs and highlights local labour market opportunities;
- The creation of a network of Cornerstone Employers. These act as champions for school engagement and encourage the involvement of their staff, wider supply chains and networks, establishing another key link between institutions and the business community;
- Enabling access to national and local resources which provide opportunities to demonstrate links between curriculum and careers, successful approaches to parental engagement and proven methods for meaningful encounters between education and the world of work;
- Meeting the requirements of Provider Access Legislation by highlighting the importance of technical and vocational pathways and promoting local provision through colleges and independent training providers;
- Providing routes for school and college staff who lead on careers education activities to undertake professional development and gain sector leading qualifications;

- The development of projects to overcome local challenges which meet the needs of employers and target areas of disadvantage.

Current position and opportunities for further development

- Since its inception, the Marches Careers Hub has led a sustained improvement in the quality of careers education being delivered within its 65 Hub institutions. Measured through the achievement against all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, performance in careers education by institutions, as a whole, has improved from 30% in 2018 to 71% in 2023 .
- The high-quality support provided through the Hub, and its consistency across the functional economic geography of the Marches, has deepened relationships with educational institutions, key employers and wider stakeholders.
- Alignment with national careers education policy provides reassurance that the Hub's Enterprise Co-ordinators are acting impartially and in the best interests of local schools and colleges, and wider Marches economy.
- The Marches Careers Hub has simplified messages to employers about the benefits of school and college engagement, developing their own early careers programmes and nurturing a future talent pipeline. It promotes the CEC's Employer Standards framework which helps businesses understand excellence in careers education outreach. The Hub also provides a range of engagement opportunities for local employers, current examples include:
 - hosting teacher encounters to build teachers' understanding of local employment opportunities and employer need;
 - becoming volunteer Enterprise Advisers;
 - releasing staff to attend careers events, promote their sectors and build understanding of employers' expectations and needs.
- The Marches Careers Hub's network of business volunteers (Enterprise Advisers and Cornerstone Employers) and staff (the Strategic Careers Hub Lead and Enterprise Co-ordinators) can continue to provide valuable further input on skills needs across the Marches based on intelligence gathered through their work with local schools and colleges.
- The development of a bespoke governance structure for the Marches Careers Hub, including a Steering Group with a private sector Chair, has enabled effective project oversight by partners and provides a framework for future project delivery.

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Chair, The Marches Careers Hub Steering Group

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