



Watford Grammar School for Girls

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy statement sets out the school's arrangements for delivering Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG).

This complies with the school's legal obligations under the Education Act 2011, and meets statutory guidelines as published in the DfE document "Careers guidance and access for education and training providers" dated January 2023.

2. Rationale for CEIAG

CEIAG is an essential part of the support offered to our students. If effective, it can help prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life, and can help them make decisions and manage transitions.

The careers landscape is a forever changing one, and as such, it is important that students develop the skills and knowledge needed to make informed decisions for their future, and understand how to obtain and further develop their employability skills.

In 2018, the DfE document "Careers guidance and access for education and training providers" was published, which set clear guidelines on how to provide good CEIAG. These 8 Gatsby Benchmarks of best practices include:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

Career planning is not just limited to one stage of life, and it is important that when meeting these benchmarks, progression through the Key Stages is also seen.

3. Commitment

WGGS is committed to fulfilling its statutory duties by providing a planned programme of careers education for all students in Years 7-13, following the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, and providing impartial information, advice and guidance. It is also committed to maximise the benefits for students by using a wide approach involving parents, carers, alumnae, external providers and employers.

4. Aims

At all key stages, the curriculum has been designed in order to best meet the Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Career Guidance.

The overall aim of the careers curriculum is to help students have a successful transition to adult life and take ownership of their own career path. This is done by providing all students with the necessary information and advice, and by developing the skills and confidence needed to:

- Make informed decisions for themselves.
- Be able to manage their own transitions between the different stages of their education and career.
- Research and follow a career path and obtain and sustain employment.
- Challenge stereotypes and have high expectations of themselves.

As such, the careers curriculum has been designed with a different focus for each year group, which is relevant for the life stage the student is at. Additionally, at all key stages, students have the opportunity to meet numerous employers in order to increase their knowledge on as wide a range of careers as possible, and to start to develop a network with employers.

5. Entitlement

5.1. Student Entitlement

Our school aims to ensure that all students in years 7-13 are entitled to:

- Independent careers advice, via access to Services for Young People (SfYP) representatives.
- Personalised support and guidance that promotes the best interest of the students to whom it is given.
- A CEIAG programme that seeks to raise aspirations, challenge stereotyping, and promote equality and diversity.
- Be encouraged to follow career paths that suit their interests, skills, and strengths.
- Impartial, and up to date information on the full range of education and training options available at each transition point; including colleges, technical education, independent training providers, and apprenticeships opportunities.
- Receive up to date information about careers-related events, and skill-development opportunities, and all be provided with the same opportunities.
- The opportunity to contact the Careers Department should they have any questions or concerns.
- Experience employer encounters through the careers programme, or through attending events such as careers talks and careers fairs.
- Give feedback after attending careers fairs.
- Have access to information and guidance through the school's website and Unifrog.

5.2. Parent Entitlement

Our students do not make their decisions in isolation, and we recognise the important part that parents play in their child's decision making.

We are keen to develop parental involvement, and as such, parents are entitled to:

- The opportunity to contact the Careers Department should they have any questions or concerns.
- Attend after-school events such as careers fairs, and options evenings as per invite.
- Give feedback after attending careers fairs.
- Have access to information and guidance through the school's website and Unifrog.
- Be kept up to date about career-related events, and skill-development opportunities.

Parents are also encouraged to participate by giving talks to students, having stands at careers fairs, and conducting practice interviews. A form is sent out to parents as their child joins our school, asking if they would be willing to volunteer for such events.

6. Curriculum Intent

6.1. Key Stage 3

The aim of careers education in Key Stage 3 is to introduce students to the working world, the vocabulary associated with it, and the wide range of possible careers that they could pursue. They will start thinking about what they personally would want from a career and will start to develop their skills on how to investigate careers further. They will think about critical employability skills or qualifications that would be needed for different careers, and through identifying their own personal traits, strengths and skills, will start to develop a long-term action plan. They will also experience a workplace through a work shadowing day. At the end of Key Stage 3, students will be encouraged to use the careers resources they have been introduced to, to help inform their GCSE decisions.

6.2. Key Stage 4

In Key Stage 4, the emphasis shifts onto preparing students for making their post-16 choices, and for the world of work; into which they may shortly be entering. They will learn about A-level subjects and what they involve but will also be informed about all other possible options available to them after their GCSEs, including colleges, technical colleges, and apprenticeships. To prepare them for employment, students will focus more on CV and interview skills, and will learn about their rights and responsibilities, budgeting and payslips. They are encouraged to investigate potential career paths further, and will use this information, together with advice and research to help inform their post-16 decisions.

6.3. Key Stage 5

In Key Stage 5 we aim to prepare students for making their post-18 choices, and for becoming an independent adult. They will learn about all the options that are available to them, including higher education, jobs, gap years and apprenticeships, and given assistance on whichever route they choose to go down. Students are given advice on writing personal statements, with emphasis on UCAS, apprenticeship and job applications, and they will receive a lot of support on interview preparation, leading up to a mock interview day. To help further with their transition to university and adult life they learn about study skills, student finance and budgeting. We believe that developing employability skills is very important, so encourage students to take part in work experience.

6.4. Curriculum Implementation

To maximise contact with employers and providers, careers education is delivered by external speakers where possible. At all other times, Careers education sessions are prepared by the Careers Department, and delivered by form tutors.

6.5. Staffing: Careers Team

Sarah Smith-Wightman: Head of Careers

Bal Randhawa: SLT lead for careers and Director of Sixth Form

Rachel Aldridge: Higher and Further Education Co-ordinator

Naseema Begum: Careers Administrator

Vivienne Morgan & Mrs Sabine Kamal: Sixth Form Administrators

Services for Young People (SfYP): Independent Careers Service

Julie Wolf: Link Governor

6.6. Career Guidance Meetings

We have a statutory duty to provide students with access to independent careers advice. This is done via SfYP. By the end of Year 11, all students will have had one session with a careers advisor. Follow-up sessions will also be offered to students who need extra advice. The opportunity to have a careers advice session is also available to sixth form students.

6.7. Needs-based Referral

Heads of Years, Directors of Key Stages, and the Learning Enrichment Department work closely with SfYP to identify students who would benefit from early intervention, for example those with lack of direction or motivation, vulnerable students, those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), or those at risk to become NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). Such students will have access to impartial advice sessions more regularly, and throughout the key stages.

6.8. External Providers and Employer Links

A range of external training providers are invited in to speak to our students, including local colleges, technical colleges, universities, independent training providers and apprenticeship organisations.

A number of sessions integrated into the school careers programme, and lunch time and after-school events also offer employers an opportunity to come into school to speak to students and/or their parents/carers.

Details of the procedures and opportunities for external providers can be found in the school's Provider Access Policy.

6.9. Alumnae

Relationships with alumnae are strengthened by encouraging them to give talks to students and having stands at careers fairs.

The annual Year 12 'Face the Future' mock interview day also encourages participation from a large number of alumni and employers, in offering support to students on application and interview skills.

6.10. Safeguarding

The school's Safeguarding Policy sets out the school's approach to allowing providers into the school as visitors to talk to our students. All external providers of CEIAG will be expected to adhere to this policy.

6.11. Work Based Learning

6.11.1. Work Shadowing – Key Stage 3

In Year 9, all students participate in a day of work shadowing, the aim of which is to introduce them to a working day. They are asked to consider factors such as health and safety, different roles and departments that can be found within a company, how to be successful in the workplace, how professionals behave, and how the world of work differs to the world of school. After the day they are asked to reflect on their experience, and what they have learnt.

Parents and carers are asked to arrange this day for their child. It is expected that the majority of students will go to work with a parent, relative or friend of the family. There is no expectation that students shadow a career that they are interested in pursuing, as it is appreciated that it can be difficult to find an appropriate placement.

6.11.2. Work Experience – Key Stage 4

Whilst work experience is no longer compulsory, we recognise the important insight that it can give into the world of work and specific careers, and the benefit that it can have on student's employability skills and future applications that they may make.

We therefore offer a small cohort of students the opportunity to take part in a week of work experience in the Summer term of Year 10. SfYP are used as an external provider, and they offer a choice of placements that they have approved after prior checking on all safety aspects. Our aim is to provide a placement that matches the requirements of the individual student, and this could be:

- To apply skills and deepen knowledge and understanding of concepts learned in the classroom, therefore enabling students to make cross-curricular links.
- To develop their employability skills.
- To promote their personal and social development, including self-confidence, time management, personal organisation, and resilience.
- To develop their understanding of the world of work, including the expectations and routines of a working environment
- To help them make the transition from school to work.
- To introduce them to the skills and knowledge of a particular career before they make their post-16 decisions.
- To boost their career aspirations.

Students are offered the option of organising their own placement if they have a contact in an industry of choice; and SfYP will carry out all necessary checks prior to approval.

Parents will be asked to give consent for work experience, and supply contact and medical information that may be shared with the employer in case of emergency. Parents are responsible for organising safe travel for their child to and from the placement.

Prior to placement, students are encouraged to visit or telephone their employer to check arrangements. Preparation sessions also take place including aspects such as dress code, expectations of attitudes and behaviour, health and safety, and use of their work experience diary.

During placement students are normally required to work the usual working hours of the employer with whom they are placed, but no more than 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week (in line with the Working Time Regulations 1998). If they are absent for any reason, they must inform both the employer and the school. Students are visited by teaching staff whilst on placement, and informal feedback from both the employer and the student will be collected. As work experience is part of a students' education, students should not receive any payment.

Post placement, students reflect on their week, identify what they have learnt, and consider whether they have improved in their key employability skills. Evaluation questionnaires will be requested from both students and parents.

6.11.3. Work Experience – Key Stage 5

In Year 12, we encourage students to undertake work experience in preparation for Higher Education or the world of work. Whilst advice or notification of available schemes can be given by teaching staff, the placement should be arranged by the individual student. It is expected that this is arranged for weekends and school holidays whenever possible but understand that this may not be possible in all cases. All requests for permission to be absent from school will be considered in the context of the students' attendance and their individual needs.

6.11.4. Safeguarding

6.11.4.1. ***For our Year 9 students undertaking work shadowing:*** Work shadowing is arranged by parents and carers. Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that the place of work is appropriate for the age and capabilities of their child. The school does not carry out any workplace checks or risk assessments. Parents/carers are asked to coordinate with the employers to provide evidence of Employer Liability Insurance, and to ensure that Health and Safety is discussed on arrival at the place of work.

6.11.4.2. ***For our Year 10 students undertaking work experience:*** We ensure all appropriate checks are carried out in advance of their placement, through a contract with a recognised provider. On-site visits by staff, or telephone calls are used during the week to ensure that students are appropriately safeguarded whilst on work experience.

- 6.11.4.3. ***For our Year 12 students undertaking work experience:*** Where permission is granted for absence from school to undertake work experience, the parent/carer is responsible for judging whether the place of work is safe and that all appropriate checks have taken place to ensure the safety of their child. The school does not carry out any workplace checks or risk assessments. Parents/carers or students are asked to coordinate with the employers to provide evidence of Employer Liability Insurance.

7. Curriculum Impact: Monitoring and Evaluation

The school's arrangements for the provision of CEIAG to students is monitored by the Head of Careers.

The effectiveness of careers education provisions will be assessed annually using feedback from students, teachers, parents and employers.

The school also uses the 'Compass +' Tracker Tool, and termly meetings with the Careers & Enterprise Company to measure progress towards meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks.