

Devon, Plymouth
& Torbay
CAREERS HUB

THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY

Partnering to shape tomorrow's workforce

A guide for employers

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x 2

Employers are twice as likely to agree that educational outreach is helping to improve the diversity of their workforce

50%

of employers are more likely to say that their education outreach is helping develop new talent pipelines

4 x

A young person who has 4 or more encounters with employers is 86% less likely to be unemployed

1250

Over 1250 employers have completed the Employer Standards survey.... so far

95%

of employers who provided an industry taster for teachers recommend the programme to colleagues and other businesses

80%

of employers working with a Careers Hub say collaboration with schools and colleges is helping to bring apprentices into their organisation



Introduction

The Devon, Plymouth & Torbay Careers Hub was established in 2018 in partnership with The Careers and Enterprise Company, with a mission to transform careers education for young people across the patch.

We work with every state-funded secondary school, special educational needs school, alternative provision, and post-16 college in the region.

Our goal is to connect educators with local employers to co-create and deliver high-quality, meaningful careers education that prepares students for the world of work.

But we can't do it alone.

To make a lasting impact, we need the support of the business community across Devon.

Whether you're a sole trader with a few hours to spare or part of a multinational organisation with a dedicated CSR strategy, your involvement can make a real difference.

This guide outlines the many ways you can get involved. No matter the size of your contribution, every interaction helps a young person take a step closer to discovering their future.



Why Get Involved?

Businesses across all sectors are facing similar challenges when it comes to building a future-ready workforce:

- How do we build a strong talent pipeline?
- How do we increase diversity and inclusion in our teams?
- How do we deliver meaningful impact through our CSR or social value commitments?

Engaging with careers education is a powerful way to address all of these challenges.



By working with schools and colleges to support students in developing their employability skills, aspirations, and understanding of the world of work, you're not only helping young people - you're investing in the future of your business and your community.

The Benefits to Your Business

- **Shape the future workforce** by helping young people develop the skills and mindsets your industry needs.
- **Raise your profile** as an employer of choice among young people, parents, and educators.
- **Fulfil your social value goals** by making a tangible difference in your local community.
- **Inspire the next generation** and help close skills gaps in your sector.



Ways to engage

Careers Champion

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CAREERS
CHAMPION

Can you offer an hour of your time on an adhoc basis to support activities such as mock interviews, careers talks or careers speed dating?

Who: Individuals passionate about supporting young people

Commitment: Adhoc & flexible to suit – no formal commitment

Activities include: Mock interviews, Careers fairs, Mentoring, Sector Talks

Support provided: Resources

Benefits to employer: Personal development, Giving something back to the community, Early talent visibility for your business

“I have found mentoring a Year 9 student to build confidence in both herself and her abilities to secure a job an incredibly rewarding journey. We've explored topics such as identifying her strengths and weaknesses, what she values in good leaders, and how to take positive steps towards her own future. Watching her grow and gain self-assurance has been truly inspiring.”

Sarah Lloyd – Sanctuary

“Supporting mock interviews has been really fulfilling – it's a chance to give young people honest, practical support as they navigate that next step into professional life; and watching them grow in confidence throughout the session is incredibly rewarding. It's not just about preparing them for the world of work, it's about showing them that their voice and ambitions matter and it's great to be a part of that, however small it may seem.”

Archie Willmot - PKF Francis Clark

Ways to engage

Enterprise Adviser

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ENTERPRISE
ADVISER

Can you provide support in a more formal way to one or more schools to help develop their careers education programme?

Who: Professionals who are looking to strategically support one or more schools/college on a longer term basis to develop their careers activities.

Commitment: Voluntary role - 1 year formal commitment

Activities include: Strategic support for careers programme development, Sector / Specialism specific talks, Mentoring, Staff CPD

Support provided: Training, networking & resources

Benefits to employer: Influence on education, Sector promotion, Talent pipeline development, Personal development

“ In my role as an Enterprise Adviser, I enjoy being able to help the engineering employers that I work with connect to the school I am matched with – it’s a win-win. The school gets great speakers to inspire and inform their students about a career in engineering and some amazing work-relevant projects for the students to explore and the employer gets to meet their potential future workforce.”

Karen Woodward – Engineering UK

“ Being an Enterprise Adviser is hugely rewarding. I have been able to get involved with every year group from careers workshops with Year 7s, 8s and 9s to work experience placements for year 10s and 12s and mentoring with year 11s and 13s. The work is really varied, enriching and very addictive! The experience has taught me so much as well, developing my skills as a business owner and introducing me to a network of Enterprise Advisers across Devon and beyond. ”

Tom Palmer – Ocean City Media

Ways to engage

Employer Partner

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EMPLOYER
PARTNER

Can your business support the work of the Careers Hub on an adhoc basis depending on the requirement?

Who: Companies committed to supporting careers education without a formal arrangement in place. No named individuals identified, but a willingness to assist where possible.

Commitment: Ongoing partnership with no formal commitment

Activities include: Workplace visits, Work experience placements, Curriculum support, Teacher insight days

Support provided: Training, networking & resources

Benefits to employer: Brand visibility, Increased recruitment pipeline, Sector promotion, Staff development

“ Bay Photonics values its partnership with the Devon, Plymouth & Torbay Careers Hub, supporting young people to explore and pursue STEM careers through mentoring in the Dragon’s Den style event, offering apprenticeships, and undertaking school engagement. As part of the Torbay Hi-Tech Cluster, we are committed to nurturing local talent and helping students make informed choices that lead to fulfilling careers in the high-tech industry right here in Torbay. ”

Phil Mitchell – Bay Photonics

“ I really enjoyed showcasing one of the workshops AECOM can offer to the local schools. The workshop helps showcase the many careers within the maritime engineering sector and also highlights the fledging industry of offshore wind that is coming to the South West. It’s great to see the kids and teachers really engage with engineering and to help all students (especially female students) realise what is out there as an amazing career. ”

Gemma Maynard – AECOM

Ways to engage

Cornerstone Employer

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CORNERSTONE
EMPLOYER

Does your business already work in educational outreach and represent a key priority sector? Would you like to influence strategic & policy thinking around careers & skills for the future?

Who: Key employers who are able to advocate for careers education across Devon & beyond.

Commitment: Strategic & long term

Activities include: Advocacy & thought leadership, Offering opportunities at scale, Strategic input into Careers Hub priorities, System design

Support provided: Training, national and local networking & resources

Benefits to employer: Local, regional & national influence, Policy shaping, Sector representation, Social Value

“Being a Cornerstone employer is of real benefit to the Met Office. Through this programme, the Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Careers Hub facilitates effective networking between Cornerstone employers, enabling us to learn from each other and collectively improve our ability to reach and support young people, to best prepare them for the future while also strengthening our future talent pipelines.”

Lisa Tomkins - Met Office

“Babcock are delighted to be a Cornerstone employer as it gives us the opportunity to actively support both local and national initiatives through engagement with education providers and their pupils as well as with other employers. We not only see tangible benefits from this for ourselves with regards to outreach work, recruitment and the sharing of best practice, but more importantly, for the local communities in which we are placed.”

Gareth Kenward - Babcock International Group

Support on offer

The Devon, Plymouth & Torbay Careers Hub is here to help you make the most of your involvement in careers education. We offer a range of training, resources, and hands-on support to ensure your outreach is meaningful and impactful.

From CPD sessions and networking events to toolkits and best practice sharing, we'll guide you every step of the way.

Whether you're new to working with schools or looking to deepen your engagement, you won't be doing it alone.



Employer Standards

Developed by The Careers and Enterprise Company, this FREE, easy-to-use online tool helps employers assess and enhance their engagement with schools and colleges.

It allows you to:

- **Identify** your current level of engagement
- **Compare** your activity against a national framework of best practice
- **Improve** your outreach through tailored recommendations



[Learn more and access the tool](#)

Employer Standards

The framework is built around nine standards which sit within these three key pillars:

1. **Inspire** young people to take their next best step
2. **Prepare** them to be career-ready
3. **Collaborate** with others for greater impact

Whether you're just starting out or looking to deepen your involvement, this tool provides a clear roadmap to help you deliver meaningful, measurable outcomes.

How it works:



Step 1

Self-assessment

30 minute online survey



Step 2

Your results

See your results in seconds



Step 3

Recommendations

Short, medium and long term



Step 4

Compare

Nationally, regionally or sectorally

Inspire young people for their best next step



1. Provide meaningful opportunities

Give young people a taste of work by offering meaningful experiences with clear aims. Tailor activities to your audience and involve a breadth of young people from your workplace to make it relevant.



2. Be inclusive

Engage with schools, special schools or colleges most in need of support. Break down barriers - consider the relatability of the messenger, actively challenge stereotypes and preconceptions, and adapt to include all young people.



3. Evaluate and improve

Establish whether you are achieving impact and adapt where needed. Conduct evaluations with young people, teachers and employee volunteers.

Prepare young people to be career ready



4. Build essential skills and explain their relevance

Support young people to develop and practice essential skills so young people, teachers and Careers Leaders can reflect on and see their value in the workplace.



5. Prepare young people for application processes

Help young people understand and practice a range of application and selection processes, supporting them to describe their skills and experience effectively.



6. Raise awareness of pathways into work

Provide information about opportunities, pathways, subjects and qualification requirements for roles in your organisation and sector, linked to the local labour market - particularly at key transition points.

Collaborate for success



7. Engage over the long-term

Extend your engagement with schools, special schools and colleges by having repeat exposure with the same cohorts of young people and providing employees with long term volunteering opportunities.



8. Partner with others

Identify priority needs of a school, special school or college. Share knowledge about job opportunities, local labour market, and pathways with others - including teachers, Careers Leaders, parents, Careers Hubs, and activity providers. Support teachers/tutors to relate classroom learning to the world of work. Collaborate and share best practice with other employers.



9. Value the engagement

Embed careers education within business planning and enable employees to engage with outreach. Recognise impact on young people and share with employees.

Deciding on the right level of engagement

We understand that every business is different - what you can offer will depend on your time, resources, and goals. The list below gives you an idea of the different levels of support you can provide, from quick wins to deeper, strategic involvement.

Activity	Careers Champion	Enterprise Adviser	Employer Partner	Cornerstone Employer
Application support	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mock Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interactive CV session	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interactive employability skills	✓	✓	✓	✓
Careers Fair	✓	✓	✓	✓
Careers Speed Networking	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workplace visit / Open Doors	✓	✓	✓	✓
Careers Carousel	✓	✓	✓	✓
Film / Case study	✓	✓	✓	✓
Project support	✓	✓	✓	✓
Panel / Sector Q&A	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promoting sector pathways	✓	✓	✓	✓
Apprenticeship Talk	✓	✓	✓	✓

Please note - this list is only a guide

Activity	Careers Champion	Enterprise Adviser	Employer Partner	Cornerstone Employer
Themed days	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workshop / competition	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supporting after school clubs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mentoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
In person work experience		✓	✓	✓
Group work experience		✓	✓	✓
Teacher industry taster		✓	✓	✓
Work- based curriculum input		✓	✓	✓
Teacher / Governor CPD		✓	✓	✓
Virtual work experience			✓	✓
Strategic oversight				✓
Advocacy for Careers Hub agenda				✓
Delivering outreach at scale				✓
Supporting supply chains to engage				✓
Policy shaping nationally				✓
System design				✓
National sector based projects				✓

Please note - this list is only a guide

Make it meaningful checklist

It is really important that all interactions between students and employers are meaningful. Here's a quick checklist to help you to make sure that any activity you are involved in is hitting the mark.

Does your activity



have a clear purpose, which is shared with the employer & young person



have a learning outcome underpinning it which is appropriate to the young person's needs



involve extensive two-way interactions between the young person & employees



include opportunities for young people to perform a task or produce a piece of work relevant to the workplace



include opportunities to meet a range of different people from the workplace



include the employer providing feedback to the young person about their work



include time for young people to reflect on the insights, skills & knowledge gained