

South Midlands Careers Hub

Benchmark 7 and Provider Access Legislation

Please introduce yourself in the chat

Tuesday 16th
December 2025

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Agenda

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- Welcome & Learning Outcomes
- BM7 versus PAL overview
- Making it meaningful
- Planning
- Providers
- Career Leader approaches
- Resource spotlight

What's on your mind?

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Please add at least one BM7 or PAL related questions to the chat

By the end of this session, you will

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- Have a clear understanding of the differences between meeting benchmark 7 and the provider access legislation
- Have a greater awareness of the providers in the region
- Know where to go for further information and resources

BM7 versus PAL

	Benchmark 7	Provider Access Legislation
What	Encounters with different types of providers	Encounters with providers of technical and apprenticeship education
Number	Number – number of encounters not stated	2 in KS3 2 in KS4 2 in KS5
Timing	Timing not stated	- In school day - Before end of February of each key stage
Impact	Making it meaningful checklist	Making it meaningful + PAL compliant checklist
Relevant guidance	Statutory guidance for schools and colleges	Section 42A, 42B, 45 and 45A of the Education Act 1997
Achievement	Overwhelming majority or above	All

Don't forget – it is possible to meet the benchmark and NOT be PAL compliant – and vice versa!

Meaningful / Impactful

Making it meaningful

- Have a clear purpose, which is shared with the provider and the young person
- Be underpinned by learning outcomes that are appropriate to the needs of the young person
- Involve a two-way interaction between the young person and the provider
- Include information about the provider, such as their recruitment and selection processes, the qualifications that provider offers and the careers these could lead to
- Describe what learning or training with the provider is like
- Be followed by opportunities for the young person to reflect on the insights, knowledge or skills gained through the encounter

PAL compliant

To be PAL compliant, encounters should be delivered **during the school day** and include:

- Information about the provider and the approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships that the provider offers
- **Information about the careers to which those technical education qualifications or apprenticeships might lead**
- A description of what learning or training with the provider is like
- Responses to questions from the pupils about the provider or approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships

Education/Training Provider Encounters

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Who?	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Sixth Form Colleges							
FE Colleges							
ITPs							
14-19 studio school / UTC							
Universities							
Other higher technical providers & Providers of the local offer for SEND							

Don't forget – in addition to the BM7 providers listed above, employers who offer apprenticeships can support with PAL.

Education/Training Provider Encounters – what are you up to?

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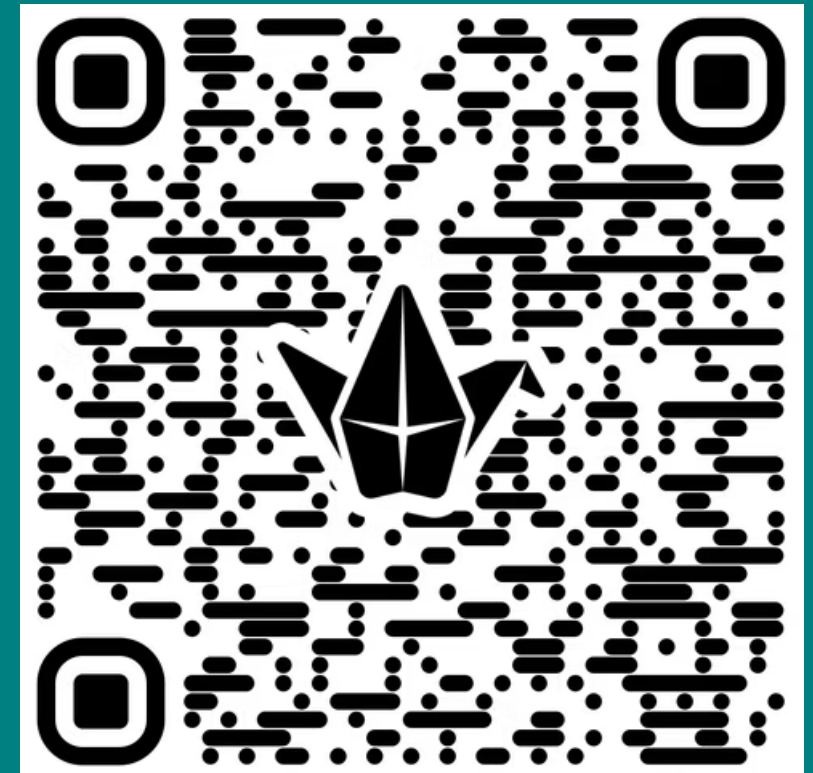
South Midlands careers Hub • 18h

Education / training provider encounters

Please add details of who you have come in, the activity under the appropriate year group and provider type

Year 7 | **Year 8** | **Year 9** | **Year 10**

- South Midlands careers Hub** 10 minutes from now
Providers of the local offer for SEND
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 9 minutes ago
Providers of the local offer for SEND
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 9 minutes ago
Providers of the local offer for SEND
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 9 minutes ago
Providers of the local offer for SEND
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour from now
Sixth Form College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 17 hours ago
Sixth Form College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour from now
Sixth Form College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour ago
Sixth Form College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 17 hours ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour ago
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0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 17 hours ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 17 hours ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 1 hour ago
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 46 minutes from now
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment
- South Midlands careers Hub** 43 minutes from now
FE College
0 likes | 0 comments | Add comment



BM7 – 3 questions - Schools

Question		
<p>7.1 By the time they finish Key Stage 4, approximately what proportion of pupils have had meaningful encounters with the following education providers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth Form Colleges • Further Education Colleges (including land-based colleges where appropriate) • Independent Training Providers (ITPs) • 14-19 School based vocational providers (including studio schools and university technical colleges) • Universities • Other Higher Technical Education Providers (including further education institutions, Institutes of Technology or employers offering degree apprenticeships) 	<p>Clarification: Encounters with FE/HE providers in the form of a visit to the provider, a visit from the provider or virtual encounters all contribute to achieving this Benchmark as long as they meet the definition of meaningful.</p>	<p>A guide to Gatsby Benchmark 7 Gatsby Benchmarks</p>
<p>7.2 Approximately what proportion of pupils who are considering applying to higher education have had at least two visits to a higher education provider by the age of 18? (KS5 providers only)</p>		
<p>7.3: Which of the following statements are true of the encounters with further and higher education provided by your school?</p> <p>Encounters have a clear purpose shared with the provider and the young person</p> <p>Encounters are underpinned by learning outcomes appropriate to the needs of the young person</p> <p>Encounters involve two-way interactions between young people and providers</p> <p>Encounters involve providers describing what learning or training with them is like</p> <p>Encounters involve providers giving information on their recruitment and selection processes</p> <p>Encounters involve providers referencing the qualifications they offer and the careers these could lead to</p> <p>Encounters involve young people being given the opportunity to reflect on the insights, skills or knowledge gained</p>	<p>Clarification: Throughout a careers programme, encounters should be sequenced so that a young person can build up a clear picture of opportunities available to them. Experiences or encounters could be in person or a combination of in person and virtual and could include providers delivering sessions in a school, college or ITP, as well as young people visiting the provider. Young people and providers should be supported to prepare for the encounter. Additional or different support may be needed for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).’</p> <p>Gatsby Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years</p>	<p>Understanding how to embed progressive encounters with further and higher education CEC Resource Directory</p> <p>Benchmark 1: Suggested universal career-related learning outcomes CEC Resource Directory</p>

BM7 – 3 questions – Colleges/ITPs

Question		
<p>7.1 By the time they finish Key Stage 4, approximately what proportion of pupils have had meaningful encounters with the following education providers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth Form Colleges • Further Education Colleges (including land-based colleges where appropriate) • Independent Training Providers (ITPs) • <i>Specialist provision (e.g. specialist further education colleges, supported day centres)</i> • Universities • Other Higher Technical Education Providers (including further education institutions, Institutes of Technology or employers offering degree apprenticeships) 	<p><i>Has the answer option of 'not applicable'.</i></p> <p>Clarification: Encounters with FE/HE providers in the form of a visit to the provider, a visit from the provider or virtual encounters all contribute to achieving this Benchmark as long as they meet the definition of meaningful.</p>	<p>A guide to Gatsby Benchmark 7 Gatsby Benchmarks</p>
<p>7.2 <i>By the end of their programme of study, approximately what proportion of learners will have had meaningful encounters with an appropriate range of further and higher education providers?</i></p>		
<p>7.3: Which of the following statements are true of the encounters with further and higher education provided by your school?</p> <p>Encounters have a clear purpose shared with the provider and the young person</p> <p>Encounters are underpinned by learning outcomes appropriate to the needs of the young person</p> <p>Encounters involve two-way interactions between young people and providers</p> <p>Encounters involve providers describing what learning or training with them is like</p> <p>Encounters involve providers giving information on their recruitment and selection processes</p> <p>Encounters involve providers referencing the qualifications they offer and the careers these could lead to</p> <p>Encounters involve young people being given the opportunity to reflect on the insights, skills or knowledge gained</p>	<p>Clarification: Throughout a careers programme, encounters should be sequenced so that a young person can build up a clear picture of opportunities available to them. Experiences or encounters could be in person or a combination of in person and virtual and could include providers delivering sessions in a school, college or ITP, as well as young people visiting the provider. Young people and providers should be supported to prepare for the encounter. Additional or different support may be needed for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).'</p> <p>Gatsby Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years</p>	<p>Understanding how to embed progressive encounters with further and higher education CEC Resource Directory</p> <p>Benchmark 1: Suggested universal career-related learning outcomes CEC Resource Directory</p>

BM7 – 4 questions – Specialist Settings

Question	
<p>7.1 By the time they leave your specialist setting, approximately what proportion of learners have had meaningful encounters with the following education and transition providers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive apprenticeships • Supported apprenticeships • Sixth form colleges • Further education colleges • Independent Training Providers (ITPs) • 14-19 School based vocational providers such as studio schools and university technical colleges • Other Higher Technical Education Providers (including further education institutions, Institutes of Technology or employers offering degree apprenticeships) • Adult day care provision 	<p>A guide to Gatsby Benchmark 7 Gatsby Benchmarks</p> <p>Creating an inclusive apprenticeship offer - GOV.UK</p> <p>Supported internships – GOV.UK</p> <p>Open academies, free schools, studio schools and UTCs - GOV.UK</p> <p>Support for apprentices with a learning difficulty or disability</p>
<p>7.2 By the time they leave your specialist setting, approximately what proportion of learners will have had meaningful encounters with an appropriate range of further and higher education providers?</p>	
<p>7.3 Approximately what proportion of learners who are considering applying to higher education have had at least two visits to a higher education provider by the age of 18?</p>	
<p>7.4 Which of the following statements are true of the encounters with further and higher education provided by your school?</p> <p>Encounters have a clear purpose shared with the provider and the young person</p> <p>Encounters are underpinned by learning outcomes appropriate to the needs of the young person</p> <p>Encounters involve two-way interactions between young people and providers</p> <p>Encounters involve providers describing what learning or training with them is like</p> <p>Encounters involve providers giving information on their recruitment and selection processes</p> <p>Encounters involve providers referencing the qualifications they offer and the careers these could lead to</p> <p>Encounters involve young people being given the opportunity to reflect on the insights, skills or knowledge gained</p>	

BM7 – PAL Questions (schools/specialist schools only)

Question	How to answer
7.4 What proportion of pupils in Year 8 and Year 9 have had at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during Key Stage 3 study that meet the requirements of Provider Access Legislation?	Autumn/Spring – planned activity Summer – actual delivery
7.5 What proportion of pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 have had at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during Key Stage 4 study that meet the requirements of Provider Access Legislation?	Autumn/Spring – planned activity Summer – actual delivery
7.6 What proportion of pupils in Year 12 and Year 13 have been <u>offered</u> at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during Post 16 study that meet the requirements of Provider Access Legislation?	Autumn/Spring – planned activity Summer – actual delivery
7.7 What proportion of pupils in Year 12 and year 13 have <u>attended</u> at least two meaningful encounters with providers of apprenticeships and technical education during Post 16 study that meet the requirements of Provider Access Legislation?	Autumn/Spring – planned attendance Summer – actual attendance
7.8 What proportion of pupils of the year group which most recently completed the 'first key phase' (period covering 1st September in Year 8 to 28th February in Year 9 as defined in Provider Access Legislation) had at least two encounters that met the requirements of Provider Access Legislation within that key phase?	Autumn/Spring evaluations – think of your current Year 10 students – what did they actually get? Summer – what did your current Year 9 students actually get?
7.9 What proportion of pupils of the year group which most recently completed the 'second key phase' (period covering 1st September in Year 10 to 28th February in Year 11 as defined in Provider Access Legislation) had at least two encounters that met the requirements of Provider Access Legislation within that key phase?	Autumn/Spring evaluations – think of the students who left year 11 last summer – what did they actually get? Summer – what did your current Year 11 students actually get?
7.10 What proportion of pupils of the year group which most recently completed the 'third key phase' (period covering 1st September in Year 12 to 28th February in Year 13 as defined in Provider Access Legislation) had at least two encounters that met the requirements of Provider Access Legislation within that key phase?	Autumn/Spring evaluations – think of the students who left year 13 last summer – what did they actually get? Summer – what did your current Year 13 students actually get?

Not ready for 28th February?

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[Provider Directory - South Midlands Careers Hub](#)

Apprenticeship Ambassador Network

- East Midlands apprenticeambassador@eastmidsaan.onmicrosoft.com
- East of England eoekaan@gmail.com

T Level Ambassador Network

- TBC

STEM Ambassador Network

- [STEM Ambassadors for secondary teaching](#)

Employers – Higher and Degree level apprenticeship vacancy listing

- [Higher-and-Degree-October-2025.pdf](#)

Local colleges / training providers

- [What Next – South Midlands](#)
- [SEND Post-16 Options – South Midlands](#)

New ATE Resources

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Amazing Apprenticeships is working in partnership with The CEC to launch an exciting new suite of digital, adaptable Apprenticeships & Technical Education (ATE) resources for schools and colleges.

Available now – designed for anyone to be able to pick up and use – careers leaders, teachers, employers. The resource decks include delivery notes, presentation script and animation.

- [What is technical education - FAQs](#)
- [What is technical education KS3 & KS4 slide deck](#)
- [What is technical education KS5 slide deck](#)

Coming soon

- Regionalised slide decks
- Industry sector films
- T Level assembly and animation

Further info in [webinar recording Introducing New ATE Resources for Teachers and Careers Leaders Webinar – Amazing Apprenticeships](#)



[Provider Access Legislation | The Careers and Enterprise Company](#)

[The Provider Access Legislation \(PAL\) in SEND Settings | CEC Resource Directory](#)

[Ofsted - Education Inspection Framework Guide | CEC Resource Directory](#)

[Making encounters meaningful: support for providers | CEC Resource Directory](#)

[Provider Access Legislation \(PAL\) - South Midlands Careers Hub](#)