



Careers Strategy

Introduction

At Arden College we are committed to careers education, information, advice, and guidance ensuring students' leave us with the right tools and values to become independent, an active citizen or employed. We support students, with their parents and carers, to consider their future options, realise their potential and decide how their skills and experiences fit with opportunities in the local job market. We support students to prepare for their preferred destination whether that is to continue with further education, employment, training or living independently. We have a person-centred approach to student outcomes through our EHCP annual reviews process where we collaborate with all stakeholders to shape clear and ambitious targets for students to prepare for their next steps.

Everyone at Arden College is fully committed to our statutory and moral obligation to provide a holistic careers service for students in Phase 2 and Phase 3 and 4, highlighting the vocational and academic routes to their preferred career path. Each student will be given an opportunity to engage in Work Placements, internal and external. Students also have careers embedded into their timetable. All career focused sessions are delivered weekly by a Phase tutor, with oversight of Phase Managers and the Vice Principal. Our aim is to ensure that students are inspired and motivated for the world of work, ensuring high achievable aspirations are considered for a range of careers available.

There are several terms used to describe Careers Education, and there is inevitably some overlap between them.

- Employability/Work skills is the delivery of learning about careers and the skills and knowledge required to become employable. This embedded as part of the curriculum.
- Work experience/placement is the provision of opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of work and to develop skills for employability through direct experiences of work.

- Careers information is the provision of information and resources about courses, occupations, and career paths.
- Careers advice is more in-depth explanation of information and how to access and use information.
- Careers guidance or careers counselling is a deeper intervention in which an individual's skills, attributes and interests are explored in relation to their career options.

Arden Colleges Vision

To ensure students, their parents, and carers, are informed and prepared to achieve aspirational next steps into independence, becoming an active citizen and gaining employment/further study towards a career

Strategic Objectives:

- All students, parents, carers, and tutors have access to careers information, advice, and guidance.
- All students are accessing and engaged in a meaningful and developmental Careers Education curriculum programme.
- All students' transition to a variety of positive destinations.

The strategy sets out where Arden College is currently, using a summary of the Compass Careers Benchmark tool and the Gatsby Framework. The strategy will inform you how Arden College is meeting the Gatsby Framework and what the areas for development are.

	Stage 1 Work experience	Stage 2 Work experience	Stage 3 Work experience	Stage 4 Work experience	Stage 5 work experience	Stage 6 work experience	Employment
What	Student engages in tasks which may benefit others (with support and direction)	Student engages in internal work placement which they understand to be a 'job' (with support and direction).	Student engages in internal work experience involving members of the public (with support and guidance)	Student engages in external work experience with a college job coach (with guidance)	Student engages in external work experience with minimal job coach support (Pre-internship – with guidance and increasing independence)	Student engages in work placement with minimal job-coach support at least 3 days per week. (May be Supported Internship with increasing independence)	Student engages in paid work and can get to and from work. (without college staff and with generalised skills). May continue to be supported through Access to Work funding.
Where	College and local community	College and local community	College and local community	Local business, employer or charity	Local business, employer or charity	Local business, employer or charity	Local business or employer
Past or Current Examples	Litter picking Setting the dining table Cleaning Gardening Baking Flower arranging and delivering to the local care home	Banks Café Maintenance Kitchen support Cleaning Office support IT support Enterprise eg. Sales, Arden's Gardens Delivery	Banks Café Arden Café Office Skills College visitor greeter	Brett's Pets Salvation Army Café The Mikhail Group (Hotel) The Bold/The Grand Marshside Primary School OXFAM/PDSA/British Heart Foundation Café Rococo Rice Lane City Farm Salvation Army Recycles Atkinson Library Whitbread Premier Inn Maidenhead Aquatics (Dobbies) North West Outdoor Adventure Co-Op Banks Hub Broad Green Hospital			
Future Destination	Active Citizen	Active Citizen	Active Citizen	Active Citizen or Employment	Active Citizen or Employment	Active Citizen or Employment	Employment

Benchmark & progress made	Gatsby Statement	Current State	Areas for Development Green – Achieved Yellow - Ongoing
1: A stable careers programme 92% Dec 2025 92% March 2026	Institutions and organisations should have an embedded programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by learners, parents and carers, staff, governors, employers and other agencies.	Careers leadership is supported and is embedded across the specialist college. Clear systems and roles ensure everyone shares responsibility for delivering high-quality, person-centred careers education. There is Lydia, who is the Careers leader and is studying towards her Level 6 Qualification. Vicki, the Vice Principal, has strategic oversight of the Careers offer. Externally, we employ Mike from Careers Connect, who gives external Careers advice. The college Vision shapes priorities for careers and feeds directly into the overall development plan, keeping Preparing for Adulthood central to curriculum and planning. Senior leaders and staff understand and are accountable for the aims of the careers programme, ensuring it aligns with wider specialist-college goals such as independence, communication and meaningful progression. A strategic careers plan is in place and regularly reviewed. It reflects the needs of learners with SEND and supports key development priorities across the college.	Continue to develop a National Careers event that the whole college can partake in; we need more options for Phase 2. Develop a bank of social settings and visits to where leavers of the college have gone to volunteer – Post college provision booklet created and distributed to parents- Dec 2025 Continue to support the Careers Leader to complete the Level 6 Careers Leader qualification. -Lydia has achieved her L6 qualification – Feb 2026 Support and challenge from governance - we require a named Careers Link Governor who can consider the effectiveness of the careers provision. They will be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness, quality and strategic alignment of the college's careers provision.- Mike from Careers connect has agreed to be part of our local governing body from September 2026 – March 2026

		Strategic planning and impact evaluation are led by a senior leader and built into whole-college quality assurance, curriculum planning and reporting. Governors review the careers provision in the termly governor report, ensuring personalised pathways and destination outcomes are monitored effectively. The college receives support from the Careers Hub link and engages with wider colleagues and regional groups. Arden College works with a wide range of employees who contribute to planning and evaluation, ensuring careers provision meets learners' diverse needs and reflects best practice in SEND careers education. LFC delivered a 10-week employability programme. We work closely with the DWP and Job Centre. Our local link is The Mikhal group who offer a carousel of placements	
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2: Learning from careers and labour market information 88% Dec 2025 88% March 2026	All learners, parents and carers, teachers and staff who support learners should have access to good quality, up-to-date information about future pathways, study options and labour market opportunities. Young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents and carers may require different or additional information. All learners will need the support of an informed adviser to make	Progressive, responsive and differentiated careers learning journeys that are underpinned by relevant progressive careers-related learning outcomes, are informed by impact evaluation, the school or special school vision and priorities, and learner needs assessments Careers education, advice and guidance for identified early through a transition meeting with students, parents/carers. A plan is made and it will include a learner journey and how we will aim to reach their aspirational destination. Plans are reviewed termly and an evaluation of intervention and support informs college development planning and reporting. A range of external professionals, and LA's actively support students/parents/carers to plan for adulthood. Students all have IAG meetings with a Careers Advisor from career connect. Future options are fully discussed during annual reviews so that steps can be put into place to meet the aspirations. Destination data, termly targets and related data on all learners is used by Careers Leader, the senior leadership team and governors to measure progress of the careers development plan against	Continue the development of the TAS in the role of Job Coach to ensure they are fully aware of how to support a student on placement. – Job coaching training NATSPEC, this is due to a new staff team. Share and promote the latest LMI with students, parents/carers. – Added LMI data to the careers board -October 2025 Make further information about Careers education available to parents and carers by having a range of resources are available at their request. The Arden College website has a number of links and a page dedicated to parents/carers, which could be developed further -December 2026. Hold parent and carer coffee mornings where next steps can be discussed. Set it up as a market for next steps providers to speak to parents/carers and students (Parent advice event planned for Spring 2026) – Internal careers event has taken place and was a great success – March 2026 Hold an transition event that showcases local Social Care settings. October 2025
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	the best use of available information.	objectives, to inform continuous improvement and to inform evaluation and reporting. Sustained destinations data is systematically collected and analysed through our Destination spreadsheet Careers is a integral part of some students Individual curriculum. This is measured via the Quality team and the quality assurance process of a student's curriculum. The Careers Leader and SLT Lead meet half-termly to share updates regarding destinations and current pathways.	
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3: Addressing the needs of each young person 100% Dec 2025 100% March 2026	Learners have different careers guidance needs at different stages. Careers programmes should help learners navigate their concerns about any barriers to career progression or progression pathways. In addition, opportunities should be tailored to the needs of each learner, including any additional needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, young people with SEND and those	• Students undertake personalised work experience placements, that are individualised to them. • Session plans and resources are differentiated based on the needs of the students • A meeting with students, parents/carers is arranged in the first term to share our individual plan for them. This will include a learner journey and how we will aim to reach their aspirational destination • Records of students and their aspirational outcomes are kept. Each student has their own record and folder. • Students desired employment outcomes are articulated in their EHCP, and outcomes identified to support their aspiration in their individual curriculum. This is shared with all relevant stakeholders. • Students' EHCP target areas of development and skills are related to careers education. We work in partnership with families to understand any specific difficulties they may have and deliver appropriate strategies to overcome these	Introduce short, visual, and accessible LMI resources tailored for SEND learners (e.g., pictorial job profiles, simple labour-market charts). Added LMI data to the careers board - October 2025 Create a simple, accessible "Parent Guide to Next Steps and LMI" that can be shared at key transition points. Increase the frequency of parent workshops or drop-in sessions linked to Preparing for Adulthood and LMI. Create a library of success-story profiles (videos, case studies, ex-student talks) linked directly to different learner needs and aspirations. Offer targeted support for families at key transition points (entry, mid-programme, leaving). – Support targeted transitions have begun – March 2026
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	who are persistently absent.		
4: Linking curriculum learning to careers 81% Dec 2025 81% March 2026	As part of the providers programme of careers education, all subject staff should link curriculum learning with careers, even on courses which are not specifically occupation led. Subject staff should highlight the progression	• Progress in careers education is monitored and supported in line with other quality assurance processes • Tutors often make links to careers within their teaching and learning. • Each student's individual plan links back to the principles identified by Preparation for Adulthood. • Documented careers learning journeys that are responsive differentiated and underpinned by relevant progressive careers-related learning outcomes, provide a measurable approach to developing essential skills through the curriculum. • The curriculum is tailored to individuals needs and learning outcomes identified in their EHCP.	Strengthen staff confidence With LMI by Introducing quick reference guides for staff (e.g., local job sectors, employment trends, supported internship pathways). Gather learner voice specifically on whether they understand how their learning links to jobs and skills. A questionnaire is due to be created in the summer term, and this will also be added to the agenda for the College council – March 2026 Ensure all staff know how to access support from the Careers Leader.

	routes for their subject and the relevance of knowledge and skills developed in their subjects for a wide range of future career paths.	• If required students will study Maths and English to a level that is relevant to them individually. • The vast majority of students understand the importance of Maths and English for their future destinations.	
5: Encounters with employers and employees 100 % Dec 2025 100% March 2026	Every learner should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment opportunities, including visiting speakers,	All students who are deemed appropriate have encountered a number of small, medium, and large businesses, enabling us to offer regular and meaningful encounters with employers. All students who it is relevant to encounter a work-placement throughout their time at Arden College, this may be internal or external We deliver bespoke and meaningful work-based opportunities across the academic year. Our business and enterprise initiative allows all our students to contribute to its success. All students where it is deemed appropriate have a scheduled individual IAG meeting set.	Continue to develop our Business and Enterprise offer, so that all students at all Phases can be involved in some capacity. Students are completing lots of additional enterprise activities in the summer term to raise money for end-of-year events- March 2026 Continue developing a system that captures all encounters with an employer/employee are monitored and evaluate its success. VG in looking at the capacity of Databridge to do this- March 2026 Ensure that students participate in an annual National Careers event- Students attended a local event with the support of the internal careers lead – March 2026

	mentoring and enterprise schemes, and could include learners' own part-time employment where it exists.	The Careers Programme is individualised. It is a documented, responsive and differentiated careers learning journey, underpinned by relevant progressive careers-related outcomes. Student needs are assessed and informed through multiple meaningful encounters with employers, with clear intent for all learners and for specific cohorts.	Hold a national event, a reverse careers fair.- Completed March 2026 Continue to invite employers to give talks about the work they do to inspire the students.
6: Experiences of workplaces 100% Dec 2025 100% March 2026	Every learner should have first-hand experiences of workplaces to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks.	All students who is deemed appropriate have encounter with a number of small, medium, and large businesses enabling us to offer regular and meaningful encounters with employers. As part of the curriculum planning, students engage in a range of work-related learning at different settings. Students are fully supported to engage with employers through range of suitable activities. We offer embedded lessons around the employability skills, which for some lead to a qualification in E3-L2 Employability Work based placements are provided on a gradual basis beginning in a student's first year with us, they would attend internal placements with the impact of them making wise career choices and graduating on to an external	Continue to build on our already established bank of core placement opportunities. All Work Based Placements need to be progressive so that they build on previous placement experience.

		placement in an area of employment they wish to work and forge a career.	
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		Support is built around an individual and is tailored to their aspirations as identified through their EHCP	
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7: Encounters with further education and higher education 40% Dec 2025 40% March 2025	All learners should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them, including academic, technical and vocational routes. This should incorporate learning in schools, colleges, independent training providers (ITPs), universities and in the workplace.	All students at Arden are supported to enhance their skills, providing opportunities for greater responsibility and challenge, as part of ongoing career progression and development. Through having an ambitious Career education curriculum, we offer careers lessons, and via the Annual Review process, students and their families are made aware of the opportunities available to them in the local area, e.g., employment and Further Education. Independent Travel Training is delivered with students who are able. We have developed a link with the Mikhail Group, who speak to students about different roles in Hospitality A link is to be made with Southport and Preston colleges A link has been made with LFC Engagement with employers is informed by relevant LMI and learner need. There is evidence that employer engagement informs multiple progressive and meaningful employer encounters for learners and curriculum planning/high quality teaching.	When appropriate students are to attend an annual Careers Fair and open evenings in their local areas where they encounter and learn about a range of apprenticeship, colleges, independent training providers, employers and university offers - Student engaged in the Arden careers event where they met local FE providers- next steps are to get students to attend events at the local FE sites. – March 2026 Continue to develop the link with more local college to ensure that students experience a Mainstream college setting.
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8: Personal guidance 100% Dec 2025 100% March 2026	Every learner should have opportunities for guidance meetings with a careers adviser, who could be internal (a member of staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These meetings should be available for all	As part of the curriculum planning, students engage in a range of work-related learning at different settings. Students are fully supported to engage with employers through range of suitable activities. All students where it is deemed appropriate have a scheduled individual IAG meeting set. We ensure from each meeting that each student as an action plan that is implemented and reviewed. Approaches to personal guidance is differentiated in response to the college cohort. The role of all parents and carers in supporting learners to engage in personal guidance is planned and communicated prior to IAG meetings taking place. All learners are supported to engage in personal guidance interviews. Processes for identifying learners' personal guidance needs and information	

learners whenever significant study or career choices are being made and should be scheduled to meet their individual needs. The careers leader should work closely with the careers adviser, SEND co-ordinator (SENDSCO) and other key staff to ensure personal guidance is effective and embedded in the careers programme.	sharing are embedded within whole college approaches to address the needs of all learners.	
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