

KING EDWARD VII SCHOOL POLICY



CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY

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Approved: GB

Leadership Team Responsibility: LAW

School Careers and Employability Policy

Policy Statement

Our School is committed to preparing all students for successful transitions into further education, higher education, employment or training. We aim to foster employability skills, raise aspirations and ensure every student receives impartial and inclusive careers guidance that equips them to thrive in an ever-changing world of work.

Aims

The key aims of this policy are to:

1. **Prepare for transition** – Support students in making informed, confident decisions about their future pathways
2. **Develop employability skills** – Embed essential skills such as critical thinking, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability and resilience
3. **Raise aspirations and broaden horizons** – Expose students to diverse opportunities, inspiring ambition and promoting social mobility
4. **Ensure equality, equity and inclusion** – Provide impartial guidance and challenge stereotypes, ensuring all students—regardless of background—have equal or enhanced access to opportunities
5. **Involve stakeholders** – Work in partnership with parents, carers, employers and the wider community to deliver meaningful real-world insights

Scope

Key principles of this policy apply across the whole School to:

- All students – Year 7 to Year 14
- Teaching and support staff who have a responsibility to contribute towards this
- Curricular and extracurricular activities
- Links with parents, carers and wider families
- Partnerships with employers and the wider community.

Employer encounters (Gatsby Benchmark 5)

Rationale

At King Edward VII School, we recognise the importance of providing all students with meaningful encounters with employers in line with Gatsby Benchmarks (DfE standards that Schools and colleges must achieve to ensure that young people receive appropriate guidance to ensure readiness for work). Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn directly from employers about work, employment and the skills valued in the workplace. These experiences support our students to make informed decisions about their futures and to develop the confidence, knowledge and skills required for success beyond School.

Definition of a meaningful encounter

A meaningful encounter with an employer must:

- Have a clear and shared purpose between employer and the student
- Be underpinned by appropriate and relevant learning outcomes
- Provide opportunities for two-way interaction between the student and the employer
- Be followed by reflection time for the student to consider insights, knowledge, or skills gained

Approaches to employer encounters

Encounters will be offered through a range of enrichment opportunities, which may include:

- Visiting speakers and employer-led workshops
- Mentoring programmes
- Enterprise and employability schemes
- Curriculum-linked projects with employer input
- Students' own employment experiences (where applicable)

The importance of employer encounters

Research highlights the significant impact of high-quality employer engagement on student outcomes:

- **Employment and Earnings:** Students who experience multiple quality encounters are more likely to access employment or further training after leaving School and benefit from higher lifetime earnings
- **Aspirations and Ambition:** Direct contact with employers broadens students' knowledge of the job market, helping them to consider opportunities beyond their immediate circumstances
- **Curriculum Engagement:** Linking learning to the workplace increases motivation and makes academic study more relevant and purposeful
- **Skills Development:** Employer encounters enable students to develop and understand workplace skills such as communication, teamwork, and resilience
- **Social Mobility:** Providing equitable access to employer networks supports students from all backgrounds, ensuring they have the guidance and opportunities necessary to succeed.

What is employability and how is it different from employment?

Employability is the potential for a worker to get a job and thrive, while employment is the realisation of that potential. Employability is about more than just getting a job; it is a lifelong process of developing the qualities that make students become a valuable asset to an employer and the economy. It encompasses:

- **Skills:** Specific knowledge and technical abilities, as well as transferable 'soft' skills like communication, teamwork, and problem-solving
- **Knowledge:** Understanding of a field and industry
- **Personal attributes:** Qualities such as positive attitude, reliability, flexibility, and a strong work ethic
- **Experience:** Practical experience gained through jobs or other activities

Employability is the foundation and toolkit, whereas employment is the structure built with those tools.

How is the employability of School students developed?

At King Edward VII School we are committed to preparing students for life beyond education by fostering employability skills that support lifelong learning, career readiness and meaningful contributions to society. Employability development is embedded through curriculum, extracurricular engagement, industry collaboration and real-world experiences.

Curriculum and skills development

- **Transferable skills:** The School integrates opportunities for students to develop essential skills including literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, critical thinking and communication
- **Work habits and attitude:** We encourage positive attitudes to learning, responsibility and professional work habits that enhance readiness for the workplace
- **Self-awareness:** Structured activities enable students to explore their strengths, interests and aptitudes, helping them make informed career decisions and develop a professional identity.

Extracurricular activities and experiences

- **Teamwork and collaboration:** Participation in groups, clubs and projects cultivates collaboration, leadership and problem-solving abilities
- **Resilience and confidence:** Extracurricular involvement supports resilience, self-confidence and personal growth
- **Networking:** Through School-led initiatives and community/industry engagement, students build networks and social capital that support future opportunities
- **Work-integrated learning and career planning/work experience:** The School promotes internships, placements and apprenticeships, providing students with opportunities to connect academic knowledge to professional practice
- **Industry partnerships:** Collaboration with employers and industry professionals ensures learning is relevant, applied and aligned with workforce needs
- **Career guidance:** Early and ongoing career education, including mentoring, coaching, and pathway planning helps students set realistic goals, explore career options and understand the world of work.

Appendix 1: Guidance for planning of employer engagement in Schools

- Establish clear objectives and learning outcomes for students and employers
- Identify appropriate engagement activities like workplace visits or business challenges
- Ensure clear communication with employers regarding logistics and expectations
- Make timely contact and maintaining ongoing relationships
- Design activities to be effective, efficient, equitable, and evidenced
- Review, evaluate and reflect on activities, to inform future planning.

Preparing appropriately for employability-based activities involves:

- **Defining clear goals:** ensure both the School and employer understand the purpose of the engagement, e.g. to provide career insights, develop specific skills, or support local industry
- **Identifying target audience:** determine which students or groups will benefit
- **Understand student needs:** recognise that young people often lack a realistic view of the local jobs market and need access to trusted information to develop career aspirations.

Choosing the Right Activities

- **Variety is key:** offer different types of activities, such as career fairs, webinars, hands-on workshops, business challenges, or work experience placements
- **Consider employer resources:** be flexible and offer options for businesses with limited staff time, such as online interactions or specific, targeted events
- **Focus on meaningful experiences:** design activities that provide students with a realistic view of the workplace and involve them in achievable tasks.

Logistics & Communication

- **Plan arrivals and logistics:** clearly communicate arrival, welcome, and the overall schedule to employers
- **Prepare employers:** brief them on the expected participation of students, their needs, and the learning objectives
- **Ensure timely communication:** respond to employer enquiries promptly (ideally within 48 hours) and maintain professional, jargon-free communication
- **Host effectively:** ensure a suitable space is available and consider providing refreshments to create a welcoming atmosphere,

Building relationships and impact

- **Foster ongoing relationships:** stay in touch beyond the initial activity by sharing updates, student success stories, and future opportunities
- **Gather feedback:** after each event, ask for feedback from employers and students to measure outcomes and improve future engagements
- **Promote sectors:** help employers showcase their industry, especially if they are facing skills shortages, to inspire students about potential future pathways.