



Dacorum Education
Support Centre

Policy Name	Provider Access Policy
Policy Type	Statutory / Non-Statutory
Date of Origin	December 2025
Agreed on	
Author	

Review Due Date	Review Completed	Amendments Y/N
December 2026		

DESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, to feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other's strengths and differences.

Respect, Aspiration, Resilience

Provider Access Policy Statement

Introduction

This policy sets out DESC's arrangements for managing provider access to learners, in line with Section 42B of the Education Act 1997, DfE Careers Guidance (Jan 2023), and Careers & Enterprise Company requirements. It ensures compliance with statutory duties and supports Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance.

Learner Entitlement

All learners in Years 8–11 are entitled to:

- Information about technical education qualifications, apprenticeships, and academic pathways.
- Encounters with a range of providers, including technical education and apprenticeships, through events, assemblies, and online sessions.
- Guidance on applications for academic and technical courses, including post-16 and post-18 options.
- To understand how to make applications for the full range of academic and technical courses.

For learners of compulsory school age these encounters are mandatory and there will be a minimum of two encounters for learners during the 'first key phase' (Year 8 to 9) and two encounters for learners during the 'second key phase' (Year 10 to 11).

These provider encounters will be scheduled during the main operational hours and the provider will be given a reasonable amount of time to, as a minimum:

- Share information about both the provider and the approved technical education qualification and apprenticeships that the provider offers
- Explain what career routes those options could lead to
- Provide insights into what it might be like to learn or train with that provider (including the opportunity to meet staff and learners from the provider)
- Answer questions from learners

Alignment with Gatsby Benchmarks

- Benchmark 5: Encounters with Employers and Employees.
- Benchmark 7: Encounters with Further and Higher Education.
- Benchmark 8: Personal Guidance integrated into careers programme.

Respect, Aspiration, Resilience

Previous providers

In previous terms/years we have invited the following providers from the local area to speak to our learners:

- Employability workshops delivered by the Job Centre Plus team
- Get Work Ready Days for both KS3 and KS4
- NHS careers talks
- West Herts College visits
- Oaklands College visits
- ASK Apprenticeships – delivered by the ASK team
- Services for Young People (SfYP) Personal Advisor – regular 1:1 session with all learners
- Careers talk from Police and Fire Brigade

Opportunities for Access

DESC offers statutory provider encounters and additional events integrated into the careers programme. Providers may engage through in-person or live online sessions. Digital resources and prospectuses will be shared with learners and parents/carers.

KS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get Work Ready Days (Autumn and Spring terms)• PSHE / Social Development (throughout the school year) · 1:1 session from Services for Young People (SfYP)• KS4 Options taster sessions for Year 9 learners (July)• KS4 Options session Assemblies for Year 9 (June)• Guest speakers run by department(s)• Weekly mentoring sessions
KS4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get Work Ready Days (Autumn and Spring terms)• 1:1 session with SfYP• Post-16 interviews/consultations for Year 10/11 learners (throughout the school year)• Post 16 provider open evenings: Opportunities to visit sixth form colleges, schools and other training providers regarding A level, Applied General technical and vocation and apprenticeships• Post 16 technical education options/pathways Year 11 Pod assembly (November/December)• Post 16 apprenticeships year 11 assembly Pod (November/December)• Apprenticeship Workshops• PSHE lessons• Careers Fair (in Centre) for Years 10-11 (February)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Generation Hertsmere” Careers Fair (November) • PSHE career lessons (Autumn Term) • Guest speakers run by department(s) • Interview workshop (Communities 1st) (July) • Weekly mentoring sessions • Extended work experience
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Meaningful provider encounters

One encounter is defined as one meeting/session between learners and one provider. We are committed to providing meaningful encounters to all learners. Meaningful online engagement is also an option, and we are open to providers that are able to provide live online engagement with our learners.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

All encounters will be adapted to meet the needs of SEND learners and those requiring additional support. Providers will be briefed on accessibility requirements.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Effectiveness of encounters will be reviewed annually through learner feedback, provider feedback, and impact tracking against Gatsby Benchmarks.

Parental Engagement

Parents/carers will be informed of provider encounters via newsletters, digital platforms, and invited to key events to support learner decision-making.

Management of Provider Access Requests Procedures

Providers wishing to request access should contact: Miss Naomi Walker, Co-Head of Centre,

Telephone: 01442 247476,

Email: admin@desc.herts.sch.uk.

Granting and Refusing Access

We aim to be as flexible as possible when working with external visitors, within the confines of the school day. Access is offered via, but not limited to:

- Assemblies
- PD Lessons
- Drop-down events as part of a calendared event

Access for external providers may only be declined or deferred where the provider fails to meet safeguarding requirements, where the proposed session does not meet the definition of a meaningful encounter, where there is an unavoidable timetable clash with examinations or whole-centre events, or where insufficient notice has been given (normally a minimum of 10 working days). Through this policy, the Centre does not promote academic routes over technical or apprenticeship pathways and ensures that all learners receive balanced, impartial and unbiased information about the full range of options available to them

Safeguarding

Our Safeguarding policy outlines the Centre's procedures for checking the identity and suitability of visitors. Education and training providers will be expected to adhere to this policy. All visitors must comply with the Centre's safeguarding procedures, including signing in, wearing visitor ID at all times, and remaining supervised unless agreed in advance. All provider content must adhere to KCSIE and Prevent Duty expectations. The Centre complies with UK GDPR. Providers may only collect student information with the explicit consent of learners and/or parents, in line with our Data Protection Policy

Premises and facilities

The Centre will make the social areas, classrooms or private meeting rooms available for discussions between the provider and learners, as appropriate to the activity. The Centre will also make available AV and other specialist equipment to support provider presentations. This will all be discussed and agreed in advance of the visit with the Careers Leader or a member of their team.

Meaningful online engagement is also an option and we are open to providers that are able to provide live online engagement with our learners.

Providers are welcome to leave a copy of their prospectus or other relevant course literature in the Centre's social areas. These will be available to learners at lunch and break times.

Linked documents

· CEIAG Commitment and Vision Statement

Complaints:

Any complaints with regards to provider access can be raised following DESC's complaints procedure or directly with The Careers & Enterprise Company via provideraccess@careersandenterprise.co.uk

Monitoring Arrangement

DESC will evaluate the impact of provider encounters and the wider careers programme each year, drawing on student voice, destination data and feedback from visiting providers. Responsibility for overseeing and quality-assuring arrangements for provider access rests with Naomi Walker. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and, at each review, will be submitted to the Management Committee for formal approval.