

UNITY ACADEMY CAREERS STRATEGY 2026–2027

Our Vision & *Learners as Leavers* Framework

At Unity Academy, our mission is to change lives, leading to real opportunity and a positive future. We empower every pupil—irrespective of background or starting point—to develop the ambition, knowledge, cultural capital, and work ethic needed to thrive in modern society. Informed by the local context of Blackpool and Lancashire, our careers programme breaks down perceived barriers, tackles stereotypes, and connects learning directly to local and national labor market opportunities.

Learners as Leavers Intended Outcomes

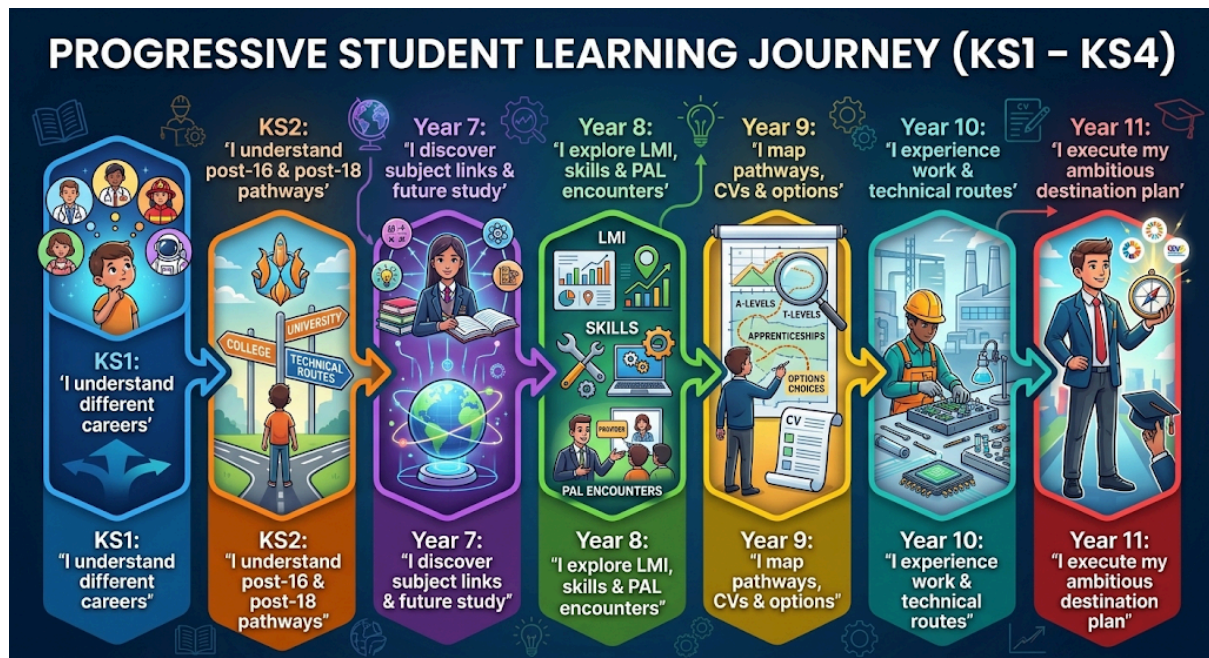
By the time a pupil completes their journey at Unity Academy, they will be:

- **Informed Decision Makers:** Equipped with a deep understanding of academic, technical, and vocational pathways (including T-Levels, Apprenticeships, and HE).
- **Workplace Literate:** Possessing core employability skills defined by the *Skills Builder Framework* (Communication, Problem Solving, Leadership, Resilience).
- **Self-Aware & Ambitious:** Able to articulate their personal strengths, navigate Labor Market Information (LMI), and execute a clear destination plan.
- **Experienced:** Equipped with first-hand experience of modern workplaces and statutory technical encounters.

Strategic Improvement Priorities (2026–2027)

1. **Establish a Cohesive, Data-Driven Careers Plan (GB1 & GB2):** Fully embed **Compass+** across the academy. Provide direct access to the Independent Careers Adviser and pastoral teams to track interventions, FSQ career-readiness data, and destination plans in real time.
2. **Embed Purposeful Careers in Every Curriculum Area (GB4):** Implement whole-staff CPD using CEC Careers Learning Outcomes. Require every subject faculty to map explicit career connections and disciplinary applications into Key Stage 3 and 4 schemes of learning.
3. **Expand Workplace Experiences & Statutory PAL Compliance (GB5, GB6 & GB7):** Deliver a structured **Work Experience Framework** for KS4 aligned with DfE 2026 guidelines, and enforce statutory compliance with Provider Access Legislation (PAL) across Years 8–11.

Progressive Pupil Learning Journey (KS1 – KS4)



Curriculum & Encounters Mapping

Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2

Key Stage / Year	Core Curriculum Theme	Employer & Provider Encounters (GB5, GB7)	Gatsby Benchmarks
KS1 (Y1–Y2)	<i>What is a Career & Breaking Stereotypes</i>	• Interview an Employee (Remote/Live) • Primary Futures "This is my Career" • Industry Visitors (NHS, STEM, Emergency Services)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
KS2 (Y3–Y6)	<i>Exploring Pathways & Employability Skills</i>	• Y5/Y6 University & Technical College Workshops • Skills Builder Framework Integration • Y11 Pupil Ambassador Career Presentations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

Curriculum & Encounters Mapping

Key Stage 3 & Key Stage 4

Year Group	Focus / Curriculum Theme	Planned Activities & PAL Encounters	Statutory PAL & Guidance Compliance	Compass+ Tracking Point
Year 7	<i>Subject Relevance & Pathways</i>	• Faculty-led STEM & Arts Career Modules • BAE Systems STEM Outreach • Oxbridge Academic Awareness	• GB4 Subject Mapping • Impartial FE/HE Overview	Baseline FSQ Assessment logged
Year 8	<i>LMI, Skills & Technical Options</i>	• Lancashire LMI & Enterprise Adviser Workshops • Mandatory PAL Encounter 1: Local FE/Technical College • Mandatory PAL Encounter 2: Apprenticeship Provider	• Meets PAL Statutory Duty (2 encounters Y8/9) • LMI integration	LMI research & Skills Audit recorded

Year 9	<i>Options, Applications & Career Mapping</i>	• Options Process & Career Mapping Form Time • CV & Application Writing Units (PSHE) • Employer Mock Interview Day & Blackpool Careers Fair	• 1:1 Group Guidance Interviews • Pre-NEET Identification	Options Guidance & Readiness Score updated
Year 10	<i>Workplace Readiness & Technical Routes</i>	• 1–2 Week Structured Work Experience Framework (Workplace placement or immersive simulation) • Mandatory PAL Encounter 3: T-Level & HTQ Provider • Mandatory PAL Encounter 4: Independent Training Provider	• Meets PAL Statutory Duty (2 encounters Y10/11) • DfE 2026 Work Experience Mandate	1:1 Guidance Summary & Placement Record logged

Year 11	<i>Destination Execution & Post-16 Pathways</i>	• 1:1 Impartial Careers Guidance (Claire Baker - EBP NW) • Targeted Application Support Clinics (College, Apprenticeship, Sixth Form) • NEET Risk Intensive Intervention & Parental Consultations	• Universal 1:1 Independent Guidance Guarantee • Equal weighting to Academic & Technical	Intended Destination & Confirmed Offer recorded
----------------	---	---	---	---

Framework for Gatsby Benchmarks Compliance

Gatsby Benchmark 1: A Stable Careers Strategy

- Strategic Plan published on school website, updated annually, and approved by SLT and Governors.
- Progress measured termly via Compass+ and evaluated using pupil, parent, and employer feedback.
- **Governance Oversight:** Dedicated Link Governor for Careers conducts bi-annual reviews.

Gatsby Benchmark 2: Learning from Career & Labour Market Information (LMI)

- LMI embedded into RRS, PSHE, Tutor Time, and parent newsletters.
- Parents supported via the *Talking Futures* toolkit and dedicated LMI workshops during Options and Parents' Evenings.

Gatsby Benchmark 3: Addressing the Needs of Each Pupil

- **Inclusion Focus:** Tailored career pathways and additional 1:1 guidance for SEND (EHC Plan) pupils, Looked-After Children (LAC), and Pupil Premium cohorts.
- **NEET Risk Management:** Early identification in Year 9 with targeted multi-agency mentoring and pathway tracking.
- **Alumni Network:** Active Unity Alumni database established to inspire current pupils and challenge local stereotypes.

Gatsby Benchmark 4: Linking Curriculum Learning to Careers

- Every faculty leader maps explicit career links within Key Stage 3 & 4 schemes of work using CEC Learning Outcomes.
- Whole-staff CPD delivered annually focusing on subject-specific disciplinary applications and STEM pathways.

Gatsby Benchmark 5: Encounters with Employers and Employees

- Guaranteed minimum of two employer encounters per academic year for every pupil (KS1–KS4).
- Annual Mock Interview Day in Year 9 involving local business partners and employers.

Gatsby Benchmark 6: Experiences of Workplaces

- Fully aligned with **DfE 2026 Guidance**: Delivery of structured KS4 Work Experience activities (placements and workplace encounters with employers such as Vinci Construction).
- Progressive workplace visits integrated across Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

Gatsby Benchmark 7: Encounters with Further and Higher Education

- Full compliance with statutory **Provider Access Legislation (PAL)**: Guaranteed encounters with FE colleges, apprenticeship providers, and technical education specialists.
- Oxbridge Partnership and University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) SUN project visits embedded from Year 5 to Year 11.

Gatsby Benchmark 8: Personal Guidance

- Universal entitlement: Every pupil in Year 10 and Year 11 receives at least one 1:1 guidance interview with a qualified, independent Level 6 Careers Adviser (Claire Baker).
- Targeted early 1:1 guidance provided in Year 9 to support post-16 pathway planning and options selection.

Alignment with the Ready, Respectful, Safe Curriculum

Employability skills and professional standards are directly linked to Unity Academy's core behavioral framework:

- **READY (Professionalism & Punctuality)**: High attendance, punctuality, self-regulation, resilience, and personal presentation are explicitly linked to workplace expectations and career success.
- **RESPECTFUL (Communication & Teamwork)**: Focuses on active listening, professional etiquette, spoken English (oracy), and constructive communication in diverse teams, supported by employer video insights.
- **SAFE (Workplace Health, Safety & Ethics)**: Teaches online safety, digital footprint management, professional boundaries, and legal rights in the workplace.

Strategic Action Plan & Governance (2026–2027)

Strategic Priority	Key Leverage Actions	Lead Responsible	Target Date	Success Criteria & Measurement
1. Leadership Vision & Compass+ Integration	• Roll out Compass+ across careers and pastoral teams. • Provide Claire Baker (Careers Adviser) direct system access. • Implement FSQ surveys at Y7, Y9, and Y11.	Strategic/ Operational Leads	Nov 2026	100% of pupil encounters and guidance notes logged on Compass+; FSQ baseline completed.
2. Gatsby Benchmark 4 Curriculum Delivery	• Deliver whole-staff CPD on CEC Career Learning Outcomes. • Audit departmental curriculum maps across all faculties. • Share best practice examples.	Curriculum SLT / Careers Leads	Jan 2027	100% of subject schemes of learning feature explicit, audited career learning outcomes.
3. Work Experience & Statutory PAL Compliance	• Launch structured KS4 Work Experience Framework. • Schedule 4 statutory PAL technical or apprenticeship encounters across Y8–Y11.	Careers Lead / EBP NW	March 2027	100% KS4 work experience participation; PAL compliance verified and logged.

4. Parental Engagement & Alumni Network	• Launch <i>Talking Futures</i> parent portal. • Establish Unity Alumni database with local employer links.	Careers Lead / Pastoral Team	Dec 2026	Increased parent engagement at options events; alumni network active in encounters.
--	--	------------------------------	----------	---

Provider Access Policy Statement (Summary)

Unity Academy actively welcomes technical, vocational, and apprenticeship providers in accordance with Section 42B of the Education Act 1997 and updated Provider Access Legislation.

- **Access Opportunities:** Providers are granted access during dedicated assembly weeks, careers fairs, and subject-specific workshops.
- **Facilities Provided:** The academy provides hall space, AV equipment, and small-group rooms to facilitate provider presentations.
- **Requests for Access:** Education and training providers wishing to speak to pupils or parents should contact careers leads listed below or careers@unity.fcat.org.uk.

Careers Leadership & Multi-Agency Team

- **Strategic Careers Lead:** Seth Wilkins (seth.wilkins@fcat.org.uk)
- **Careers Lead (Operations):** Rachael Forrest (r.watson@unity.fcat.org.uk)
- **Independent Level 6 Careers Adviser:** Claire Baker (*Education Business Partnership North West*)
- **Enterprise Coordinator:** Chris Maddock (*Inspira / Lancashire Careers Hub*)
- **Enterprise Adviser:** Hannah Bailey (*Social Value Manager, Vinci Construction*)
- **Governance Oversight:** FCAT Academy Governor Board