

Unity Academy Policy Statement on Provider Access

Compliance with Section 42B of the Education Act 1997 (as amended by the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022)

Introduction

This policy statement sets out Unity Academy's arrangements for managing access of providers of technical education and apprenticeships to pupils in Years N to 11. It outlines the school's approach to ensuring that pupils are informed about the full range of education and training options available to them, in line with statutory requirements under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997, also known as the Provider Access Legislation (PAL).

Pupil Entitlement

All pupils at Unity Academy in Years 8 to 11 are entitled to:

- Find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeship opportunities as part of a careers programme that provides information about the full range of education and training options available at each transition point.
- Hear from a range of local education and training providers about the opportunities they offer, including technical education qualifications, apprenticeships and other post-16 pathways.
- Understand how to make applications for the full range of academic, technical and apprenticeship routes.
- Participate in at least four mandatory encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships during their time at Unity Academy.

In accordance with Provider Access Legislation, Unity Academy will provide:

- Two mandatory provider encounters during the first key phase, taking place at any time during Year 8 or between 1 September and 28 February of Year 9.
- Two mandatory provider encounters during the second key phase, taking place at any time during Year 10 or between 1 September and 28 February of Year 11.

Within each key phase, the two statutory encounters will involve different providers.

All statutory encounters will take place for a reasonable period during the standard school day and will be available to all pupils in the relevant cohort.

During each statutory encounter, providers will be given sufficient opportunity to:

- explain who they are and the education or training they provide;

- explain the approved technical education qualifications and/or apprenticeships they offer;
- explain the careers and progression routes to which these opportunities may lead;
- give pupils an insight into what learning or training with the provider is like; and
- answer questions from pupils.

Unity Academy will ensure that encounters are accessible and appropriate for all pupils, including pupils with SEND.

Management of Provider Access Requests

Procedure

Providers wishing to request access should contact the Careers Leadership Team:

- **Seth Wilkins** – Strategic Careers Lead
- **Rachael Watson** – Operational Careers Lead
- **Telephone:** 01253 355493
- **Email:** seth.wilkins@fcatt.org.uk / r.watson@unity.fcatt.org.uk (*Careers Team Contacts*)

Access Considerations

To be granted access as a provider, the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- Curriculum time availability.
- Availability of staff to support the session.
- Availability of required facilities.
- Appropriate educational and career content.
- Other departmental requirements on the same day.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) status of visiting personnel.

Opportunities for Access

A number of events integrated into the school's careers programme offer providers an opportunity to come into school to speak to pupils. Providers are invited to request access for these events and activities as appropriate. Below is an outline of access events across year groups, including statutory Provider Access Legislation (PAL) mandatory encounter designations:

Year Group	Event / Activity	Timing	Statutory PAL Requirement
Years N–6	Further Education experiences, STEM activities/providers/competitions, Employer experiences for pupils.	Autumn, Spring, and Summer Terms	Primary Career Awareness
Years 7, 8 & 9	Careers Fair, Assemblies, Technical Education & Apprenticeship Workshops.	Spring and Summer Terms	Mandatory Key Stage 3 Encounters <i>(Minimum 2 encounters across Y8–9)</i>
Years 10 & 11	Employer Encounters, Apprenticeship Talks, Careers Fair, Technical Education Assemblies.	Autumn and Spring Terms	Mandatory Key Stage 4 Encounters <i>(Minimum 2 encounters across Y10–11)</i>
Years 10 & 11	College visits, Technical Education Talks, Mock Interviews, Parents' Evening Talks.	Autumn, Spring, and Summer Terms	Post-16 Transition Pathways

Premises and Facilities

- The school will make suitable facilities available for discussions between providers and pupils, such as classrooms or the school hall, depending on the activity.
- The school will make available relevant information to support the event (e.g., student attendance lists and available resources such as interactive whiteboards and sound systems).
- Providers are encouraged to discuss their facility and resource requirements with the Careers Leader in advance to ensure appropriate arrangements can be made.

Safeguarding

- Unity Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.
- Providers accessing the school will be expected to adhere strictly to the school's safeguarding policy.
- Any visiting providers will be supervised by school staff throughout their visit and provided with relevant safeguarding information upon arrival.

Complaints

- Any complaints regarding the school's handling of provider access requests should be made through the school's formal complaints procedure, which is available on the school website.

Monitoring and Review

- The Strategic and Operational Careers Leads will monitor the implementation of this policy and ensure full statutory compliance.
- The policy will be reviewed annually by the school's leadership team and governing body.
- **Last Reviewed:** October 2026
- **Next Review Date:** July 2027

Measuring Impact

The impact of provider access and careers guidance is measured through several methods, including but not limited to:

- Feedback forms from pupils, parents, and employers.
- NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) figures published on the school website as Destination Data.
- 1:1 career guidance meetings with an independent Advisor or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member.
- Internal referral systems.
- Student perception surveys.
- Personal development tracking recorded through Compass+.

This policy ensures that Unity Academy meets its obligations under Section 42B of the Education Act 1997 and supports pupils in making informed decisions about their education and career pathways. For further information or to make an access request, providers should contact the Careers Leadership Team using the contact details provided above.