

PACE Northwest – Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance (CEIAG) Strategy & Policy

Alternative Education Provider · Liverpool, England

Approved by: Board of Directors · **Policy owner:** CEIAG Lead (Careers Leader)

Effective date: 29 August 2025 · **Reviewed:** 16 September 2026 · **Next review due:** 16 September 2027 (or sooner if law/guidance changes)

1. Purpose and scope

PACE Northwest provides impartial, high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) that helps learners and prospective learners make informed decisions about learning, work and life. This policy and strategy:

- sets out our CEIAG aims, standards and procedures;
- aligns to current government careers guidance for schools, colleges and independent training providers (ITPs);
- adopts the updated Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance, introduced for implementation from the 2025–26 academic year, as our organising framework; and
- supports current Ofsted inspection expectations, relevant funding rules and the matrix Standard for IAG quality.

Who it applies to: all PACE Northwest staff, subcontractors, delivery partners and associates; learners and prospective learners of all ages, including apprentices; and employers engaging with our provision. Where we operate in schools/colleges, we comply with host-institution access policies and safeguarding procedures.

2. Policy statement

PACE Northwest will provide CEIAG that is impartial, accessible, inclusive and learner-centred, addressing each learner's needs (including SEND) and promoting equality of opportunity regardless of protected characteristic or background. We will:

- give learners access to accurate, up-to-date labour market information (LMI) and appropriate personal guidance;
- ensure encounters with employers and meaningful experiences of workplaces are built into relevant programmes;
- champion all appropriate pathways, including apprenticeships, technical and vocational routes, higher education and employment with training, avoiding provider or route bias; and
- measure, evaluate and continuously improve CEIAG impact, including destinations.

3. Legal and standards framework (England)

This strategy reflects and should be read alongside the following, as updated from time to time:

- DfE Careers guidance and access for education and training providers (updated June 2026). For ITPs without a specific statutory careers requirement, this guidance is followed as a statement of good practice where applicable.
- Updated Gatsby Benchmarks of Good Career Guidance (implemented from the 2025–26 academic year).
- Current Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and relevant school / further education and skills inspection toolkits.
- Relevant current apprenticeship and adult-skills funding rules.
- matrix Standard for Information, Advice & Guidance quality.
- Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice (0–25).
- Safeguarding: Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 where applicable to the setting/activity, and Prevent duty guidance.
- Data protection: UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- **Board & CEO:** approve strategy, set tone, ensure resources and receive impact reports.
- **CEIAG Lead (Careers Leader):** policy owner; leads strategy and annual plan; oversees Gatsby implementation and termly self-assessment; maintains employer/provider networks; ensures personal-guidance arrangements; oversees destinations tracking and reporting.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** ensures CEIAG activities involving children and young people follow applicable safeguarding requirements, including KCSIE 2026; approves relevant risk assessments and ensures concerns are escalated appropriately.
- **Data Protection Officer (DPO):** ensures lawful processing of CEIAG data.

- **Curriculum Leads/Trainers/Assessors:** embed careers into teaching, learning and assessment; signpost LMI; support reviews, progression planning and employer encounters; record CEIAG activity.
- **Employer Engagement Team:** broker quality encounters and workplace experiences; assure health & safety and safeguarding; brief employers on inclusive practice.
- **All staff:** provide impartial information, avoid route/provider bias, and refer learners for personal guidance or specialist support when needed.

5. Learner entitlement

Every PACE Northwest learner/applicant will receive CEIAG appropriate to their age, programme and circumstances, including:

- accessible information about programmes, funding, support and progression;
- initial IAG before enrolment and appropriate initial assessment;
- a stable careers programme mapped to the Gatsby Benchmarks where applicable;
- encounters with employers and professional networks;
- meaningful workplace experience appropriate to programme and age;
- high-quality local and national LMI;
- access to appropriately qualified personal careers guidance, with actions recorded where appropriate;
- fair access and reasonable adjustments for SEND;
- progress reviews including next-step planning; and
- destinations support/signposting after completion where requested.

6. Strategy 2025–2027 (headline objectives & KPIs)

Objective A – Embed the updated Gatsby Benchmarks: publish an annual CEIAG plan and web statement; complete termly self-assessment; target ≥90% benchmark achievement by July 2027.

Objective B – Personal guidance access: provide personal guidance appropriate to learner need and key decision points; target ≥95% satisfaction and ≥90% action-plan completion where an action plan is required.

Objective C – Employer encounters & workplace experiences: provide meaningful employer encounters and workplace experiences appropriate to learner age and programme, recording and evaluating quality through learner reflection.

Objective D – Inclusive CEIAG: identify and reduce participation gaps for learners with SEND or from disadvantaged groups and review CEIAG access/impact.

Objective E – Destinations: track 3-, 6- and 12-month destinations where appropriate; set annual targets by programme; seek year-on-year improvement in sustained positive destinations.

Objective F – Quality assurance: maintain matrix Standard accreditation/readiness where relevant; internal review of IAG; annual policy training for relevant staff.

7. Programme design aligned to the Gatsby Benchmarks

PACE Northwest organises CEIAG around the eight updated Gatsby Benchmarks:

- **1. Stable careers programme** – publish aims, programme/calendar and contacts; review regularly; report to the Board.
- **2. Learning from career and labour market information** – help learners find, assess and use relevant LMI.
- **3. Addressing the needs of each young person** – tailor support and provide additional help for vulnerable/disadvantaged learners and those with SEND.
- **4. Linking curriculum learning to careers** – embed career learning and employer context within programmes.
- **5. Encounters with employers and employees** – schedule meaningful interactions with a diverse range of employers.
- **6. Experiences of workplaces** – provide structured workplace experiences appropriate to programme and age, with preparation and reflection.
- **7. Encounters with further and higher education** – expose learners to the full range of appropriate next-stage learning and training routes.
- **8. Personal guidance** – provide opportunities for guidance meetings with an appropriately trained careers adviser, scheduled around individual needs and significant choices.

8. Provider Access (schools/colleges)

When invited by a school or college, including through its Provider Access Policy, PACE Northwest will provide impartial information about apprenticeships, technical education and training. We will respond promptly, provide suitable staff/employer representatives, tailor content, comply with host safeguarding and visiting-speaker arrangements, and provide follow-up information.

Contact for provider access: becs@pace-com.org

9. Personal guidance standards

Personal guidance will be impartial and learner-centred and delivered by an appropriately trained/qualified careers adviser in line with current good practice. It will cover relevant options, entry requirements, finance, support needs, reasonable adjustments and progression planning. Safeguarding concerns are escalated immediately to the DSL. Advisers are expected to follow relevant professional ethical standards and maintain CPD.

10. Information quality and LMI

Published information will be accurate, current and unbiased, including entry requirements, costs/funding, delivery mode, assessment, support and realistic outcomes. Appropriate LMI sources will be cited in learner materials. Marketing claims will comply with consumer protection law.

11. Equality, diversity, inclusion and SEND

CEIAG will challenge stereotypes and mitigate barriers. We provide accessible formats and reasonable adjustments; promote diverse role models; tailor advice for care-experienced learners, young carers and those with SEND; signpost specialist services; and review participation/outcomes to identify inequity.

12. Safeguarding and Prevent

CEIAG activity involving under-18s follows applicable safeguarding requirements and PACE Northwest safeguarding procedures, including KCSIE 2026 where relevant. External speakers, visits and workplace experiences are subject to appropriate risk assessment and safeguarding checks. Concerns are recorded and escalated in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

13. Data protection and records

We process CEIAG data under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 with appropriate privacy information and retention arrangements. Records are stored securely on approved systems. Learners can exercise information rights through the DPO (becs@pace-com.org).

14. Funding-rule alignment (apprenticeships/adult skills)

PACE Northwest will follow the current funding rules applicable to the provision it delivers, including requirements relating to pre-enrolment information, initial assessment, recognition of prior learning, learner support, progress and evidence.

15. Quality assurance and evaluation

- Self-assess against the Gatsby Benchmarks at least termly; use Compass+ or another appropriate mechanism where available/applicable.
- Collect learner and employer feedback after key CEIAG activities and review by group where useful.
- Track destinations at appropriate checkpoints and report outcomes to the Board.
- Review IAG records, advice quality and impartiality; track remedial actions.
- Maintain matrix readiness/accreditation where relevant or commissioned.

16. Complaints and appeals

Concerns about CEIAG should be raised with the CEIAG Lead in the first instance. If unresolved, follow the Company Complaints Policy. Learners may also have access to relevant external complaint routes depending on the provision/funding.

17. Publication and contacts

This policy, the CEIAG programme, relevant provider-access contact details and information on how the programme is reviewed will be published or made available as appropriate.

- CEIAG Lead: becs@pace-com.org
- Outreach (schools/colleges): becs@pace-com.org
- Safeguarding (DSL): becs@pace-com.org

- Data Protection (DPO): becs@pace-com.org

Appendix A – Annual CEIAG Plan (example headings)

- Careers programme calendar mapped to Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Employer encounters & workplace experiences timetable.
- Personal guidance schedule and referral routes.
- Staff CPD plan (CEIAG, safeguarding, Prevent, SEND, LMI).
- LMI/resources plan and marketing-information checks.
- Destinations tracking methodology and targets.
- Inclusion actions and adjustments, including SEND.

Appendix B – Personal Guidance Referral Pathway

1. Tutor/assessor or learner initiates referral.
2. Triage by CEIAG Adviser, prioritising safeguarding/SEND where appropriate.
3. Guidance interview and action plan where appropriate.
4. Follow-up and referral to specialist/support services where needed.

Appendix C – Employer Encounters & Work Experience Minimum Standards

- Clear learning outcomes and appropriate briefing for learners and employers.
- Safe, inclusive activities with relevant risk assessment and safeguarding checks.
- Learner preparation and reflection; evaluation collected and reviewed.

Appendix D – Destinations Tracking

- Data sources may include learner records, surveys, employer/HEI feedback and other lawful sources.
- Indicative checkpoints: 3, 6 and 12 months.
- Metrics may include sustained education/training/employment, progression and level/sector alignment.

Appendix E – Definitions

- **CEIAG** – a whole-organisation approach to careers education alongside information, advice and guidance services.
- **Personal guidance** – impartial one-to-one careers guidance delivered by an appropriately trained/qualified adviser.
- **Meaningful experience of the workplace** – structured first-hand workplace experience with clear purpose, preparation and reflection, proportionate to programme and age.

Version control

v1.1 – reviewed 16 September 2026.