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## Careers & IAG Strategy

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## **BCA Values and Commitment to Employability**

### **Values**

Our values express what BCA stands for and how we will conduct ourselves as an organisation:

- We will provide a supportive and inclusive approach to learning
- We will give everyone the opportunity to develop and grow as an individual
- We will inspire our students to achieve their aspirations and recognise achievement
- We will provide a safe and open culture which promotes friendship and family values

### **Employability**

All of our courses are vocational and have been designed with input from employers to ensure students will learn the skills, knowledge and attitudes that recruiters are looking for.

We do this by creating opportunities for them to be exposed to what is really happening in industry so most of our courses have a work-related element, for example a formal industry placement.

These are some of the different kinds of work-related activities that you might experience on your course:

- Live briefs from employers
- Industry visits
- Guest speakers
- Research projects
- Industry placements

## **Our Vision for Careers Guidance at BCA**

Our vision for Careers Guidance at BCA is to provide a comprehensive and progressive programme that provides effective careers information, advice and guidance for all students. By raising students' awareness and broadening their understanding of progression and employment options, we aim to enable them to make informed, realistic decisions at key transition points in their life. We are a fully inclusive college and believe that support and encouragement are necessary for all students to ensure that they make the best decisions for their future, and to build resilience and a deeper understanding of the constantly changing world of work. This strategy sets out a plan of how we intend to work towards meeting this vision.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 BCA is committed to offering a Careers Service that is accessible to everyone. To ensure that all students are fully equipped with the skills and knowledge that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and work.
- 1.2 BCA commits to providing an excellent Careers Service that will enable students to understand the range of opportunities available to them in the current economy and acquire the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in the workplaces of the future. This strategy sets out the ambitions and plans for the College's careers provision through Beyond BCA, the combined Careers and Industry Placement department.
- 1.3 BCA firmly believes that by providing high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance, students will be confident about their future success. This will result in:
  - Students understanding the full range of opportunities available to them
  - Students gaining the skills that are valued in the workplace
  - Students having first-hand experience of the workplace
  - Students receiving access to an excellent programme of advice and guidance delivered by individuals with the right skills and experience
  - Students having access to careers advice and guidance that is tailored to their individual circumstances
  - The College meeting its key strategic priorities outlined in the College Strategic Plan

## **2. Entitlement**

BCA will offer a careers programme that is stable and structured. The College will use the 8 Gatsby Careers Benchmarks (See Appendix A) to measure the results and impact of the following ambitions:

- 2.1 Students will access high quality, impartial careers information advice and guidance from appropriately qualified staff to help clarify their aspirations for work, understand the options open to them and make informed decisions in terms of employment, further study and apprenticeships.
- 2.2 Students will receive support to develop their skills and knowledge to enter the employment market, and gain the confidence to get them there.
- 2.3 Students will receive support to find suitable industry placements or experience to help develop the skills they need to secure and sustain meaningful employment.
- 2.4 Students, including disadvantaged students, will have the platform to receive tailored support.

2.5 Data and technology will be used to drive continuous improvements in careers delivery.

### **3. Mechanisms of Delivery**

#### **3.1 Careers Lead**

The Careers Manager, Heads of Department, Course Leaders and Pastoral Tutors will lead on the compliance with the 8 Gatsby Careers Benchmarks.

#### **3.2 Beyond BCA - Industry Placement**

Students receive support from the team of Employability and Placement Advisers to find suitable industry placements within their chosen area.

#### **3.3 Access to Advice and Guidance**

All students will be able to access high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance through one-to-one and group sessions with a qualified Careers Adviser, as well as from experienced and qualified Subject Teachers.

#### **3.4 Pre-Enrolment**

The Careers Service, Subject Teachers and Pastoral Tutors offer a range of career exploration opportunities, including:

- One-to-one appointments
- Group tutorials themed around careers
- College visits themed around careers
- Interviews with Subject Teachers (vocational specialists)
- Taster Days

#### **3.5 Events and Workshops**

The Beyond BCA team, Subject Teachers and Pastoral Tutors will between them organise a range of events, visits, workshops and activities to support students to understand the wide range of options, take ownership of their aspirations and make informed decisions in terms of career goals. These activities will include:

- Careers and Higher Education Fairs (including virtual)
- Visits to HE and Apprenticeship conventions
- University taster sessions
- CV workshops
- External guest speakers bespoke to learning areas
- Workshops delivered by staff who are vocational specialists
- Educational visits
- Industry placements/experience
- Personal Statement sessions
- University visits
- Student finance workshops

- One-to-one careers guidance
- Careers briefings
- Employment workshops
- Mock Interview workshops
- Access to wider careers research tools through Unifrog

### 3.6 Induction and Tutorial Sessions

The Beyond BCA team and Subject Teachers will work collaboratively to fully support the Tutorial Programme and provide relevant resources to enhance the student opportunity.

### 3.7 Job Boards

The Beyond BCA team and Subject Teachers will provide up to date information on employment opportunities relating to the local labour market, using displays on Job Boards and Classroom, as well as face to face discussion.

### 3.8 At Risk Students

Students who are at risk of becoming NEET or withdrawing from their course will be contacted by the Subject Teacher or Pastoral Tutor and provided with high quality support and options, and offered a one-to-one appointment with the Careers Manager.

### 3.9 Contact details for the Beyond BCA and Careers Manager are:

**Tricia Whitehouse, Industry Placement Manager (to be Beyond BCA Manager)**  
01628 827323 or [pawhitehouse@bca.ac.uk](mailto:pawhitehouse@bca.ac.uk)

**Alice Kane, Careers Manager**  
01628 827326 or [akane@bca.ac.uk](mailto:akane@bca.ac.uk)

## 4. Higher Education

- 4.1 The Beyond BCA team, Pastoral Tutors and Subject Teachers will support students at every stage of applying to university.
- 4.2 The Careers Manager and Beyond BCA team will quality check UCAS applications prior to their submission.
- 4.3 The Subject Teachers will provide a high quality personally written and proofread Academic Reference for all students wishing to apply to HE.
- 4.4 The College will deliver organised talks and resource guides to parents/carers on how to support the student through university.

- 4.5 The Beyond BCA team will organise an annual HE Event to enable students to discuss progression opportunities with a range of universities.
- 4.6 The Careers Manager and Subject Teachers will organise time tabled HE briefings.
- 4.7 The Careers Manager will organise HE Student Finance Talks for students to help clarify the student finance process.

## **5. Quality and Review**

- 5.1 Progress will be monitored by the Link Manager during regular 1:1 Meetings with the Careers Leader. There will be an annual review in line with the College Appraisal Procedure.
- 5.2 The quality of Careers Advice and Guidance will be monitored through the College Self Assessment Process which will inform the College Quality Improvement and Strategic Plan.
- 5.3 The College will use surveys, destinations data and focus groups to gather student feedback and monitor the effectiveness of this Careers Strategy.
- 5.4 The College will maintain 'Matrix' quality standards.
- 5.5 The Careers Strategy will be updated every 2 years. Next review due: February 2023.

## The 8 Gatsby Careers Benchmarks

### 1. **A stable careers programme**

Every school and college should have an embedded programme of career education and guidance that is known and understood by students, parents, teachers, governors and employers.

### 2. **Learning from career and labour market information**

Every student, and their parents, should have access to good quality information about future study options and labour market opportunities. They will need the support of an informed adviser to make best use of available information.

### 3. **Addressing the needs of each student**

Students have different career guidance needs at different stages. Opportunities for advice and support need to be tailored to the needs of each student. A school's careers programme should embed equality and diversity considerations throughout.

### 4. **Linking curriculum learning to careers**

All teachers should link curriculum learning with careers. STEM subject teachers should highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.

### 5. **Encounters with employers and employees**

Every student should have multiple opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. This can be through a range of enrichment activities including visiting speakers, mentoring and enterprise schemes.

### 6. **Experiences of workplaces**

Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing and/or work experience to help their exploration of career opportunities, and expand their networks.

### 7. **Encounters with further and higher education**

All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

### 8. **Personal guidance**

Every student should have opportunities for guidance interviews with a career adviser, who could be internal (a member of school staff) or external, provided they are trained to the appropriate level.