

Careers Strategy 2022/23

Title of Strategy: Careers Strategy	Staff Member responsible: Vice Principal - Student Services
Version: Final	Review Date: September 2023

1. **Background** The South Thames Colleges Group (STCG) is made up of Carshalton College, Kingston College, Merton College and South Thames College, which merged on 1 August 2017. South Thames Colleges Group is one of London's largest providers of post-16 education and training and is an ongoing and significant contributor to its local communities.
 - 1.1 South Thames Colleges Group is committed to offering a careers service that is accessible to everyone. This will 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. *'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' (Gatsby Benchmark 1)*
 - 1.2 South Thames Colleges Group commits to providing an excellent careers service that will enable students to understand the range of opportunities available to them in today's 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 to expand the quality of the College's careers provision.
 - 1.3 South Thames Colleges Group firmly believes that by providing high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance its students will be confident about their future success. This will result in:
 - *All students understanding the full range of opportunities available to them, the skills that are valued in the workplace and to have first-hand experience in the workplace*
 - *All students receiving access to an excellent programme of advice and guidance delivered by individuals with the rights skills and experience*
 - *All students having access to careers advice and guidance that is tailored to their individual circumstances*
 - *The College meeting its key strategic priorities outlined in South Thames College Groups Strategic Plan*

2. Entitlement

South Thames Colleges Group will offer a programme of high-quality impartial careers information, advice and guidance that is stable, structured and delivered by College staff equipped with the right skills and experience. The College adopts the Gatsby Careers Benchmarks model (See Appendix A) to measure the results and impact of the below:

- 2.1 All students can access high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance from appropriately qualified staff to help clarify their aspirations for work, to understand the options open to them and to take control of and make informed decisions in terms of job and career change, training and promotion. Opportunities for advice and support will be tailored to the needs of each student
- 2.2 All students will receive support to develop their skills and knowledge to enter the employment market, and to have confidence in their journey.

- 2.3 Young people will receive support to find suitable work placements or work experience to help develop the skills they need to enter the workplace and secure and sustain meaningful employment.
- 2.4 All students will have the opportunity to receive tailored support. Data and technology will be used to drive continuous improvements in careers delivery.

3. Method of delivery

3.1 Careers Lead

The Vice Principal Student Services is the Group's assigned Careers Lead.

3.2 Work Experience

Young people will receive support to find suitable work placements, work shadowing and/or work experience to help develop the skills they need to enter the workplace and secure and sustain meaningful employment.

3.3 Access to Advice and Guidance

Students will be able to access high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance through 1 to 1 and drop-in sessions with qualified Careers Advisers.

3.4 Pre-Enrolment

The Careers Teams and curriculum staff will offer the opportunity to access:

- *Drop in appointments*
- *School visits themed around careers*
- *Interviews*
- *Open events*
- *Taster Days*
- *Admissions evenings*

3.5 Events and Workshops

The Student Services Employability and Curriculum Teams and will organise a range of events, workshops and activities to support students in understanding their options, take control and make informed decisions in terms of their career goals and aspirations.

- *'Swap don't drop' events*
- *Careers and employment Fairs*
- *Employability weeks*
- *Higher Education Fairs*
- *CV Workshops*
- *External guest speakers bespoke to learning areas*
- *Educational visits*
- *Personal Statement Sessions*
- *University visits*
- *Student Finance Workshops*
- *Internal Progression Events*

3.6 **Induction and Tutorial Sessions**

The Careers Advisers and the Employability Team will work closely with curriculum areas to support Tutorial delivery linking student learning with careers and provide relevant resources to help them make informed decisions. STEM subject teachers will work with Careers advisers/Employability staff to highlight the relevance of STEM subjects for a wide range of future career paths.

3.7 **Job Opportunities**

The College will provide up to date information on employment opportunities relating to local labour market information, displayed on Job Boards / and through Kudos and Moodle.

3.8 **At Risk Students**

Students who are at risk of becoming NEET or withdrawn from the programme of study will be contacted to provide high quality, impartial careers information, advice and guidance on their next steps.

4. Higher Education

4.1 The College will support students at every stage of applying to Higher Education, including higher level Apprenticeships

4.2 Careers Advisers will support tutors and students with the checking of UCAS applications and personal statement, prior to their submission.

4.3 The College will work with HE institutions to provide Student Finance Workshops and Personal Statement sessions for students.

4.4 The College will organise the annual HE Fair to enable students to discuss progression opportunities with a range of universities.

5. Apprenticeships

5.1 Careers Advisors will provide support for apprentices who either take a break in learning or lose their employer.

5.2 Careers Advisors will support apprentices at the end of their programme to find a new employer if they are made redundant.

8. Quality, Reporting and Review:

8.1 Progress will be monitored by the Academic Team Leadership and PDPA Matrix group which will then report to College Management teams and Group Leadership team.

8.2 The quality of Careers Advice and Guidance will be monitored through the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), which will inform the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

8.3 The College will use student feedback via surveys and focus groups to monitor the effectiveness of the Careers Strategy.

8.4 The College will work towards maintaining 'Matrix' quality standards.

8.5 The strategy will be reviewed by Executive annually.

Cross-Referenced Policies

8.6 Employability and Employer Involvement Policy

8.7 Careers, Education, Information & Advice and Guidance Policy (CEIAG)

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Appendix A: The Gatsby Benchmark

The Gatsby 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 an appropriate level. These should be available whenever significant study or career choices are being made.