

## **PROVIDER ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS. AMENDED JANUARY 2023**

In the Skills for Jobs white paper, the department announced plans to strengthen this statutory requirement and create a clear minimum standard for compliance.

Through the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 we have made further provision as to the number of provider encounters that schools must offer and when, and set new parameters around the duration and content of each encounter.

All maintained schools and academies must provide six encounters with a provider of technical education or apprenticeships for year 8 to 13 pupils.

We have timed these six meetings to inform consideration of post-14, post-16 and post-18 options and progression to the next stage of education or training.

As a minimum, schools must offer:

- Two encounters for pupils during the 'first key phase' (year 8 or 9) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend, to take place any time during year 8 or between 1 September and 28 February during year 9.
- Two encounters for pupils during the 'second key phase' (year 10 or 11) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend, to take place any time during year 10 or between 1 September and 28 February during year 11.
- Two encounters for pupils during the 'third key phase' (year 12 or 13) that are mandatory for the school to put on but optional for pupils to attend, to take place any time during year 12 or between 1 September and 28 February during year 13.

Schools should encourage all pupils to attend the encounters, however, optional attendance for older pupils recognises that, while many 16- to- 18-year-olds will benefit from finding out more about post-18 technical options, some will be in the sixth form having made a firm decision to pursue their chosen pathway.

All six encounters must happen for a reasonable period of time during the standard school day.

Provider encounters that take place outside of school hours, for example parents evenings, do not count towards fulfilment of the legal requirement for six provider encounters, but schools are still encouraged to provide these complementary experiences for pupils and their parents.

Schools and providers should work together and schools must ask each provider to provide information to pupils that, as a minimum, includes:

- information about the provider and the approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships that the provider offers, 44
- information about the careers to which those technical education qualifications or apprenticeships might lead,
- a description of what learning or training with the provider is like,

- responses to questions from the pupils about the provider or approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Schools are already required by law to prepare a policy statement setting out the circumstances in which education and training providers will be given access to pupils. The new legislation requires schools to set out the times at which access is to be given and explain how they will meet the new legal requirement to put on six provider encounters.

(Information taken from Department of Education 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers Statutory guidance for schools and guidance for further education colleges and sixth form colleges January 2023')