

Careers Programme

Vision Statement – to inspire, inform, and raise aspirations of all students.

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Careers Team	Five Level 7 Qualified and Experienced Careers Advisers SUN Progression Mentor Two Careers Assistants Work Experience Coordinator & Work Experience Assistant

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NB This document is available in other formats and languages upon request; please contact us if you require alternative access.

Peter Symonds College places significant emphasis and priority on supporting students with their next steps, whatever direction they want to take. All students at the college are on a careers learning journey, moving towards decisions at key transition points and developing lifelong career development skills and knowledge. Our careers provision and programme has been designed to support all students on this journey while at college and beyond, and is responsive to need, with multiple encounters and experiences across each academic year. This helps all students develop their career readiness, essential skills for the workplace, while also enabling them to make well-informed decisions about education, training, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities.

The college is fully committed to and aware of the DfE publications linked to careers and the Gatsby Benchmarks, structuring our Careers Programme to meet statutory requirements and CDI Careers Development Framework. We are proud to have held the Quality in Careers Standard since 2008, fully meeting all the requirements in our most recent assessment in 2025. We are affiliated members of the CDI professional body and all Careers Advisers adhere to the CDI codes of practice. Continuing professional development linked to careers education is a priority for all staff, especially the careers team.

The College offers:

- A large dedicated Careers Department with resources and study space, staffed by the Careers Team and open throughout the college day
- Access to digital careers resources, which include the Unifrog platform, along with a comprehensive Intranet site for students and staff to access
- Unlimited access to impartial and unbiased one-to-one appointments with a qualified Careers Adviser throughout students' studies in college, with different types of appointments available and all bookable online or in person
- Targeted support to students in the following identified groups – EHCP; vulnerable; FCM; EAL or refugee; young carer; NCOP; or looked after child
- Opportunities for students to access meaningful encounters with a variety of employers, employees, self-employed staff, higher education providers, educational establishments and organisations through cross-college careers events with external visitors/stakeholders:
    - **Careers Day** – compulsory off-timetabled day in the spring term for all students, with approximately 150 talks delivered by external speakers
    - **Progression Fair** – spring term exhibition with approximately 80 stands, allowing students to explore higher education, employment, training providers, and gap opportunities with visiting representatives from these areas
    - **Symonds Lecture Programme** – compulsory 50-minute timetabled sessions for Lower Sixth students in the spring term, which cover careers sessions delivered by external speakers, focusing on progression
    - **Visiting Speaker Careers Talks/Workshops/Appointments** – organise approximately 45 opportunities during the academic year with visiting representatives, covering areas such as employability skills, higher education, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities
- Careers Education takes up a high proportion of the 40-minute tutorial programme delivered by tutors, which is compulsory for all students to attend weekly
- One-to-one reviews with a personal tutor to monitor progress and support progression
- Up-to-date job vacancy system, allowing students to view current and local labour market information and apply for suitable opportunities (including apprenticeships, part-time jobs, volunteering, and work experience), along with registering to get alerts when new relevant opportunities become available
- Relevant career opportunities are advertised to all students through a weekly Careers Bulletin and the Careers Google Classroom, along with regular emails advertising college careers events and support available
- Termly Careers Newsletter advertising key and relevant information, with a targeted newsletter for parents and a separate one for students and staff
- Students studying vocational courses, which take up the majority of their studies, will

participate in compulsory work experience
- A library of video recordings from visitor talks on careers and options after college

Student Careers Ambassadors play an essential role in our college, and student voice is a key part of our Careers Strategy. Any student can apply to become a Careers Ambassador, with responsibilities including attending termly meetings to help review and evaluate the Careers Programme; contributing to newsletters & social media presence; consulting & assisting with the creation of posters & displays; and meeting & greeting visitors at events. Over the last year, we have had four actively engaged Careers Ambassadors.

Below is a detailed overview of the careers provision provided to students, depending on whether they are a Level 2, Lower Sixth, or Upper Sixth student. Our Careers Programme is underpinned by progressive learning outcomes, tailored to the needs of learners, and is linked to the college's development plan. The programme is mapped against the Gatsby Benchmarks, with an aim to expose students to the career routes, opportunities, and possibilities available; allowing them to identify & develop their skills, qualities, and goals, to make informed and ambitious decisions about their next steps after college.

Table 1: Details of Careers Programme over the academic year for Level 2 Students on a One-Year Course

College Term	Year Group: Level 2, One-Year Course	Gatsby Benchmark Covered
Autumn	● Introduction to the Careers Department and launch of Unifrog ● Sign up for Careers Google Classroom to receive relevant information and opportunities ● Tutorial Activities on next steps and employability skills ● Symonds Lecture Programme begins and includes a welcome from SMT and applying for a Level 3 course ● Preparation and support begin for compulsory work experience via tutorial sessions and subject lessons ● Compulsory one-to-one careers interview ● Careers Advisers available at all progress review evenings to advise parents/carers on supporting their child with progression after the Level 2 course ● Support provided to students with re-applying to Peter Symonds College, along with other further education providers, training providers, or employers	1, 2,3,4, 1, 2, 3 1, 2, 3 1, 3 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 1, 3 , 8 1, 3 1 ,3 ,7
Spring	● Tutorial activities on labour market information, work experience, interview skills, Unifrog, and preparing for Careers Day & Progression Fair ● Apprenticeship talk ● Careers Day ● Progression Fair ● Employability & Skills Day ● Mock interviews with visiting employers ● Continued support provided for applying to courses or employment ● Compulsory work experience takes place ● Debrief and review of work experience	1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 5 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 1, 2, 3, 5 1, 2, 3, 5 1, 2, 3 1, 2, 3, 5 1, 3
Summer	● Tutorial Activity on the importance of backup options ● Offered another careers appointment ● Targeted support for students still seeking employment ● Additional support provided with progression on from the Level 2 course, from the tutor and the Careers Department	1 , 3 1 , 3 , 8 1, 3 1, 3

Table 2: Details of Careers Programme over the academic year for Lower 6th Students

College Term	Year Group: Lower Sixth/Year 12	Gatsby Benchmark Covered
Autumn	• Introduction to the Careers Department in Symonds Lecture (includes resources and support available) and introduction to Unifrog	1, 2,3,4
	• Careers Advisers available at all progress review evenings for parents/carers and students	1, 3 1, 2, 3, 4
	• Sign up for Careers Google Classroom to receive relevant information and opportunities	
	• Programme of lunchtime talks/events commences, which includes Armed Forces visits; studying abroad talks & fair; widening participation information; Employability Week of talks; and Student Finance eligibility webinar for Non-UK Nationals	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Spring	• Compulsory Symonds Lecture Programme covering: What next after College, Employability & Entrepreneurial Skills, Apprenticeships, Higher Education, and Student Finance	1, 2 ,3, 5, 7
	• Tutorial activities on labour market information; qualifications explained; preparation for Careers Day and Progression Fair; employability skills; work experience & volunteering; creating a LinkedIn profile and interview skills	1, 2, 4
	• Careers Day	
	• Progression Fair	1 , 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
	• Programme of specialist support commences for students considering applying to competitive courses or institutions	1, 2, 3, 5, 7 1, 2, 3
Summer	• Three separate information evening events for parents on Oxbridge; Future Options and Apprenticeships	1, 2, 3
	• Tutorial Activities on applying to higher education & writing personal statements, along with preparing for apprenticeship applications	1, 3
	• Specialist subject talks from alumni and industry professionals linking curriculum to careers and higher education	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
	• Optional talks on higher education, including writing a personal statement	1, 2, 3

Table 3: Details of Careers Programme over the academic year for Upper 6th Students

College Term	Year Group: Upper Sixth/Year 13	Gatsby Benchmark Covered
Autumn	• Tutorial Activities on planning for the future; apprenticeships; gap year; performing well at interviews; values in the workplace and applying to higher education	1, 2, 3, 4,
	• Personal Statement one-to-one support	1, 3
	• Careers Advisers available at progress review evening for parents/carers and students throughout the academic year	1, 3
	• Optional workshops/support available to support students with university admission tests	1, 2, 3
	• Dedicated UCAS support for all applicants, with internal systems in place via Tutors, Careers Department, Tutorial activities, and Subject Teachers	1, 2, 3,
	• Practice Interview support available for higher education and employment interviews through the Careers Department, teaching staff & governors	1, 3
	• Support and talks available for students considering apprenticeships & employment, including a dedicated Employability Week and talks from visiting employers	1, 2, 3, 5
	• Specialist support available for students applying to UCAS	1, 3

	Conservatories, Oxbridge & Medicine/Dentistry/Vet Science ● Tailored support and sessions for students applying to Art Foundation courses	1 , 3
Spring	● Tutorial activity on Preparing for Careers Day and Progression Fair ● Careers Day ● Progression Fair ● Information and support on finance and student finance ● Higher Education Funding Evening for parents ● Targeted support for students seeking employment	1, 3 1 , 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 1,3 1, 3 1, 2, 3
Summer	● Applying to UCAS as an ex-student information ● Alumni information ● Post Results service support during August	1, 3 1, 3, 1, 3

Access to Personal Guidance
Personal guidance refers to purposeful and supportive conversations between a Careers Adviser and a student. The college provides all students with access to high-quality, impartial careers guidance through its in-house team of professionally qualified Careers Advisers. All advisers hold a Level 7 careers guidance qualification, adhere to the CDI Code of Ethics, and undertake regular professional development to ensure up-to-date and informed support. Students are made fully aware of how to access personal guidance, with regular reminders shared during tutorials and through the Symonds Lecture Programme. This information is also communicated to parents and carers via newsletters and parents' evening events. The Careers Department is based in the Ashurst Building and is easily accessible to all students. The location is well-advertised, and Careers Assistants are always available at the reception desk to the department to help students book appointments, as well as to provide general information and support.

Parent/Carer Engagement
The college has a clear approach to engaging parents and carers in our Careers Programme, with a focus not just on sharing information, but also supporting parents and carers to make the best use of it and get involved in events we organise. This includes:-

- Termly parents/carers Careers Newsletter
- Appointments available with a Careers Adviser at every Progress Review Evening
- Regular emails sent with key information
- Future Options Information evening specifically for parents/carers, with a recorded presentation delivered by Careers Adviser & visiting university, along with a mini fair of visiting exhibitors
- Apprenticeship Information evening specifically for parents/carers, with a recorded presentation delivered by Careers Adviser & visiting employer, along with a mini fair of visiting exhibitors
- Two Higher Education Funding evening webinars specifically for parents/carers
- EHCP Information Evening for parents/carers and students, with information talks and a mini fair of visiting exhibitors
- Careers Information added to the PSC Connect Portal for all parents/carers to access, along with recordings from any careers events

Careers in the Curriculum
In addition to the Careers Programme, careers is also delivered through curriculum areas, with subject teachers highlighting progression routes for their subject and the relevance of the knowledge and skills developed in their subject for a wide range of career pathways and future career paths. This can be delivered via lessons, lunchtime talks or workshops, visits to employers, visiting speakers to the college, and college trips. These activities are recorded and evaluated through Unifrog.

Quality Assurance
We are committed to quality assurance and continuous improvement of our Careers Programme. Each term we complete the Careers and Enterprise Company Compass evaluation, which measures our careers provision against the Gatsby Benchmarks. This academic year, we will complete the Careers Impact Internal Leadership Review via Compass and participate in the Careers and Enterprise Company Peer-to-Peer Review. This will allow us to share practice and progression against the Gatsby Benchmarks, along with identifying what works well and areas for improvement.

The Careers Programme is regularly evaluated using feedback from students, parents/carers, staff and external stakeholders, to ensure it has impact, and is achieved through: -

- Questionnaires and surveys completed after every careers activity
- Annual careers survey

- Evaluation of destination data
- Tracking and data gathered through student use of Unifrog
- Careers Ambassador input
- 1-1 discussions with students
- Feedback from staff and students through tutorial evaluation
- Measure all activities against CDI framework and Gatsby Benchmarks

We welcome feedback and views on this document or any activities delivered through the Careers Department from students, parents/carers, employers, and organisations. If you would like further details of our programme or to provide feedback, please email careers@psc.ac.uk

Supporting our Careers Programme

We are very happy for individuals to contact us if they would like to develop links with Peter Symonds College and be involved in our Careers Programme. We are aware of the Provider Access Legislation, and a copy of our policy for this can be found on the college website.

Employer Expression of Interest Form – We are keen to work with employers to develop and deliver our Careers Programme. Please complete this form to let us know which areas you can support us with.

Alumni– We are very keen to use alumni to support our Careers Programme. Seeing what previous students have progressed onto can be a huge inspiration to current students. The college has invested in the alumni platform Future First, which enables us to build a network of volunteers to help inspire current students and provide real-world insight into current job markets, career pathways, and industry trends. The platform also allows alumni to build their own network with other former students, along with gaining access to updates on the latest college news and events. Anyone is welcome to sign up to the platform, which is regularly monitored and managed by the Careers Department.