

Careers education and career readiness

Higher quality careers provision leads
to stronger student career readiness

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Summary

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This report presents the findings of our latest research on the relationship between students' career readiness and the quality of careers provision provided by their institution (as measured by the Gatsby Benchmarks), replicating analysis from last academic year on a larger sample.¹

The [Future Skills Questionnaire \(FSQ\)](#) was launched by [The Careers & Enterprise Company](#) as a feature of the [Compass+](#) career management tool in September 2021, available to state-funded secondary schools, special schools and alternative provisions in England. The FSQ is a student self-completion questionnaire that measures students' career readiness and essential skills at key transition points across secondary education. The data, aggregated across schools, provides national insight into student perceptions and how they compare according to stage of learning, student background and school characteristics. During the 2022/23 academic year, over 100,000 students from 574 institutions completed the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ), making it the most extensive survey of its kind in the country.

The analysis on Key Stage 4 students supports previous findings of the positive impact of careers provision on students' reporting of their career readiness, suggesting that a student in a school achieving all eight Gatsby Benchmarks would typically have a career readiness score of 3.5%pts higher than a student in a school achieving one Gatsby Benchmark.² While this is a small increase, it is worth noting that sufficient evidence was provided to



This report considers the relationship between a student's career readiness (as measured through the FSQ) and the quality of careers education provided in a student's institution. The analysis supports previous findings of the positive impact of careers provision on students' career readiness.

The aims of this research were:

- To substantiate the role of careers education provision in developing the career readiness of young people, particularly in overcoming the starting gap faced by young people in circumstances of financial disadvantage.
- To propose future investigations into the relationship between careers provision and student career readiness.



This analysis uses responses from 29,029 Year 10 and Year 11 students who completed the GCSE Years version of the FSQ in the 2022/23 academic year.³ Control variables were sourced from Compass+ (accessed from the school's MIS system) and government data sources (the School Info website). All models required full control variable availability, resulting in a maximum sample size of 27,437 students across 349 schools. All data were taken as of the 2022/23 academic year.

The analysis modelled the outcome variable of student's career readiness (defined in Appendix 2), with the independent variable of interest being the number of Gatsby Benchmarks achieved by their school.⁴ We modelled both the direct relationship (e.g. no control variables) and with a set of controls (see below). Our headline results are based on the final model as a

Multivariable model using individual-level data from the 2022/23 academic year. The number of Gatsby Benchmarks achieved by the school is the independent variable of interest. The outcome variable is career readiness. The model is estimated using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. The results are presented in the following table.

A full list of KS4 FSQ quest ons can be found [here](#).

Each quest on in the career knowledge and skills sect on of the quest onnaire was scored from 0-3.

- No, not yet = 0
- Possibly, I'm not sure = 1
- Yes, to some extent = 2
- Yes, to a great extent = 3

A student's total score is then converted into a percentage relat ve to their maximum possible score.

The control variables were added iterat vely in four blocks, requiring full control variable coverage from later blocks in earlier models:

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East Midlands	2783	9.6
East of England	2121	7.3
London	2113	7.3
North East	2023	7
North West	5166	17.8
South East	5267	18.1
South West	3488	12
West Midlands	4101	14.1
Yorkshire and the Humber	1967	6.8
2Ÿ> s'Ÿ, Ns-%o"Ÿ , ~		
Rural hamlet and isolated dwellings	785	2.7
Rural hamlet and isolated dwellings in a sparse set ng	120	0.4
Rural town and fringe	3611	12.4
Rural town and fringe in a sparse set ng	129	0.4
Rural village	1097	3.8
Rural village in a sparse set ng	62	0.2
Urban city and town	15611	53.8
Urban major conurbat on	7050	24.3
Urban minor conurbat on	564	1.9

Endnotes

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