



# A Tailored Careers Strategy to Champion Best Practices for the Disabled Community



## CAREERS POLICY 2025

## Overview

This policy sets out how we deliver our careers education, advice and guidance to all participants. In partnership with our stakeholders, we achieve all eight Gatsby benchmarks as marked by Compass. Our Matrix Standard, owned by the Department of Education Quality is the Standard required for Information, Advice, Guidance. This is reviewed yearly. As a Disability Confident Leader, we are committed to delivering a bespoke and ambitious careers programme to the next generation and developing best practice for all.

SAMEE was established in 2016 to support disabled and neurodivergent people wanting to explore self-employment as an alternative to traditional employment. By teaching and sharing valuable self-employment and holistic skills, through a unique mix of peer mentoring and personal guidance, we have supported many disabled participants into successfully starting a self-employed role.

## Our Vision, Ethos and Mission

### Our Vision

Every disabled person can access the self-employment and holistic support they require to meet their individual needs through the co-creation of activities and bespoke resources.

### Our Ethos

The SAMEE team believe that every disabled person accessing our services deserves to lead a fulfilling life and achieve success on a journey that is as unique as they are.

### Our Mission

To influence societal change through mentoring, advocacy and best practice, alongside innovative programme co-creation, development and delivery, enabling disabled people to access self-employment support to positively impact the reduction of the disability employment gap.

## Strategic Objectives

Develop independent participants with clear aspirations who are responsible for their own career journey and learning.

- All students have folders to keep track of their work.
- All participants to receive impartial level 6 careers guidance and all too be arranged alongside an award-winning careers advisor specialising in SEND students. Participants can request additional guidance through their mentors.
- All participants have at least 3 meaningful self-employment-based placements throughout their time on programme.
- All participants have access to our Careers Co-Ordinator who is based on site two days a week. This means they can ask any questions they may have and be in control of the type of work-placements they go on.

Careers are further embedded across all programme curriculum areas

- Mentors are also career ambassadors and regularly provide updates.
- All staff to receive regular CPD careers.
- Mentors create bespoke careers sessions to suit each participants needs.

Create a strong employer network of partners to support our careers provision.

- Developing a database of employer contacts through our Partnerships Manager and Careers Co-ordinator.
- Expand the SAMEE Ambassador scheme to increase networking opportunities.
- Compliance with the Baker Clause by having access to guest speakers and further education establishments.
- Use CRM systems to track destination data and develop Alumni.

## Community Links and Stakeholders

We sustain partnerships with a variety of local and national services, providers and employers to ensure our participants have tailored, innovative and inspirational opportunities to explore their self-employment learning and work options. This ensures we continue to meet Gatsby benchmark 3 to meet the needs of every participant. Some of the community links and stakeholders we have are:

- **Local Colleges** (Bournemouth and Poole College, Kingston Maurward, and Brockenhurst College)
- **Local SEND Provisions** (The Crumbs Project, Millie College, Winchelsea School, Futures, SWRAC etc)
- **Other Training Providers** (Handsome Hounds, David Pusey, University of Warwick, Nail My Career)
- **National Colleges** (The Horticulture Correspondence College)
- **Work Experience Placements** (The Repair Hub, ASDA, Russell Coates Museum, Paul Collins Photography)
- **Employers** (Xerocad, Trethowans, Lloyds Banks, 2WAM, Abacus Accountancy, Lansdowne Woodward Insurance Brokers)
- **Volunteer Organisations** (Marsham Court Hotel, Dorset Police, Greenshark Media, Train AV, Can100)
- **Alumni** (Jeenewoosh, Amy Newell, Those Thoughts, Emily Braz, Antons Gardening)
- **Job Centres** (Tringham House, Tamerisk House, Ringwood)
- **Councils** (BCP, Dorset, Devon, Torbay)

# Current Provision

## Yearly Activities

This is a sample of activities that is being delivered 2024-25. As the careers programme is flexible and bespoke to each student, there are always new workshops and events that occur.

Programme and Section:	Activities:
Supported Self-Employment Internship  <b>Term 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Independent Careers Advice 1-2-1 Session</li> <li>➤ Meeting with our Careers Co-Ordinator</li> <li>➤ Employer Encounters</li> <li>➤ Functional Skills for Self-Employment – Maths and English</li> <li>➤ Goal Setting and Action Planning</li> <li>➤ Support with Holistic Skills in every-day life and work</li> <li>➤ Vocational Profiling</li> <li>➤ “Work with Me” document creation</li> <li>➤ Qualification routes exploration if needed</li> <li>➤ Partnership working to identify placement opportunities</li> </ul>
Supported Self-Employment Internship  <b>Term 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Independent Careers Advice 1-2-1 Session</li> <li>➤ Meeting with our Careers Co-Ordinator</li> <li>➤ Employer Encounters</li> <li>➤ Functional Skills for Self-Employment – Maths and English</li> <li>➤ Goal Setting and Action Planning</li> <li>➤ Support with Holistic Skills in every-day life and work</li> <li>➤ Peer related Guest Speakers</li> <li>➤ Careers exploration using relevant LMI</li> <li>➤ Self-Employment Skills in relation to Business Planning</li> <li>➤ Volunteer Work Exploration</li> <li>➤ Starting relevant Qualifications or Courses</li> <li>➤ Starting work-based opportunities/work placements</li> <li>➤ Interviewing/talking to relevant career industry mentors</li> </ul>
Supported Self-Employment Internship  <b>Term 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Independent Careers Advice 1-2-1 Session</li> <li>➤ Meeting with our Careers Co-Ordinator</li> <li>➤ Employer Encounters</li> <li>➤ Functional Skills for Self-Employment – Maths and English</li> <li>➤ Goal Setting and Action Planning</li> <li>➤ Support with Holistic Skills in every-day life and work</li> <li>➤ Peer related Guest Speakers</li> <li>➤ Careers exploration using relevant LMI</li> <li>➤ Self-Employment Skills in relation to Business Planning</li> <li>➤ Continuing relevant Qualifications or Courses</li> <li>➤ Starting work-based opportunities/work placement</li> <li>➤ Interviewing/talking to relevant career industry mentors</li> <li>➤ Networking and building up client base</li> </ul>

# How we meet the Gatsby Benchmarks

In 2013 Sir John Holman was commissioned by the Gatsby Charitable foundation to undertake research into good careers guidance. He established there were eight benchmarks required to ensure students make well-informed good careers decisions. This was updated in 2024.

The SAMEE Charity scores **94%** for all benchmarks on the Gatsby self-evaluative Compass tool that is completed every term. The Gatsby benchmarks are:

No.	Gatsby Benchmark
1	A stable careers programme
2	Learning from career and labour market information
3	Addressing the needs of each young person
4	Linking curriculum learning to careers
5	Encounters with employers and employees
6	Experiences of workplaces
7	Encounters with further and higher education
8	Personal Guidance

## Gatsby Benchmark 1

*“Every provider should have an embedded programme of careers education and guidance that is known and understood by learners, parents and carers, staff, those in governance roles, employers and other agencies.”*

### We meet this benchmark by:

- Having clearly defined staff roles and responsibilities.
- Support of those staff members in leadership roles and a Level 7 Qualified Careers Leader.
- Meeting the individual needs of each participant by creating very bespoke training programmes.
- Regular evaluation of our programme.
- Our programmes align with our Mission, Vision, Ethos, and Values.
- We are committed to continuously evolving and investing in our innovative careers’ programmes.
- Building relationships with internal colleagues, external partners, the young people, and their parents/carers.
- Our careers programme is published on our website and is communicated to staff, parents/carers, and the young people in a way that each will understand it.
- We are continuously asking for feedback from learners, parents/carers, and staff.

## Gatsby Benchmark 2

*“All learners, parents and carers, subject staff and other staff who support learners should have access to good-quality, up-to-date information about future pathways, study options and labour market opportunities. Young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents and carers may require different or additional information. All learners will need the support of an informed adviser to make the best use of available information.”*

### We meet this benchmark by:

- Each participant has their own 1-2-1 mentor who is continuously looking at LMI using online tools.
- Each participant has their own technology (laptop, tablet, phone) that they use to look at online LMI with our support.
- We have the Careerometer tool available for all to use on our website.
- Developed strong relationships with employers and local authorities to get insights about local LMI.
- Researching careers and LMI is built into all of our programmes.
- Access to a Qualified Level 6 Careers Advisor, Level 7 Careers Lead and Careers Co-Ordinator to assist in LMI research.
- Guest speakers for the Supported Self-Employment Internship to assist in the interns having access to local employers who can advise on LMI.
- We ensure that our advisors explore all options with our participants. This includes, further education, self-employment, and employment to see which is the better route for each participant.

### Gatsby Benchmark 3

*“Learners have different careers guidance needs at different stages. Careers programmes should help learners navigate their concerns about any barriers to career progression. In addition, opportunities should be tailored to the needs of each learner, including any additional needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those who are absent.”*

#### **We meet this benchmark by:**

- Every participant work on their own bespoke pathway.
- When a participant joins one of our programmes, they record their vision and where they would like to progress to next (further education, employment, or self-employment). This is reviewed regularly with the career’s advisor and/or mentor.
- We work with the participant to discover what reasonable adjustments they may need.
- The careers advisor works closely with our Careers Co-ordinator and Mentors to create a bespoke programme for each participant.
- Our careers programme embeds equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- We challenge stereotypical thinking and misconceptions to ensure that our participants have a clear understanding of what opportunities are available to them.
- All of our staff team either have a disability/neurodivergence or have a close relation to a person with disabilities/neurodivergence.
- We ask our alumni to do workshops with participants.
- We are aware of all participants aspirations and we provide timely support to help get them towards this.
- For the supported self-employment internship, we ensure that we can meet the outcomes on the EHCP by tailoring our programme to meet need.
- We develop and create resources alongside our participants.

### Gatsby Benchmark 4

*“As part of the providers programme of careers education, all subject staff should link curriculum learning with careers, even on courses which are not specifically occupation led. Subject staff should highlight the progression routes for their subject and the relevance of knowledge and skills developed in their subject for a wide range of future career paths.”*

#### **We meet this benchmark by:**

- Careers learning is everyone's responsibilities.
- Our staff work to the "Skills Builder Universal Framework" to develop employability and life skills with our participants.
- Our staff highlight the progression routes for the programme our participants are involved in. This is done by building the knowledge and skills into the curriculum.
- Various encounters with employers and experiences of workplaces brings curriculum learning to life and enriches a person's career development.
- Supporting staff to use careers information in their curriculum delivery, so they can signpost to sources of support and have informed conversations with participants.
- We have whole staff meetings and CDP training for individuals to share best practice and any knowledge gained.

## Gatsby Benchmark 5

*"Every learner 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, and could include learners' own part-time employment where it exists."*

### **We meet this benchmark by:**

- On the supported self-employment internship programme, there is a guest speaker coming in every week. This is usually employers or alumni.
- We consider the specific support needed by each participant to ensure each employer encounter is meaningful.
- We ensure that participants on our supported self-employment internship have various employer encounters as we recognise that some young people, may need multiple encounters before they find something that resonates with them.
- Attending careers fairs
- Employer workshops covering topics such as marketing, law, insurance, banking, and design amongst others.
- Participants take part in 15 hours of meaningful work placements and work-based opportunities per week on our supported self-employment internship.
- Participants have the chance to have informal chats/interviews with employers and self-employed people to gain a wider understanding of the sector they are interested in.
- Building confidence of our participants to engage with employers.
- Support our participants to gain part time work if they wish.
- All of our staff have backgrounds in different industries so we are well placed to give further information on many industries for both employment and self-employment.

## Gatsby Benchmark 6

*"Every learner should have first-hand experiences of workplaces to help their exploration of career opportunities and expand their networks."*

### **We meet this benchmark by:**

- Participants take part in 15 hours of meaningful work placements and work-based opportunities per week on our supported self-employment internship.
- creating space and time for young people to prepare and reflect.
- Helping our young people to work through a work-experience diary.

- Have a flexible approach to experiences of workplaces, prioritising their impact on the young people.
- Set practical work tasks by employers
- Offer work experience either in person or virtual.
- Built up a vast network of employers that we can contact for work placements for our young people.
- Ensure that each work placement that our young people go on, are industry specific to what they want to go into.
- We are a Disability Confident Leader and have helped other companies become Disability Confident Leaders.
- Offer all of our young people the chance to have a work coach go into work placements with them for support.
- Have partnership managers to build connections with work placements.

## Gatsby Benchmark 7

*“All learners should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them, including academic, technical and vocational routes. This should incorporate learning in schools, colleges, independent training providers (ITPs), universities and in the workplace.”*

### **We meet this benchmark by:**

- We ensure that all of our participants are made aware of the full range of education and training options available to them and what next steps they can take.
- Encounters with further education/Individual Training Providers (ITPs), and workplaces give the participant the chance to meet both staff and other learners.
- Participants on our Supported Self-Employment Internship are given the opportunity to gain industry specific qualifications through online and in person courses.
- Have partnership managers to build connections with further education opportunities.
- Help our young people to raise their aspirations.

## Gatsby Benchmark 8

*“Every learner should have opportunities for guidance meetings with a career’s adviser, who could be internal (a member of provider staff) or external, provided they are trained to an appropriate level. These meetings should be available for all learners whenever significant study or career choices are being made. They should be expected for all learners but should be scheduled to meet individual needs. The careers leader should work closely with the careers adviser, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO) and other key staff to ensure personal guidance is effective and embedded in the careers programme.”*

### **We meet this benchmark by:**

- Having 3 qualified Level 6 Careers Advisors on our team
- Training others for their Level 6 Careers Advisor Qualification. We currently have 2 trainees with 1 of these being our Careers Co-ordinator.
- Offer all participants the opportunities to have initial 1-2-1 sessions and follow ups with one of our Careers Advisors either in person or virtually.
- Changed the wording from Careers Interviews to Careers Meetings and Careers Chat to allow our participants to not feel judged or that it was something they could pass or fail. Using the word



meeting or chat better reflects the purposeful and supportive conversations that take place between careers advisors and our participants.

- Creating an action plan alongside our participants so they have a clear direction forward.
- Our Senior Leadership Team are both Level 6 qualified careers advisors.
- Our careers guidance is intergrated into our careers programme.
- We have our careers programme available on our website including an introduction to our Careers Advisors to help prepare our beneficiaries for their meeting.
- We have codesigned resources with disabled people to enable everyone to communicate in the way that works best for them.
- Our careers advisors work closely with every member of our staff team
- Our careers advisors are all registered with The Careers Development Institute (CDI)

Our careers programme is based around creatively delivering all of the Gatsby benchmarks for careers best practice.

At The SAMEE Charity, we are committed to staying at the forefront of careers guidance, ensuring our offerings remain a model of excellence both in the UK and internationally for the disabled community. We believe that a bespoke, holistic, integrated approach to careers education across all programmes is crucial to this mission. Additionally, we emphasize a collaborative approach to career planning, empowering mentors, staff, parents, and students to make informed and confident decisions about their futures.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS & PRIORITIES**

In the next phase of Careers development at The SAMEE Charity, we aim to strengthen our current achievements by further enhancing the placement opportunities across programmes and further integrating career education into every programme subject area (aligned with Gatsby Benchmark 4). This approach will allow us to share our strategies with other provisions across the UK while ensuring that our students receive the highest quality careers education and guidance.