The Downs School
Provider Access Policy Statement

Date of last review: April 2023
Date of next review: April 2024
Version: 1

To include The Department of Education, July 2021: "Baker Clause" and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The policy will be monitored and evaluated annually by the Governors of The Downs School Local Advisory Board committee.

The Downs School is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of its students and young people
Rationale

High quality careers education and guidance in school or college is critical to young people’s futures. It helps to prepare them for the workplace by providing a clear understanding of the world of work including the routes to jobs and careers that they might find engaging and rewarding. It supports them to acquire the self-development and career management skills they need to achieve positive employment destinations. This helps students to choose their pathways, improve their life opportunities and contribute to a productive and successful economy.

As the number of apprenticeships rises every year, it becomes increasingly important that all young people have a full understanding of all the options available to them post-16 and post-18 including wider technical education options such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications.

Commitment

The Downs School is committed to ensuring there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access students, for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. The Downs School is fully aware of the responsibility to set students on the path that will secure the best outcome which will enable them to progress in education and work and give employers the highly skilled people they need. That means acting impartially, in line with the statutory duty, and not showing bias towards any route, be that academic or technical.

The Downs School endeavours to ensure that all students are aware of all routes to higher skills and are able to access information on technical options and apprenticeships (The Department of Education, July 2021: “Baker Clause”: supporting students to understand the full range of education and training options, and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023).

Aims

The Downs School policy for access to other education and training providers has the following aims:

To develop the knowledge and awareness of our students of all career pathways available to them, including technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

To support young people to be able to learn more about opportunities for education and training outside of school before making crucial choices about their future options.

To reduce drop out from courses and avoid the risk of students becoming NEET (Young people not in education, employment or training).

Student Entitlement

The Downs School fully supports the statutory requirement for students to have direct access to other providers of further education training, technical training and apprenticeships. The school will comply with the new legal requirement to put on at least 6 encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships for students in Year 8 - 13. Students in Key Stage 3 will receive at least 2 encounters which will take place during Year 8 and up to 28th February of Year 9. Students in Key Stage 4 will receive at least 2 encounters which will take place during Year 10 and up to 28th February of Year 11. Students in Key Stage 5 will receive at least 2 encounters which will take place during Year 12 and up to 28th February of Year 13. This will be done in assemblies, in addition to providers attending careers events at school, which will take place during the standard school day. Provider access events will be mandatory for all students in Years 8-11 to attend. Provider access events will be delivered to students in Years 12-13 but will not be mandatory to attend.
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Development

This policy has been developed and is reviewed annually by the Careers Leader and Line Manager (Deputy Headteacher) based on current good practice guidelines by the Department for Education.

Links with other policies

It supports and is underpinned by key school policies including those for Careers, Child Protection, Equality and Diversity, and SEND.

Equality and Diversity

Access to other providers is available and promoted to allow all students to access information about other providers of further education and apprenticeships. The Downs School is committed to encouraging all students to make decisions about their future based on impartial information.

Requests for access

Requests for access should be directed to Mrs C Wilson-Croombs, Careers Leader, who may be contacted by telephone or email, careers@thedownsschool.org, Tel 01635 270080.

Grounds for granting requests for access

Access will be given for providers to attend during school assemblies, timetabled Careers or PDP lessons, and Careers or Raising Aspirations events that The Downs School is arranging. Students may also travel to visit another provider as part of the trip to be organised in partnership with The Downs School. This access will take place within the normal school day.

Details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access

The Downs School will provide an appropriate room or assembly hall to be agreed. If requested or needed rooms will have computers, projectors and screens provided. Computer rooms can also be arranged. The Careers Leader will organise this, working closely with the provider to ensure the facilities are appropriate to the audience. Appropriate safeguarding checks will be carried out. Providers will be met and supervised by a member of staff who is facilitating.

Live/Virtual encounters

The Downs School will consider live online encounters with providers where requested, and these may be broadcast into classrooms or the school assembly hall. Technology checks in advance will be required to ensure compatibility of systems.

Parents and Carers

Parental involvement is encouraged, and parents may be invited to attend the events to meet the providers. Parents will be informed of the encounter and where appropriate, will be signposted to further resources, so that they can further support their child.

Management

The Careers Leader coordinates all provider requests and is responsible to his/her senior management line manager.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about this policy should be raised to Mrs C Wilson-Croombs, email: careers@thedownsschool.org, who will raise the complaint to the Headteacher of The Downs School.

Appendix
Providers who have been invited into The Downs School to date include:

- Activate Learning (Oxford College, Reading College)
- Newbury College
- Sparsholt College
- UTC Didcot
- West Berkshire Training Consortium
- Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
- AWE

Destinations of previous pupils from The Downs School include:

- Activate Learning (Oxford College, Reading College)
- Newbury College
- Sparsholt College
- UTC Didcot
- West Berkshire Training Consortium
- Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
- AWE Academy
- St Barts School Sixth Form
- The Willink School Sixth Form
- Kennet School Sixth Form
- Basingstoke College of Technology
- Berkshire Agricultural College
- Henley College
- Peter Symonds College