

Bridging the gaps: practical approaches to cross-sector careers collaboration

Careers support across the school–HE transition

Natalie Freeman SFHEA, University of East Anglia

The aim of this session

More connected support across the school–HE transition

- The issue
- Changing expectations of students
- Practical responses
- What my research aims to contribute

-

One journey, different expectations

How students encounter careers support can change



At school

A planned careers programme
Adults often organise engagement
Gatsby provides a shared framework

At university

Multiple routes into support
Students often initiate engagement
Curriculum embedding varies

The equity question

Who can navigate the change most easily?

- Social capital
- Self-efficacy
- Knowledge of provision
- Sense of belonging
- Practical accessibility



Practical steps we can take now

Small changes within existing relationships

Practitioner understanding

Share how each sector works

Identify useful contacts

Explain unfamiliar terminology

Student preparation

Explain how support is accessed

Make changing expectations explicit

Check what students understand

Understanding the other sector

A starting point: reciprocal 30-minute workshops



My doctoral research

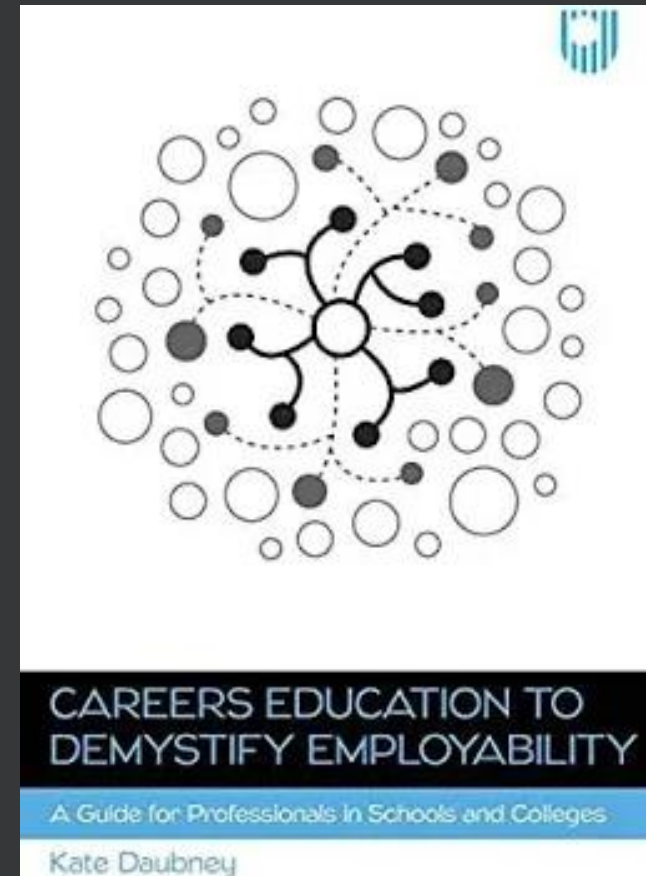
Exploring where greater continuity could help and what would make it workable

- 1 National qualitative practitioner survey
- 2 Practitioner focus groups
- 3 Student vignette workshops
- 4 Synthesis into an evidence-informed toolkit

Existing work

Recommended reading

A highly recommended resource for staff working with secondary school and FE students.



References

Careers support across the school–HE transition

Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services. (2025, January 13). *New AGCAS research reveals five growth areas for careers and employability services in 2025.*

<https://www.agcas.org.uk/News/Page-3/new-agcas-research-reveals-five-growth-areas-for-careers-and-employability-services-in-2025/279504>

Daubney, K. (2021). *Careers education to demystify employability: A guide for professionals in schools and colleges.* Open University Press.

Gatsby Charitable Foundation. (n.d.). *An overview of the updated Gatsby Benchmarks.* Gatsby Benchmarks. <https://www.gatsbybenchmarks.org.uk/understanding-the-gatsby-benchmarks/>

Handscomb, G., Gu, Q., & Varley, M. (2014). *School–university partnerships: Fulfilling the potential. Literature review.* London Centre for Leadership in Learning, UCL Institute of Education. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10065168/>