

School, college, and student perspectives on information shared about educational pathways: Gatsby Benchmark 7



GATSBY

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Technical Annex

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This Technical Annex contains four sections. The first section contains an overview of the findings from the Rapid Evidence Review. Section two provides high-level findings from the pilot exercise with independent training providers (ITPs). Section three contains additional findings and figures to supplement findings within the main report. Section four provides a more detailed profile of respondents to supplement that outlined in Chapter 2 of the main report.

1. Rapid Evidence Review: overview of key findings

This section provides a short overview of the findings from the Rapid Evidence Review. The full piece can be read as a separate report annex.

1.1 Current achievement levels of Benchmark 7

In 2017, the Gatsby Benchmarks were adopted as part of the UK Government's Career Strategy. Its commitment to the Benchmarks was re-affirmed in the recent Skills for Jobs White Paper.

According to the Career & Enterprise Company (CEC), current levels of compliance with Benchmark 7 by schools and colleges in England are low but improving. Based on an analysis of data submitted by schools through the Compass tool, the CEC's report of 2020 found that 33% of schools and colleges had fully achieved the benchmark. This represents an improvement on rates of achievement in 2019 and 2018, when, respectively, 21% and 12.5% of schools and colleges had fully achieved the benchmark.¹

1.2 School engagement with further education

Despite evidence of *improvements* in meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks – suggesting that more schools and colleges are successfully facilitating meaningful interactions between their students and further and higher education providers – recent research suggests that engagements between schools and further education remains limited in absolute terms.

The Baker Clause, which came into force in June 2018, dovetails with Gatsby Benchmark 7 by stipulating that all local authority-maintained schools and academies are required to allow education and training providers the opportunity to talk to school students from year 8 to year 13 about technical and vocational pathways and opportunities. Schools' compliance with the Baker Clause gives an indication of schools' willingness to engage with FE colleges. Research into the impact of the Baker Clause found that 70% of technical education providers were finding it difficult to access schools in their area a year after the introduction of the Baker Clause.² Findings are corroborated by the Association of Colleges, which found through its 2020 Careers Survey Report that schools appear to limit colleges' access to school students in numerous ways (NB: small sample size).³ Financial incentives provided by the government for schools to retain students into sixth form appear to underpin much of this reluctance to engage with further education providers.⁴

¹ CEC, 2020, *Careers education in England's schools and colleges 2020*

² Institute for Public Policy Research, 2019, *The Baker Clause – One Year On*

³ Association of Colleges, 2020, *Association of Colleges careers survey report – March 2020*

⁴ Ibid

1.3 Differences in engagement with school type

The level and quality of engagement with further and higher education also varies by school type. The CEC has found that rates of achievement of Gatsby's Benchmark 7 are lower for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision schools, as well as for Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), than they are for mainstream schools.⁵ In the same research, the CEC also found that students at schools without sixth forms are more likely to encounter a broader range of post-16 learning providers than students at schools with sixth forms, while sixth form colleges are more likely to provide their students with encounters with higher education than with employers. Academies were also more likely than non-academies to arrange visits with University Technical Colleges.

1.4 Impact of Covid-19 on the delivery of FE and HE encounters

Schools and colleges have met the challenge of Covid-19 by embracing digital technologies to facilitate both teaching and outreach activities (both those organised internally and via external organisations) remotely. Typical encounters provided for students include summer schools, online mentoring, academic support and information and virtual open days. Many of these online initiatives offered by outside agencies have specifically targeted disadvantaged students: Target Oxbridge – a programme run by Rare, a diversity specialist that supports black African and Caribbean students who are applying to Oxford or Cambridge universities – moved their usual outreach events online, organising a series of webinars through which prospective African and Caribbean students could access advice and talk to existing black students at the universities.

Although online and digital resources may offer distinct advantages in broadening access to further and higher education encounters in an age of lockdown, such as eliminating travel costs, the move to digital learning risks excluding learners that do not have access to Wi-Fi or digital devices, while the formats of some virtual offerings can be more engaging than others.⁶

⁵ CEC, 2020, *Careers and enterprise provision in England's secondary schools and special schools in 2019: Detailed Gatsby Benchmark results*

⁶ CEC, 2021, *Practical ideas for achieving Gatsby Benchmark 7*

2. Independent training providers pilot

In addition to the main survey fieldwork with colleges, the questionnaire was also piloted with a small sample of independent training providers (ITPs) – seven in total. The results from this pilot are presented here, although findings should be treated with caution due to the low number of respondents.

Types of qualifications offered: ITPs most commonly offer a range of other Level 3 qualifications (six of the seven responding ITPs) and off-the-job training for apprenticeships (five), while other Level 4 or 5 qualifications are offered by over half of responding ITPs (four).

Ability to describe and communication options to school students: The small number of responding ITPs has very high confidence in their description and communication of options to their students, with an average rating of at least nine or higher for all options (except A-levels). Similarly, at schools ITPs visit, respondents believe options are well described to students, with an average rating of nine for all except apprenticeships which are rated at seven.

The small number of responding ITPs typically engage with around ten schools per year.

Providing information to schools: ITPs most commonly report that they provide information to school students via visits by staff or students, or open days, or through paper and electronic means, on a monthly or a weekly basis, prior to Covid-19. Since March 2020, visits by staff and students, and open day opportunities, have decreased.

Designing interactions: ITPs rate feedback from school students as being most useful in designing their events (mean 9.6) followed by feedback from school staff at previous event (9.0) and internal discussions with other staff at their institutions (8.8). Questioned on which staff input into the design of their interactions with schools, around half of ITPs note that schools' teaching staff or schools' careers staff directly input into this activity, while input from school students and feedback from parents is less commonly relied upon. The most popular ways in which ITPs evaluate the impact of their engagement with schools is by gathering feedback from school staff, and also from students, both being done by around two in three institutions.

Awareness: Over half of the small number of ITPs (four of the seven) report that schools are 'slightly aware' of the courses which they offer, with two stating schools are fully aware of the opportunities offered by their ITP.

Satisfaction with interactions: ITPs were asked to rate from one (very unsatisfied) to ten (extremely satisfied) the satisfaction of their engagement with schools. ITPs provide an average satisfaction rating (mean) of 5.5. For context, the most common score (mode) provided by colleges is nine, for schools, eight, and seven for ITPs.

The small number of ITPs report being most satisfied with the level of interest of students (7.2) and least satisfied with the ease of access to students in schools without sixth forms (6.0).

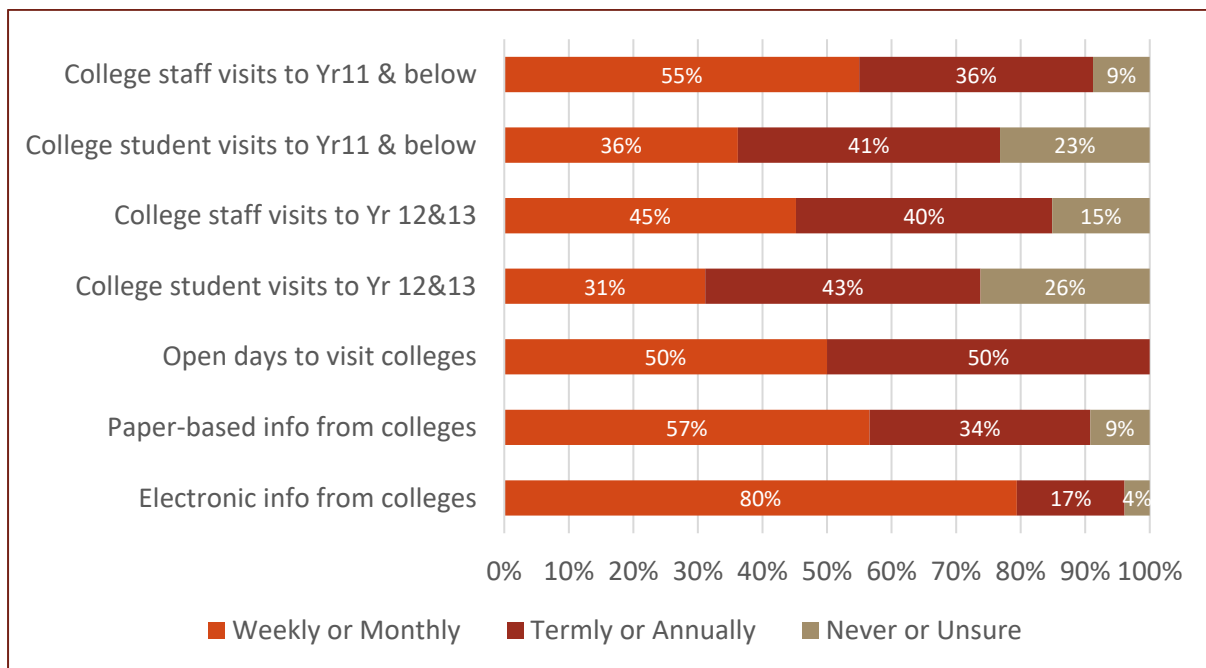
Barriers: ITPs report that their main barriers to engaging with schools are that access is restricted to certain groups of students (four out of the seven), and that it is difficult to engage with schools (three).

3. Supplementary findings and figures

3.1 Educational pathways

Section 3.4 of the main report outlines the frequency with which educational pathways were discussed and information provided by colleges and by universities to students, from the perspectives of schools and students. Similarly, colleges were also asked their perception on how frequently they provided information to school students. This information is presented in Figure 1 (below) and shows that colleges most typically provide electronic information to school students on a regular basis, followed by paper-based information and staff visits to students in Year 11 and below. Colleges note they provide information more regularly than schools and students note information is received from colleges. This can be rationalised as the number of schools which colleges typically interact with will be higher than the number of colleges that schools interact with.

Figure 1 Colleges' views on frequency with which information was provided by colleges pre-Covid-19



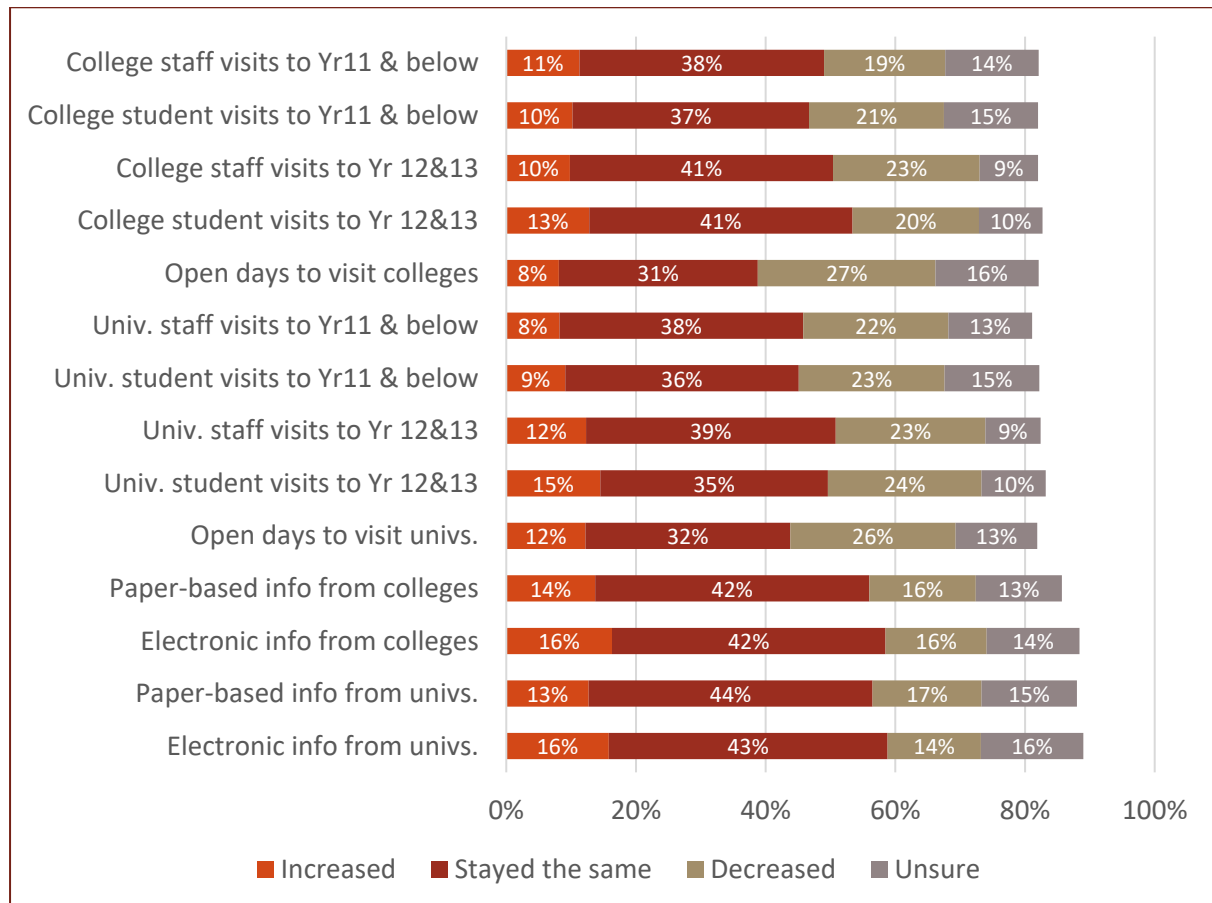
Colleges: Prior to Covid-19, how often did your college provide school students with the following?
Base: Variable from 16 to 80. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

3.2 Satisfaction, quality, and perceived barriers

Section 5.1 of the main report discusses satisfaction with the information being provided to students, and with the frequency with which this is done, from the perspective of schools and students. Students were further asked about their perception of how the quality of the information they receive via various sources had changed since the first national lockdown in March 2020 (due to

the Covid-19 pandemic). The findings are discussed in the main report, and the full data are reported in Figure 2, below.

Figure 2 Students’ perception on how quality of information has changed since Covid-19



How has the quality of information provided by those sources changed since the lockdown in mid-March?
Base: Variable from 130 to 294. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.⁷

3.3 Changes arising due to Covid-19

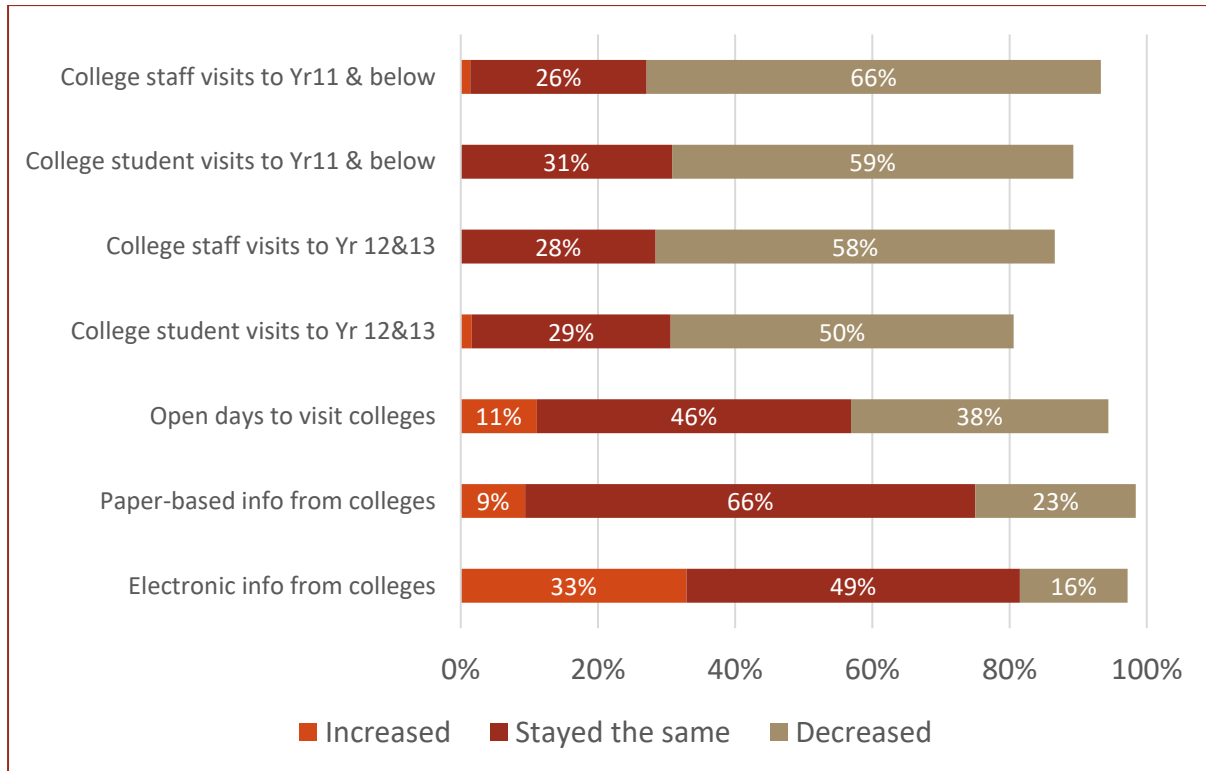
Section 7.1 of the main report outlines how the frequency of information provision has changed since the Covid-19 pandemic, from the perspective of schools and school students. Colleges were asked a similar question too, and generally they too report that information provision via visits has dropped off noticeably since March 2020, with an increase in electronic information to students (see Figure 3).

Comparing views from colleges which are apprenticeship providers and those which are not, the former group report a much larger decrease in activities and engagement with school students, compared to non-apprenticeship providers, which are more likely to state that levels of engagement

⁷ Note: Totals do not add to 100% as 'Not applicable' option has been removed from this figure.

have remained constant. In contrast, there is little difference in responses by college which do provide higher education qualifications, and those which do not.

Figure 3 Colleges' views on change in frequency with which information is provided by colleges post-Covid-19



Colleges: Since Covid-19 and lockdown in mid-March, how has the frequency of students' interactions with the following information sources changed, in relation to discussing onward options?
Base: Variable from 27 to 74. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021. (Not applicable and Don't know responses removed)

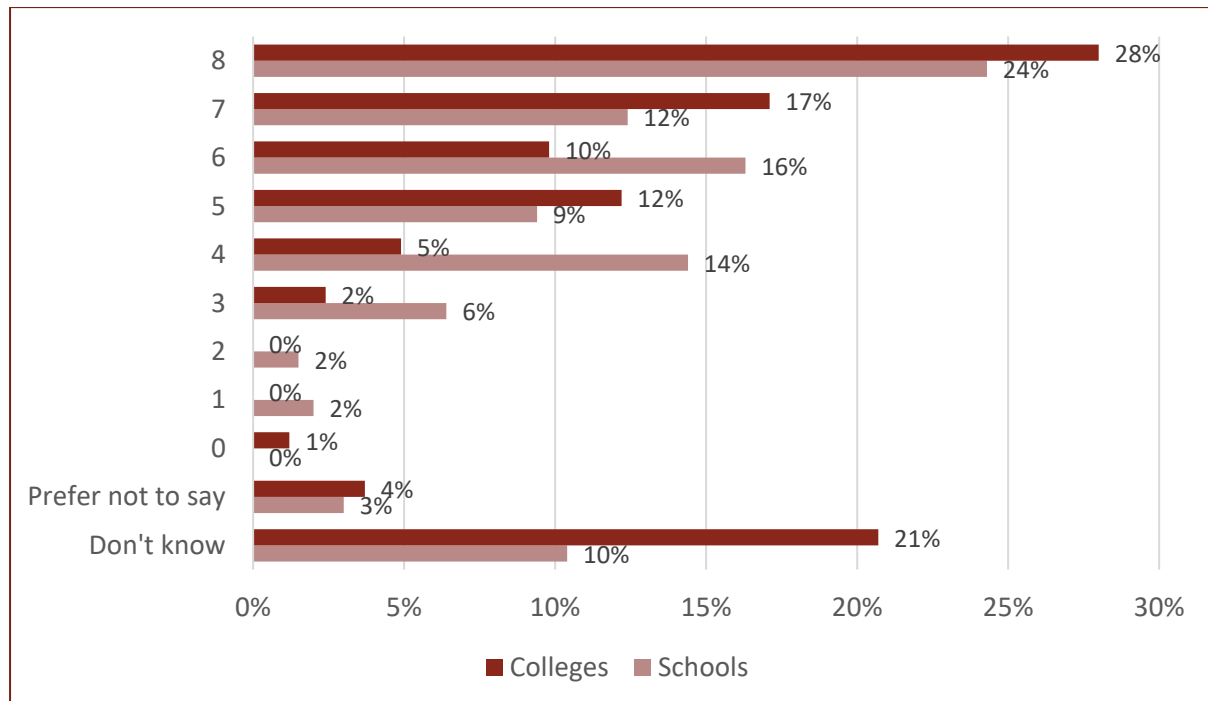
4. Respondent profile

4.1 Detailed respondent profile

An overview of the respondent profile was provided in Chapter 2 of the main report. This section provides greater detail of respondents and their background and context.

Schools and colleges were asked to note how many of the Gatsby career benchmarks they are currently meeting. Around a quarter of all responding institutions are meeting all eight. Around two thirds of schools (62%) and colleges (67%) meet at least half of these eight.

Figure 4 Number of Gatsby benchmarks currently met



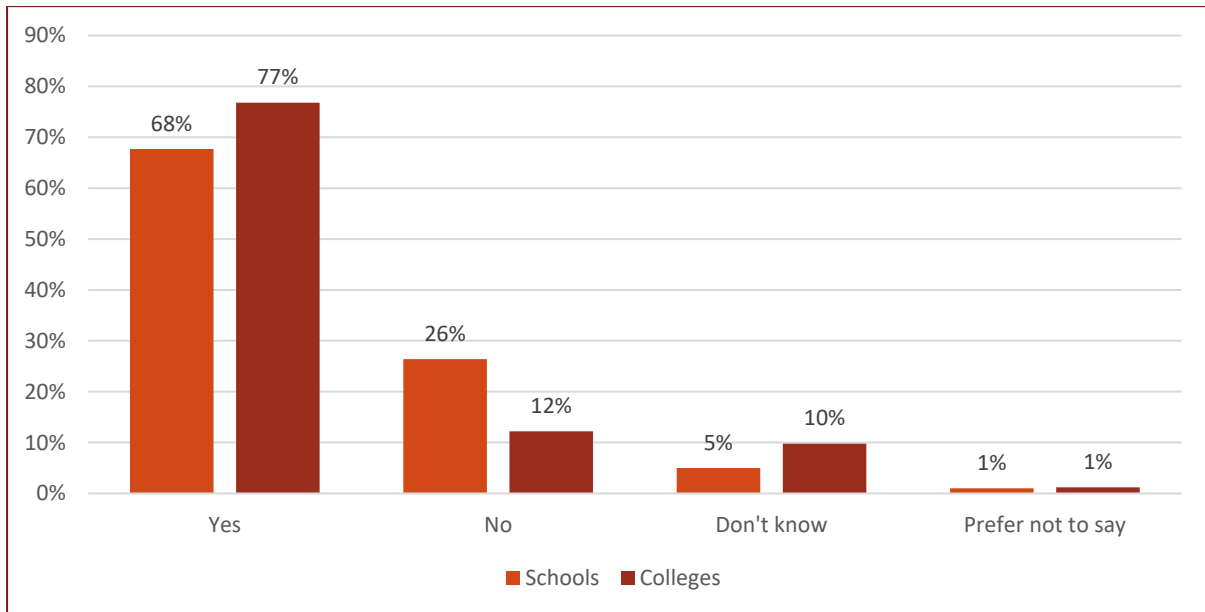
How many Gatsby Benchmarks is your school/ college fully meeting, currently?

Base: 202 (schools) and 82 (colleges) respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Schools and colleges were also asked specifically whether they are currently meeting Benchmark 7. As noted in this report’s introduction, this research directly links to this benchmark, which focuses on encounters with further and higher education, and on the need for all students to understand the full range of learning opportunities available to them. Two in three schools (68%) do currently attain Benchmark 7, compared to three in four colleges (77%). The achieved sample has a higher proportion of institutions achieving this Benchmark compared to the national average – for context, one in three schools and colleges (33%) were achieving Benchmark 7 in March 2020.⁸

⁸ CEC, 2020, *Careers education in England’s schools and colleges 2020*

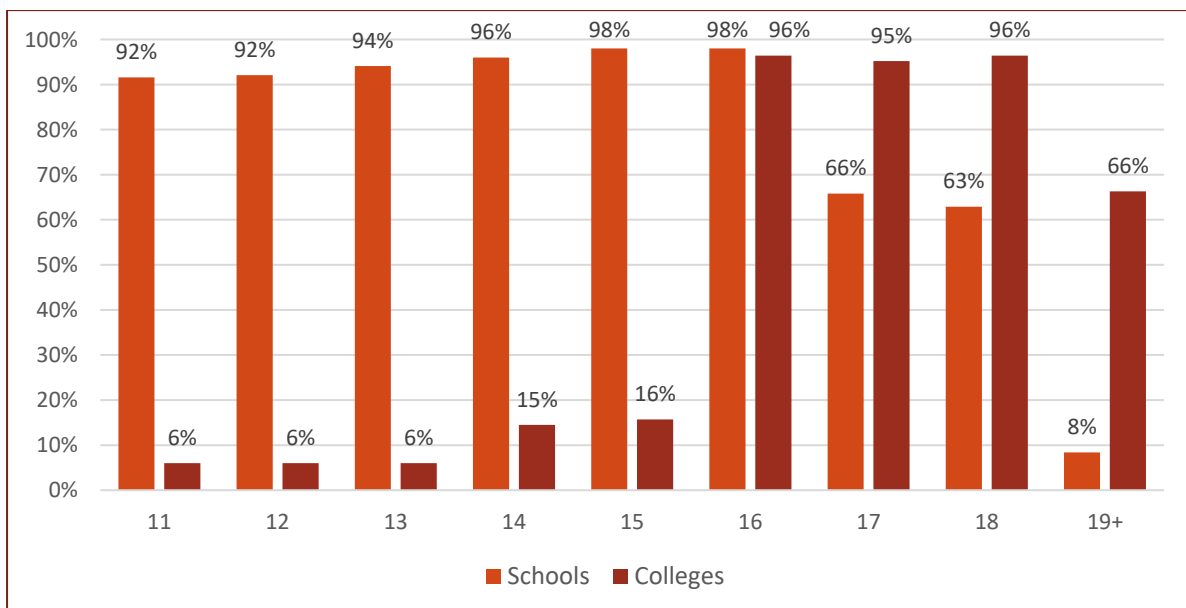
Figure 5 Respondents meeting Benchmark 7



Is your school/college currently fully meeting Gatsby Benchmark 7 (Encounters with Further and Higher Education)?
Base: 201 (schools) and 82 (colleges) respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Schools and colleges were asked which age range of students their institution teaches. Colleges predominantly teach students between age 16 to 18, with two thirds teaching students age 19+ and a sixth teaching students aged 14 or 15. Meanwhile, the majority of schools teach students aged 11 to 16, while two thirds of responding schools teach sixth form students aged 17 or 18.

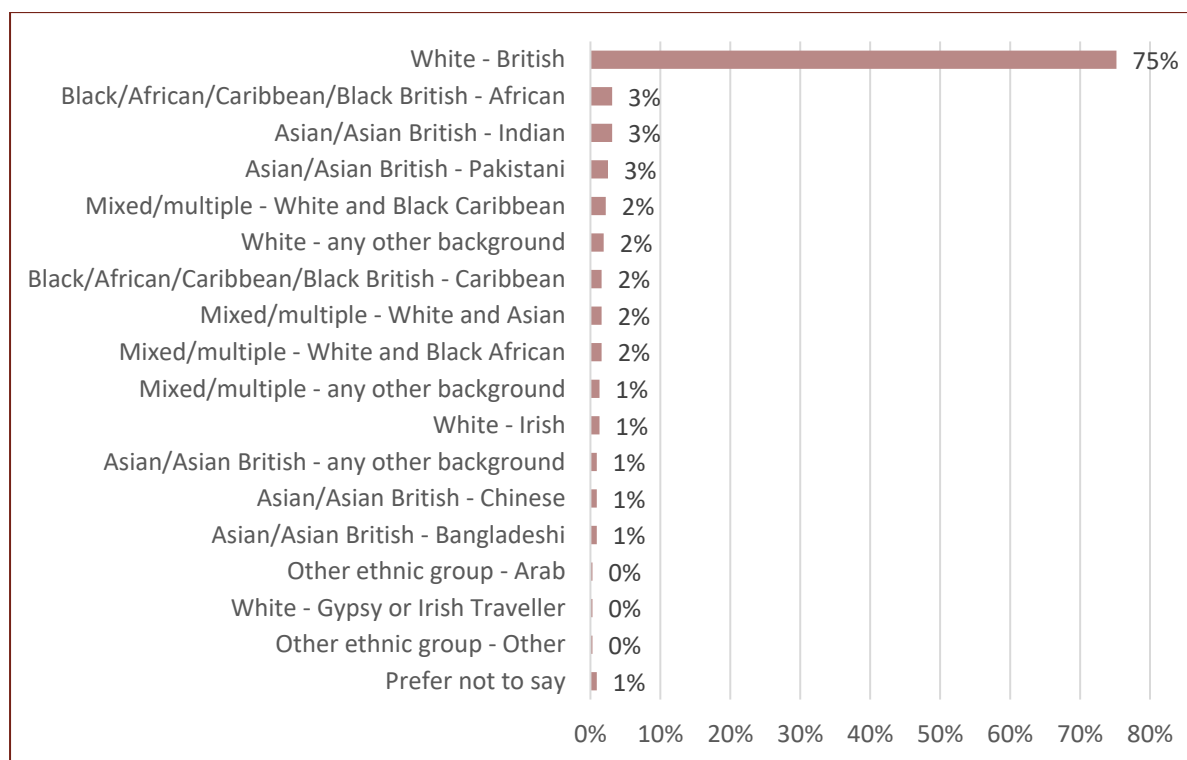
Figure 6 Ages taught by school and college respondents



What age students does your school/college teach?
Base: 202 (schools) and 83 (colleges) respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Information on students' ethnic background was also recorded. Three quarters of respondents have a white British background, and the remaining 25% of respondents are from a wide range of other backgrounds.

Figure 7 Student profile by ethnicity



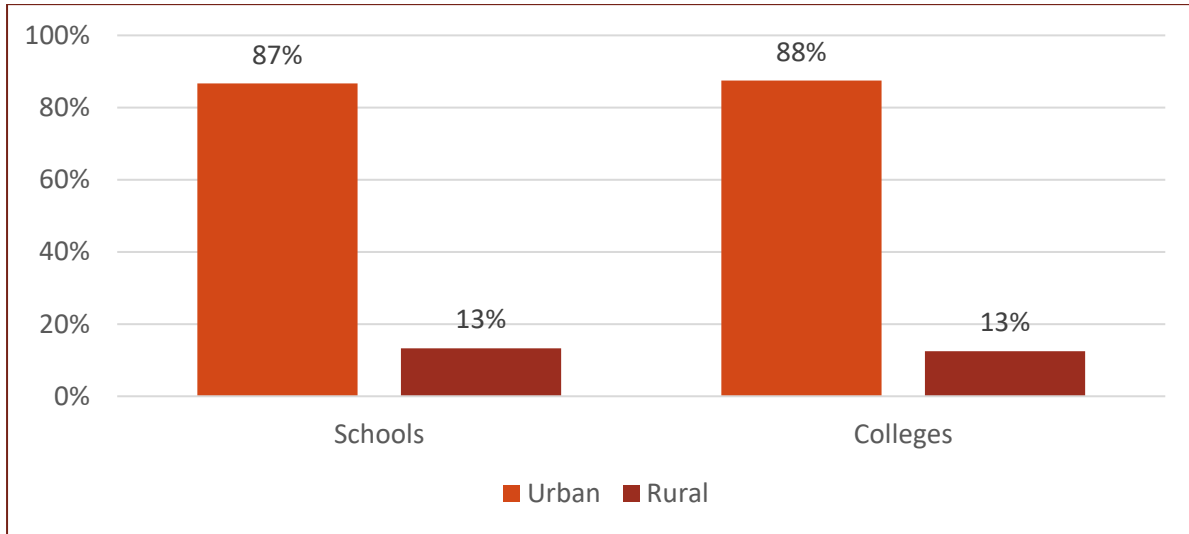
What is your ethnicity?

Base: 318 respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Schools and colleges were asked to provide the Unique Reference Number (URN) for their institution. Using the DfE's tool, Get Information About Schools, these URNs were used to understand institutions' location. Most schools (87%) and colleges (88%) are based in an 'urban' environment, while remaining respondents are based in a rural setting. These settings are defined as:

Urban	Rural
Urban city and town	Rural hamlet and isolated dwellings
Urban city and town in a sparse setting	Rural hamlet and isolated dwellings in a sparse setting
Urban major conurbation	Rural town and fringe
Urban minor conurbation	Rural town and fringe in a sparse setting
	Rural village
	Rural village in a sparse setting

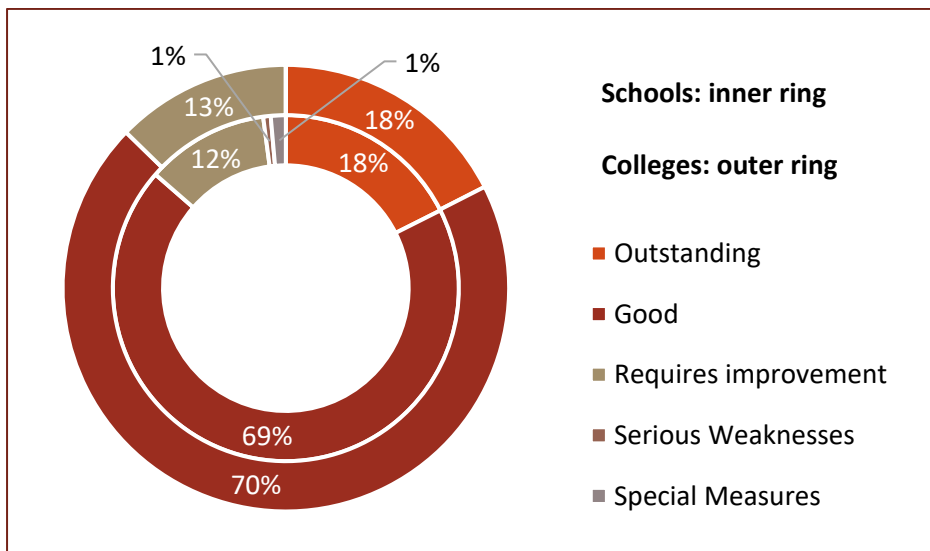
Figure 8 School and college profile by location



Derived from URN data
Base: 196 (schools) and 72 (colleges) respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Using the same data derived from institutions' URNs and the DfE's Get Information About Schools online tool, a profile could be built of responding institutions' Ofsted ratings. Around a fifth are rated as 'Outstanding' and just over two thirds are rated as 'Good'. The remaining colleges are all have a 'Require improvement' rating. Most other schools also hold this rating, although a small number have a 'Serious Weaknesses' or 'Special Measures' rating.

Figure 9 School and college profile by Ofsted rating

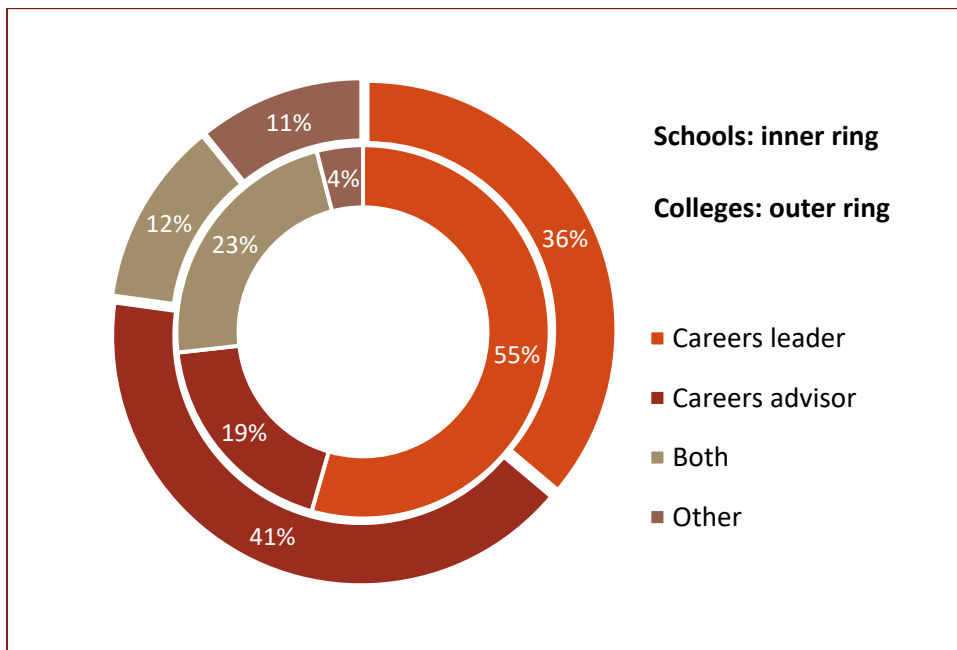


Derived from URN data
Base: 148 (schools) and 63 (colleges) respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

4.2 Supplementary figures

This section contains additional figures and data to supplement the data outlined in Chapter 2 of the main report.

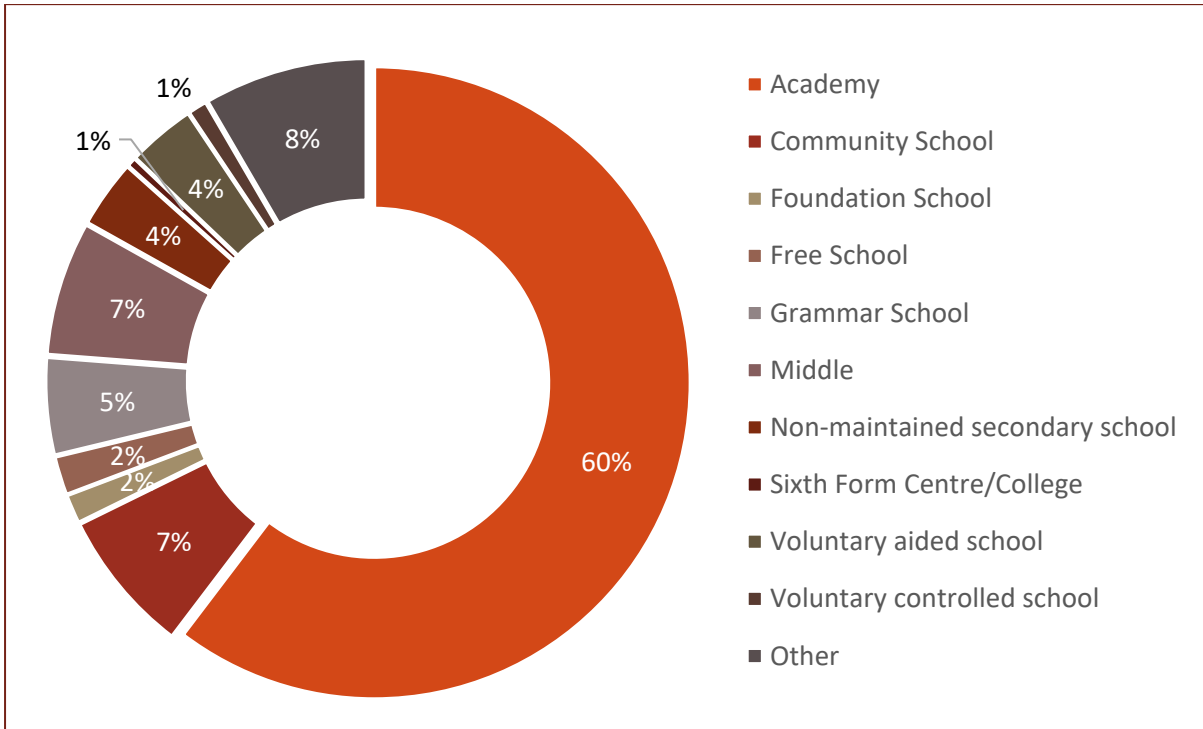
Figure 10 Staff roles responding



Which of the following best describes your job role/title?

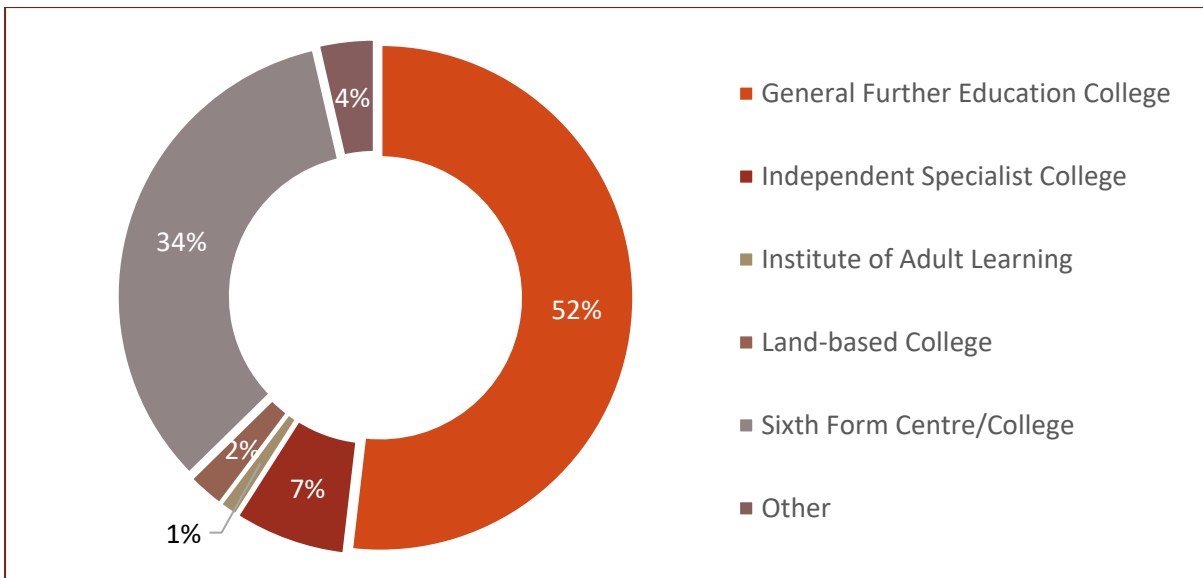
Base: 202 (schools) and 83 (colleges) respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Figure 11 School responses by institution



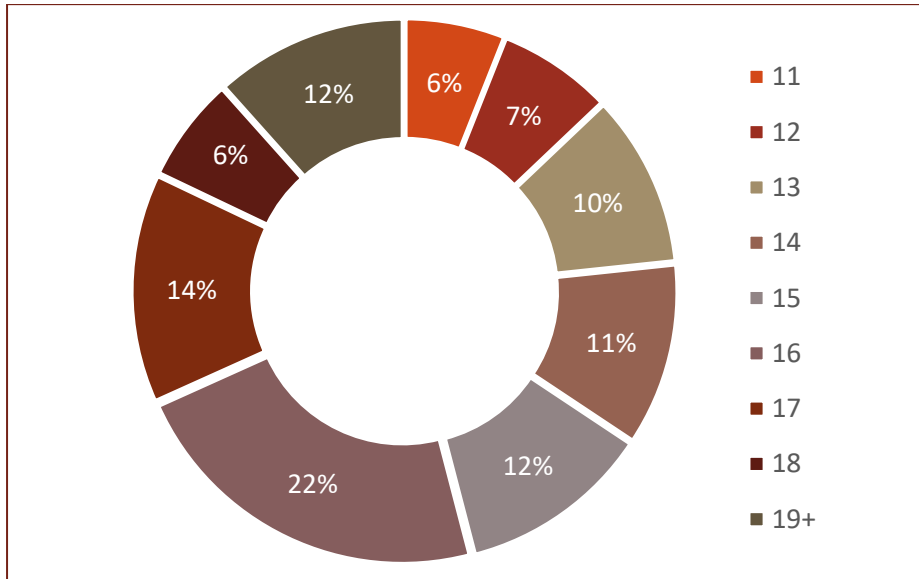
Base: 202 respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Figure 12 College responses by institution



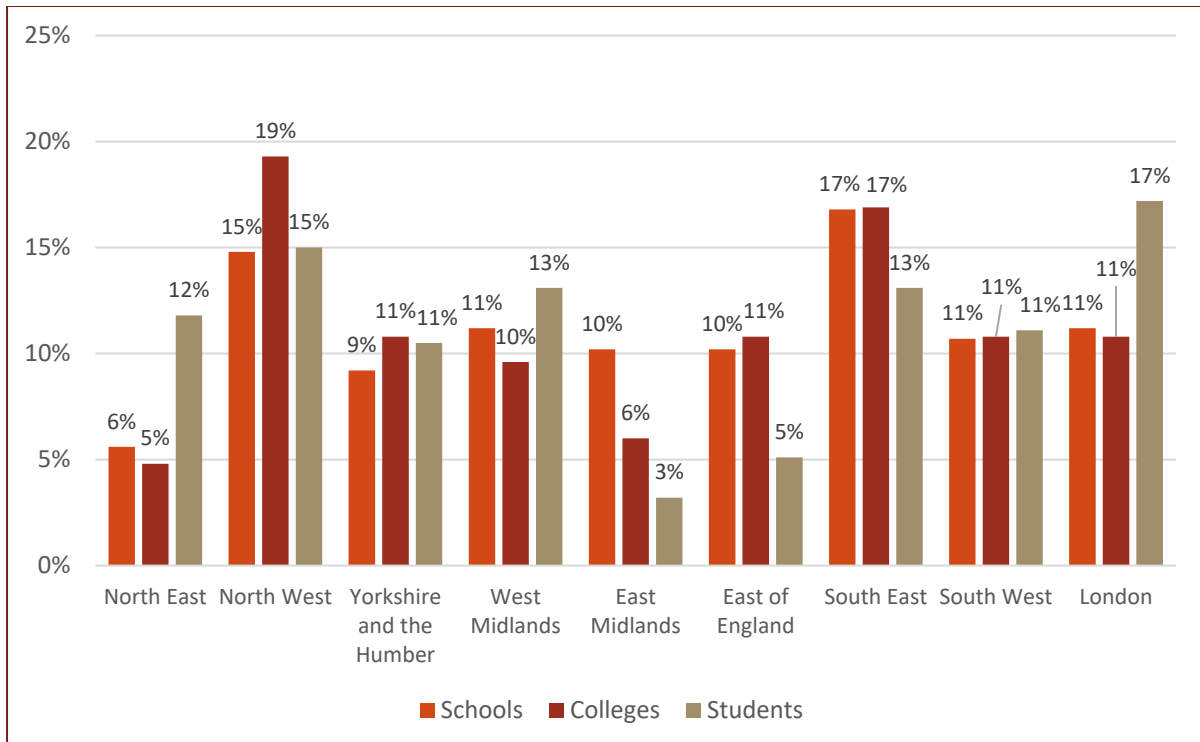
Base: 83 respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Figure 13 Student profile by age



Base: 318 respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.

Figure 14 Respondent profile by region



Base: 196 (schools), 83 (colleges) and 314 (students) respondents. Source: Pye Tait Consulting 2021.