

THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY

Accompanying guide for Teachers, Careers Advisers,
Support Workers and Family members.

The Marches
CAREERS HUB

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My Vocational Profile

A journey from Year 7 to adulthood and the world of work.

Name

Supporting Adult

Job Title

Parent / Carer Name

EHCP ☐

YES ☐

NO ☐

Date of 1st update

Date of 3rd update

Dates of 2nd update

Additional update dates

Education & Learning

Personal Development & Support

Independence & Transitions

Employment & Progression

Introduction

This guide has been written to help teachers, support staff, careers advisers, tutors and other trusted adults use My Vocational Profile with young people in a meaningful, practical and person-centred way.

The workbook is not intended to be completed in one sitting or treated as a one-off document. It is a profile that grows over time. It should be built gradually through conversation, observation, reflection, review meetings and real experiences in school, college, home and the community.

Used well, the vocational profile can help adults build a fuller picture of each young person, including:

- How they learn best.
- What matters to them.
- What support helps them.
- Their strengths and interests.
- Their growing independence.
- Their aspirations for the future.
- The next steps that will help them move towards adulthood and the world of work.

This guide gives staff a clear structure for using each part of the workbook and helps ensure the process feels supportive rather than overwhelming.

The purpose of the vocational profile

The vocational profile helps young people to:

- Understand themselves better.
- Recognise their strengths, needs and preferences.
- Talk about what helps them learn and succeed.
- Prepare for change and future transitions.
- Explore work, careers and progression routes.
- Record achievements, ideas and support needs over time.
- Contribute to planning for adulthood in a clearer, more personal way.

It also helps staff, families and other professionals to:

- Build a shared understanding of the young person.
 - Identify support strategies that work.
 - Improve transition planning.
 - Connect personal development with careers and preparation for adulthood.
 - Keep a record of progress, aspirations and next steps.
 - Make planning more personalised and consistent.
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Who this guide is for

This guide can be used by:

- Form tutors
- SEND staff
- Teachers
- Teaching assistants
- Support workers
- Careers advisers
- Transition staff
- Pastoral staff
- Key workers
- College tutors

Not every member of staff needs to complete every section. In many settings, different adults may contribute at different points. What matters is that the young person remains at the centre of the process.

Key principles for using the workbook

1. Keep the young person at the centre

The profile should reflect the young person's views, voice and experiences as much as possible. Adults may support, prompt, clarify or record, but the aim is always to capture the young person's perspective.

2. Build it over time

This workbook works best when completed gradually. Small, regular updates are more useful than trying to complete large sections all at once.

3. Use conversation, not interrogation

This should feel like a supportive discussion, not a test. Many of the best responses will come through natural conversation, activities, review meetings, classroom observations or reflection after an experience.

4. Keep language clear and accessible

Use simple, age-appropriate language. Rephrase questions where needed. Offer examples, visuals, symbols, sentence starters or choices if helpful.

5. Focus on strengths as well as support needs

It is important to record barriers and support strategies, but the profile should also celebrate strengths, interests, achievements and hopes for the future.

6. Update when things change

The most useful profiles are live documents. Revisit sections after transitions, work experiences, review meetings, key stage changes or when a young person's views develop.

7. Be respectful and accurate

Write in a way that is clear, professional and helpful. Avoid judgemental language. Record support needs honestly, but always in a way that preserves dignity and focuses on what helps.

Before you start

Before using the workbook with a young person:

- Read through the full workbook so you understand the structure
- Identify which sections are most relevant now
- Think about how the young person communicates best
- Prepare any visuals, symbols, sentence starters or adapted resources they may need
- Decide whether the section is best completed 1:1, in a small group, with family input, or through a review discussion
- Allow enough time so the conversation does not feel rushed

It can also help to explain:

- What the workbook is for
 - That it will be added to over time
 - That there are no right or wrong answers
 - That it is about helping adults understand them better
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Approaches that can help

Some young people will answer questions directly. Others may need a more flexible approach. Staff can use:

- Discussion and note-taking
- Sentence starters
- Visual choices
- Emoji scales
- Checklists
- Drawing or mind maps
- Photographs
- Examples from real situations
- Support from a trusted adult
- Observations from class, enrichment, visits or work experience

For some young people, it may be better to complete a question verbally and have an adult scribe their response. Others may prefer to circle, tick, point, choose from options or add short phrases only.

Good practice when recording responses

When writing responses in the profile:

- Keep wording clear and specific.
- Use the young person's own words where possible.
- Include practical examples.
- Record what helps, not just what is difficult.
- Avoid vague phrases such as "struggles with everything".
- Describe support in a useful way, for example: "Benefits from clear step-by-step instructions and advance warning of changes".
- Date updates where appropriate.

Helpful wording usually sounds like this:

- "Prefers..."
 - "Finds it easier when..."
 - "Benefits from..."
 - "Enjoys..."
 - "Is developing confidence in..."
 - "Would like to learn more about..."
-

Suggested use across the journey

The workbook is designed to begin in Year 7 and continue through to post-16 and post-18 planning. The "when to start" prompts on each page should guide the timing, but staff can adapt this to the young person.

A simple approach might be:

Year 7–8

Focus on:

- Education and Learning
- Personal Development and Support
- early support needs
- strengths and communication

Year 8–9

Add:

- Independence and Transitions
- early conversations about change
- growing self-awareness

Year 9–10

Begin:

- Discovering Jobs
- early career ideas
- work preferences
- transition planning

Year 10–11

Develop:

- post-16 planning
- experiences that help learning
- career action planning
- preparing for adulthood

Year 12–13 or college stage

Focus on:

- post-18 plans
- more detailed action planning
- independence for adult life
- employment preferences and support needs
- final transition preparation

Section-by-section guidance

Section 1: Education and Learning

This section helps adults understand how the young person learns, communicates and accesses education.

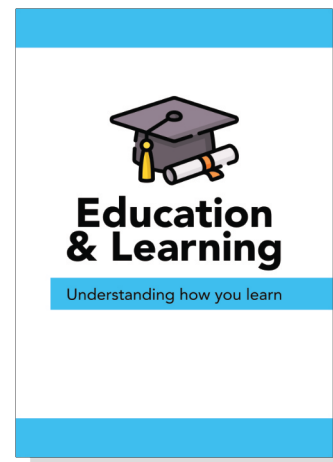
1.1 About Me – The Basics

Purpose: To capture core information that helps staff understand the young person from the start.

What to explore:

- preferred communication
- who supports them
- who they live with
- first language
- any medication or support needs linked to daily school life

How to complete it: Keep this discussion simple and factual. This section is often best completed with support from home and school together, especially at the start.



Useful prompts:

- How do you usually like people to talk with you?
- Is it easier when people show you, tell you, write it down, or give you time?
- Who usually helps you at school or at home?
- Is there anything adults should know to help you feel comfortable?

Staff tip: This section can be especially useful during handovers to new staff.

1.2 My Learning Profile

Purpose: To understand how the young person experiences learning.

What to explore:

- Favourite subjects
- Difficult subjects or topics
- Preferred ways of learning
- What helps concentration
- Recent learning successes

How to complete it: This can be done through discussion, a simple questionnaire, or after a lesson reflection. Encourage the young person to think about what learning feels like when it is going well.

Useful prompts:

- What lessons do you usually enjoy most?
- What makes those lessons easier or more interesting?
- Do you learn best by watching, listening, doing, talking or repeating?
- What helps you stay focused?
- What have you learned recently that made you feel proud?

Staff tip: Try to get beyond “I like PE” or “I do not like maths”. Ask what specifically helps or gets in the way.

1.3 What Helps Me Learn Well?

Purpose: To record practical support strategies and classroom conditions that help the young person succeed.

What to explore:

- Classroom conditions that help
- Routines and structures that work
- Equipment used
- What a good learning day looks like
- What teachers should know

How to complete it: This section works best when based on real examples. Staff can contribute observations alongside the young person's views.

Useful prompts:

- Do you like lessons to feel calm, quiet, structured or flexible?
- What helps you feel ready to learn?
- Do things like checklists, overlays, headphones or laptops help?
- What routines make the day easier?
- If a teacher wanted to help you do your best, what should they know?

Staff tip: This section can become one of the most useful practical summaries in the workbook. Keep responses specific and usable.

Section 2: Personal Development and Support

This section helps the young person describe themselves, their interests, their challenges and their support network.

2.1 My Personality

Purpose: To help the young person describe who they are.

What to explore:

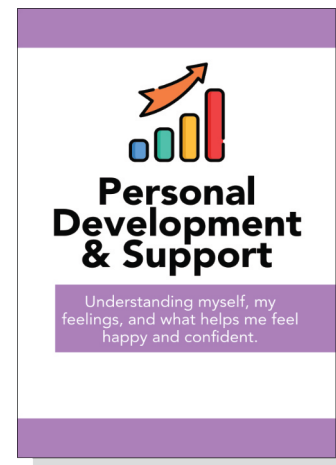
- Personality traits.
- How they see themselves.
- How others see them.
- What they like about themselves.

How to complete it: This section should feel positive and reflective. Some young people may find it easier to start with emojis, word banks or choices.

Useful prompts:

- Which words sound most like you?
- What do your friends or family say you are like?
- What do you like about your personality?
- When do you feel most like yourself?

Staff tip: Young people may need reassurance here. Some may find it difficult to talk positively about themselves without examples and encouragement.



2.2 My Interests and What Makes Me Happy

Purpose: To understand what motivates, engages and regulates the young person.

What to explore:

- Hobbies.
- Favourite activities.
- Interests in and out of school.
- What helps them feel calm or happy.
- Groups or clubs they enjoy.

How to complete it: This can be completed through discussion, enrichment review, tutor conversations or interests-based activities.

Useful prompts:

- What do you enjoy doing in your free time?
- What kinds of activities make you feel good?
- What do you look forward to?
- What helps when you are having a difficult day?

Staff tip: Interests often provide useful clues for future careers exploration, community involvement and motivation.

2.3 My Challenges and What Helps Me

Purpose: To identify difficulties in a supportive way and record strategies that help.

What to explore:

- Triggers or challenges.
- What support works.
- What others should avoid.
- What helps the young person feel safe, happy and healthy.
- Support that is most effective at home or school.

How to complete it: Approach this gently and without judgement. The aim is not to dwell on problems, but to understand support needs clearly.

Useful prompts:

- What kinds of things can make a day harder?
- What usually helps when that happens?
- Is there anything adults do that makes things worse instead of better?
- What helps you feel safe and calm?

Staff tip: Use respectful wording. For example, write “Finds sudden changes difficult; benefits from preparation and reassurance” rather than negative labels.

2.4 My Strengths and Support Network

Purpose: To identify strengths and the people who make a difference.

What to explore:

- Strengths in different settings
- Achievements and areas of pride
- Key people in the young person's life
- How others support them
- New strengths emerging over time

How to complete it: Invite the young person to think about strengths at home, school, college, work experience or in hobbies. Staff and families can help identify strengths the young person may not notice themselves.

Useful prompts:

- What are you good at?
- What are you proud of?
- Who helps you most, and how?
- What have you got better at recently?

Staff tip: This section is especially important before transitions, applications or reviews because it gives a fuller, more balanced picture.

Section 3: Independence and Transitions

This section supports preparation for adult life and change.

3.1 My Home and Life Skills

Purpose: To explore growing independence.

What to explore:

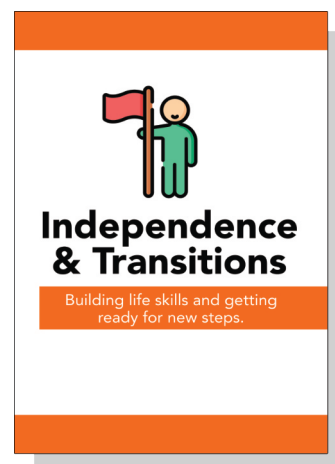
- Skills used at home.
- Money skills.
- Cooking, laundry, housework and travel.
- What the young person is learning now.
- What they want to learn next.
- Support that builds independence.

How to complete it: Keep the discussion practical and realistic. This is not about judging what a young person cannot do. It is about understanding starting points and next steps.

Useful prompts:

- What jobs do you do at home by yourself?
- What are you learning to do more independently?
- What do you want to get better at next?
- How confident do you feel about travel or handling money?

Staff tip: Small steps matter. Record developing independence as well as fully secure skills.



3.2 Physical, Sensory and Mobility Needs

Purpose: To record access needs and adjustments that help.

What to explore:

- Sensory needs.
- Mobility needs.
- Physical comfort.
- Equipment used.
- Adjustments that support access in education or work.

How to complete it: This section may need input from families, support staff or specialist colleagues. Make sure what is recorded is accurate and useful.

Useful prompts:

- Are there any things that feel uncomfortable or difficult physically?
- Do you use any equipment that helps?
- What helps you feel comfortable in classrooms or other places?

Staff tip: This section can be very important during transitions into work experience, college or new settings.

3.3 Preparing for Change

Purpose: To help the young person prepare for transitions in a planned way.

What to explore:

- What makes change difficult.
- What helps them feel prepared.
- Support needed in new places.
- What information helps beforehand.
- Whether visuals, maps, photos or visits help.
- Travel practice needs.

How to complete it: This section is best revisited before known transitions, including new classes, new sites, work experience, college visits and post-16 or post-18 moves.

Useful prompts:

- What helps you feel ready for somewhere new?
- What do you like to know in advance?
- Would it help to see photos or meet people first?
- Do you need time to practise a journey or routine?

Staff tip: Be specific. “Needs a map” is less helpful than “Benefits from photos of key staff, a map of the building and a pre-visit before starting”.

3.4 Preparing for Adulthood (PfA)

Purpose: To link current development with future adult life.

What to explore:

- Independent living goals.
- Community inclusion.
- Health and wellbeing goals.
- Skills for adult life and work.
- Support needed to reach goals.

How to complete it: This section may be useful in review meetings and transition planning. Encourage the young person to think about adult life in small, realistic ways.

Useful prompts:

- What do you want to be able to do more independently as you get older?
- How would you like to be part of your community?
- What helps you stay healthy and well?
- What adult life or work skills would you like to build?

Staff tip: Keep this aspirational but grounded. Focus on next steps as well as long-term hopes.

Section 4: Employment and Progression

This section helps the young person explore jobs, preferences, experiences and future routes.

4.1 Discovering Jobs

Purpose: To begin noticing jobs and sectors that interest the young person.

What to explore:

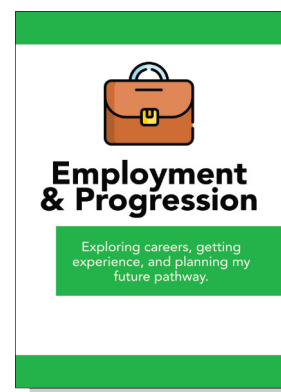
- Jobs they are curious about.
- What they like about those jobs.
- Skills linked to those roles.
- Who they have seen doing interesting jobs.

How to complete it: This works well after employer encounters, assemblies, curriculum links, workplace visits or careers lessons.

Useful prompts:

- Have you seen any jobs that look interesting?
- What do you like about them?
- What do people in that job actually do?
- Who do you know, or know of, who does something interesting?

Staff tip: Keep it exploratory. Young people do not need fixed answers at this stage.



4.2 My Career Ideas

Purpose: To explore what matters to the young person in future work.

What to explore:

- Dream jobs.
- Realistic alternative ideas.
- Interests and motivations.
- Skills they already have.
- Values and preferences linked to work.

How to complete it: Encourage openness. Young people can record broad ideas as well as specific jobs.

Useful prompts:

- What would your dream job be right now?
- What other jobs might suit you?
- Why do those jobs appeal to you?
- What skills do you already have that could fit those jobs?
- What matters most to you: helping people, routine, creativity, money, being outdoors, meeting people?

Staff tip: This page is a good bridge between self-awareness and careers education.

4.3 My Work Preferences

Purpose: To identify the kind of working environment that may suit the young person.

What to explore:

- Busy or quiet environments.
- Indoors or outdoors.
- Team or independent work.
- Preferred hours.
- Workplace routines.
- Travel needs.
- Interest in self-employment.

How to complete it: This section often becomes more accurate after visits, tasters or work experience. It can be revisited several times.

Useful prompts:

- Would you rather work somewhere busy or calm?
- Do you prefer being around lots of people or working more independently?
- Would mornings, afternoons or flexible hours suit you better?
- Are there any travel needs adults should know about?

Staff tip: Preferences may change with experience. Treat this as a developing picture, not a final decision.

4.4 Experiences That Help Me Learn

Purpose: To capture what the young person learns from real experiences.

What to explore:

- Work experience
- Volunteering
- Tasters
- Visits
- Part-time jobs
- What they enjoyed
- What was difficult
- What they learned about themselves

How to complete it: Ideally complete this soon after each experience while details are fresh.

Useful prompts:

- What did you do?
- What part did you enjoy most?
- What did you find difficult?
- What did that experience teach you about yourself?
- Would you like to do something similar again?

Staff tip: This section can be extremely powerful for identifying patterns in strengths, support needs and future direction.

4.5 My Post-16 Pathway

Purpose: To help the young person explore and compare options after Year 11.

What to explore:

- Top options after Year 11.
- What interests them about each one.
- Places visited.
- Support needed in the next setting.
- Who can help them decide.

How to complete it: This section should be linked to real guidance, visits, open events and conversations with families and advisers.

Useful prompts:

- What are your top three ideas for after Year 11 at the moment?
- What appeals to you about each one?
- What have you visited or explored so far?
- What support would help you in a new setting?
- Who can help you make your decision?

Staff tip: Keep all appropriate options open while the young person explores. The aim is informed decision-making, not rushing into a choice.

4.6 My Post-18 Plans

Purpose: To support planning beyond sixth form or college.

What to explore:

- Top options after post-16 study.
- Settings or services to visit.
- Support needed in the next stage.
- Aspirations linked to adulthood, training or work.

How to complete it: This section is most useful in Year 12 and Year 13, or the equivalent college stage. It should be informed by guidance, transitions work and realistic progression planning.

Useful prompts:

- What do you want your next step to be after college or sixth form?
- Which options feel most right for you at the moment?
- What places would you like to visit?
- What support would make the next step more successful?

Staff tip: Link this section with transition reviews and action planning so it leads to practical next steps.

4.7 My Career Action Plan

Purpose: To turn ideas into practical next steps.

What to explore:

- Short-term goals.
- Medium-term goals.
- Long-term aims.
- Actions needed next.
- People who can help.
- Support needed.
- Dates and next actions.

How to complete it: Keep goals realistic and clear. This section works best when supported by a teacher, adviser or key worker.

Useful prompts:

- What is one thing you want to do soon?
- What do you want to work towards this year?
- What is your longer-term goal at the moment?
- What needs to happen next?
- Who will help you do that?

Staff tip: Break large goals into small, manageable actions with dates where possible.

Section 5: Parent / Carer Views and Consent

5.1 Parent / Carer Views

Purpose: To include the views, hopes and concerns of family or carers.

What to explore:

- What is going well.
- Hopes for the short and long term.
- Concerns about next steps.
- Support that may help.

How to complete it: This may be completed during review meetings, transition planning, or sent home for contribution. Family input can add valuable context.

Staff tip: Family views should add to the profile, not replace the young person's voice.

5.2 Consent and Sharing

Purpose: To clarify who can see the profile and how information may be shared.

What to explore:

- Who the profile can be shared with.
- Whether the young person and family understand this.
- Signatures and dates where required.

How to complete it: Explain clearly what the profile is for and who may need to use it to support transition and planning.

Staff tip: Use your setting's usual information-sharing and safeguarding procedures alongside this section.

Using the profile in real practice

When to revisit the workbook

Good times to review or update sections include:

- Annual reviews
 - Transition reviews
 - Start or end of a school year
 - After work experience
 - After college or workplace visits
 - Before options discussions
 - After a significant change in need or circumstance
 - When a young person develops new interests or goals
-

How long should it take?

The workbook should be completed in stages. Some pages may take 10–15 minutes. Others may need more than one conversation. It is better to complete one page well than rush through several.

Staff do not need to complete every page in order. Start with the sections that are most relevant and build from there.

Supporting different communication needs

To make the workbook more accessible, staff may need to:

- Simplify the wording
- Read questions aloud
- Break one question into smaller parts
- Give visual choices
- Use examples from the young person's life
- Offer sentence starters
- Allow thinking time
- Complete responses across more than one session
- Use a scribe
- Involve a familiar adult who understands the young person well

The aim is not for every page to look the same. The aim is for the profile to be meaningful and usable.

Things to avoid

Try to avoid:

- Completing the whole workbook too quickly

- Writing only from an adult perspective
 - Using labels without explanation
 - Focusing only on difficulties
 - Recording vague comments that do not help future
 - Staff treating the workbook as a compliance exercise
 - Assuming answers will stay the same over time
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What a strong profile looks like

A strong vocational profile is:

- Personal
 - Practical strengths-
 - Based honest
 - Regularly updated
 - Shaped by the young person's voice
 - Useful to staff, families and transition partners
 - Connected to real next steps
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Final message for staff

The value of this workbook is not in how quickly it is completed, but in the quality of the conversations it creates.

For some young people, this profile will become the first place where their strengths, support needs, aspirations and future pathway are brought together in one clear document. It can help adults understand not just what support is needed, but who the young person is, what matters to them and how they can be helped to move forward with confidence.

Used thoughtfully, it can support better planning, better transitions and better outcomes.
