

Provider access legislation

The **updated provider access legislation (PAL)** has now been enacted. It specifies schools must provide at least six encounters with approved providers of apprenticeships and technical education for all their students:

- Two encounters for pupils during the 'first key phase' (year 8 or 9) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend
- Two encounters for pupils during the 'second key phase' (year 10 or 11) that are mandatory for all pupils to attend
- Two encounters for pupils during the 'third key phase' (year 12 or 13) that are mandatory for the school to put on but optional for pupils to attend

PAL Provider	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
DWP		February 2026 - LMI and option choices	DWP Post 16 Choices – Apprenticeship talk and Assessment Centre activities carousel		DWP Post 16 Choices – Apprenticeship talk and Assessment Centre activities	
Northumberland College				Post 16 qualification choices		
Newcastle College				Subject Carousel and Post 16 Choices		
Kier				Apprenticeship career routes		Apprenticeship career routes
Port of Blyth	Career route options and qualification choices		Career route options and qualification choices		Career route options and qualification choices	
Careers Fair and employer engagement	All	All	All		All	
National Apprenticeship				National Apprenticeship		National Apprenticeship

week engagement				week engagement		week engagement
--------------------	--	--	--	--------------------	--	--------------------

This new legislation will become a key mechanism to further help learners understand and take-up, not just apprenticeships, but wider technical education options such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications.

At The Careers & Enterprise Company, we are keen to support schools and providers to meet and evidence this updated requirement meaningfully as part of wider progressive careers programmes.

In the context of the provider access legislation, a provider is an organisation that offers approved technical education qualifications or their representative, for example an FE college or training provider.

A provider, to whom access is given, must deliver an encounter that includes the following:

- Information about the provider and the approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships that the provider offers
- Information about the careers to which those technical education qualifications or apprenticeships might lead
- A description of what learning or training with the provider is like
- **Responses to questions from the pupils about the provider or approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.**