



Youth Employment --- EXCHANGE

Tuesday 5th May 2026 | 10.00-12.00

Charlotte Jones

Head of Operations
GMLPN

Chloe Forrest

Partnership Manager
GMLPN

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- Background and Context – Charlotte Jones
- Chair Welcome – Andy Turner
- Gateway Qualifications – John Hamilton
- GMCA – Sharon Weetman
- Breakout Discussions
- Initiatives and Impact
- Close and Next Steps

Background & Context

GM POSITION PAPER

Tackling the NEET Challenge

Across Greater Manchester

September 2025

GMLPN
Greater Manchester
Learning Provider Network

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

gateway
qualifications

[Greater-Manchester-NEET-Position-Paper-September-2025.pdf](#)

Headspace Bolton



Andy Turner - Chair
Wbl Skills & Participation
Devt Officer
Rochdale Borough Council



ROCHDALE
BOROUGH COUNCIL

John Hamilton
Head of Business
Development
Gateway Qualifications



[illegible]

growth curiosity achievement support
communication
learning
progress creativity development
problem-solving safety playfulness
discovery motivation
belonging career-pathways thinking
challenge independence inspiration ambition imagination opportunity wellbeing experience dreams
skills
potential
confidence knowledge
expression identity-building
future
freedom collaboration research
openness connection guidance community choices exploration questioning
identity confidence-building innovation

Sharon Weetman

Head of Youth Employment &
Apprenticeships
GMCA

GMCA GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY

**The GM Post 16
system - working for young
people in Manchester**

together
we are

**GREATER
MANCHESTER**

Sharon Weetman

**Head of Youth Employment &
Apprenticeships**

Greater Manchester will be the UK's leading engine of social mobility, with all young people having a clear path towards a good job in our growing economy.

A transformed technical education system via the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc) will give young people a clear line of sight to high-quality jobs in sectors that are growing in our city-region, as well as increased access to essential life and work skills, growing their sense of hope and optimism for the future.

We'll also create better access to good jobs, with support to upskill and reskill, with a commitment to raise our employment rate.

A clear line of sight
to high-quality jobs

Removing barriers to good
employment will help reduce
poverty, improve health, and
boost the economy by closing
critical skills gaps.

4.

A clear line of sight to high-quality jobs

End state: GM will be the UK's leading engine of social mobility, with all children and young people having the opportunity to thrive with a clear path towards a good job in our growing economy.

Key delivery plan activity:

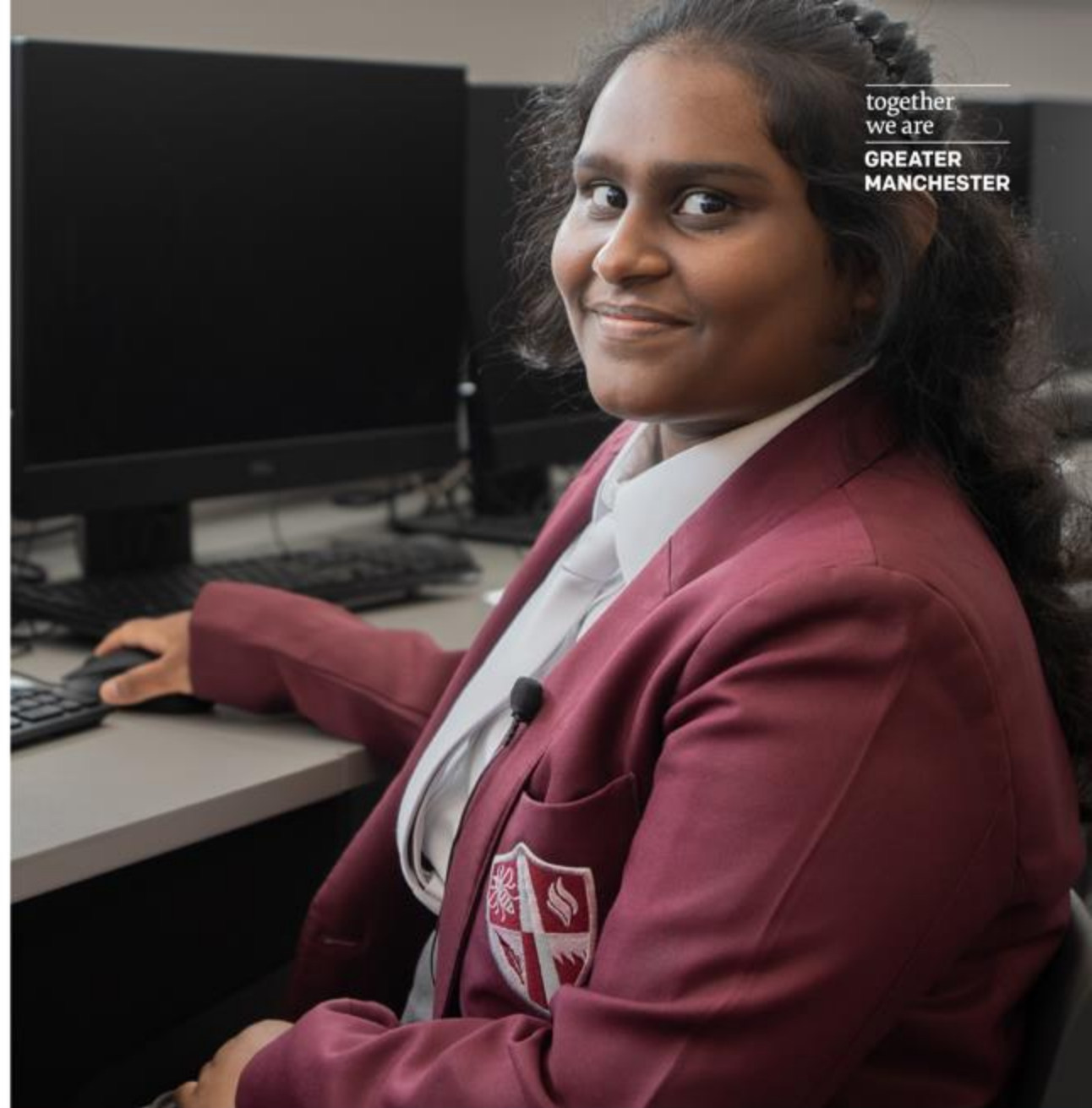
- By 2029 we will **narrow the gap on school readiness** through a consistent best start in life family hub offer, improved early access to speech and language support and investment in multiagency workforce skills and competencies that support child development.
- By 2029 **School Attendance for disadvantaged learners will be above 93%.**
- By 2029 we will **deliver a GM Youth Guarantee for 15–25-year-olds**, delivering consistent and targeted NEET engagement and prevention, tailored employment support and a guaranteed post-16 place for all learners.
- By 2029 96% of secondary schools and colleges will be delivering **high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance** with 50% implementation of the Gatsby Benchmarks. By 2035 high quality CEIAG will be embedded in all education institutions and everyday support services.
- By 2029 90% of schools and colleges will be working towards a tailored MBacc plan and we will have fully rolled out the MBacc award for all students following a technical pathway. This means that by 2035 **most young people (aged 14-18) will be able to choose an MBacc pathway that meets their aspirations and leads them to a good job in GM's economy** supported by 45 days of industry experience by age 19.
- By 2029 we will increase the number of residents able to access place-based, tailored skills and employment support to a) enter or sustain work, b) upskill and progress in their careers into good jobs in GM's economy. **Narrowing the gap with the national employment rate with good sustainable jobs that pay well.**
- By 2029 we will grow the volume of higher technical skills for key growth sectors delivered across GM's Colleges and Providers. By 2035 we will ensure that **businesses can access the skilled pipeline needed for our key growth sectors** through skills provision that is employer informed, responsive to local need & occupation specific.
- By 2035 **Post-16 technical provision and apprenticeship pathways** for young people are clear, match their aspirations, are fully aligned with the region's economic needs and offer clear progression pathways.

Beeline – Giving young people a clear line of sight to great jobs in Greater Manchester

Electina, a Year 11 pupil from Tameside, is expanding her education and career horizons thanks to Beeline and her school's involvement in the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc).

Beeline is a digital tool to give young people in Greater Manchester a clear line of sight to real jobs in the city region's growing economy.

Beeline has helped Electina broaden her aspirations and helped her to find out more about major employers and the exciting opportunities available via technical education routes.



Pathways for all young people

Modern Work Experience

Apprenticeships

Supported Internships

College place

ITP provision



“Good” jobs

Application processes

Qualification pathways

Youth Guarantee

Jobs Guarantee

Modern Work Experience: The National Journey

Government ambition for Modern Work Experience



Gatsby Benchmarks and updated statutory guidance



There is now greater focus on progressive, modern work experience across multiple year groups



Work experience is no longer seen as a single placement in Year 10, with increased emphasis on equity, employer engagement and meaningful experiences



CAREER GUIDANCE



NEXT 10 YEARS



Source: Gatsby Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years

Source: Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK

What Modern Work Experience Is

Modern Work Experience is:

- A progressive programme of experiences, starting early
- Rooted in equity and access for all learners
- Flexible to the needs of schools, learners and employers
- Designed to connect education with industry
- Focused on building the future workforce

This supports the government ambition of:

- At least one week of work experience activity in Years 7–9
- At least one week of placements in Years 10–11
- A minimum of two weeks / 50 hours of work experience by Year 11



Youth Path



[YouthPath - Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

A GM Youth Guarantee

 UK Government

YOUTH GUARANTEE

Our offer to employers

- ▶ **£1,000**
for employers who hire apprentices aged 16-18.
- ▶ **NEW £3,000**
for employers who hire 18-24 year olds who have been on Universal Credit for over 6 months.
- ▶ **NEW £2,000**
for SMEs who hire apprentices aged 16-24.
- ▶ **No NICs**
on employees under 21, or apprentices under 25.
- ▶ **£2,000**
for employers who hire foundation apprentices aged 16-21.
- ▶ **Jobs Guarantee**
Fully subsidised work for long-term unemployed 18-24 year olds.

To get involved visit:
business.gov.uk/recruit

We will ensure that every young person (16-25) across GM will have the opportunity to be in education, employment or training.

 UK Government

Introducing the YOUTH GUARANTEE GATEWAY

If you're a young person not earning or learning after 13 weeks on Universal Credit, we guarantee a referral to one of the following:

- ▶ a job
- ▶ an apprenticeship
- ▶ learning
- ▶ work experience
- ▶ vocational training
- ▶ a workplace training programme with a guaranteed interview

LAUNCHING TODAY
IN 81 JOBCENTRES

Our Response to the Milburn Review

We want to create a Greater Manchester Youth Guarantee that can act as a blueprint for the rest of the UK:

Government should deliver on its commitment in the Post-16 White Paper and devolve accountability for supporting young people who are, or at risk of becoming, NEET to MSAs,

The Integrated Settlement should be expanded to bring together funding across a range of Departments under the banner of the Youth Guarantee:

Strengthen MSAs' role in the local skills system, particularly a formal role in shaping both the Growth and Skills Levy and Lifelong Learning Entitlement, aligning each with local labour markets and economic priorities; and introducing MSA accountability for Post-16 place planning – enabling areas to deliver sufficiency across NEET prevention and 16-19 learning.

This preventative, system-wide approach will be enabled further by expanding our wider employment support offer: Acknowledging the importance of joined-up, coherent support for young people throughout 16-24 and at the 25+ transition, we identify a particular opportunity around devolving future Employment Support for the Long-Term Unemployed through GM's Integrated Settlement. This would complement GM's existing Integrated Settlement employment support package and unlock the full benefits of an integrated model.

Developing a system wide response

We are developing our year 2 GMS delivery plan...

- What do you want to see us aim for?**
- What is your role in delivering the ambition?**
- What stops you doing it? What do you need more of to go further?**

Breakout Discussions

<https://padlet.com/charlottej17/youth-employment-exchange-may-2026-pplxagl7s18igxhf>

Initiatives and Impact

Initiatives and Impact – Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation apprenticeships (level 2)

Foundation apprenticeships are set at level 2 and are designed to help young people get started in an industry.

Foundation apprenticeships are available across a range of sectors, including construction, engineering, digital and social care.

You do not need to have any specific qualifications or experience to apply.

Who can do a foundation apprenticeship?

Anyone between 16 and 21 can start a foundation apprenticeship.

If you're between 22 and 24, you can start if you:

- have an EHC plan
- are in care or have been in care
- are in prison or have been in prison

You cannot apply for a foundation apprenticeship if you're 25 or over.

Foundation Apprenticeships – first apps:

- Onsite trades
- Building service engineering
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Health and social care
- Hardware, network and infrastructure
- Finishing trades
- Software and data

Plans to launch hospitality and retail

Initiatives and Impact – Youth Guarantee

 UK Government

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IN 81 JOBCENTRES

AoB

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Community Membership
- When would be useful to meet again?
 - September?
 - F2F or online?
- What would be useful to cover at the next meeting?