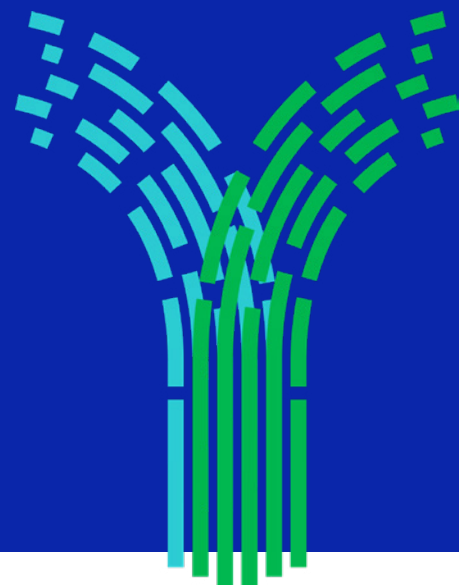




“Letters to My Younger Self”

Inspiring Future Careers in PE and Teaching for Ethnically Diverse Pupils

1. Context and how to use this guide

These powerful letters, curated in 2025, are from PE teachers of ethnically diverse backgrounds written to their younger selves, reflecting on key choices and values that shaped their lives and careers. They are intentional in their approach to offer honest, encouraging, and relatable insights for pupils making decisions about their futures, with a particular lens on PE, school sport, and education.

Purpose of this resource:

- To support career advisors and PE teachers in encouraging diverse students to see teaching and PE as meaningful, achievable careers
- To offer relatable role models and prompt personal reflection
- To align career learning with Gatsby Benchmarks (especially 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6).

How to use in schools:

- In RSHE, careers sessions, or PE lessons (ideally Years 8–11)
- One letter per session, either read aloud or printed for small group discussion
- Reflection questions (examples provided below) to help students explore personal values, choices, and aspirations
- Use responses as part of career action planning, or small group coaching.

Gatsby Benchmark links:

- Benchmark 2: Learning from career and labour market information
- Benchmark 3: Addressing the needs of each pupil
- Benchmark 4: Linking curriculum learning to careers
- Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees
- Benchmark 6: Experiences of workplaces (link to further opportunities)

2. Reflection Questions (per letter)

Use 2–3 questions per session to support reflection and discussion.

Generic Questions (use with any letter):

1. What part of this letter inspired you most or reminded you of yourself?
2. What values, habits, or advice from the letter do you want to adopt?
3. How could a career in PE, sport, or teaching help you make a difference?

Specific Questions by Letter:

Adrian Rollins (AR)

Themes: Identity, self-worth, ambition, positive mindset

1. Why is it important to surround yourself with people who believe in your potential?
2. How did Adrian's pride in his Caribbean roots shape his success?
3. What do you think "knowing your worth" means in your life right now?

Mo Jafar (MJ)

Themes: Confidence, resilience, self-belief, habits

1. What habits did Mo mention that would help you at school or in life?
2. How can being proud of your heritage help you in tough situations?
3. Why might teaching or sport be a good career for someone who wants to help others believe in themselves?

Marika McCurdy (MM)

Themes: Hard work, opportunity, regret, joy of teaching

1. Marika says "Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard", do you agree?
2. What does "say yes to opportunities" mean to you right now?
3. Why might working with young people in PE or sport be rewarding?

Shrehan Lynch (SL)

Themes: Positivity, resilience, support networks, all-round effort

Reflection Questions:

1. Shrehan talks about the importance of giving effort in all subjects, not just the ones you enjoy. How could this advice shape your current approach to school?
2. What does "look inwards for inspiration" mean to you, and how can that help you make good decisions?
3. Who is your "Jim"; someone in your life who supports and encourages you, and how could they help you with future choices?



Jermaine Coleman (JC)

Themes: Self-belief, learning mindset, peer influence

Reflection Questions:

1. Jermaine says he “lacked a thirst for learning” but wishes he had applied himself more. What would applying yourself fully look like for you?
2. Why is it important to have friends who are loyal and want the best for you?
3. Jermaine talks about not joining a debate club because of self-doubt. Have you ever held back from something? What might you try now?

Irfan Khawaja (IK)

Themes: Identity, confidence, forward-thinking, hope

Reflection Questions:

1. Irfan talks about feeling different and lacking confidence. How can knowing “you have a right to be successful” change your perspective?
2. What does “keep looking up” mean to you, and what inspires you to do that?
3. Irfan says not to let others waste your time. What might that look like, and how can you stay focused on what matters to you?

Aaminah Hussain (AH)

Themes: Self-belief, courage, identity, trying new things

Reflection Questions:

1. Aaminah says, “Try everything you are offered at school”; what’s one opportunity you’ve not yet said yes to that could help you grow?
2. She talks about the importance of being the role model you wish you could see; what does that mean to you, and how could you start being that person now?
3. “You are capable of more than you realise”; when have you surprised yourself, and how can believing in yourself help shape your next steps?



3. Ideas for PE Teachers and Career Advisors

For PE Teachers:

- Build a lesson where students read one letter and reflect on character values in sport
- Link the stories to key themes in PE (e.g. teamwork, resilience, leadership)
- Create a 'career corner' in the PE department, showcasing these letters and PE career pathways
- Invite local teachers or sport coaches to share their journeys (Gatsby Benchmark 5).

For Careers Advisors:

- Use the letters as a reflective tool during one-to-one guidance
- Highlight teaching (especially PE) as a career that values lived experience and community impact
- Offer further pathways: apprenticeships, sport coaching, youth work, or teacher training (Benchmark 2)
- Encourage pupils to write their own "Letter to My Future Self" as part of career action plans.

4. Extension Activity (optional)

Ask pupils to write:

- 'A letter to my future self', or
- 'A letter from me to someone like me'
(to inspire someone else from a similar background)

This can be used for:

- Assemblies
- School newsletters
- Displays around careers or diversity in education

