



Briefing Paper

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Work-based learning: A briefing for schools

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Introduction

The transformative power of work-based learning can be seen in the raised aspirations of young people, the improved performance of the education system and the bigger commitment of business and industry to the health of the economy and society.

Scope and purpose

The aims of this briefing are to:

- Define 'work-based learning'
- Explain the benefits of work-based learning
- Promote the development of work-based learning in the school curriculum
- Recommend ways of improving the quality of work-based learning
- Signpost sources of further information and advice across the home nations.

The briefing draws on evidence of policy and practice in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales as well as European and international evidence. The approaches to work-based learning in this paper are applicable to secondary schools, specialist settings and further education but should be appropriately differentiated and adapted to meet the needs of your learners. The briefing can also be considered for use with primary aged learners.

The contemporary challenge

A commitment to quality work-based learning in the curriculum is essential. The world of work is changing at a faster rate than at any time in living memory. This presents young people with unique opportunities, but also unprecedented challenges, related to:

- The risk of failure in meeting the UN's sustainable development goals to avert climate catastrophe, safeguard the environment and promote social justice
- The revolution in AI, robotics and innovative digital technology which will change skills demands and working life in ways that are difficult to predict
- The impact of wide-ranging social change in the UK linked to an ageing population, low birth rate and relatively high socio-economic deprivation
- The need to cope with the impact of heightened global political and economic uncertainty.

They incorporate the concept of 'no-one left behind', indicating that economic and social development cannot just benefit elite groups in society. All citizens must be included, even the most marginalised groups.



What is work-based learning?

Work-based learning refers to the curriculum learning that students undertake in a physical (P), remote (R) or virtual (V) workplace setting. It involves students performing work roles, skills and tasks facilitated by employers and school staff. Work-based learning encompasses a wide range of activities such as:

- Employer events (P, R, V) e.g. workshops, enterprise challenges/competitions, business games/role plays/simulations, skills festivals, open doors events
- Workplace/site visits (P, R, V) e.g. factory tours
- Work placements (P, R, V) e.g. work experience, work shadowing.

The term 'work-based learning' overlaps in meaning with terms such as 'work-related learning' and 'work-related experiences'. The use of language in this area is influenced by the education policies of each of the home nations; but the essential characteristic of work-based learning is that it involves the students undertaking the roles, tasks and activities of an employee.

Types of work-based learning

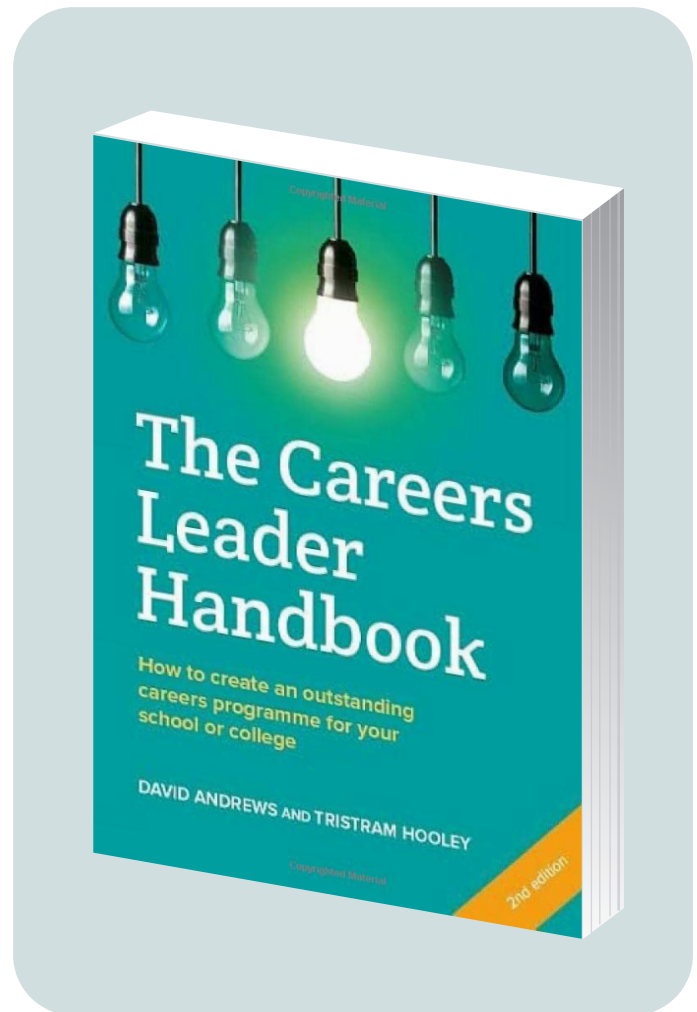
The Careers Leader Handbook (Andrews & Hooley, 2022) identifies eight types of work-based learning:

1. School or college as a workplace
2. Workplace visits
3. Work shadowing
4. Short-term work experience
5. Extended work experience
6. Internships and holiday placements
7. Volunteering and social action
8. Part-time work.

In-house placements are especially beneficial for students who need additional support and can take on a role which is very different from their usual student role.

Schools and employers can now also arrange remote/virtual visits as well as actual visits which increases flexibility and saves on other costs such as travel. Virtual opportunities make it possible for any student anywhere in the country to participate in engaging and inspirational experiences. For example, they could simulate the experience of flying a plane, or solving a crime. Remote experiences remove the barrier of geography and enable students potentially to interact with employers live anywhere throughout the world. They can work on real projects and gain feedback on their input. Virtual and remote experiences can, therefore, make a positive contribution to social mobility and social justice, especially if schools and colleges can support ICT access arrangements.

Placements can often combine different types of work-based learning. Work experience, for example, can be combined with work shadowing and work-based projects and challenges. Active, participative and experiential learning approaches are known to have a strong impact on student learning.



Internships and holiday placements often provide students with the opportunity to gain professional learning experience related to their studies or career interests. Schools can enhance the value of this activity by facilitating individual and small group guidance sessions with a careers adviser to enable students to review and reflect on their experience.

Volunteering is undertaken without payment for good causes such as charities and third sector organisations. The evidence indicates that it is beneficial for the student volunteers too (CEC, 2017). Engaged Learning, also called community-based learning or service learning, gives students the opportunity to build confidence, give back to their communities and apply skills and knowledge from their school learning.

Although earning is usually the focus of students' part-time work, teachers can strengthen the learning gains by organising group activities in which students share with each other what they have learned doing their part-time jobs.

It is important that students are provided with a range of work-based learning opportunities that are planned and progressive throughout their education. A linear approach where each student is expected to pass through different stages of learning at the same time will not work for all. A personalised approach with adequate support and differentiation can ensure progress coherent and comprehensive.

Work-based learning and the curriculum

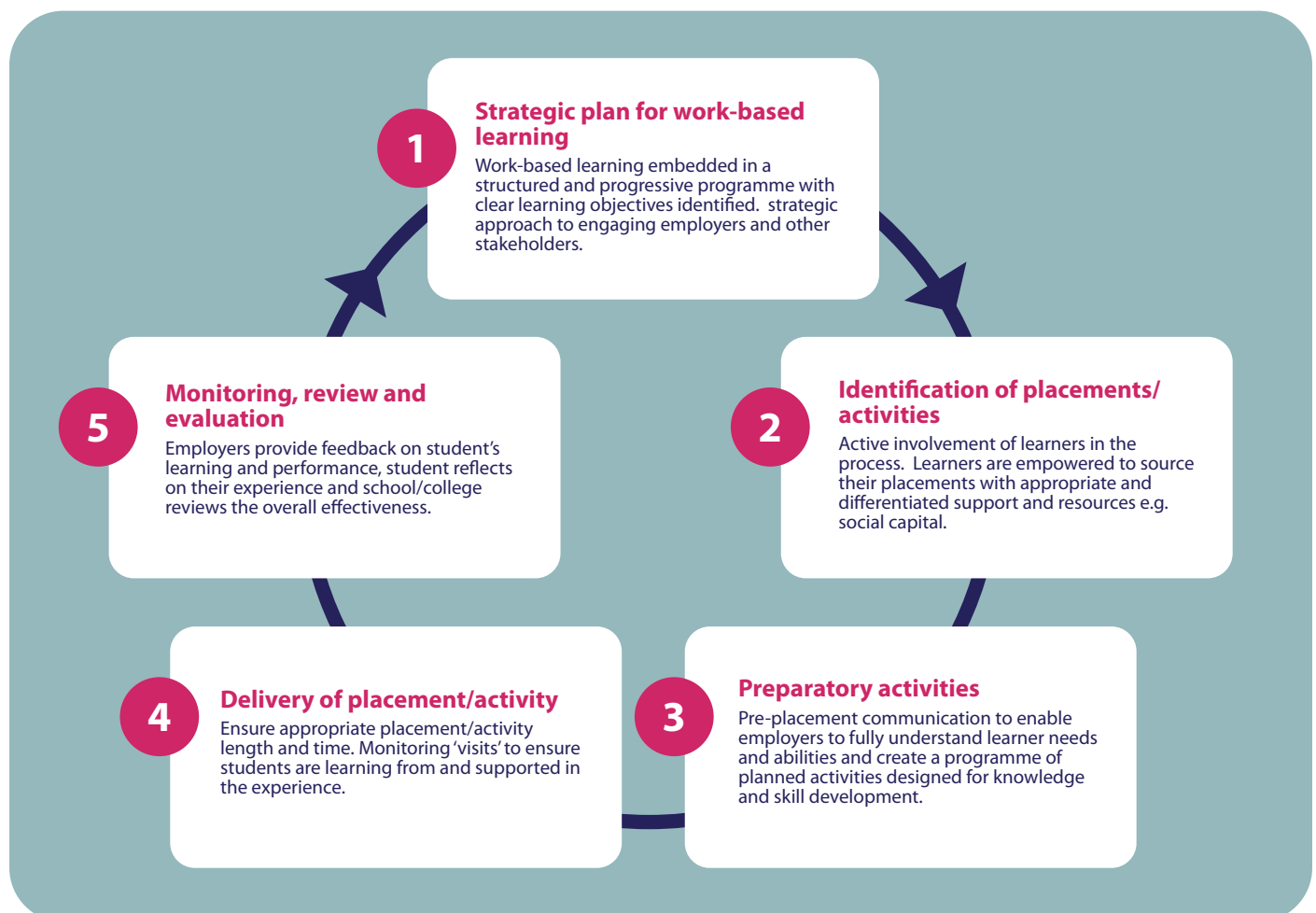
Work-based learning in curriculum design

Work-based learning needs to be strongly positioned in national curriculum frameworks to receive the attention it deserves. Where work-based learning is formally recognised as a cross-curricular element, it helps learners to make important connections in their learning between the subjects/areas, themes and skills that are the complementary elements of the curriculum structure. It is therefore essential to ensure all staff fully understand the benefits of work-based learning and are supportive to the process.

Work-based learning is often successfully managed as a central component of career education. It is widely accepted that work-based learning supports students in developing lifelong career management competencies which Hambly & Bomford (2019) identify as readiness, decision making, self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decide, transition and reflection.

Managing and organising work-based learning in the curriculum

At the school level, the steps in managing work-based learning are: *(Adapted from Work experience and related activities in schools and colleges, DfE 2017)*



Step 1 – Strategic plan for work-based learning

Senior leaders and governors need to approve the policy and resources required to underpin the strategy for work-based learning. It is important that the strategy is based on the individual student, ensuring inclusion, equity and diversity. They should consider its potential impact on the school’s external relations and how it will enhance the curriculum and the school development/improvement plan. Identifying a lead for work-based learning with sufficient status and time to carry out the role is also essential.

The chart below shows a worked example of a design template for developing work shadowing as a progressive learning activity.

Who is it for?	KS3	KS4	16-19
What is it for?	<p>Children often know little about the work that parents and family members do. This activity can also play a vital role in facilitating conversations about careers.</p> <p>The school can encourage students to focus on observing and collecting information about the world of work.</p>	<p>Work shadowing of one or more employees can help students to explore job roles and how organisations function. It provides valuable insights into teamwork and relationships at work.</p> <p>It is also helpful to students with a career interest that they cannot sample by doing work experience; but it can also be part of a work placement.</p> <p>It can be worked into courses which have assessment of practical work, e.g. business, sport, health and social care.</p>	<p>Work shadowing can make a positive contribution to students’ career plans. It is an opportunity to develop their understanding of key issues in careers such as work ethic, job satisfaction, equality and power and authority.</p> <p>Students can use their work shadowing in applying for courses and jobs to show their commitment.</p> <p>It can be worked into courses which have assessment of practical work and it can be the focus of project work</p>

Step 2 – Identification of placements/activities

Students and former students (alumni), parents/carers and staff are valuable leads. Professional forums on social media such as the CDI’s careers leaders community are also useful sources of information, e.g. you may be able to gain some recommendations for free virtual programmes, or employers offering remote placements/projects.

Web searches using key terms such as ‘work experience’ will reveal how extensive the literature is on good practice and help you to discover employer-branded work-based activities.

Traditional methods such as ‘cold-calling’ local employers still has a place. Many businesses do not know how to contact schools and have not been approached!

Step 3 – Preparatory activities

Good planning and preparation are the key to successful implementation of work-based learning activities. This involves:

- Starting well in advance to ensure a long lead-in time to make the necessary contacts and to communicate with students, staff and parents/carers (where appropriate)
- Preparing the necessary administrative ‘paperwork’, recording tools and structured curriculum materials in good time
- Making appropriate arrangements to assess and accredit (if applicable) the work-based learning. Student portfolios of evidence are a useful assessment tool (Belgrad, Burke & Fogarty, 2008) and the awarding of digital badges, certificates and prizes is a way of recognising students’ achievements.

Step 4 – Delivery of placement/activity

Effective monitoring is important to check how well students are responding to the activity, e.g. in the case of actual and virtual work experience, by arranging for staff to ‘visit’ students and support their learning.

Step 5 – Monitoring, review and evaluation

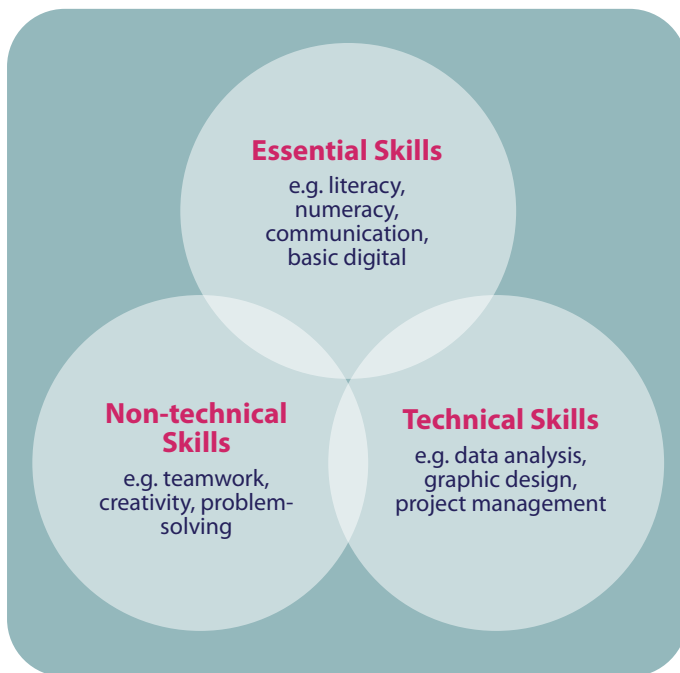
Debriefing students gives them the opportunity to reflect on and consolidate the learning that has taken place and to share their experience with their peers. Possible approaches include:

- Inviting the employer and parent/carer to comment on what the student has achieved
- Incorporating a ‘performance of understanding’ in the follow-up, e.g. making a newspaper, putting up displays, giving talks and presentations
- Encouraging students to draft a short paragraph about their work-based experience for future use in their applications, personal statements and CVs
- Organising guided small group discussions facilitated by staff and employers who participated in the work-based activity to assist students in planning their next steps.



Skills for life and work

The development of skills for life and work, and their associated knowledge and attitudes, is a major focus of work-based learning in the curriculum. Schools frequently find themselves faced with competing skills frameworks jockeying for their attention (Ambrose 2024). Navigating this minefield, schools need to remind themselves that their goal is to settle on an approach that is fit for their learners and sustainable, i.e. not overly complex to manage. Employers have a particular interest in tackling skills shortages and mismatches in the labour market. A useful starting point for evaluating different skills frameworks is to consider the relationship between three broad groupings of skills for life and work.



The boundaries between these groupings of skills are shown as overlapping. This reflects the way in which specific skills have different roles in different contexts. In this framework, the skills groupings are:

- essential skills, including basic skills, which are needed by all young people as they are central to functioning in everyday life. Context should be applied to use of basic skills e.g. helping learners to understand how to communicate to employers.
- non-technical skills which are needed by most young people as they are transferable and common to most employments
- technical skills which are needed selectively by young people as they are the specific skills needed to perform set job tasks.

the CDI framework provides a more holistic and comprehensive range of age and stage related outcomes based on career knowledge, skill and attitude development. See 'Sources of evidence, information and advice'.



Technical and vocational qualifications

Work-based learning can make a significant contribution to students' enjoyment and success on technical and vocational courses¹. All the home nations have initiatives for developing technical and vocational qualifications that will be credible, well-regarded and accessible to all, e.g.

- Delivering national careers strategies such as *Making the most of everyone's skills and talents* in England² and *Careers by Design* in Scotland³
- The roll-out of new qualifications such as T Levels⁴ in England and VCSEs and Skills for Life and Work qualifications in Wales⁵
- The Careers & Enterprise Company initiative to re-invent work experience for young people in England⁶ and the Targeted Work Experience (TWE) programme in Wales
- The promotion of apprenticeships and skills in the home nations.

2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>

3. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-careers-strategy-moving-forward>

4. <https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/>. The DfE has published analysis of the first cohort of T Level students which showed that around 4 out of 5 students agreed the T Level allowed them to progress to further study, work and their future career (April 2024). The industry placement was seen as the most important aspect of the course, and over a quarter of students in work or on an apprenticeship were working for the company that hosted their industrial placement.

5. <https://www.qualificationswales.org/news-views/qualifications-wales-announces-exciting-new-range-of-qualifications/#:~:text=VCSEs%20will%20be%20assessed%20at,approach%20to%20learning%20and%20assessment>

6. <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/news/new-2-million-scheme-to-reinvent-work-experience-for-young-people/>

Realising the benefits of work-based learning

The benefits of participating in work-based learning are shared between students, schools and employers. Although the primary focus of this briefing is the immediate benefits of work-based learning, the ongoing value of lifelong work-based learning should not be overlooked.

Benefits for students

Work-based learning in the curriculum can help young people to become more confident, motivated, optimistic, hopeful, resilient and resourceful. Further benefits include:

- Giving students a taster and practical experience of the world of work
- Stimulating their career thinking and planning
- Preparing students for the transition into the next phase of their education, training or employment
- Creating opportunities, e.g. helping them to make contacts and build networks to improve their employment prospects
- Strengthening their self-presentation assets and skills
- Making progress in the courses they are taking.

Benefits for schools

The framework of objectives in Re-thinking Work Experience (eds. Watts, Jamieson & Miller, 1991) captures the broad range of benefits of work-based learning for schools.

Work-based learning provides rich and relevant resources, and contexts to reinforce what is being taught in the classroom. In the STEM subjects, for example, work-based learning can highlight how methods and processes are applied and scaled up by industry. Work-based learning gives schools access to powerful learning environments. It enhances the social and cultural capital of learners and strengthens the ties between schools and their community partners. The quality of relationship built through work-based activities, for example, then feeds through to a wide range of other link activities including careers fairs, talks and classroom project.

Benefits for employers

Employers have an important stake in education as young people will become their future employees, customers, clients and stakeholders. Speakers for Schools 23/24 data suggests just 7% of employers offer work experience to teenagers and only 40% engage in any kind of career activities. Schools can help employers to recognise benefits of engaging, such as:

- awareness of developments in schools and how they prepare students for adult and working life and getting the opportunity to influence these
- hearing the views and ideas of students
- talent spotting future apprentices and recruits
- raising the profile of their own organisation and sector
- contributing to their local communities
- Developing their own staff who become involved in work-based learning activities
- Motivating staff, e.g. talking to young people about their roles and skills will remind them of what they contribute to the success of the business.

Framework of objectives for work experience

1. Enhancing – enabling students to deepen their understanding of concepts learned in classroom settings, and to apply skills learned in such settings.
2. Motivational – to make the curriculum more meaningful and significant to students, so improving their levels of academic attainment.
3. Maturation – to facilitate students' personal and social development.
4. Investigative – to enable students to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world of work.
5. Expansive – to broaden the range of occupations that students are prepared to consider in terms of their personal career planning.
6. Sampling – to enable students to test their vocational preference before committing themselves to it.
7. Preparatory – to help students to acquire skills and knowledge relating to a particular occupational area, which they will be able to apply if they wish to enter employment in that area.
8. Anticipatory – to enable students to experience some of the strains of work so that they will be able to manage the transition to work more comfortably.
9. Placing – to enable students to establish a relationship with a particular employer which may lead to the offer of a full-time job.
10. Custodial – to transfer some of the responsibility for individual students, for a period.

Improving the quality of work-based learning

Emphasising impact

The *Good Career Guidance* report (Gatsby Foundation, 2014) stressed that school-based 'Encounters with employers' (Benchmark 5) and work-based 'Experiences of work' (Benchmark 6) should be 'meaningful'. The Careers & Enterprise Company has suggested that the minimum criteria for encounters to be meaningful is that they should have defined outcomes, two-way interaction and the student meets a range of people and performs a work-related task⁷.

The Gatsby Foundation also recommends that 'as far as is possible, schools and employers should ensure these are positive experiences'. Careful preparation and follow-up of work-based learning experiences will help to make them more positive and meaningful although it is not always possible to control or standardise the outcomes of work-based learning. Indeed, it is important to recognise the benefits of non-formal and incidental learning. Unintended learning outcomes and a positive attitude to negative experiences can be even more beneficial (Branford, Richards & Rodriguez, 2023). These reports reinforce the importance of ample debriefing time for students to reflect and share their experiences with their peers.

Raising ambition

Most students, schools and employers have perfectly sound objectives for participating in work-based learning activities. For students, it might be to gain a qualification. For schools it might be to help students achieve their aspirations. For employers, it might be to forge a relationship with the local community.



Improving the quality of work-based learning requires all those involved to be more demanding than this. For students, this might be to become better at making their own decisions and managing their own learning and careers (The UCAS report, *Project Next Generation: Six themes that influence student choice*, provides further insights into this). For schools, this might be to prepare students to become future leaders and managers. For employers, this might involve contributing to students' understanding of how the economy and society operate.

Collaborative partnerships

The impact of work-based learning can be enhanced by forming collaborative networks of schools, colleges, businesses, careers services and other local partners and contractors to develop work-based learning strategies for their areas (e.g. careers hubs in England, local authorities and regional consortia in Wales). This can facilitate the sharing of costs (e.g. for the vetting of work experience placements), better efficiency (e.g. by co-ordinating the dates that schools choose for work experience) and the sharing of innovative practice (e.g. working with employers to create virtual work-based activities).

A practical evaluation strategy

A practical evaluation strategy will give schools the evidence they need to improve quality:

- Incorporate regular evaluation in your development plans
- Choose a different focus for evaluation each time
- Evaluate inputs and processes as well as impact or outcomes
- Make it purposeful, e.g. to inform a decision or change you are thinking of making
- Keep evaluations manageable – make use of questionnaires that are tried and tested including those from the CEC Resources directory impact tool kit.
- Choose approaches that are fit for purpose, e.g. surveys and questionnaires are a straightforward way of measuring self-reported levels of satisfaction and usefulness; scrutiny of documents created by students such as diaries and experiences and achievements logs can achieve similar results but may be more difficult to analyse
- Aim for an achievable level of rigour, e.g. focus groups are a cost-effective way of sampling the views and experiences of students; individual interviews can achieve the same ends in greater detail and depth but are more resource intensive
- Pilot the evaluation instruments to remove any flaws
- Remember to get consent of all the parties involved in the evaluation
- Present the outcomes of the evaluation in different ways for different audiences to improve impact
- Take advantage of openings, if possible, such as the opportunity to use your own professional learning and research to evaluate an aspect of your work-based learning or to join a work-based learning project or external evaluation.

The OECD has produced a useful questionnaire for evaluating the impact of schools' work-based and work-related learning activity:

OECD Question	Rating		
	Red	Amber	Green
Exploring the Future			
1. Do you teach learners how to apply for jobs and offer interview practice drawing on input and current approaches from employers?			
2. Do you have evidence that learners are engaging in careers conversations about their career plans?			
3. Is there a policy and approach that encourages students to engage in careers conversations with staff and link employers?			
4. Is information available about the occupational ambitions of all learners?			
5. If learners are uncertain, is support put in place to explore options and factors that contribute to their uncertainty?			
Experiencing the Future			
6. Do you help all learners meaningfully to engage on a regular basis with people in work through planned employer encounters?			
7. Do you have a programme of workplace visits and/or job shadowing that enables all learners critically to explore and investigate different workplaces for themselves?			
8. Do you have confidence that all learners will have had meaningful experiences of work before leaving secondary education?			
9. Do you give all learners two more opportunities to experience work that aligns with their interests before leaving secondary education?			
10. Do you have a structured approach to pre-placement preparation and post-placement reflection built around work placements?			
Thinking about the Future			
11. Do you help learners to reflect on their choice of pathways and as they learn more about their career ambitions and entry requirements?			
12. Do you understand your learners' ambitions and have policies in place to encourage them to aim high?			
13. Do you know if your learners' occupational and educational plans are aligned?			
14. Do you know if your learners are able to see a clear relationship between their educational experiences and later employment outcomes?			



Approaches to quality

Quality frameworks

The Careers & Enterprise Company in England has been working on an employer framework to improve quality by providing a clear roadmap of what leads to positive outcomes both for business and for young people. The more effective education outreach programmes can be, the more they can help employers communicate their skills gaps and broaden access. The framework presents nine standards under three key pillars and offers a self-assessment tool to help celebrate good practice and promote development.

Inspire young people for their best next steps

1. Provide meaningful opportunities
2. Be inclusive
3. Evaluate and improve

Prepare young people to be career ready

4. Build essential skills and explain their relevance
5. Prepare young people for application processes
6. Raise awareness of pathways into work

Collaborate for success

7. Engage over the long term
8. Partner with others
9. Value the engagement.

Quality frameworks are a way of getting useful feedback on the quality of your work-based learning, e.g.:

- Benchmarking schemes such as [Compass](#) and [Compass+](#) which enables schools in England to self-assess their performance against Gatsby benchmarks 5 (Encounters with employers) and 6 (Experiences of work) and compare themselves with the performance of other schools
- The [Careers Impact System](#) which enables schools to monitor their development or maturity with input from peers
- Quality awards such as the [Quality in Careers Standard](#) in England and the [Careers Wales Quality Award](#) in Wales which provide external support and challenge to schools aiming to consistent high quality in careers and work-related provision
- Annual award competitions such as the [Careers Wales Valued Partner Awards](#) and the [UK Career Development Awards](#) that have categories which recognise excellence in aspects of work-based learning.

7. https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/1207_-_meaningful_encounters_checklist_1.pdf#:~:text=Planning%20a%20meaningful%20encounter%20This%20checklist%20is%20designed,careers%20activities%20involving%20an%20employer%20or%20FE%20FHE%20provider.

Sources of evidence, information and advice

Policy frameworks in the home nations

Each home nation provides guidance to schools to support arrangements for work-based learning.

In Wales, work-based learning is an integral part of the statutory CWRE curriculum (introduced 2022). It sits within aim 4: 'Exploring opportunities: Learners explore opportunities through a variety of meaningful experiences in learning, work and entrepreneurship.'

In Northern Ireland, 'work experience is not a statutory requirement, but work related learning is a core component and is seen as best practice in the provision of a quality CEIAG programme.' (Work experience arrangements, p. 5 Education Authority, 2019).

The statutory guidance in England states that 'Every student should have first-hand experiences of the workplace through work visits, work shadowing or work experience'. Student should have one experience by age 16 and a further experience by 18

Education Scotland have 'work placement standards' (2015) as well as broader guidance for work-related learning to 'clarify expectations and provide helpful support and guidance' to schools.

Barclays Lifeskills

<https://barclayslifeskills.com/>

This site has resources that are especially useful for teachers and students relating to work experience, enterprise, employability, understanding money and similar topics. The navigation is clear but staff will need to allow plenty of time to explore everything that is available such as the virtual work experience tool (<https://barclayslifeskills.com/i-want-virtual-work-experience/school/virtual-work-experience/>).

Career Development Institute Framework

<https://www.thecdi.net/resources/cdi-framework>

The CDI career development framework is a model for planning, tracking and recording students' progress and outcomes across with six learning areas from early years (age 4) through to key stage 5 (age 19). Work-based learning can contribute to students' learning in all six areas but is most directly linked to 'Manage Career' and 'Create Opportunities'.

The Careers & Enterprise Company

Resources produced by the Company include:

- *Making it meaningful*
<https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/resources/making-it-meaningful> takes careers leaders through the steps involved in making each encounter with employers or experience of work meaningful:

1. Planning and preparing to succeed
2. Implementing and engaging with intent

3. Reflecting on the value of the learning
 4. Progression and building in next steps.
- *reimagining experiences of the workplace*
<https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/reimagining-experiences-workplace#:~:text=Experiences%20of%20the%20workplace%20programmes,provide%20meaningful%20and%20immersive%20opportunities>



- *Work experience, job shadowing and workplace visits. What works?* (2017)
<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/media/wknmpwvm/what-works-report-work-experience.pdf>
- *Work Experience Resources for SEND Schools*
<https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/resources/work-experience-resources-send-school>

The report noted that "There is a lot of formative evidence to suggest that participating in a work experience placement is a 'potentially effective' activity for young people to undertake (a 2 on the Early Intervention Foundation evidence scale). It has been shown to have a positive impact on employability skills, motivation in education, career-decision making and knowledge of the world of work. However, many of these outcomes are reported by participants themselves and there is a lack of robust, long-term investigations in this area."

The report also noted that work experience is less effective when it is added to students' programmes as a bolt-on extra with perfunctory preparation and debriefing. This is costly as a two-week placement is the equivalent of 5% of annual curriculum time. The most successful schemes are those which have clear objectives related to students' career learning, study programmes and wider prospects.

- *Involving Young People in Volunteering. What works?* (2017) <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/resources/involving-young-people-volunteering-what-works> points to substantial evidence that volunteering is beneficial to young people and society. The report highlights that:

“volunteering can have a significant and observable impact on skill development (personal development and employability skills) as well as career readiness. The case is less clear for attainment and progression. Volunteering can be a low-cost intervention in comparison to other skill development interventions. However, effective volunteering requires careful attention to quality

volunteering should be promoted to all young people and that they should be supported to find the right placement. Young people should be encouraged to volunteer for as long a period as possible, whilst maintaining some opportunities that young people can dip in and out of. Support should be given to the young person to make sure that they are trained for the role and that the beginning and end of the role are clearly demarcated. Support should also be given to help the young person recognise the skills and experiences they have gained and understand how these can be utilised to progress in education or employment.” (page ?)

- *Re-inventing work experience for young people* (2023) <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/news/reinventing-work-experience-zoe-healey-industry-and-work-experience-lead/>



Careers Wales

(<https://careerswales.gov.wales/>)

The Business Engagement Advisers at Careers Wales publish regular LMI Bulletins and facilitate school-business links. Useful resources including the Careers and Work-related Experiences (CWRE) toolkit and toolbox can be accessed on the Careers Wales website. Careers Wales runs the CWRE Quality Award and Valued Partner Awards.

Equalex

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/equalex/> is a new approach designed to support schools to provide two weeks' worth of high quality work experience for every young person, ensuring quality, equity and flexibility. It was piloted in Greater Manchester last year and is in the process of national roll-out.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

in 2013 reported how 'employers are from Mars and young people from Venus', highlighting the mismatch between employers' expectations of young people and young people's understanding of what is expected of them. Making work experience work: Guide for employers was published in 2023. <https://www.cipd.org/uk/knowledge/guides/work-experience-guide/>

Education and Employers

Recent and relevant reports on the impact of different types of employer engagement activities can be found on the Education and Employers (<https://www.educationandemployers.org/research-main/>) website, a UK-based charity that works with schools, employers and a wide range of partners to give learners the opportunity to find out first-hand about jobs and the world of work.

Health and Safety Executive

Information for employers

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/employer/work-experience.htm>

Information for work experience organisers

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/organisers.htm>

Education Authority, Northern Ireland

School work experience arrangements

<https://www.eani.org.uk/work-experience-arrangements>

Inspiring the Future

Supporting SEND Students:

<https://www.inspiringthefuture.org/secondary-and-colleges/supporting-sen-students/>

Estyn

Partnerships with employers in secondary and special schools (Estyn Feb 2020)

<https://estyn.gov.wales/improvement-resources/partnerships-with-employers-in-secondary-and-special-schools/>

North East Ambition

Work Experience Framework Modules: <https://ambition.northeast-ca.gov.uk/work-experience-modules> a suite of resources developed to support employers and educators to plan and deliver structured, meaningful encounters for young people.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)

OECD has published three reports which provide valuable evidence of the positive economic benefits of work-related experiences. The OECD Report into indicators of Teenage Career Readiness (OECD, 2021) refers to two countries – the UK and Germany – where a positive relationship between work placements and better employment outcomes for young people has been found.



Ofsted

Independent review of careers guidance in schools and further education and skills providers (September, 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-careers-guidance-in-schools-and-further-education-and-skills-providers/independent-review-of-careers-guidance-in-schools-and-further-education-and-skills-providers>

Ofsted identified the importance of providers thinking strategically about careers and support employer engagement and delivering provision that is authentic, contextualised and personalised. All schools visited were involving employers, colleges, and training and higher education providers in their careers programme through careers fairs, assemblies, work experience and visits to workplaces or universities and links with employers were a feature of good practice in around half the schools visited. In the context of this briefing, it is valuable to recognise that the review found a weakness in provision at KS3, in particular, a lack of clear thinking about the rationale for provision for this age group. Ofsted noted the tendency for views on work sectors to become fixed at an early age so using work-related learning to broaden horizons and encourage investigation of different roles is a key benefit. Furthermore, the report recognised the challenges post-pandemic of home working and how to address demand in work-based learning from all cohorts. The review identified parents as an under-utilised resource and there is clearly scope for greater involvement of parents and carers in the five stages of the effective implementation of work-

based learning. International literature notes the importance of employer engagement, and structures to support schools and colleges in engaging with them, such as careers hubs or local enterprise partnerships.

Skills Development Scotland

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

Work Placement Standard (2015)

<https://education.gov.scot/media/zkklqepi/dyw-workplacementstandard0915.pdf>

Speakers for Schools

Speakers for schools found evidence (Speakers for Schools, 2022) connecting 'work experience' placements to higher annual salaries as well as in reducing the chances of becoming NEET. Flexible approaches to traditional 'work experience' during the covid-19 pandemic saw solutions created through the introduction of virtual (simulation of work activities) and remote (home/classroom-based activities) placements. These new approaches provide greater opportunities for social justice and social mobility alongside more traditional placements.

In 2023, Speakers for Schools published *Learning from Experience*

<https://www.speakersforschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Learning-from-experience-March-2023.pdf>

From the website, learners can access virtual placements devised by participating organisations that are usually between 1 and 4 hours long and held on one day.

<https://www.speakersforschools.org/work-experience-opportunities/>

Youth Employment UK: Explore Work Experience

The online Explore work experience programme consists of digital resources for teachers and learners designed to enable learners to prepare for and get the most out of work placements

(<https://www.youthemployment.org.uk/careers-advice-help/explore-work-experience/>)

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