

## **Work-focused experience within Careers and the world of work**

Learning through work-focused activities is an essential part of Careers and the world of work (CWW). Work-focused experience includes all activities that directly equip learners in their understanding of and competence in the world of work. This includes work experience placements.

The first purpose of work-focused experience is to enhance an individual learner's future employability and competence in the world of work. In simple terms, employability is what young people will need in order to thrive in their future working lives -a mixture of skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding that will need to be maintained and refreshed throughout life.

Work-focused experiences benefit young people by helping them to:

- understand the world of work and the changing demands of working life;
- clarify their personal goals, raise their aspirations and set ambitious targets for themselves;
- think through their learning options and career choices; and
- develop the employability skills that employers require.

**The purpose of this matrix is to help learning providers identify and coordinate the full range of work-focused experience activities that might be provided at each curriculum phase.**

Learning providers should consider how best to provide work-focused experience activities for learners. The number and context of such opportunities are for learning providers to determine.

As CWW provision needs to be in-line with the ethos and character of an institution and should meet the particular needs of learners, work-focused experiences will not be the same for all learners in all areas.

Work-focused experience activity	Description	Matrix of work-focused experiences by phase			
		Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Post 16
1. To understand the range of jobs carried out by people in their community. (from <i>Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales</i> )	Many primary schools provide activities that relate to work-focused learning such as visits to local employers, employers giving classroom presentations, industry-linked challenge activities.				
2. Short blocks of work experience with an employer	<p>Work experience is commonly defined as an activity in which a learner carries out a particular task(s) more or less as an employee would but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience.</p> <p>There is <b>no statutory requirement</b> to provide work experience placements for every learner. Work experience is, however, a specific <b>mandatory requirement</b> of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification's Core studies. All learners are required to work with an employer, typically on a work experience placement.</p> <p>Quality work experience placements equip learners to face the world of work; however, they require appropriate pre-placement preparation, health and safety briefing and debriefing in order to be of best use to learners.</p>				

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3. Visits to industry	Visits to industry provide learners with first hand experiences and applications of the subject(s) they study in the classroom. Such visits enhance the curriculum, highlight the relevance of individual subjects to everyday life, and enable learners to observe a variety of different subject-related careers.				
4. Master classes with employers	Learners experience a range of practical, vocationally-related activities related to a particular skill sector to prepare them to make informed choices regarding their future study and progression.				
5. Business simulations	Participative, team working, problem-solving role play activities that enable learners to apply their learning and introduce business concepts such as marketing, production and strategic decision making; often presented as interactive/online scenarios.				
6. Work-related community participation	Depending upon the nature of the volunteering undertaken, opportunities to develop work - related skills often occur. The Core of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification requires all learners at foundation, intermediate and advanced level to undertake 30 hours of community participation.				

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7. Enterprise activities e.g. Mini-enterprise, Young Enterprise	<p>Learners (in groups or as individuals) work independently of their teachers to tackle relevant issues that involve an element of risk and uncertainty about final outcomes. They are expected to take personal responsibility for their actions through an 'enterprise process' based on four-stages:</p> <p>1: Tackling a problem or need  2: Planning the project or activity  3: Implementing the plan  4: Evaluating the processes</p> <p>The Core of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification requires all learners at foundation, intermediate and advanced level to be involved in a team enterprise activity.</p>				
8. Industry days	<p>Representatives from specific career areas/skill sectors visit the school for a whole or half day to work directly with learners. Employers are usually grouped into occupational areas. For example, a medical group could consist of a doctor, nurse and a dentist. Each group gives short presentations/ a question and answer session/ information and advice about their career area to learners from a particular year group. At the end of the session, learners move on to their next selected occupational area.</p>				
9. Experience of the world of work for those unlikely to be in paid employment	<p>Providing young people with additional learning needs and disabilities with targeted support, in realistic and practical work-related settings, to discover new skills and develop confidence.</p>				

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10. Work-related problem-solving activities	Short, job-specific tasks and other hands-on experiences which provide opportunities for learners to practise work-related skills, e.g. running a fruit tuck shop, interpreting a set of financial accounts, or chairing a meeting.				
11. Weekly timetabled / extended work placements	The learner works with an employer over an extended period for part of the week, whilst continuing their studies for the remainder of the week.				
12. Work shadowing	Learners spend relatively short periods of time with, and observing, an employee as they carry out their role in a particular profession. The learner is not expected to complete any tasks, however normal safeguarding procedures are still required. Work shadowing is more usually offered to post-16 pupils. A variation of work shadowing is 'Take your child to work day' when the learner spends the working day with a parent/carer at their place of work.				
13. Dynamo role model presentations/workshops	Dynamo encourages learners to raise their aspirations and realise their own potential. Active and successful entrepreneurs from across Wales act as role models presenting their story, exploring the highs and lows of running a business and taking time to interact with the pupils through questioning and activities.				

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14. Careers/option choices conference	A careers conference provides learners with opportunities to talk to employers, training organisations and representatives from further and higher educational institutions. Such events are most useful when pupils are making decisions about their post-fourteen and post-sixteen options.				
15. Taster sessions	Enable learners to spend short periods (up to half a day) with employers looking at job opportunities within a particular profession.				
16. Employer mentoring	Mentoring is a relationship where a mentor from the world of work helps learners, who may need to raise their ambitions and gain confidence, to clarify their personal targets and achieve his or her work and life goals. Mentoring may take place between a business role model and an individual learners or a group of learners.				
17. Mock interviews	Mock interviews provide young people with opportunities to prepare for and undertake a practice interview with an employer. The employer then offers feedback on how they can improve their interview techniques and skills. Employers can also provide feedback on CVs, application forms and supporting letters.				

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18. Employer support for the design and delivery of the curriculum	Often specific projects designed to enrich and add relevance to the curriculum. Employers might deliver a presentation to learners focusing on an aspect of their organisation related to a particular unit of work e.g. a financial advisor/bank official speaking to Business Studies students. Alternatively employers might supply educational materials and resources to support teaching and learning.				
19. Careers Clubs	Careers clubs help learners gain first-hand experience of a particular career area. The club organises regular brief presentations/question and answer sessions by employees from a range of career areas.				
20. Local role models	Inviting former students to share their personal experiences of the world of work.				

Other opportunities to gain work-focused experience	Description	Matrix of work-focused experiences by phase			
		Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Post 16
21. Out of school hours activities	For example, Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) clubs give learners time to apply and extend skills and concepts that they are taught in the classroom.				
22. Learner-run mini-enterprises in special school settings	For example, one school has a Fairtrade shop. Run by a group of 14 to 19-year-olds, it provides students with opportunities to learn how to develop a business plan, carry out market research with other learners and staff, order items, carry out stock checks, handle money and manage accounts.				
23. Part-time (paid) employment (PTE)	PTE can provide valuable first hand experience of the world of work. Child employment legislation however, limits the age at which a child may be employed on a part-time basis and on the number of hours that school children (13 to 15 years old) can be employed.				