

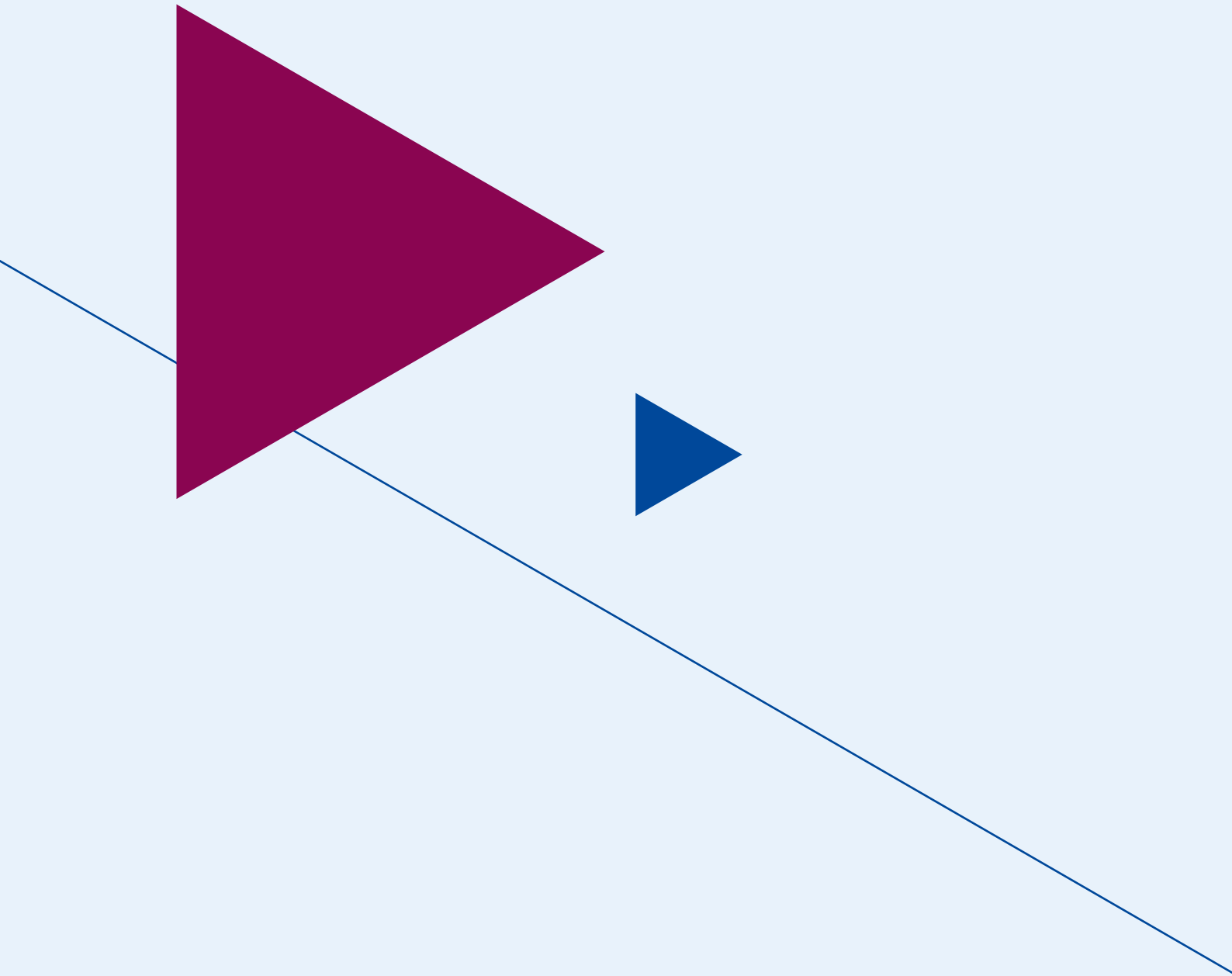


International
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► A guide to work experience

Using the ILO's career development framework to support work experience in education and training in low- and middle-income countries





▶ **A guide to work experience**

Using the ILO's career development framework to support work experience in education and training in low- and middle-income countries

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► About the guide

This guide is designed to introduce the idea of work experience for practitioners working in schools and technical and vocational education and training settings in low- and middle-income countries.

The guide provides an introduction to the concept of work experience and insights into how this idea can be introduced into the education system. It makes use of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) career development (CD) framework to structure and support the learning that is needed around work experience placements.

This guide is designed to be highly practical. It is aimed at practitioners and programme managements. It is published alongside the *Handbook for career and livelihood development*. We would recommend downloading the two documents together. The handbook was developed for the ILO by Hannah Blake (University of Derby), Tristram Hooley (University of Derby) and Pedro Moreno da Fonseca (International Labour Organization).



1

Understanding work experience

In the *Handbook for career development (CD)* the International Labour Organization (ILO) writes that ‘career describes people’s pathways through life, learning and work as well as the way that they understand those pathways and accord them meaning.’ The ILO goes on to argue that ‘engaging with this concept has huge potential for individuals to develop their own lives and consider how they can contribute to their community and society’ and to set out a framework through which individuals, educators, policymakers and other actors can encourage people to engage in career development.

The Handbook for CD argues that it is possible to use the CD framework to support career learning. In this guide we will explore this in relation to the provision of work experience which is designed to help young people to learn about different occupations, workplaces and sectors and to develop their career thinking.

A lot can be learnt about careers by watching other work, talking to working people and participating in work. The opportunity for young people to leave a school, college or technical and vocational education environment and undertake work experience as part of a career programme can be an important part of their school to work transition.

► What is work experience?

Work experience is an opportunity given to high school, college or technical and vocational students where they can engage in a short-term experience, or series of experiences, of the workplace. The purpose of work experience is to gain insights into careers, work skills and job opportunities and inform career decision making. This kind of work experience is distinct from more substantial vocational placements which young people might participate in during a technical and vocational education, which are primarily designed to develop occupational skills. During work experience the young person is still first and foremost a student and should not be treated in the same way as an employee or with the same expectations. As the student is not an employee, or being paid, they should not be exploited for their free labour and it is important that occupational safety and health management systems are in place.

► Who can take part in work experience?

Work experience is an approach which is designed to develop young people's knowledge of careers, the world of work and work skills. It is an approach which can be used with all young people in any form of education, particularly prior to labour market entry. Typically work experience placements become longer and move from observation to doing as young people get older. For example, it might be useful to take a class of 11-year-old children on a short visit to a workplace, while students who are over the age of 14 might be expected to become a short-term supervised worker with limited responsibilities for an organisation (normally for one or two weeks).

► When should work experience take place?

Work experience can be undertaken at any time during the year. It can be a programme that is open throughout the year, or the school or educational institution can arrange for all work experience opportunities to be undertaken in a specific period.

There is a strong case for developing a *programme of work experience for young people which includes a variety of different activities which gradually come more intense as the young people get older.*

► How can work experience be beneficial?

Work experience is beneficial to students, it can also be beneficial to schools/colleges and other educational providers, teachers, parents/guardians and employers.

Benefits to students

A key benefit to undertaking work experience is that it offers young people the opportunity to explore the different types of jobs that exist and see how businesses and organisations function and operate from behind the scenes.

Engaging with employers can help students to explore the different types of jobs and careers and the different pathways they can choose to reach those goals. Exploring different jobs and pathways can serve to provide awareness to the students about the different educational options available to them once they leave school. This could include university, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and apprenticeships. Undertaking work experience not only aids in the development of practical understandings of work realities (such as time management, and correct work attire) but also teaches young people the importance of networking and developing professional networks.

Work experiences also increase young people's self-understanding, independence and self-confidence, and help them become aware of the expectations from employers and what a work environment is like and what it is like to work alongside adults.

There is also some evidence to suggest that work experience can motivate students. Often students return from work experience more engaged, more able to make the connection between school and their career plans, and keen to do well at school and improve their grades.

Benefits to schools/colleges/teachers

Work experience requires educators to build relationships with employers and engage with the aspirations of the young people that they teach. Because of this it can improve the knowledge of teachers about surrounding job opportunities, different educational and employment pathways and what each can offer. It can also help schools and colleges to develop their curricula as well as build closer relationships with the community and local businesses.

While it is not the focus of this guide, it is also worth noting that not all work experience placements have to be aimed at young people. There are also examples where teachers and career professionals take place in work experience placements to increase their knowledge of the labour market. Ideally they will then be able to feed this back to students by embedding it into the curriculum.

Benefits to parents/guardians

Work experience can be an opportunity for students and their parents/guardians to discuss career options and for parents/guardians to also develop their knowledge as to what opportunities and pathways are available for their child(ren). This can be important when involving families who do not have an awareness of the different types of jobs available to their child and what qualifications their child needs to be able to enter that organisation.

Benefits to employers

When engaging with businesses it is important that they are aware of the benefits that providing work experience can have for them. Benefits for businesses can include improved staff retention, recruitment opportunities i.e. access to talent pools, increase awareness of job opportunities, engagement in the local community leading to awareness, contribution to the development in the local area and staff development. Engaging with people within the community from a young age can not only raise the awareness of the business in the community but it can also serve as a future recruitment opportunity by developing the employability skills of the young people.

Challenging stereotypes

For many young people there is often a preconception around what jobs they can and cannot do because of their gender, and for many young people, this is reinforced to them by their families and community. Work experience can serve as a catalyst for developing awareness amongst young people as to the types of jobs that are available to them that may traditionally be associated with gender stereotypes.

Work experience is only likely to challenge stereotypes if it is carefully managed by schools or other education providers. If young people and their parents are left unchallenged to choose and organise their work experience placements the most likely outcome is that they will choose jobs that are familiar. This means that the school has an important role to play in encouraging students to explore new ideas as they set up their work experience placements.



2

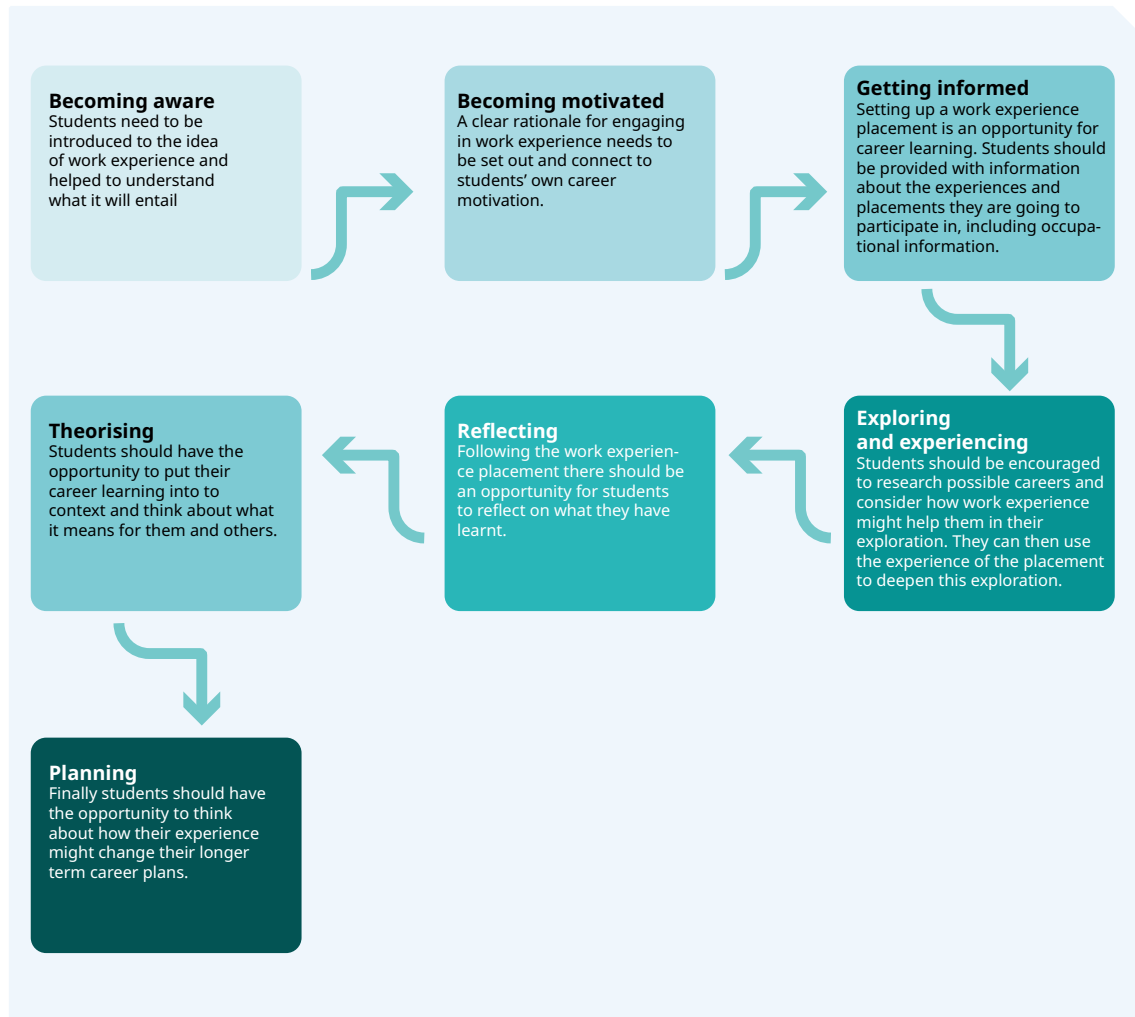
Designing work experience programmes

It is important to remember that work experience is a learning activity for students. Because of this it needs to be carefully designed to ensure that it is effective and leads to career learning.

It is also important to acknowledge and understand the different types of employment that takes place in your geographical area. For example, if your school/college is situated in a rural environment the employers will be very different to those in an urban environment. Similarly, there will be different opportunities available in the formal and informal economies.

In the Handbook for CD the ILO sets out the career learning spiral which describes how people learn about their careers. It sets out a series of stages in career learning which it can be useful to use to structure work experience. These are set out in Figure 1. Structuring work experience to support career learning.

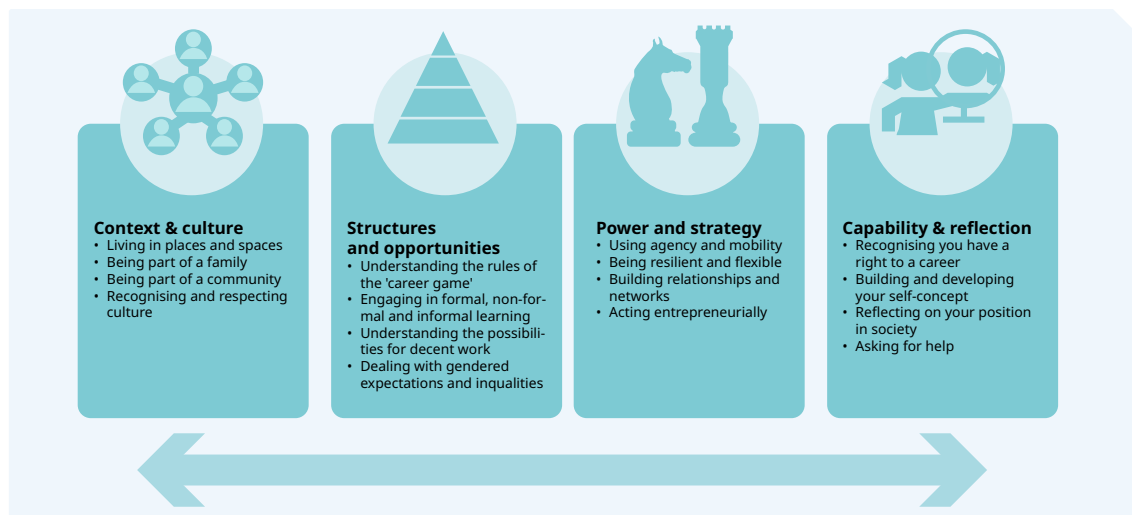
Thinking through these learning stages will help educators to design effective work experience placements that lead students to effective career learning.

► **Figure 1.** Structuring work experience to support career learning

► Setting career learning outcomes

It is important to set career learning outcomes for the work experience opportunity that you are going to engage students in. Thinking about what you want them to learn will help to clarify and organise the work experience opportunity.

The Handbook for CD sets out 16 career learning outcomes organised into four categories as follows.

► **Figure 2.** CD learning outcomes

You can use [Resource A](#) to help you to design the work experience opportunity.

Choosing different types of work experience

It is important that work experience is not confused with any other work based learning programme such as traineeships or apprenticeships. Unlike the organised programmes which provide technical training, work experience programmes are created in order for young people to learn about the world of work, and explore different possible careers.

There are a wide range of different types of work experience that you can choose from. The type of work experience that you choose should be tailored to meet the learning outcomes that you are trying to achieve. They should also be influenced by the needs and requirements of the students and the resources of the businesses that you are working with.

Common approaches to work experience are as follows.

The school as a workplace

Educational institutions are workplaces. One option to encourage students to think about possible careers is to engage them in career learning from the teachers and other staff. Reframing their learning environment as a workplace and giving them the opportunity to question the staff can be a powerful career learning experience.

Example

A session is organised with members of staff and students where students have the opportunity to ask the members of staff about their education and work history. It is a good idea here to include members of staff from across the education establishment such as teachers, headteachers, cleaners, gardeners and cooks.

Workplace visits

One of the easiest forms of work experience that it is possible to organise are workplace visits. These refer to students participating in a short visit to a workplace in which they can see a work environment, meet workers and ask questions about the jobs available at that organisation.

These types of visits often take place as a class or in small groups and will last no longer than a day. Activities during workplace visits can consist of group exercises, networking, workshops, Q&A sessions and site tours.

Example

A group of students are all interested in a career in construction, so a day's visit to a construction firm is organised. During their visit the students are given a tour of the site and different departments and then are given an opportunity to speak to current employees about their jobs and how they came to work there. This gives students the opportunity to network and potentially build contacts.

Job shadowing

Job shadowing can be an effective way for individuals to experience the workplace and gain a deeper understanding of a particular job or organisation. Job shadowing usually takes place over a shorter period, generally 1-2 days and consists of a student accompanying an employee to observe their workday.

This short experience helps students develop an understanding of workplace culture and expectations such as rules of the workplace, workwear attire and work behaviours. Job shadowing can be particularly helpful for students who want to pursue a career in an area in which work experience is not possible such as medicine and the law.

Example

A student is keen to become a nurse. Due to the nature of this career it would not always be suitable to arrange a work experience placement and so job shadowing provides a great opportunity for the student to observe a nurse in a local medical centre. The student is able to observe from a distance to understand a typical day in the life of a nurse. The student may be given the opportunity to speak informally to the nurse about their career path and experiences.

Volunteering and social and community action

An alternative way for students to gain work experience is through participation in volunteering or community or social action. This activity allows the young people to get involved in projects or activities that are of real interest to them and which they believe can make a difference to the lives of others. Volunteering can range from raising money for good causes, working for charitable organisations, or raising awareness for something they are passionate about. It may also involve working on a community project to improve lives in their community.

Example

A student is passionate about the environment but is unsure what job they can pursue. They know of a local non-profit organisation who work to raise awareness of the importance of recycling and not littering. The student has started volunteering for 4 hours once a week with the organisation to find out more about what jobs they can do linked to this interest and what qualifications they might need. The student can also use this experience on their CV or personal statement when applying for jobs or college/university courses.

Short work experience placements

A short work experience placement typically takes place within a workplace whilst the young person is also in full-time education. Work experience placements generally take place over a 1-2 week period with the purpose of developing a young person's employability skills, assisting their career decision making and developing an awareness of the world of work and different job opportunities.

Work experience placement are often organised during school or college time and are closely supported by educators.

Example

A student has expressed an interest in cars and potentially a salesperson, but they are unsure if they want to do this as a career. A work experience opportunity could be arranged for this student to provide them with a brief insight into the world of work in this sector. In a short period of time (5 - 10 days) the student will be able to gain an insight into the role of a salesperson, the process of selling cars, and the expectations of the employer.

Longer work experience placements / internships

Some young people are keen to gain additional work experience during school holidays. In this case, and particularly for older children, they may be able to get longer, ideally paid, placements during the longer school holidays. These kinds of work experience placements or internships are normally left to students to arrange, but can be very valuable, particularly in competitive occupations. The school may wish to facilitate this through making contact with employers and supporting the student to engage with them.

Example

A student wants to become a graphic designer and has already undertaken work experience but they want to develop their knowledge and experience. As a result the student has decided to find an organisation in their local city who can offer an internship during their school holiday. This internship will give the student a chance to spend a longer period of time with experts in their field and pass on knowledge to the student. The student may also be given the opportunity to contribute to a project that the organisation is working on.

Part-time work

Some students may already have a job whilst they are in education. Whilst there are concerns about work distracting students from their studies, when done in moderation part-time work alongside studies can be beneficial for the students. In some cases, it is also worth noting that for some families it may be expected that part-time work is undertaken by the young person to help support the family income. Educators need to handle these arrangements carefully, encouraging students to reflect on what they are learning in their part-time work and also helping them to balance work and school.

Example

A student has a part time job in a local supermarket on an evening and weekends to support their family's finances. This job teaches the student about finances and responsibilities but it also develops skills such as time management, customer service, and self-confidence.



Engaging employers

In the previous section we discussed what kinds of learning outcome student might get from a work experience opportunity and suggested some basic design principles and approaches that you can use. We will be returning to these later on, but first it is important to talk about the process of engaging employers. One of the unique elements of work experience is that it always makes use of employers and working people from outside of the school. This raises a lot of issues that schools and colleges need to think through.

Any employer can offer work experience as long as they have enough staff and resources to look after the students on placement. This means that any company, from a small family run business to a large multinational organisation, can provide placements for work experience. This is also the case with businesses in the informal and formal economy, for example, it may be that a student wishes to work in agriculture and that it is useful to place them in a local farm. However, it is also important to make sure that placements stretch and broaden students' career thinking, beyond their initial career ideas.

When engaging with an employer for the first time it is important to clearly explain what work experience is and why it is important for both students and employers to partake in the opportunity. It is always helpful to have researched the organisation before contacting them to develop an understanding of the work they do and what types of work experience opportunities they could be asked to host. It is then

helpful to explain to the employers why it is not only beneficial to the student but also to them as an employer to be providing work experience. By doing this it allows the employer to see that it is not all to benefit the young person.



A [guide for employers](#) can be found at the end of this handbook.

► Explaining work experience to employers

When engaging with employers it is important that they understand what they are being asked to do and know what is expected from them. It is important that each employer is aware of the purpose of work experience placements and as a teacher, you should explain to them the focus of work experience is to enable students to gain an understanding of the workplace and develop their generic employability skills.

Key questions that you might want to cover when meeting with employers include the following:

How is work experience facilitated?

Work experience placements are generally facilitated by the school/college contacting and liaising with the employer. It is important to be flexible when working with employers, for example by being willing to vary the timing and length of work experience where this is possible. However, ultimately the student is still engaged in an education activity and the school should be focused primarily on ensuring that the young person gets a positive career learning experience.

What should the business expect if it takes a work experience student?

Employers should be clear on what they are expected to do and about the capabilities of the young person. For example, you should inform them that it is expected that the student should be supervised at all times and that they should be provided with experiences that will give them an insight into that particular organisation/career and what skills they need to be able to achieve that. You should also be clear that while it is appropriate that the student should be given a range of relevant work-related tasks they should not be treated as cheap labour. Ideally students will be involved in a range of work-related activities such as having the opportunity to speak/observe a range of different employees, interact with customers/clients and be involved in projects. Businesses should be made aware of these expectations before a placement is organised to ensure that they can provide a work placement which has positive outcomes.

How long can a business ask a student to work?

Depending on the type of work experience students may be expected to undertake their work experience at times outside of their day-to-day school timetable. Students should not be considered to be a replacement for paid workers and they should not be expected to work excessive hours which could be seen as exploitative. Contact with unions is recommended to ensure programmes are implemented in an ethical way that does not question the rights of the workers. Work hours and expectations should be agreed between the school/college/training provider, employer, parent and student before any work experience takes place.

What are the benefits to employers?

Offering work experience opportunities can be beneficial to employers for several reasons.

- *Recruitment opportunities and building talent pipeline* – the ability to access a wider range of talent which may have not previously explored that line of work which in turn may help reduce hiring risks in the near future.
- *Fresh ideas* – young people offer new and interesting ways of thinking which reflect the needs and interests of the next generation.
- *Staff development* – work experience provides existing employees with the opportunity to supervise and mentor a young person and help them to develop their skills.
- *Engagement with the local community* – this can help boost relationships and economic development.

Once a work experience placement has been offered and organised it can be good practice to ask the employer to complete an employer consent form (find an example of this in [Resource B](#) at the end of this handbook) and for you as a teacher to complete an employer placement details form ([Resource C](#)).



► Getting students to contact employers

Whilst it is recommended that schools act as facilitators in organising the work experience opportunities, it can often be a worthwhile activity for students to be given the role of finding their own work experience placements. This activity can serve as a way of developing the student's awareness of different businesses in their local area and helps them to start thinking about what career/sector they may find interesting. However, schools need to be careful to ensure that the work experience placements that students choose take them beyond their immediate family and community networks and encourage them to broaden their career thinking. It is also important for the school to check over the employer before any placement is formally organised.

Job fairs and careers events can act as a good opportunity for students to network with employers and generate initial contact upon which a work experience placement can be organised. The use of social media can also be helpful in connecting with local employers.



4

Organising and managing work experience

In the previous sections we have discussed how to design work experience so that it fits with career learning principles and how to engage employers. In this section we turn to the practicalities of running work experience programmes.

It is important when organising work experience opportunities for your students that you carefully look at the context you are working in and check both the local and national laws regarding work for young people, for example, it is important to check whether young people on work experience are covered by any labour laws or regulations.

► How to match students with appropriate placements

It is important when organising work experience opportunities for your students that the placements are aligned as closely as possible with their career ambitions or interests, whilst also stretching their career thinking. A placement may not always align exactly with the future aspirations of the student however students can still take the opportunity to develop generic workplace skills and explore the world of work.

Language can also be a factor when organising work experience placements. It is good to have an awareness of the language spoken at each organisation before matching a student as there must be a common language spoken between the employer and student.

Once students have been matched with a placement it can be helpful to keep all details on one document, an example of this is in [Resource D](#) (*Work experience record*).



► Ensuring health and safety

Schools, colleges and training providers must make an effort to ensure the health and welfare of their students whilst on work experience. This could involve but is not limited to the following.

- Undertaking a risk assessment of the placement and considering how risks can be addressed and minimised.
- Ensuring the employer is aware of the risks associated with having a student in their organisation.
- Provide the student with an employee who will supervise them and who will be responsible for the student's safety.
- Employers should inform the school/college and parents/carers of any possible risks for the student whilst on work experience.
- Providing employers with informing employers of a student's health conditions and learning disabilities.
- Providing the students with an induction which includes information such as using machinery and equipment.
- Awareness of diversity and gender differences to ensure the health and safety of both men and women. A gender sensitive awareness of societal expectations and responsibilities.
- Thorough hygiene rules should be followed at all times.

► Informing parents and gaining consent



Parents or guardians should be informed that their child is going to participate in a work experience placement in advance and give their consent, if the child is below the age of consent. Find an example template for this in [Resource E](#) at the end of this handbook.

► Arranging transport

It is normally the responsibility of the student and parents and guardians to organise transport to and from the place of work, although the education establishment may provide support and transport if this is necessary. Thinking about the location of the work experience and transport issues should be undertaken at the point at which the student is applying for work experience to help to avoid any problems. Ensure that vulnerable students (disability/gender) are supported and feel safe with the transportation they will be using.

► What happens if a placement falls through?

Unfortunately, from time-to-time employers can cancel placements at the last minute for a variety of reasons. If this happens there are usually two options – ask another employer already offering work experience if they will take another student or provide the student with a placement within the school/college itself, this could be alongside teaching staff or the school library, kitchen or office.

► Monitoring visits

Teachers should monitor each work experience visit and should try to visit each student in their placement, where this is not possible, teachers should phone the work experience provider to check on the student. This gives the teacher the opportunity to speak to the student and the employer and make sure that both the student and employer are happy.



It can be helpful for teachers to record these visits or conversations to keep track of how the student is getting on in their placement. A template for this can be found in [Resource F](#) at the end of this handbook.



5

Preparing your students for work experience

To make the work experience opportunities as successful and positive as possible it is important to adequately prepare your students. Young people should go on work experience having prior knowledge and understanding of what to expect during their placement and how to behave whilst there. This can be done through various methods such as group briefing sessions, workshops, and information sheets prior to the start of the placement.

These sessions can be used to help students understand the purpose of work experience and make them aware of the employability skills that they will have the chance to develop – this can be particularly helpful when trying to engage young people from backgrounds where a career is not something that is searched for.

► Setting their own learning aims

Teachers should already have defined a series of learning outcomes (drawing on the CD framework) for the work experience programme. These learning outcomes should be communicated to students and students should be encouraged to develop them into their own personal learning outcomes.

This can be achieved in a session prior to work experience in which students are encouraged to think about what they want to learn, do and experience whilst they are on work experience. These kinds of details should be recorded and used to support students reflection after the work experience placement.

► Meeting employer expectations

It is important to talk to employers about their expectations and then communicate this to the students. Key areas of discussion with the students might include.

- **Dress and appearance:** Students should be wearing clothing which is appropriate to their role. If they are in an office environment they should be dressed smartly, if they are doing manual work they should be wearing clothes suitable for manual activities. If students are unsure, it is recommended that they contact the employer before their placement.
- **Behaviour:** Students should be reminded that they are entering a work environment and therefore it is important to behave in a way that is expected from an employee at that organisation.
- **Time management and organisation:** Employers will expect each work experience student to be able to arrive at work each day on time and with the appropriate equipment.



6

Reflection and debriefing on the work experience activity

► For students

During their placement, it is often useful for students to complete a diary to fill in every day to keep track of what they have done each day, what they have learnt, what went well and how the placement has helped with their career decision making. At the end of the placement, students can then use this diary to help them reflect on their overall experience and their learning ([Resource G](#)), *if shared with teachers*



this can also act as a way for teachers to understand the students' feelings, aspirations and goals. Partnering students up after their placements and giving them the opportunity to undertake peer to peer reflection can help the young people thinking about what they have learned from their work experience placements. For example, the teacher could ask students to write down a challenge they overcame during their placement, such as a problem solving issue, and discuss with their peer how they dealt with the issue and what they have learned as a result.

It is also recommended that students write thank you letters to their employers, this is something that could be undertaken as a task in a lesson such as English ([Resource H](#)).



It can be a good learning exercise to ask students to complete an end of placement questionnaire ([Resource I](#)). Not only does this act as a way to encourage the students to reflect on their placement but it also helps you as a teacher to understand whether the placement was worthwhile for the student, whether they felt it helped their skills development and any other feedback they may wish to share.

► For practitioners/teachers



It can be helpful for teachers and practitioners to reflect on the work experience process, engagement with employers and the experiences of the students ([Resource J](#)). *It is helpful to ask questions such as*

- Were employers engaged?
- Was it worthwhile for the student?
- Would you use the employer again?

► Employer feedback



Gaining feedback from the employer can be helpful when developing future work experience placements. Feedback can also be given from the employer to the student as a way to help the student reflect on what they have learnt and the skills they have developed. It is recommended that feedback from employers is always gathered as soon as possible after the work experience has taken place as this can be used to support continuous improvement and ensure that the placements are always of high quality (See [Resource K](#)).



7

Resources

The following resources are available to support teachers/careers advisors to deliver work experience placement. These resources are referred to throughout the handbook and are presented in chronological order of use.

- A. Designing work experience
- B. Employer consent form
- C. Employer placement details
- D. Work experience record
- E. Parental consent form
- F. Monitoring visit feedback
- G. Work experience student diary template
- H. Student letter to employer
- I. Student work experience questionnaire
- J. Teacher reflection
- K. End of placement – Employer feedback form

► A. Designing work experience

Title of work experience:

Type of work experience

- ☐ The school as a workplace
- ☐ Workplace visits
- ☐ Job shadowing
- ☐ Volunteering and social and community action
- ☐ Short work experience placements
- ☐ Longer work experience placements / internships
- ☐ Part-time work

When is it going to happen:

Learning outcomes

Context and culture	Structures and opportunities	Power and strategy	Capability and reflection
- Living in places and spaces - Being part of a family - Being part of a community - Recognising and respecting culture	- Understanding the rules of the game - Engaging in formal, non-formal and informal learning - Understanding the possibilities for decent work - Dealing with gendered expectations and inequalities	- Using agency and mobility - Being resilient and flexible - Building relationships and networks - Acting entrepreneurially	- Recognising you have a right to a career - Building and developing your self-concept - Reflecting on your position in society - Asking for help

Supporting career learning

Career learning stage	When will it happen?	How will you support this learning?
Becoming aware		
Getting informed		
Exploring and experiencing (the work experience placement itself)		
Reflecting		
Theorising		
Planning		

► B. Employer Consent Form

Name of organisation	
Name of contact	
Job title	
Contact information	

I hereby give consent for (*Student name*) to participate in the work experience programme from to (*Dates*) and acknowledge my responsibilities to the student. The pupil's age and inexperience will be taken into account when agreeing tasks, and I understand that he or she must not undertake prohibited activities and occupational safety and health guidelines will be followed

I will / will not* require a meeting with the pupil prior to the placement with this company. (*delete as appropriate)

Date and Time of interview:

► C. Employer placement details

Name of Company	
Address of Company	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Supervisor of Student	
Position in Company	
Normal Working Week	
Normal Working Times	
Brief details of work to be undertaken by the pupil as agreed with the school/college	
Any special requirements?	
Any other details/comments	

Signed (*Teacher*):

Date:.....

Signed (*Employer*):

Date:.....

► D. Work experience record

Name of Pupil	Date of Birth	Name and Address of Employer	Type of Work	Brief details of agreed duties	Dates of placement

► E. Parental consent form

School Details

Dear Parent

Work Experience

We have been able to arrange work experience arrangements for all pupils in (class). This has been possible through the cooperation of local employers who see this form of extended education as a valuable introduction to the world of work. The arrangements will operate from to and we will let you have further particulars at a later date. The coordinator for work experience will assess each proposed placement for suitability. They will organise the placement and the pupil for the placement.

The arrangements are governed by the following conditions:

- participation can only be permitted with the written consent of the parent if the child is under the age of 16;
- payment must NOT be accepted by the pupil;

If you are agreeable for your son / daughter to participate in these work experience arrangements please complete and return the attached slip.

Yours faithfully

Principal/Teacher

I am / am not* agreeable for my son / daughter* to participate in the work experience arrangements. (*delete as appropriate)

I agree to take responsibility for the organisation of travel arrangements for my son / daughter whilst he / she is on work placement.

Is there any medical (or other) condition which may affect your child on work placement? (please circle)

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please give details:

Signed: (Parent / Guardian)

Date:

► F. Monitoring visit feedback

Student Name:	Class:
Company:	
Is the employer happy with the student?	
What sort of tasks is the student doing?	
Is the student happy with the placement/are they finding it useful?	
Are there any health and safety issues?	
Would the employer offer work experience placements in future?	
Any other comments:	
Signed:	Date:

► G. Work experience student diary template

Day 1	
Description of work undertaken	
What did you enjoy about it?	
What was not enjoyable?	
What new skills have you learned?	
Day 2	
Description of work undertaken	
What did you enjoy about it?	
What was not enjoyable?	
What new skills have you learned?	
Day 3	
Description of work undertaken	
What did you enjoy about it?	
What was not enjoyable?	
What new skills have you learned?	

► H. Student letter to employer

School details

Dear *[employer name]*

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to do my work experience at [name of organisation]. I really enjoyed my time, especially [write about the best part of the experience for you].

I feel that it will help me with my future career plans as it has helped me to understand what working life is like and I was able to develop my [write about one or two employability skills].

I found the staff very helpful and friendly and would like to thank [insert name of person you worked closely with] for all of the help and support they gave me.

Yours sincerely

[Sign]

[Print name]

► I. Student work experience questionnaire

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I enjoyed my work experience				
I was satisfied with my work experience				
I had enough information about work experience				
As a result of my work experience...				
I better understand the skills employers are looking for				
I know which personal qualities employers think are important				
I have developed some new skills that employers value (e.g. customer awareness, and use of IT)				
I understand better why it is important to do well at school				
I understand better how workplaces are organised				
I am clearer about what I want to do in my future education and career (post-16)				

If you were not happy about any part of your work experience, can you explain why?

Could your placement have been improved? If so, in what way?

Any other comments?

► J. Teacher Reflection

This document is designed to help teachers reflect on the work experience activities that took place in their schools. When completed it should help teachers when it comes to designing the following year's work experience placements.

What worked well when organising placements?	
Were any placements cancelled? If so, why?	
Were the employers engaged?	
Did the students find it worthwhile?	
Have any employers said they will take a student next year?	
What has employer feedback been like?	
What could be improved for next time?	

► K. End of placement – Employer feedback form

Name:	Position:
Company name:	Date of Work Experience:
Name of student:	

	Yes	No	Comments
Were you happy with the information about work experience you received from School?			
Were you happy with the information provided about the student?			
Did you feel that the student was well prepared for the placement?			
Was the visit / phone call during the placement professional and helpful?			
Was the student able to communicate well with staff?			
Is there anything more that we could do to improve our support for you?			

Would you like to make any other comments about the placement?

Signed:

Date:

Guidance for Employers

► What is work experience?

Work experience is an opportunity for someone (often a school or college aged person) to spend a limited amount of time with an organisation to help them gain an understanding of the world of work, explore different careers, and build a network of contacts. There are different types of work experience including:

- Workplace visits: offering students an opportunity to visit the business for 1hr – 1day to provide an insight into the world of work.
- Job shadowing: 1-2 days student visit to the workplace to observe a job being carried out. Often undertaken in circumstances where the student is not able to actively work in that environment without qualifications e.g medical and legal settings
- Short term work experience: often 1-2 weeks long but can vary in nature and length greatly to give young people a detailed insight and experience of the world of work
- Long term work experience/internship: students may want to explore a sector or job in more depth and so a placement over 4-5 weeks could be provided where the student can take on more responsibilities.

* Employers are not expected to pay the young people whilst on their placements.

Employers should be aware of the occupational safety and health procedures and are encouraged to speak to their unions and refer to local employment laws.

► Activities during workplace visits

During students' visits to the workplace it is generally helpful if the visits are structured in order to make them more purposeful. This can include:

- Group exercises: providing the students with a task to solve related to the organisation and what might be expected in a job.
- Networking: bring together a group of employees and a group of students to encourage discussion, conversations about careers and development opportunities.
- Workshops: CV and personal statement writing, interview skills.
- Q&A sessions: an opportunity for students to ask employees questions about their jobs, background, and experiences.

► How is work experience beneficial to employers?

Offering work experience can be beneficial to employers for a number of reasons:

- **Recruitment opportunities and building talent pipelines:** placements can allow employers to access a wider range of young talent whilst also making a useful contribution to workforce planning.
- **Fresh ideas:** young people offer new and innovative ways of thinking reflecting the needs of customers and consumers.
- **Staff development:** existing staff can be given the opportunity to supervise or mentor a young person and therefore develop their own skills.
- **Engagement with the community:** this can help boost the local economy and raise awareness of the business and increase brand loyalty.

► How to get the best young people

Taking on young people for work experience placements can help an employer tap into a wider talent pool and reach individuals from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Employers should be open to the type of young person they take on for placement.

Introducing a young person to the work place

It is important that young people on work experience are given a good induction into the workplace that can help them understand and settle into working life. It is likely that the young person will have never experienced the world of work and so can be beneficial to teach them about the functions of work and expectations. An induction is an opportunity to:

- Get to know the young person
- Understand their previous experience
- Talk about expectations
- Establish the young person's goals
- Provide space for the young person to ask questions.

A good induction should include:

- An introduction to the organisation and its employees
- A tour of the facilities including toilets, cafeteria, fire exits and health and safety information
- An outline of what the student will be doing during their placement (work plan)
- Understanding what the young person hopes to gain from their placement

► Making a work plan

Students should be given the opportunity to undertake a variety of tasks within different departments where possible to provide them with a good insight into the work place. It may be helpful to draw up a work plan for the student prior to their placement starting so that activities can be organised and the student has an organised schedule.

► Supervision/mentoring

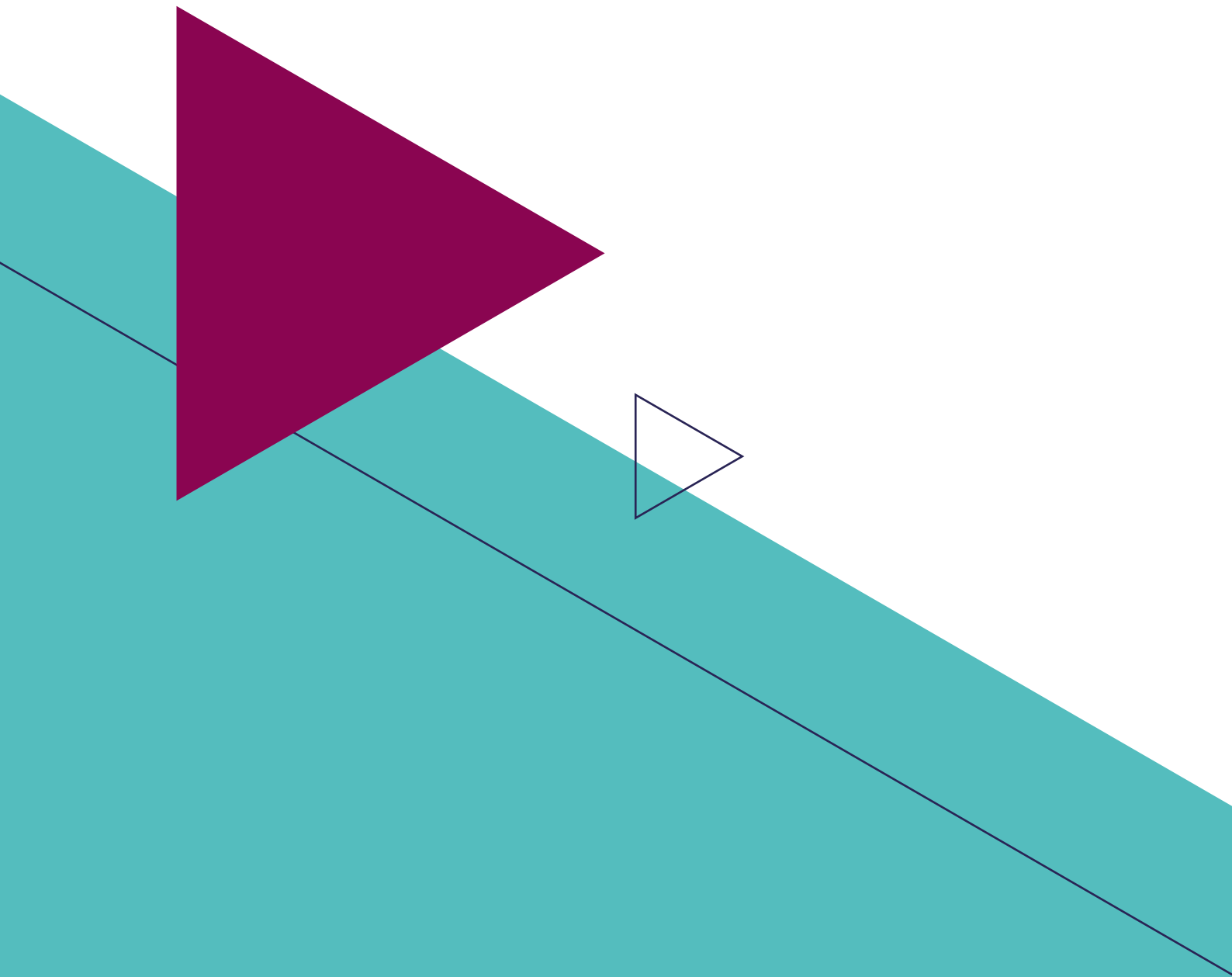
When a business is taking on a young person for work experience they should ensure that the young person is provided with a dedicated employee who can act as their supervisor for the duration of the placement. This supervisor should be able to offer support and guidance to the young person and ensure that the young person is following their work plan.

► End of placement feedback

At the end of the work experience placement it is often helpful to have a meeting with the young person to discuss how the placement went for both the young person and the employer. Students will often have a diary that they will be filling in throughout their placement and schools may provide paperwork for you to be able to feedback to them on the student and whether you would be willing to offer further support or future work experience placements.

► Practical tips

If you are eager to offer work experience in your organisation you can actively contact your local school, college or training provider



ilo.org

International Labour Organization
Route des Morillons 4
1211 Geneva 22
Switzerland