



Evaluate

What does 'good, very good or excellent' look like? This is evaluation in a nutshell. It will have played a part throughout your virtual or blended work experience programme - monitoring progress from the Scope phase through to the last feedback session should have informed next steps and may have resulted in a shift in your plans. Now it's time to take a good look at your programme as a whole, its impact and outcomes and how what you have learnt can help you plan future programmes.

Why Evaluate?

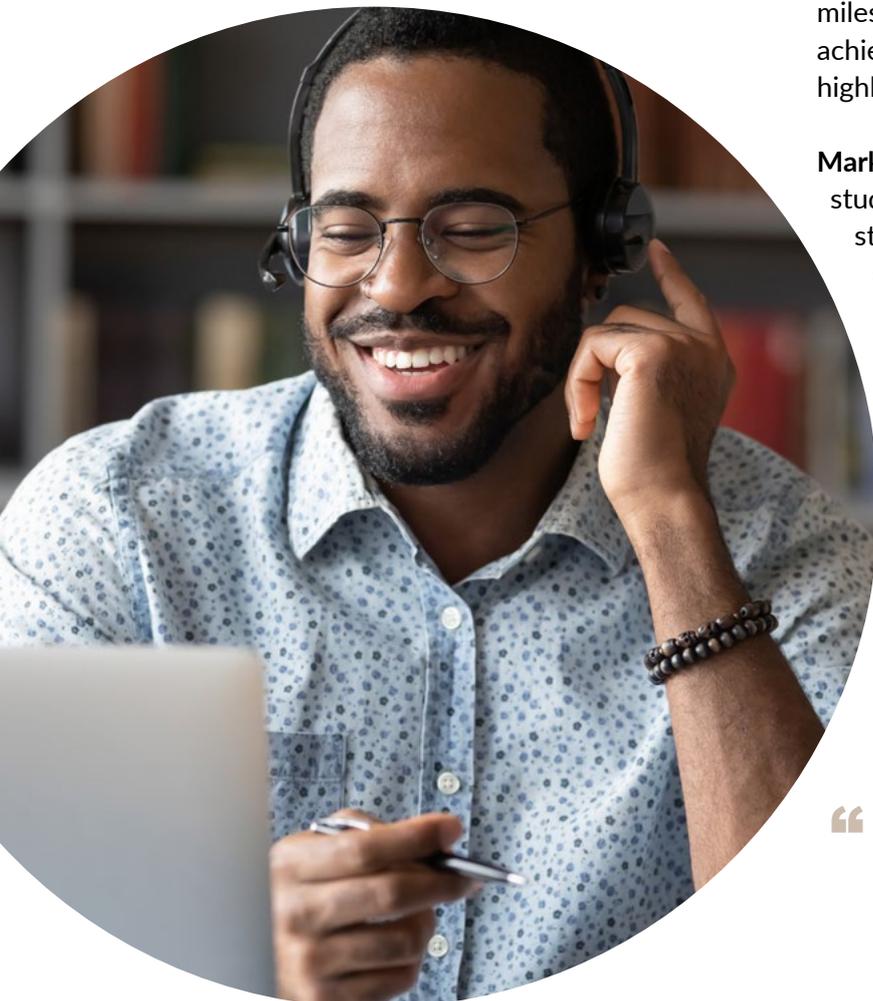
Evaluating any project is as important as delivering it. The key reasons are these:

Measuring impact - did you reach the desired outcomes? Were there any unexpected positive outcomes? Is the student feedback positive and helpful? What are the opinions of the school/ college staff who were involved?

Learning and improving - how can you use what you find to plan even more effective future programmes? What worked? What didn't? Did your employees feel engaged and positive about their experience?

Accountability - are all the stakeholders - students, schools, colleges and your business - satisfied with the outcomes and programme as a whole?

Funding - was your programme financially successful? Were there any unexpected costs or was your financial planning robust and realistic?



Next Steps

A large part of your evaluation process will be collecting information from the three partner groups in your work experience programme - your staff, partner organisations, the schools and colleges and of course, most importantly, the students themselves. Remember to focus on the success criteria and outcomes you identified in your schemes of work and planning. These are your benchmarks for success on paper, and will tick the Gatsby Benchmark boxes for the schools if your planning has been effective.

There may have been many unexpected positive outcomes which you can, and absolutely should include when you evaluate your programme. Demonstrate how you have been responsive to individual needs. Highlight spontaneous creative moments the students have had. What sparked that? This shows how you've working dynamically with them.

Other things to consider - Were there any milestone moments? Possibly particular achievements by the students which can be highlighted?

Marketing - were any resources produced by the students which you can use in future marketing strategies? Feedback from students and schools can also be used to promote your business as a work experience partner.

Collaboration - your programme and evaluation could be shared as best practice with the wider business community to promote your commitment to the workforce of the future.

If your programme offered accreditation, were the students successful in achieving it? Was it celebrated?

“ Remember to focus on the success criteria and outcomes you identified in your schemes of work and planning.

Getting the information you need



The more information you can gather from your virtual work experience programme, the richer your evaluation will be. Gathering qualitative data gives insight to the views of the participants, such as interviews, questionnaires (see an example below) and observations. Taking the time to collect qualitative data complements this and gives a way of measuring the impact on young people, especially if your programme reaches a large number. The more data you are able to collect, more your evaluation will inform future planning.

[Our Step By Step Guide](#) is a toolkit packed with more information, examples and resources to help you make something special.

Student Feedback

Student feedback forms are the very best way to find out more about their experience and what they feel they have learnt during their work experience with you. Even better might be a sample of students being asked to meet with you to give more in depth feedback - some students will respond to questions much more readily in a virtual 'face to face' meeting than by filling in a form. This could be done by one of your facilitators or mentors. Experienced employers will know that getting student feedback is important, but also difficult to get. One of the simplest ways is to gather feedback through surveys.

Construction company Willmott Dixon shares questions they ask their work experience participants:

Questions to ask:

What did you enjoy most?

What did you enjoy least?

Were the sessions the right length?

Were you provided with support and clear instruction throughout?

Were the objectives clearly set out at the start and relevant to your needs?



Has your knowledge and understanding of the industry improved?

Have you learnt about jobs available in the industry?

Would you consider a job in the industry?

Will you make plans to achieve your goals?

Do you feel more confident in your abilities?

Do you feel more prepared for work than you did before?

Would you recommend this activity to a friend?

Tell us more.

Employee Feedback

The members of your team who have been involved in the programme will have vital insights into its success and will also be able to identify learning points for future planning. These could be members of staff who delivered sessions, mentored, facilitated or took part in the research and planning phases.

Questions to ask:

What worked well?

What could work better?

Was your time effectively used?

Did it impact on your general workload?

If so, how could this be made better?

Were relationships with students, schools and colleges effective and positive?

Do you feel you have developed new skills through your involvement in the programme?

Would you like to be involved in future programmes?

In what capacity?

How do you see this impacting your own career development?

Are there any training needs you have identified?





Schools and Colleges Feedback

The staff of the schools or colleges you have worked with will have another set of objectives which their own evaluation will address. Their statutory requirement to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks, which also forms part of any Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) inspection, and the progress of their students will be paramount in their thinking at this stage. They will need to provide evidence of attainment of all the benchmark requirements, so being able to show through your evaluation that you have helped them do this is essential, not only for them, but for the accountability, reputation and sustainability of your programmes. The most important achievement is giving young people the experience.

You should plan for a meeting with the staff you have worked with. Here are some suggestions for starting points in your discussion:

Were the outcomes for each session met?

Which Gatsby Benchmark requirements were met?

“ **The most important achievement is giving young people the experience.**

Were there any that were met unexpectedly?

How can the programme be adapted and developed to meet them more effectively, or meet more of them?

Was communication between the school/college and the business effective?

Did your students feel supported by the business between sessions?

Was information shared effectively?

Was the timescale appropriate?

Were the resources used the right ones?

Was the programme sufficiently adaptable to meet the needs of individual students (young people with SEND, for example)?

Were there any technical issues which need to be addressed?

Were there any safeguarding concerns?

Presenting findings from your evaluation

When you have put together your evaluation document it becomes a real tool for the future. You will probably have two versions - one which is a much more in depth analysis of your programme, and another which may be much more visual which summarises and celebrates your findings.

The first is your toolkit for you to refer to when you embark on the research and planning of your next work experience programme. It is not an 'end' document - in fact it is quite the opposite and needs to be thought of as the starting point for your next programme.

This document may also be needed as evidence of the effectiveness of your programme. The school or college you have worked with may need it to use as part of the information supplied to an OFSTED inspector for example. Or the board of your organisation may need it to refer to when considering longer term strategic planning and allocation of resources.

The shorter version is an invaluable resource to promote your offer – not just to students, schools and colleges but also to your business colleagues. You will be able to use it to recruit more of your workforce as volunteer mentors, facilitators and leaders. You will also be able to use it to secure the commitment of the whole organisation to future programmes, promote your offer to schools, colleges and students and promote your business in the wider community. Think of it as a document at the core of a great marketing strategy!

Case study

Example of key findings from Dorset NHS

Here is a list of key findings following Dorset NHS's recent virtual work experience programme:

Introduction to Medicine.

They found out how much young people value virtual work experience and how it's helped them to find more direction in their career.

This clear document colourfully and simply highlights key findings and gives positive feedback from their students, showing how much they learned from the experience. As well as a great summary, this can be used for reports, press releases and even motivational posters in the break for the hard working NHS staff.

Our Dorset
Your Local NHS and Councils Working Together

HIGHLIGHTS - DORSET NHS VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME
INTRODUCTION TO MEDICINE

- The event met everyone's expectations
- All participants agree or strongly agree that the session covered everything they needed
- 85% of students found the opportunity to ask questions to professionals who work in the sector, one of the most valuable parts of the session
- More than the 70% of attendees agree or strongly agree that timing, format and schedule of the session worked well
- 100% of attendees would recommend the programme to a contact or a friend
- All students agree on the overall usefulness of the event
- 90% of participants are likely or very likely to apply for medical school after attending the Introduction to medicine

October 2020
half term

Part of a 4 events
programme

26 Dorset schools joining the programme

58 students attending

16-18 years old students

'Thank you for making this day interesting and further sparking my interest in medicine as a career! :)
Attendee

'Thank you so much for setting this up, it was really enjoyable and informative. I am very grateful to have gotten the chance to hear from such a wide array of doctors and I believe this will help me in my future applications to medical school!'
Attendee

'Huge thank you for allowing me to complete this work experience, it was such a useful insight into the career! This has definitely helped me prepare for medical school as well as any upcoming interviews I may have.'
Attendee

'A really valuable day for finding out more about specific specialties, and about how we would be studying and working practically in order to become a doctor. Thank you!'
Attendee



Give Young People Experience of Your Workplace

The digital guide

Need support to create a great experience of your workplace programme?
Visit <http://wex.careersandenterprise.co.uk> for a practical Step By Step guide,
downloadable resources and further information, plus further supporting research
reports and white papers. All in one place!

THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY

Developed in partnership with



Created by

