

Automotive Work Experience Toolkit

Employers guide



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The IMI

The Institute of the Motor Industry is the professional body for individuals working in the motor industry and the authoritative voice of the retail automotive sector. The IMI's aim is to ensure the automotive retail sector has a skilled, competent and professional workforce that is fully equipped to keep pace with the demands of new technology and changing markets. A key part of business for manufacturers and dealers is to encourage the best and brightest people to join their business in a variety of roles.

Employer Guidance

Work experience provides employers with an opportunity to promote a positive image of the industry and gives them the perfect stage on which to test young people who can be viewed as potential future employees. By building links with local schools and colleges employers can help improve the work readiness of young people about to enter the workforce and recruit informed school leavers who better understand the skill requirements and environment of the retail motor industry.

A well-organised work experience replacement helps promote the relevance of vocational qualifications within our sector and the need for ongoing training as part of an employee's career development. Employees themselves can also benefit through the process of managing and operating the work experience placement allowing them scope to develop management and coaching skills. Existing staff could develop assignments or projects related to their department or job role for the student to complete during the course of the placement. These should encourage the student to communicate with staff and carry out research.

What you can offer as an employer will obviously depend on the size, structure and nature of your business and the range of opportunities you have. You should also however consider how much time and resources can be devoted to the work experience, which departments, positions and tasks are suitable for a young person, health and safety implications and any disruption to the normal daily routine.

However, by providing a well-planned, well-organised work experience for the student you will not only have helped them acquire the right skills and attitudes for the world of work but raised the profile of the retail motor industry as an attractive career option and perhaps dispelled a few inaccurate stereotypical views.

This guidance note and the associated documentation aims to assist you with the organisation, planning and management of a work experience placement. In providing a constructive and rewarding experience for participants not only will they themselves benefit from their time with you, but it will also promote a positive image of your company and our industry in general, to potential employees and customers. By developing this toolkit the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) hopes to encourage a better understanding of the wide variety and nature of the roles within the automotive sector and the career opportunities it offers.

From a practical point of view the toolkit provides you with guidance and information on work experience provision by way of notes, checklists and suggested work schedules which can be adapted to fit your environment ensuring a rounded experience to the student.

A Work Experience Agreement is drawn up prior to commencement of the work experience placement and an attendance certificate issued on completion. Samples are included in the organiser section of the toolkit, however, individual schools and colleges may choose to use their own documentation. Your school / college contact will advise you of any forms they require to be used.

The work experience activity itself can be divided into:

- Preparation prior to the placement
- Learning experiences provided during the placement
- Review on completion of the placement

Preparing for the work experience

- You need to **clearly identify who will supervise students** during their time with you and who will deputise in the event of their absence. Supervisors should be aware that young people will require more supervision than adults.
- **Prepare a scheme of work activities** and ensure relevant departments are aware of their involvement. It is worth remembering that students should have the opportunity to make choices and decisions for themselves. Consider how these activities may allow them to do things for themselves and how it might link to the student's school work. This and any learning objectives should be agreed with the work experience organiser and may include:
 - Understanding the purpose of the job or task and its relationship to the overall work of the company
 - Meeting appropriate standards of working behaviour such as timekeeping, dress code and conduct
 - Identifying the importance of good health, safety and welfare practices
- Whenever possible **invite the student to visit prior to the placement** commencing. Research has shown that a pre-placement visit to discuss the nature and range of work builds the student's confidence and they performed better during the placement. It may be possible to complete an induction into the workplace at this time and introduce the student to key personnel they will be involved with. Further details of what should be included in an induction are included in the next section entitled 'During the Placement'.
- Complete the work experience agreement and pre-placement checklist with the school / college personnel.
- Carry out a **risk assessment** of all areas where the student will be working.

