



Giving Young People Experiences of your Workplace

A Step by Step Guide for employers



COVID-19 has created a need for employers, schools and colleges to be able to deliver Experiences of the Workplace in a virtual or blended environment. While this need is especially acute when the pandemic is restricting face to face interactions, we also know from employers that virtual and blended formats will more than likely become a core part of future delivery.

As a consequence of COVID-19 and the resulting school closures and exam cancellations, many young people face an uncertain future with additional barriers when looking for experiences of the workplace. According to YoungMinds UK's COVID-19 January 2021 survey of 2,438 young people aged 13-25, "67% believed that the pandemic will have a long-term negative effect on their mental health. This included young people who were worried about the loss of education or their prospects of finding work."

Many employers are using a virtual approach to reach a larger audience as the first stage of their workplace programme, and when possible, provide face-to-face experiences to focus on young people who have a particular interest in the company/sector, or who are of particular interest to the employer. As we move through the roadmap out of lockdown, blending virtual experiences of the workplace with face-to-face can bring together the benefits of both approaches, for young people and for employers.

“ **Many employers are using a virtual approach to reach a larger audience as the first stage of their workplace programme...**

In response to the pandemic, we have partnered with EngineeringUK and collaborated with employers who have faced the challenge of creating a workplace experience programme in lockdown. This resource collates their lessons learnt, and offers a rich variety of models and templates with the aim of enabling more employers to do the same.

You can find about more about the different methods of delivering experiences of your workplace in our new guide: [Gatsby Benchmark 6: Experiences of the Workplace](#).

Step by Step Guide at a glance

The guide walks employers through the four key stages of putting together an experience of the workplace in a virtual or blended context – Scope, Design, Deliver and Evaluate. At each stage, we encourage you to visit [Give Young People Experiences of your Workplace \(Benchmark 6\)](#) to find a resource rich with tools to help, including case studies from other employers, videos, templates and in-depth guides.

What is Gatsby Benchmark 6?

Schools and colleges are responsible for providing real experiences of the workplace, which is outlined by the eight [Gatsby Benchmarks framework](#) based on national and international best practice in careers. Gatsby Benchmark 6 requires that:

- **By the age of 16, every pupil should have had at least one experience of a workplace, in addition to any part-time jobs they may have.**
- **By the age of 18, every pupil should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.**

So what does an ‘experience of the workplace’ actually mean? In the past, this would almost certainly and exclusively mean a ‘work experience placement’, with students coming to your workplace and spending a week or two working alongside a member of your team.

The world of work has changed hugely, and expectations of experiences in the workplace are very different now. The needs of students and their potential future employers can be reflected in the

design and delivery of a meaningful experience of the workplace. The ways the experience can be delivered have changed, particularly in light of COVID-19. There is now a much more flexible and blended approach to experiencing the workplace, including face to face and virtual opportunities and different models such as one day visits and project-based learning.

A ‘meaningful’ experience needs to include not only a realistic and practical introduction to your business and a career in your sector, but also needs to acknowledge the skills and interests students bring to the table. These can give a fresh perspective and can actively inform your strategic and staff development plans.

It is vital that you work with a school or college when designing the experience of your workplace. Their obligation to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks will require specific outcomes and it is important you work with them to make your programme not only meaningful, but effective and attractive to them and their students.



Step 1 - Scope

- Consider why you want to offer young people a workplace experience. Is it aligned to the needs of your business e.g. apprenticeship/graduate recruitment, increasing workforce diversity? You may just want to become a more socially responsible business. Understanding why you want to do it is an important first step.
- Decide what type of workplace experience/s you can offer and consider the resources you have internally to help make it happen. If you are not sure about what you can offer, browse through the resources on the website for ideas.
- Decide who you want to offer the experience/s to. This might link back to the reason/s you identified for setting up your workplace experience.
- Decide how you want to link to schools/ colleges. Will you do this directly or broker engagement through a local provider or Careers Hub ([CEC can connect you](#) to your Local

Consider the various models you can use to deliver workplace experiences, such as:

- Work shadowing
- Workplace/site visits
- Insight days
- Mentoring
- Project based learning
- Social action and volunteering

To find out more about these different models, see our [Experiences of the Workplace guide](#).

Enterprise Partnership and Careers Hub to ensure your opportunities reach those most in need). An initial conversation with a school or college can help you to identify what type of experience you are going to offer.



Step 2 - Design

- Work in partnership with your chosen school/college, and potentially a [provider](#) or Careers Hub, to develop a shared understanding of what the aims and intended outcomes of the experience are going to be, ensuring the experience is inclusive for all young people.
- Collaborate internally with the employees you have identified to participate in the workplace experience, to input their ideas into programme development. Assign a lead member of staff with responsibility to drive things forward and consider any staff training needs.
- What technology and tools are required to enable delivery of your workplace experience? Our [Guidance on Technology](#) is a useful guide to help develop your thinking and consider any staff training needs.



Guidance on Technology

When businesses were forced to close their doors in March 2020 to stop the spread of COVID-19, there came a dawning reality that this might go on longer than anyone had anticipated. A year later and businesses have quickly moved their services online and remote working has become the norm. This forced experiment of a new way of working has brought positives as well as negatives on the way we work, but there is no escaping the fundamental role of technology.

The pandemic has created a need for employers and schools/colleges to be able to deliver experiences of the workplace in a virtual or blended environment. While this need is especially acute when the pandemic is restricting face to face interactions, we also believe that virtual and blended formats will likely become a core part of future delivery. Prior to the pandemic some organisations were already exploring a blended delivery model.

Learning to use new technologies might seem intimidating and time consuming, but given the right tools, it can make all the difference to creating truly captivating sessions. Delivering online work experience has never been easier and you're guaranteed to have the technology in your pocket or on your desk to do so: a mobile phone, tablet, laptop or computer really is all you need to get started (and WiFi, of course).

Using easily accessible tools can mean you can effortlessly create films to share insights into your workplace and profile your employees doing their job. What's more, you can record your events to save and reuse in the future. This will give you the opportunity to build a library of resources to use again and again, and share with schools across the country. Get in touch with us to share on our Resource Directory.

General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR, has significantly changed the rules on how businesses capture and store personal data, a particular worry when working with young people. Thankfully, schools and independent organisations who specialise in the delivery of virtual work experience use systems which allow them to help you circumvent many of these challenges. Of course, it's important to take into consideration how you plan on processing data. [Accenture and Movement to Work](#) advise in their [Virtual Work Experience Toolkit](#) "records of consent are required to be maintained to demonstrate the data subject has granted permission for data processing."

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You can find this guide and many more resources on the [Design](#) page of our digital guide.

- What resources need to be developed to support delivery of your workplace experience? Consider cost implications and timescales.



Safeguarding for Employers

Ask any teacher or school/college leadership team what their number one priority is and they will all say safeguarding. First and foremost, they must create and sustain a safe environment for learning and development for students and staff alike. Follow the best practice of the school or college you are working with, it will offer you reassurance and allow you to deliver with confidence.

Within each school and college there are rigorous safeguarding policies and procedures and there will be a number of Designated Safeguard Leads (DSLs) in each one. Whilst every member of staff in a school or college will have regular safeguarding training, the DSLs will be highly trained in safeguarding and are responsible for ensuring that both policy and procedures are followed to the letter in any learning context their students find themselves in - including work experience.

What are employers responsibilities and requirements?

When working with a school and college to arrange experiences of your workplace, you will find they are very knowledgeable and will organise most aspects of related safeguarding requirements. To give you an idea of what their statutory requirements are, you can read the Department for Education's [Keeping children safe in education](#) guidance. Remember - this is not written for employers to follow, but it may be reassuring to see what the statutory guidance for schools and colleges is.

You may already be aware of or heard of DBS checks. The [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) helps

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- Basic Safeguarding principles apply whether working face to face or virtually. Download our [Safeguarding for Employers](#) for more information.
- Schools and colleges need your help to meet the requirements of Gatsby Benchmark 6. You can [read more about best practice for Career Leaders](#) to help ensure the programme you develop provides a meaningful experience of the workplace.
- Think about the structure of your programme e.g. how long will it last overall, duration of individual sessions etc.
- Consider creating an e-book to support your programme, containing all the links, meetings and documents students need to access to complete the programme.
- Test your workplace experience by running a small pilot to gain feedback from participants about structure and content and tweak, as needed, before offering more widely.
- Accreditation can be built into your programme and there are a variety of different options for this e.g. Industrial Cadets, Crest Awards. (Note: this will likely involve an additional cost to your organisation.)

Step 3 - Deliver

- Make sure all employees supporting the delivery of your workplace experience understand their role in the process and key safeguarding requirements, and make sure that they are familiar with the technology you are using to deliver the virtual elements of the programme.
- Confirm final arrangements for delivery of your workplace experience with school/college/other partners. Include a timetable so all participants (teachers, students, your employees) are aware of timings and know how the programme is structured. Here is an example of a timetable used by [Morgan Sindall](#). You can find many more on the [Deliver](#) page of our digital guide.
- As part of the induction to your experience of the workplace, make sure you introduce students to all members of staff that will be supporting delivery of the programme.
- If you require participants to undertake any 'homework' outside of timetabled sessions, make sure they have access to the technology, tools and resources needed to ensure there are no barriers to participation.

Day	Time	Activity
Monday	9.30am	Induction
	10am	Launch Project
	11.30am	Meet an Architect
	1.30pm – 2.30pm	Meet a Building Services Manager
	2.30pm – 3pm	Independent working on project
	3pm	Hear about the career journey of the Area Director
	3.30pm – 4.30pm	Independent working on project
Tuesday	4.30pm	Team Talk/learning journal
	9.30am	Meet the Site Manager and Virtually tour their site
	10.00am-11am	Meet the structural Engineer
	11.30am – 12.30am	Meet the Estimator
	1.30pm – 2.30pm	Meet the Planner
	2.30pm – 2.45pm	Questions for the Architect
	2.45pm – 4.30	Independent working
Wednesday	4.30pm	Team talk/learning journal
	9.30am	Meet an Apprentice
	11am – 12pm	Meet the Design Manager
	12-12.15pm	Ask the Architect questions
	12.15-12.30pm	Ask the Structural Engineer questions
	1.30pm -2pm	Independent working on project
	2pm – 3.30pm	CV and Interview Technique Workshop
Thursday	3.30pm – 4pm	Team talk/learning journal
	4pm – 5pm	Independent working
	9.30am	Team talk, Q&A
	10.00am	Independent working on project
	1.30pm – 3pm	#amRemarkable
	3pm – 4.30pm	Independent working on project
	4.30pm – 5pm	Team talk/learning journey
Friday	9.30am	Team talk/Q&A
	10.00am	Independent working on project
	2.30pm-3.30pm	Student presentation
	3.30pm – 4pm	Team talk, round up of week/learning journal/feedback

Find more Templates to Get You on the Way on the [Deliver](#) page.

- Make sure any pre-work you are expecting students to complete in preparation for your workplace experience is sent out to them in advance of the first session, with enough time to complete.
- If home-based employees are part of your delivery team, it is important to consider where they are going to present from, ensuring surroundings are suitable/professional.
- Gathering feedback from participants is key to assessing the impact/success of your programme. Consider the time implications of this when structuring your delivery plan.
- Be prepared for technical difficulties and have a back-up plan in place such as a non-tech dependent activity.
- Hold a debriefing session with employees (after each session, if possible) to gather any key learnings/new ideas for adapting/improving successive sessions.
- Make sure you provide structured feedback to all participants.
- Consider ways to keep students that participate in your workplace experiences linked into other opportunities your organisation can offer.



From *The Brilliant Club's Rapid Review of Digital Inclusion* that can be found on the [Inclusion page](#).

Step 4 - Evaluate

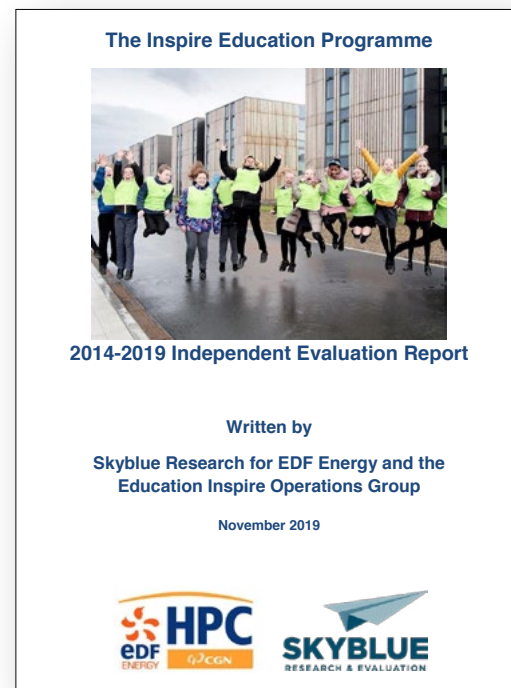
- Evaluating your workplace experience means assessing the impact of the activity on its participants, measured against its intended outcomes.
- Planned intent and learning outcomes should be co-created and agreed at the start of programme development.
- Consider the different methods/tools/resources you will use/need to gather feedback from participants. Participants include your employees, teachers, students and potentially parents/carers. There's a useful document [here](#) to help inform your thinking.
- Assign responsibility for evaluation of your workplace experience to a member of staff and consider any training needs.
- It is important to capture all aspects of the impact participation in your programme has on young people - the engagement, enjoyment and the learning.
- Summarise and celebrate your findings through an end of programme report. Take a look at some of the evaluation reports employers have shared with us on the [Resources carousel](#) to help shape your ideas.



One parent's feedback on the impact made on their child.

- To support young people's development, provide personalised feedback to each participant at the end of the programme and embed an ongoing process of individual and group feedback over the whole course.

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Read EDF's full [Independent Evaluation Report](#) and examples from other employers in [Resources on Evaluate](#).

- Use feedback gained through your evaluation to adapt and iterate your workplace experience to ensure it continues to meet the needs of participants and your business.

Visit [Give Young People Experiences of your Workplace](#) to find a resource rich with tools to help, including case studies from other employers, videos, templates and in-depth guides. It also offers guidance and inspiration on supporting young people from different settings and with different needs, as well as guidance on key requirements such as safeguarding and the use of technology.

We very much hope that you enjoy this new resource and find it helpful and inspirational. We welcome any questions or feedback. Over time, we will be updating the resources to keep them relevant to a rapidly changing context and include examples across the broader Gatsby Benchmark 6 framework, so please do keep revisiting it.



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!

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