



The Prince's  
Responsible  
Business Network

How To Guide

# WORK INSPIRATION

September 2018





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## How to Guide

### Aim of this document

This document is a practical guide to support businesses in considering what is required in order to provide inspirational work experience and work place visits for young people.

Each sector and workplace are different and, the considerations will vary according to the nature of the business. This document should be used as a guide to help businesses consider what they need to put in place to create a robust programme.

Included with this toolkit are some supporting practical activities businesses can use as well as example documentation from companies who have already developed an infrastructure relevant for their business environment and have kindly agreed to share examples. These examples should be used for reference only as a company develops supporting documents relevant to its own business.

### Supporting documents / links which accompany this guide

1. The Three Insights (tools to use with students)
  - a. All about me
  - b. Look behind the scenes
  - c. Career Plan
2. Student handbook
3. Supervisor / Buddy guidebook

### Example Documents from UBS & Barclays

4. UBS Work Experience Charter
5. Barclays Student Pre-work
6. UBS Student Application Form
7. UBS Student Confirmation Letter
8. Barclays example Risk Assessment form
9. Barclays example Confidentiality Agreement
10. Barclays Work Experience Resource Pack (for students)

### Other helpful sources of guidance

- <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploaded/careers-enterprise-what-works-report-work-experience.pdf>
- <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/routes-work/placements-guide>

### Acknowledgements

Head Teacher Steering Group  
Barclays Life Skills Programme  
UBS Work Experience Programme





## Introduction

The skills the UK economy needs to thrive post Brexit depend heavily upon the agility and diverse experiences of the future workforce. In my own business, the pace of change and evolving need for digital skills mean that we are increasingly investing our time and resources into providing young people with opportunities to develop the aptitudes and experiences they need to succeed beyond the academic qualification they achieve. This is exemplified through our ten year-long flagship education partnership with The Bridge Academy in Hackney. UBS is supporting the school to provide excellent and inclusive education, rooted in the local community, and engagement with the world of work forms a core dimension to the partnership.

I would encourage every business to provide experiences of work, reaching out to diverse communities and encouraging young people into their business. In fact, a report by the Education and Employers Taskforce found that young people who recalled experiencing four or more employer contacts at school were five times less likely to be unemployed. As a business leader, I'm passionate about making it easier for UK businesses to make these contacts more often and more effectively.

Experiences of work present a fantastic opportunity to inspire and inform young people

about where they can find future opportunities to thrive in business. Quite often, however, work experience placements involve boring, mundane jobs. To try and prevent that, we've designed an easy-to-follow flexible toolkit that can help large or small businesses to transform their work place visits and work experience into something inspirational, whilst also considering the practical steps that will help you to organise your programme.

We need to ensure that all young people have access to the networks of advice, information and experiences of work to enable them to turn aspiration into reality.

I would therefore urge you to invest in the experiences of work provided to young people, and help them to develop the skills, attitude and ambition they need to move from education into a successful working life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Soanes', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

David Soanes,  
UK Country Head, UBS





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## Why is Work Inspiration important?

The Education & Skills Survey 2017 – CBI/Pearsons, reported that over half of businesses (54%) are not satisfied with school and college leavers' work experience. And over half (52%) report that young job seekers don't have enough knowledge about their chosen field of work. Work experience placements form an essential bridge between education and the world of work, giving insight into life in the workplace, the skills required and the opportunities available. Businesses are facing a severe skills shortage with 66% of employers reporting vacancies as being hard to fill. Therefore, the need for high quality work experience is still critical.

In the following section, this toolkit provides a brief insight into the duty the government places upon schools specifically in relation to work experience with the aim of supporting business to understand the broader context for some of the requests they will receive from schools and work experience brokers.

### England

In 2012 the Government ended the statutory duty on schools in England to provide every pupil at Key Stage 4 with work-related learning. The April 2017 guidance favours a variety of inspirational work-related activities which needs to come in a variety of forms and not necessarily a 1 – 2-week work experience placement. Compared with other forms of work related learning, research by the Careers and Enterprise Company in 2017 called 'Work experience, job shadowing and workplace visits – What works?' suggested that work experience is a 'potentially effective' activity for young people to engage in and is associated with a range of positive outcomes such as enhanced employability skills. Job shadowing and workplace visits are also

important but not necessarily as effective across all outcome areas.

Workplace visits can help enhance career decision making but not a deeper development of employability skills, which is also what employers require.

To take account of the statutory guidance and provide a flexible approach helpful to schools and employers, this toolkit also includes guidance on workplace visits to help provide practical options. Businesses should discuss the most suitable form and duration of work experience with their partner schools or work experience brokers in advance.

The increasingly varied approaches taken to providing work experience should be encouraged. More experiences of the workplace and of what a successful working life requires can help young people understand the value of their learning and enable them to develop the skills that will set them up well for the future.

### Wales

Since July 2008, work experience is no longer a statutory curriculum requirement for 14-16-year olds in Wales. However, 63% of Welsh employers said that having relevant work experience is a critical or significant requirement for people applying to join their company (UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2015). Work-focused experience is, however, part of the Careers and World of Work framework in Wales which all schools follow. 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'. More detail can be found by downloading this document [Careers and the World at Work PDF](#)





## Scotland

In June 2014, the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce published a report; Education Working for All! In response to the report, Scottish Government and Local Government set out their Implementation Plans in Developing the Young Workforce – Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy published in December 2014. The standard refers to work placements throughout as opposed to the term 'work experience'. This change of terminology reflects the change in approach to one that is more personalised and flexible, with expectations set out before, during and after any placement and a greater focus on project-based learning whilst in a workplace setting. Young people will experience the world of work through a range of activities throughout their broad general education leading to a more focused experience of work in the senior phase in the form of work placements.

## Northern Ireland

The joint strategy 'Preparing for Success 2015-2020 – [A Strategy for Careers Education and Guidance](#)' from the Department of Education and the then Department for Employment and Learning (now Department for Economy) sets out the strategic vision for Careers Education and Guidance for five years. The strategy details five policy commitments, and of particular importance in relation to Work Experience is *Policy Commitment 3 – Work Experience; Work Experience for young people, schools and employers will be improved to ensure equality of opportunity and improve the administrative process of organising work experience opportunities*. In Northern Ireland (NI), Business in the Community NI is funded by the Department of Education to support the Department's work experience commitments, this is called the Work Inspiration programme.

## Working with a diverse range of young people

According to the 'Towards an employer engagement toolkit: British teachers' perspectives on the comparative efficacy of work-related learning activities' by Anthony Mann, James Dawkins and Rachael McKeown, work experience is the most valued careers intervention for all young people by teachers. However, sustained engagement such as work experience or mentoring were viewed as the most effective for lower achieving young people. Lower achievers are often from disadvantaged social groups who can also lack the social capital to access the networks to identify high quality work related learning. In fact, less diverse workforces are less competitive. In the case of race, research conducted by Business in the Community (BITC) found that employers with more diverse teams also have 35% better financial results. Taking a proactive approach to targeting diverse groups of young people for work-related learning activities can inspire them to consider your business for a future career.

Linking diversity and future skills strategies to education outreach activities can complement future recruitment plans. Practical steps, such as ensuring you have equal numbers of young men and women, representing BAME communities and ensuring work experience is also accessible to disabled students can promote your business to groups who maybe underrepresented in your workplace. BITC would recommend creating a policy or charter to help guide your approach.

## Requests for friends and family

It is inevitable that employees will request work experience placements for friends and family and this is an example of how young people use their existing network and the social capital afforded to them through their own social economic background. However, young people who do not





have the same access will be at a disadvantage. It is likely that a business only has a finite number of placements which can be offered in any given period. Should a disproportionate number be taken by friends and family, it is likely to impact upon the diversity of the young people reached and not enable a business to reach out to underrepresented communities within their business. It is important to have a position on this issue and communicate a rationale for a chosen approach so that employees can understand why numbers for friends and family are restricted and can buy-in to and support a broader inclusive approach which can benefit the business for the future. For example, UBS has created a [UBS Charter](#).

### Targeting disadvantaged young people

To help identify a school with the most disadvantaged populations in a chosen geography, identifying those schools which have a Free School Meal (FSM) percentage higher than the national average will identify schools with a higher proportion of young people from lower income families. In England, this is now recorded as what is known as Ever 6; this means the % of pupils who have ever claimed FSM in the last 6 years. The national average for England is 29.4%. In Scotland the national average for FSM is 14.2%, in Wales the national average for FSM is 15.6%.

Other indicators (for England only) are the IDACI rating and also look at GCSE percentage attainment levels (5+ C Grade or Grade 5 and above), including English and Maths per school and focus upon those which fall below the national average (53.8 %). It is also possible to download data and make comparisons via the following link: [Performance Tables](#). A work experience broker will be able to identify the most disadvantaged schools and explain which indicators they are using.

Once the schools have been identified, it is possible to further target support either directly or

through a work experience broker to ensure the most disadvantaged students are reached.

### Advertising places for Work Experience

When advertising, talk about the company's approach to diversity. Visiting a school to talk about placements during assembly time can also provide an opportunity to present role models already working within a business.

### Pre-work

Depending upon the amount of time a company is able to dedicate, asking potential applicants to participate in an activity or a piece of project work before they apply for work experience can ensure that only those who are truly interested will and can apply. This can improve the quality of the applications received. Examples of pre-work can be found by registering with [Barclays LifeSkills](#). There are a range of topics for pupils to read about and examples exercise.

### The job description, application form, interview and feedback

To provide a real taster of what it is like to apply for a job, create a job description for the work experience placement(s) and an application form. Examples of which are available to download with this guidance or click [here](#). Providing interviews is also a great way to select and prepare a student for a placement, especially if it hasn't been possible to conduct any pre-work as described above. When conducting interviews, it is also important to provide feedback so that pupils can view the experience and the company positively, regardless of the outcome. Interviews could be conducted at the school to help build excitement and a sense of competition. A letter of confirmation should be sent to successful students and an example can be accessed [here](#).





## What five elements make up

### 'Work Inspiration'?

A glamorous office isn't required to inspire. 'Work Inspiration' is about giving students an insight into the real world of work, all its subtle rules and expectations. These will be new territory for a young person and it's this insight into working life and what it takes to succeed there that makes for an inspiring placement.

There are five minimum elements that will make sure any work experience is inspiring:

#### 1. The 'Three Insights'

The 'Three Insights' are the heart of every 'Work Inspiration' placement. These short, fun exercises get students to think more deeply about what's going on around them and to explore their own strengths and goals (often for the first time). These exercises were developed by businesses to help students to reach those 'light-bulb' moments for themselves. They are available by clicking this link: [BITC Work Inspiration Toolkit](#)

#### The Three Insights

These fun sessions take no more than an hour each but are the key to creating a truly inspiring placement

#### 1) 'All about me'

This exercise puts the focus on the students themselves, giving them a chance to talk about what they're interested in and good at.

The Supervisor/Buddy should lead this one-to-one conversation encouraging the student to consider their preferences and future plans.

#### 2) 'Look behind the scenes'

This Insight ensures that whatever the specific experience of work the student has with the business, they are also made aware of the wider variety of opportunities. The workbook enables the business to match the students profile identified in the 'All About Me' session with roles in the business.

By giving students the opportunity to meet and talk with as many people from different parts of the business as possible can really bring this Insight to life.

#### 3) 'Careers happen'

In this interactive session the students interview employees to talk through their career path, highlighting the different jobs and expectations that they may have had along the way. (This is a great opportunity to engage a senior champion). The student then creates a 'career board' a visual representation of that staff member's journey.

This insight illustrates for the student the opportunistic way careers unfold, it teaches students that they will need to be resilient and adaptable to navigate a successful career in the changing world of work.







## 2. Placement Workbook + a 'Buddy'

The process of filling out a 'Placement Workbook' with a Supervisor or 'Buddy' at the end of each day provides a great opportunity to encourage self-awareness. The 'Buddy' can help the students understand the value of non-academic strengths and how what they have learned during the day can enhance their CV.

## 3. Real-life tasks and teamwork

When it comes to tasks, tea-runs and days spent photocopying are banned! Work-shadowing is a good place to start, but where possible, try to set real-life tasks that get students to think about the priorities of the business, whether that be good customer service or reducing costs. It's even better if these tasks can be worked on as part of a team of colleagues, that way they can get a real flavour of the world of work.

## 4. Variety

Try to involve as many different teams in the placement as you can to showcase the variety of roles in your business. Encourage the students to observe what skills and traits people need to succeed in their roles: Is it important to be courteous on the phone? Do they allow people a chance to speak in meetings? How do they speak to their boss or customers? These are often valuable lessons for the students in what for us are quite everyday interactions.

## 5. Student-led projects and presentation

Assign the students a project they can really feel they own and be proud of completing during the placement. Students often enjoy making a fun farewell presentation to staff during a project, or a YouTube video of what they have achieved. A certificate can be awarded to students to make the completion of a placement.

### Some ideas for student-led projects:

- Survey customers to find out what leads to a positive customer experience
- Update the pages of a campaign website
- Work as a team to design an internal poster
- 'Reverse mentor' a more senior colleague to get to grips with Twitter and social media
- Basic finance such as data entry, PO & Invoices
- Design a professional and well-formatted document
- Draft an internal news article about their placement
- Mystery shop to compare offers

Other real examples can be found in the Barclay's Work Experience Resource Pack Participants available to download by clicking the link:- [BITC Work Inspiration Toolkit](#)

**“If Work Inspiration didn't exist, I would be doing a media course at college and not getting the hands-on experience with the company like I am now.”**

[ITV Apprentice](#)

## “I found helping out with the Work Inspiration Scheme an inspiration in itself.”

### Supervisor on ITV Work Inspiration Programme

### Sample Timetable

Every placement is different, but three days is a great starting point. The timetable below is just a guide to give a sense of how the key elements come together.



#### Day 1

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- Welcome and induction: Induction to the business including a Health & Safety briefing. Introduction to the Supervisor/Buddy, set expectations and outline the days ahead
- Workplace tour: Intro to the office and some of the teams they will be working with
- Insight 1: ‘All About me’: Students think about their skills and interests and the Supervisor/Buddy decides what teams/tasks suit them best

- Student-led project: The Supervisor/Buddy introduces the project that the students will be responsible for completing during the placement
- Insight 2 ‘Look behind the scenes’: Students discover the various roles in your organisation and which ones best match their personality profile
- Employability task 1: Students work with a team
- End of day review: The Supervisor/Buddy and the students reflect and fill in the ‘Placement Workbook’.

#### Day 2

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- Student-led project development: students work on their project. This is an opportunity for colleagues to lend a hand
- Employability task 2: Students work with a team
- Insight 3 – ‘Careers Happen’: Students interview a colleague, mapping out how their career has developed, using the ‘Career Board’
- Employability task 3: Students work with a team
- End of day review: The Supervisor/Buddy and the students reflect and fill in the ‘Placement Workbook’

#### Day 3

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- Employability skills workshop:
- Employability task 4: Students work with a team
- Student-led project presentation: Rehearsal followed by fun presentation to staff, and awarding ‘Certificates of Completion’. Students hand out their own ‘Inspiration Awards’
- Final review and farewells: The Supervisor/Buddy completes the ‘Placement Workbook’, reflects on what has been achieved and learned



## What's the process?

Some programmes run for a day, some for a day per week over an agreed period, some for two weeks etc. Some businesses host one student at a time, some one hundred. Every placement is different, so the work programme should be tailored to suit the particular business. The common goal remains the same: to give the students a real and inspiring taste of what working life is really like.

Before you begin it's crucial that you create the right environment in the business to get your programme off to a good start and ensure long-term sustainability. First, you'll need to get everyone on-board.

### a) Gain internal buy in

A successful work placement or workplace visit is well planned and relies on the commitment of the volunteers involved in delivering the experience to young people. Taking the time to achieve internal 'buy-in' will help communicate why the company feels that offering experiences of work are important. A company-wide communication can unlock potential work placements and encourage employees to volunteer to support the programme. The success of a placement or visit will depend upon the support and preparation put in place by the business. The role of the volunteer and their buy-in should not be underestimated and given adequate preparation time.

Schools normally organise work experience placements during Year 10 or Year 11, and during June or September but can be at other times of the year too, so a business should organise their internal planning meeting well in advance of that with any internal stakeholders such as HR, security, reception etc. This meeting should cover:

- Any logistical issues with the placement
- Top line Health & Safety considerations

- Top line Safeguarding considerations
- Which teams will be involved
- The best time to host the placement
- What interesting projects the students could get their teeth into

Seize the opportunity to get colleagues excited about the impact of the programme and use it to engage some senior champions as volunteers, or for shadowing.

### b) Allocate responsibilities

There are two main responsibilities that will make the placement a success: **The Programme Coordinator** and **The Supervisor/Buddy**. Depending on the size of the organisation, one person could perform both these roles.

#### The Programme Coordinator role

The ambassador for the programme and responsible for making it a success. They have the important role of being the primary point of contact with the school or placement broker e.g. a local Education Business Partnership (EBP) or other provider and the different teams where students will work. They will also be responsible for:

- Understanding the students' needs and capabilities and tailoring the placement programme accordingly
- Ensuring colleagues understand the needs of students
- Ensure colleagues who will work directly with the student receive a briefing including Child Protection & Safeguarding.



- Ensuring the student's welfare is maintained whilst in the workplace as a line manager would

### Two Top Tips for Buddies

Be conscious that the student might be nervous, this may be their first time in a work setting. Be welcoming and convey information simply and without jargon.

Encourage the student to ask questions to clarify anything they are unsure about.

- Organising all logistics of the placements internally like recruiting 'Buddies'
- Monitoring the programme and debriefing with the school/EBP after the placement.



### The Supervisor/'Buddy' role

Students often lack confidence and feel shy when they start. The Supervisor/'Buddy' is more than a managerial role, they act as a friendly face helping the students with the practical things that allow them to settle in. Many businesses use the role of Supervisor/Buddy as a valued management development opportunity for junior staff. The Supervisor/Buddy will be responsible for:

- Holding a debrief meeting at the end of each day to talk about what the students have achieved,

pointing out their strengths and building confidence

- Ensuring the student undertakes a variety of tasks during the placement
- Giving positive feedback at the end of the placement, helping the student understand how the experience ties into their education and career plan.
- Please see the Work Inspiration Supervisor/Buddy Handbook for additional guidance and helpful tools

**“It's a privilege to have the opportunity to work with young people and make a difference to their career aspirations.”**

[Buddy on the Capgemini Programme](#)

### c) Find students

Avoid using informal word-of-mouth networks to connect with students as this may exclude the young people who would most benefit from the opportunity. Contacting your local school or college directly is the most common way to offer work experience to students. If you already have a partnership with a local school through 'Business Class' you should speak to your BITC Education Manager.

### Working with a school

When first speaking to the school, discuss the timing of the placement and how it would best complement the curriculum. A placement can provide a valuable way to help demonstrate the

value of what students are learning at school. Making the link to curriculum subjects will help students to understand their relevance and importance for different career pathways within a business. Many schools have a set week/fortnight for work experience, others will prefer to use workplace visits or a day per week for a period of time. Ensure this is discussed early on to understand what can work for the people in your office who will be involved in hosting your student(s).

The school will usually want to know three things prior to the placement:

- That health and safety risks have been managed - they may ask to see your employer's liability insurance policy
- What tasks/projects are planned for students
- When they can arrange a visit during the placement to catch up on how it is going

**Top Tip:** During the teacher's visit, show them the 'student workbook' so they can see all the new skills the students have learned.

### Working with a partner organisation

Some businesses find that it is easier to work with a social enterprise or partner / broker organisation to help them offer the placement to students who would most benefit from the opportunity. There are many local charities that will connect employers with young people

### d) Pre-meeting with students

Whether working directly with a school or a partner organisation; it is always helpful to meet the students prior to the placement. Ideally, candidates will have undertaken an application process etc prior to a placement. However, if this has not been possible then an informal meeting will give the space to understand the student's previous experience and personal goals. It's important to set expectations on both sides, particularly if the

workplace has specific rules around conduct or dress code. Prior to starting a placement, many teachers will ask students to make contact over the phone to confirm final details.

### e) Evaluate, adapt, improve

Every programme improves with time so debrief with internal stakeholders to share what would improve the programme is important. Analysing the placement survey results will help you critically evaluate your programme. See Work Inspiration Supervisor/Buddy handbook for examples of evaluation surveys. These can be downloaded [here](#)

### f) Debrief with partner or school

Hold a meeting with the school or partner to review the programme. Were expectations met on both sides?



### Optional Extras

Add variety and depth with these activities:

- **Mock application process**

Get the student to apply for the placement as if it were a real job. This not only teaches them a valuable life-lesson about recruitment processes, but it also builds a sense of achievement, so they place more value on the placement.

- **CV and interview support**

Use fun and interactive activities to help the student improve their CV and interview technique. These sessions do not take much time yet can have a



huge impact on the success of students at interview. Ask them to imagine their dream job, and then get them to draft a CV and cover letter to apply for it.

- **'Soft' skills development**

Help the students understand the many 'soft' skills they won't have been exposed to in education which are required in the workplace. For example: project-management, goal-setting, body-language, phone and email etiquette. Talk about these skills when introducing any projects and tasks and again when reflecting on their experiences.

- **Team up with other organisations**

Many smaller businesses add variety to their programmes by hosting the students with suppliers, partners or clients. This is a great way of exposing students to more roles and skills than they might experience in one workplace.

## Is there a lot of red tape?

Not nearly as much as you might think...

### a) Health & Safety

Employers are responsible for the health and safety of the students while on the placement. There are very few work activities that health and safety law prevents students from doing. Of course, any significant risks should be adequately controlled by:

1. Explaining the risks during induction, checking that the students understanding and how to raise health and safety concerns
2. Ensuring checks are proportionate to the environment the students will be working in and that reasonable adjustments have been made which reflect the ability and maturity of the young people

For the latest advice on health and safety, visit:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/placprovide.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/placprovide.htm)



### b) Restrictions on work experience

There are activities that are legally prohibited for young people to do. For a full list of restrictions, please refer to the HSE site

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/law/> before offering any placements to students.

### c) Risk assessment

The HSE has made it clear that existing arrangements for assessments and management of risks can be used and don't need to be repeated for work experience students. Also, offices with fewer than five employees won't need a written risk assessment, though it is good health and safety practice to have this in place.

However, if a company has not run a placement before or worked with young people previously, it's important to identify the particular needs of the students and review risk assessments before a placement begins. For the latest advice on risk assessments visit:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm>

### d) Liability insurance

Provided a company's insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers, students on placements are covered by existing employers' liability insurance policy. The insurer must be notified in advance that a young person will be onsite.

For more information, visit: [www.abi.org.uk](http://www.abi.org.uk)

### e) Written consent

If the placement is during term time, the school must arrange written consent from the parent before the placement can begin. If working with a partner organisation, the partner should make sure that this in place.

### f) Confidential information

Explicitly address issues around confidentiality during the induction session. A simple



confidentiality form has been built into the 'Student Handbook' for them to sign.

**g) Child protection / safeguarding**

Child protection is there for your protection as much as the young person's. Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action companies take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Prior to the placement, a company should understand the school's child protection policy and define a safeguarding protocol with the school. A business offering work experience should already have policies and procedures in place and the school or work experience broker will want to discuss these with you before beginning the process or selecting a pupil. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. It's worth remembering that you are required by law to protect students from harm and are responsible for their safety while they are on placement with you. For more information please visit:-

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/741314/Keeping\\_Children\\_Safe\\_in\\_Education\\_3\\_September\\_2018\\_14.09.18.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741314/Keeping_Children_Safe_in_Education_3_September_2018_14.09.18.pdf)

**DBS Checks**

At the point of writing, DBS' checks (formerly 'CRB' checks') were not usually required for supervisors, buddies or host teams. However, this should be checked as rules can change. This should also be discussed with the school or work experience broker in advance, taking into consideration the nature of the placement and supervision. More information on DBS checks can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>

From July 2012, and at the point at which this document was written, providers were no longer required to carry out enhanced DBS checks on employees working with young people aged 16-17

on work experience, please check this as rules can change.



**“The simple formula has made it very popular in our business and across the country. Thousands of placements in all kinds of workplaces have been transformed through this Business in the Community initiative.”**

Stephanie May, Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Boots UK





## Workplace visits, Open days + Site

### Visits

As indicated earlier in the toolkit, although Work Experience is one of the most effective ways to support young people to develop meaningful workplace experience, it isn't always possible for schools to release young people for a block period of time. Workplace visits are helpful in addition to work experience placements to broaden knowledge further of different workplace environments. Visits can also be made with a variety of age groups which means it is possible to start to engage and encourage much younger students to consider future careers who wouldn't yet be old enough to undertake a work experience placement. For example, a business may offer a meaningful engagement opportunity for a primary school as a way to stop them discounting STEM related subjects from an early age.

Visits also present an efficient way of supporting large numbers of young people from local schools and provide an opportunity to engage with those who will influence career decisions such as their teachers. In some instances, it may also be possible to invite parents along especially if your sector is looking to dispel myths or attract underrepresented groups.

#### What is a workplace visit?

The purpose of a 'Behind the Scenes' day is to provide insights and enhance the knowledge of young people about the world of work by seeing a real workplace environment. Visits provide the chance to talk to employees informally; to find out what opportunities for work there are and to explore the skills and experience required. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the number of different roles and departments that make up a company and challenge stereotypes about the type of person who can fill different jobs.

Generally, activities should enable the visitors to:

- understand your business sector today
- dispel any myths regarding your sector
- find out about the sorts of jobs in the sector
- develop knowledge of skills and qualifications required
- have enhanced knowledge of the world of work
- increase confidence and self-awareness in relation to the workplace

Although activities will be bespoke to each company and team, there are four specific elements which need to be included in your day.

These are:

#### Who are you?

At the beginning of the day the visitors are welcomed, and it is a good opportunity to excite the group about the day ahead and any key messages the group should consider as the day progresses.

Provide an introduction to the company, the core business aims, the corporate responsibility commitments, number of employees, etc. Talk about the wide variety of roles and departments all requiring different skills and provide an indication of what it is like to work for the company. During this introduction, it is vital to include practical considerations such as the evacuation procedure in the event of fire, the location of the toilets, asking visitors to turn off their mobile phones, timing for the day including lunch etc.

#### 1. A tour

Whether the company houses the latest technology for the industry or is simply an open plan working environment, young people won't necessarily realise what it is like to work there unless it is brought to life for them as part of the tour.

Take time to plan an engaging tour where they will see people working in the environment and not empty rooms or unused equipment. Meeting







employees and hearing about their working day, the tasks and interactions they will have and the skills they will use will help to bring the workplace to life. Consider engaging volunteers as 'buddies' for each visitor or one volunteer for a small group of three visitors. Larger groups could be disruptive to the workplace and individuals may be uncomfortable asking questions. Recommended areas to highlight are each volunteer's own department, the cafeteria/lunch room, and any other area the visitors have expressed a particular interest in.

## 2. Job descriptions

One of the key aims of the day is to show visitors the variety of roles available and what they entail. This could be done panel-style by volunteers who are in different roles or as part of a tour, etc. Whatever format used, it is important to cover what is involved in a role on a day-to-day basis, what skills are required, the hours, where employees take lunch, typical salary range and how individuals came to the role.

## 3. Recruitment and selection

Ideally you will be able to involve volunteers with HR/recruitment experience in this session. Suggestions include: a short mock interview, helping with CVs, a Q&A such as 'what would you wear to interview?', 'would you include reasons for leaving on your CV?', discussing the different steps in the recruitment process and sharing experiences of these with good and bad examples. This activity could be done with a one-on-one ('buddy') or in small groups.

## Workplace visits – the process

### 1. Gaining internal buy-in

There is no specific time of the year most suitable for visits and they can be done with any age group. They do require some significant planning and organising in the same way that a business would

plan for a visit by a customer or other stakeholders to ensure you create a great and lasting impression.

Organise an internal planning meeting well in advance which includes HR, Security, Reception and a volunteer from every department you'll visit as part of the tour. Volunteers will need to be ready to greet the visitors and prepare their colleagues as the tour moves from department to department.

This meeting should cover

- Any logistical issues with the tour
- Top line Health & Safety considerations
- Top line Safeguarding considerations
- Which teams will be involved
- The best time to host the visit
- What points of interest to focus upon as the tour moves through your business
- What one or two more interactive elements can be built into the tour which help to demonstrate job roles and a typical working day

### 2. When planning the day:

- Consider the person background of the pupils. Think about how employees may come across and try to establish common ground / rapport early on. Talk this through with the school as you plan your visit.
- Avoid jargon, slang, acronyms and over-complicated language.
- Some pupils may have special educational needs so take this into account when planning the activities
- When providing lunch, confirm dietary requirements such as any allergies, halal

### 3. Produce a plan for the day





- Produce a timetable and circulate it to the whole visit team and the school. Break this down into manageable tasks – e.g. where should the group be by when
- Share the risk assessment with the whole team and the school
- Produce a contingency plan to cover weather problems, volunteers who are unable to attend, replacement volunteers etc.
- Debrief after the visit

Gather the team together after the visit to review how it went and ensure that all team members are recognised for their contribution from the senior sponsor for the visit. It is also important to conduct a debrief session with the school to gather their feedback to help improve any future visits.

## What else can I do to inspire young people?

BITC believes, as a minimum, that every student in the UK should have at least one week's work experience before they leave school. This should be in combination with a range of other interactions with employers.

There are lots of additional shorter engagements described below which a business can do before and after offering placements. These support young people to transition successfully from education to work. For example:-

### Business Class

Business Class is a long-term, strategic partnership between secondary schools in deprived communities and local businesses. Such partnerships are a powerful mechanism for businesses to cement their existing relationship with the school and work more strategically to develop their future workforce. To find out more

please visit :- <https://www.bitc.org.uk/campaigns-programmes/education/business-class>

### Careers Lab

Many Supervisors and Buddies find themselves wanting to do more to engage and prepare young people before they come on placements. A great way to do this is to volunteer to deliver careers education through Careers Lab. This free initiative enables volunteers to work alongside teachers to bring real-life careers insight into the classroom. To find out more visit [www.careerslab.co.uk](http://www.careerslab.co.uk)

### Extended placements and 'Saturday clubs

For some businesses it makes more sense to spread the same amount of placement hours over a number of weeks or even months. This approach gives the student more time to reflect and learn at their own pace.

### Mentoring

Mentoring allows businesses to reach out to and support diverse groups to see your sector as a viable career option. Providing mentoring post placement is an excellent way to keep in touch and it has real benefits in terms of staff engagement. For more information on mentoring visit: [CIPD](#)

### Virtual activities

These can provide a way of bringing the classroom and the world of work closer together whilst requiring less time to deliver. By building fun activities into the curriculum like real-life projects, enterprise challenges or competitions, the students can take what they have learned in school and apply it to a work setting.

### Apprenticeships

Traineeships and Apprenticeships are the next logical step for many companies that want to create routes for the students they have worked with to grow talent. Also, this provides opportunities for young people who would find university fees a barrier to their career plans. NAS

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk/](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/)





### Fairer recruitment and early careers

'Work Inspiration' often prompts companies to reflect upon whether their recruitment policies and career paths would make it difficult for young people to start their careers. For information on how you can make your recruitment practices fairer, visit: <http://futureproof.bitc.org.uk/>

### Useful sites

[www.plotr.co.uk](http://www.plotr.co.uk)

[www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)

[www.CareersLab.co.uk](http://www.CareersLab.co.uk)

[www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/learning-to-work](http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/learning-to-work)

**“To anyone who is hesitating about hosting a ‘Work Inspiration’ placement I’d say: start with one, you won’t regret it.”**

Stephanie May, Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Boots UK

### ITV case study

#ITVinspire

#### What we do

As a television and online broadcaster, finding ways of engaging with younger audiences in a meaningful way is a business imperative.

ITV's Insight Programme allows it to gain knowledge and understanding about one of its most valuable TV audiences, namely young people, while at the same time providing a broad entry route into media and preventing exclusion for young and diverse talent.

The programme takes young people on a journey of ITV's business; from ideas and commissioning, finance, sales, through to making TV programmes. Week one is show-and-tell where employees come along and explain what they do, then set the young people a challenge, e.g. coming up with a new storyline for a soap character, learning how to operate a camera or how to interview people. In week two, the young people then put all their skills into practice and create their own five-minute TV programme.

Regular updates on a closed social network site enable ITV to view the progress of the young people before, during and after the programme. An online community is formed with the young people prior to starting the scheme and ITV monitors when young people move onto their internal programmes. They measure their understanding prior to the scheme and post to measure the effectiveness as well as the content.

ITV gives young people the opportunity to return a year later as part of the 'crew', running a workshop around leadership and communication skills to equip them to help with the programme delivery. Over 70% continue to engage with ITV via the FB Page

#### How did the business benefit?

85% of colleagues in an employee survey said they were proud to work for ITV.

- The scheme allows junior members of ITV's workforce to gain skills and experience in leadership and management.
- Senior managers commented on how their teams were more motivated after engaging with the programme.

#### ITV's top tips





Create an online social group to enable candidates to network and share their journey as this can enhance their experience.

- Provide opportunities for candidates to stay in touch after the placement
- Social networking is a great tool to communicate and engage young candidates who would not usually consider work experience as an option
- To ensure we remain aligned to the needs of the young people and relevant to their development, where possible we enhance the scheme to reflect the changes identified by the young people through the evaluation process.

#### What did the young people get out of it?

- 97% of trainees secured opportunities within the industry
- 83% secured opportunities at ITV

\* Figures relate to the number of trainees who responded to our survey in 2014

**“Attracting and retaining talent is critical to our success. It means ensuring we have an inclusive culture; treating people the right way, listening to their views, and giving them the chance to develop new skills and expand their experience. We know that diversity breeds innovation - vital for the best creative content.”**

Adam Crozier, CEO ITV

## Links to work experience brokers

### Business in the Community

Through the Business Class programme, BITC is also able to broker Work Experience placements for students of secondary school age. Please visit

<https://www.bitc.org.uk/campaigns-programmes/education/business-class>

### Education Business Partnerships

EBPn is a network of 80 brokerage organisations nationwide; Education Business Partnership organisations specialise in building sustainable links with employers for schools and offer a range of brokered services including Work Experience. EBPs work with primary schools through to colleges.

<http://www.ebpnational.org.uk/index.php?route=common/home>

### LifeSkills created with Barclays

LifeSkills created with Barclays is an employability programme that provides young people with access to the core skills and experiences that they need to be successful in the world of work. The programme offers free tools and resources for teachers and young people, including preparation for work experience. Through the website teachers search for and book work experience placements for their students aged 14-19 years old. Businesses can also sign-up to the LifeSkills programme and advertise their own work experience placements through the portal at

[www.barclayslifeskills.com/business/](http://www.barclayslifeskills.com/business/)

### Career Ready

Career Ready offers structured programmes which include Internships and workplace visits for 16-19 year olds

<https://careerready.org.uk/>

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# WORK INSPIRATION PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

The Work Inspiration toolkit provides you with support to consider why, when and how you may wish to provide an experience of work to a young person. Below is a checklist to be used after reading the toolkit as a quick reference. It shouldn't be used without the toolkit.

## 1. What type of experience of work are you able to offer?

- Type of experience. Can you offer one day per week, a one-week block, a work place visit, a combination of all three? This would also need discussion with the school or broker
- Agree why you want to do this. E.g Future recruitment needs, development of staff etc
- Establish when the business may be able to support
- Create job descriptions for placements
- Create pre-work ideas to discuss with the school
- Consider what Health & Safety considerations, liability insurance, child protection etc you will need in place
- Gain internal buy-in from senior leaders and relevant volunteer staff

## 2. Working with a school or broker to source pupils

- Identify when pupils can be released for an experience of work
- Identify the pupils you want to work with
- Share / discuss Health & Safety of the student, written consent from parents, child protection etc

- Agree and set the pupil pre-work including when it will be reviewed
- Work experience only - agree the pupil application and interview process including feedback to unsuccessful pupils
- Set dates and agree with school, volunteers etc

## 3. Arrange an internal planning meeting,

- Allocate volunteer tasks e.g the buddy, the programme co-ordinator
- Utilise the tools available such as the buddy diary, the Three Insights, the sample timetable etc, include logistics, Health & Safety etc

## 4. Pre-meeting with pupils

- Work experience - provide pupils with the opportunity to meet staff and ask questions about the placement prior to the start date

## 5. Deliver the placement or visit!!

- For work experience - arrange for the school to visit the pupil during the placement
- Ensure all volunteers, the pupil and school complete a feedback form
- Ensure that pupils gain an insight into the careers, recruitment and selection processes for the business

## 6. Evaluate, adapt and improve internally

- Hold an internal meeting and review feedback forms
- Conduct a debrief with the school or experience of work broker

## 7. Fast track pupils into the recruitment process (age dependent)

- Liaise internal with those responsible for recruitment to 'flag' potential candidates.





The Prince's  
Responsible  
Business Network



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