



DORSET CAREERS HUB WORK EXPERIENCE TOOLKIT FOR EMPLOYERS

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INTRODUCTION

This toolkit aims to address key concerns and remove unnecessary barriers, including over-interpretation of the law, provide evidence to all parties that the process is simpler than you think, and reassure you that the risks are negligible.

The benefits and impact of work experience clearly outweigh the perceived barriers, and with this resource and a dedicated champion, you can welcome students into your workplace and help them to find their next best step.

With thousands of pupils needing work experience each year across Dorset, we rely on the ongoing support of local businesses to enable us to achieve our goal, and really appreciate your contribution, which has a tangible impact on young people.



GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

Government Guidelines state that schools should ensure that all students at Key Stage 4 have the opportunity to take part in meaningful work experience, which is critical to achieving Gatsby Benchmark 6.

Statutory guidance to schools and colleges notes that schools 'should' deliver seven experiences of the workplace with employers during the 11-18 phases of education. There is good reason behind this.

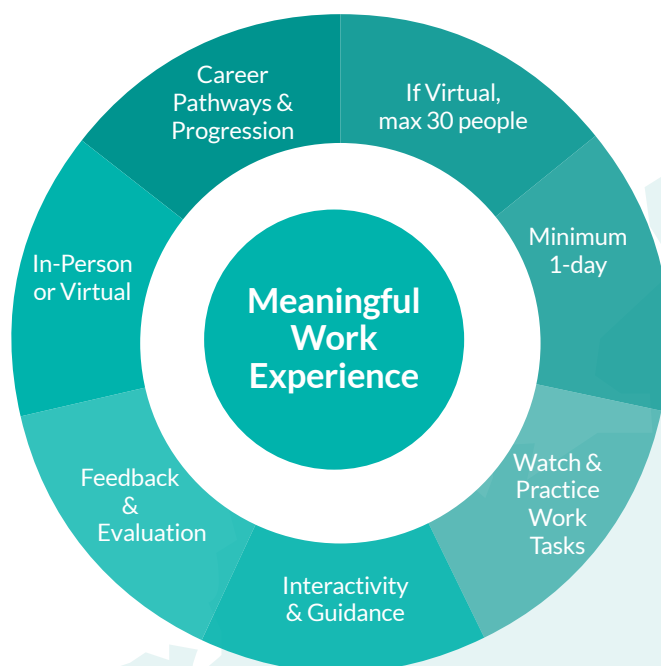
BENEFITS OF WORK EXPERIENCE

Introducing students to the workplace can help them:

- Choose future careers
- Understand the work environment
- Prepare for employment
- Raise aspirations
- Increase self-confidence

CHALLENGES

- We need to find thousands of experiences of the workplace each year to satisfy government guidelines.
- Work placement arrangements are too often seen as complicated, bureaucratic and time consuming, putting off potential employers.
- H&S compliance is often mis-interpreted by all parties, causing a major, but removable barrier.
- Schools have become extremely cautious of potential risks, their duty of care, safeguarding and the associated responsibility.
- The pandemic has brought fresh challenges with many companies and industry sectors reducing the number of placements they used to offer due to economic and logistical factors.
- The 'work from home' movement will continue to have a negative impact on the volume of in-person work placements available.
- Some parents and carers have become anxious about their young person being in unfamiliar surroundings.



HSE & RISK ASSESSMENTS

In June 2013, the government simplified the rules regarding health and safety guidance for those taking part in work experience, by confirming that the insurance industry now treats students as employees. They are covered by existing Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance policies provided the insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers.

There are very few work activities someone on work experience cannot do due to health and safety law. However as an employer, you have primary responsibility for the health and safety of the individual and the people accessing your service, and managing any significant risks. You can do this by explaining the risks during induction and checking that they understand how to raise health and safety concerns.

The Facts

- You do not need an external H&S consultant to visit and assess your workplace.
- The school does not need to assess every workplace.
- You must present the company's current employers' liability certificate.
- Reassure the school that your checks are in proportion to the environment.
- The school should not seek additional paperwork for assurance purposes.
- For a low-risk environment, such as an office or shop, that will generally be familiar to the student, simply speaking with the school as part of the wider conversation on placement arrangements is enough.
- H&S consultants are only necessary in high-risk environments. A risk assessment document will be required by the school to confirm you have made arrangements for managing risks. It will include the induction, details on training, supervision, site familiarisation, and the use of protective clothing or equipment.
- Although your organisation might be deemed to be in a higher-risk setting, the work the student is doing and the surroundings they are working in may not be, for example it could be in a separate office area.

MANAGING THE PROCESS

Who?

- Appoint a leader to champion the project, usually a member of the HR team.
- Ensure they are passionate about the cause, fully supports the programme and sees the benefits.
- Ensure they have adequate time outside of normal duties to manage the project.
- Use managers and colleagues from across the business to support with development and delivery.



Responsibilities

- Identify and schedule optimum dates for WEX and remain as flexible as possible. Schools have very tight timetables and need to avoid exams and other major dates in the school calendar.
- Update your website to clearly show your companies WEX offering and signpost student enquiries and applications to a dedicated inbox.
- Consider a fixed date for placements and an application window.
- Liaise with the school or individuals.
- Manage student application process.
- Confirm placement details and manage expectations.
- Collate and supply the school with the relevant legal documentation in line with checklist.
- Develop and plan the program and tasks and create presentation material and workbooks.
- Create induction document.
- Communicate with colleagues so they are aware that students will be on the premises.
- Check safeguarding arrangements and make appropriate provisions.
- Plan and ensure supervisory arrangements are in place and adequate.
- Complete evaluation and feedback form on request.
- Share news and success stories on internal and external marketing channels.
- Create repeat opportunities via ongoing schools' liaison and outreach.





CONCLUSIONS

- Government Statutory Guidance states all young people must undertake work experience.
- Your involvement is vital to support, inspire and attract future talent.
- WEX can raise company profiles and help build your talent pipeline.
- Employers' liability insurance covers students on placement, as workers.
- An H&S Consultant workplace visit is not necessary in most cases.
- In high risk settings, a risk assessment and clear induction is essential.
- Appoint a passionate project manager to lead the programme.
- Use existing HR resources and enlist colleagues to save time.
- Create a web page to detail opportunities and receive applications.
- Develop close relationships with local schools and your Careers Hub.
- WEX raises aspirations, increases confidence and improves outcomes.



**If you would like any more information
please get in touch**

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