



A guide to work experience for businesses in Hertfordshire

May 2019

Hertfordshire
Local Enterprise Partnership

PERFECTLY PLACED FOR BUSINESS

The key to bridging the gap between education and the world of work



Foreword

A key theme of 'Realising our Potential', the Hertfordshire Skills Strategy to 2020 is to ensure we are developing our future workforce and supporting our 16 to 24 year olds in the transition from education to employment. Our aspiration is that all young people will develop the knowledge and skills to flourish in the workforce.

The delivery of the Careers and Enterprise programme in Hertfordshire is progressing well and aims to support these aspirations, 104 schools and FE Colleges have now received an audit of their careers, enterprise and employer engagement activity. Additionally, 84 of our Hertfordshire schools have also accessed the Department for Education's 'Apprenticeship Support & Knowledge for Schools and Colleges' programme, ensuring that students, teachers and parents receive high quality information and advice about apprenticeships.

However, research tells us that for young people the transition from education to work is often difficult and employers have concerns about young people's employability skills such as confidence, communication and reliability. Access to high quality work experience opportunities is key to bridging this gap. At its broadest and best, work experience can open young people's eyes to jobs they never thought of, help inform career decisions, offer a chance to prove themselves to an employer and help instil the attitudes and behaviours expected in the workplace.

The [Hertfordshire Skills Framework](#) sets out the key employability skills and attributes sought by Hertfordshire employers from young people. The Framework was compiled by Hertfordshire LEP, YC Hertfordshire and the University of Hertfordshire, and developed with the aim of improving the work readiness of young people and the careers guidance provided by schools.

Policy changes at the Department of Education (DfE) and the introduction of 'T' Levels means that there will be bigger demand than ever for work experience placements. The DfE has supported Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership to develop a suite of resources that will provide clarification for our employers and key employer intermediaries with regard to the benefits of 'T' level industry placements in relation to other work experience opportunities. These resources will support the need to generate 'T' Level Industry Placements in the local area.

Read on to find out what these changes are, the benefits to our Hertfordshire businesses and how you can get involved.

Norman Jennings
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Introduction

Why work experience?

- Is your business growing and needs to increase its workforce?
- Do you have a succession plan in place?
- Do you need to bring new skills to the business?
- Do you need to engage fresh new talent?

If you have answered 'yes' to any of these questions, have you considered offering work experience opportunities?

Or have you experimented with work experience in the past and want to improve your current programme?

The benefits of work experience

Employers that offer work experience typically report significant benefits to their business including:

- ☐ promoting workforce diversity
- ☐ developing the supervisory and management skills of their current workforce
- ☐ enhancing their public profile by supporting their local community
- ☐ accessing a pool of hidden talent – people who offer enthusiasm and a fresh perspective to their business.

Work experience is a valuable workforce planning tool which will support your recruitment practices. It will enable you to inspire your future workforce so they will be knocking on your door as soon as they are ready to start their career.

The different types of work experience

There are a myriad of work experience opportunities available to employers and it is important to find the right programme that will fit with your organisation's priorities. Work experience is typically defined as short-term experience of employment, typically arranged for students in education from the age of 14 through to 25.

Work experience may include:

Work Placements - lasting anywhere between a day and a few weeks, during which a young or inexperienced person is immersed in a specific working environment in order to learn how things work.

Internships - programmes designed to give people, particularly graduates who already know what career path they'd like to follow, the opportunity to put their academic or theoretical knowledge into practice, in a working environment.

Work Shadowing - employers will take on students for a short period of time such as a week. This enables the students to get an insight into a role or a company whilst they are still at school, college or university.

We're here to help

The aim of this toolkit is to enable our Hertfordshire employers to make informed decisions about the types of work experience they are able to offer young people.

It covers 5 main areas including:

- Engaging with schools from years 10 through to 13
- Understanding T Levels and the requirements of T Level Industry Placements
- Traineeships
- Study Programmes
- Forging closer relationships with Higher Education establishments i.e. University of Hertfordshire to enable your organisation to tap into the University's student talent.

Engaging with schools

Building relationships with schools

Evidence shows that when young people have the opportunity to engage with employers, it has transformative effects on their employment outcomes. It will bring the world of work to life, develop skills, and encourage young people to take control of their futures.

In return, when businesses engage with young people there are also a number of benefits. As well as being a fantastic way to raise awareness of your business name and the services or products that you offer, it provides you with an opportunity to shape the future of young people who could in turn be a future employee. In addition, your employees will develop new skills which can help career progression, loyalty and employee engagement.

What types of work experience can I offer to young people?

Block Work Experience

One-week placements carried out in Years 10/11 in a variety of sectors. Employers offer work experience and students can select an opportunity of interest and go to work at a business following a successful interview.

Bespoke Work Experience

One-week placements usually carried out in Years 12/13 tailored specifically to a student and employer. These are lined up directly with the employer for a student on a certain course or with a particular interest following a successful interview.

Extended Work Experience

Placements usually for Years 11/12/13 for one or two days per week over an extended period of time (a term/terms or over an academic year) subject to a successful interview. These opportunities are specific to a student's interests and employers are sourced with a particular student in mind knowing their preferences.

Getting started

Many businesses start small and develop a school engagement strategy over time. Your first point of contact should be YC Hertfordshire who are able to support you with recruitment as well as enabling you to engage with young people in education. YC Hertfordshire (part of Hertfordshire County Council) can provide employers with support in the following areas:

- Ideas for tasks/projects/jobs you can give young people to do whilst on their placement to support your business
- The process prior to, during and after work experience to alleviate any concerns and provide step by step information.
- Hints and tips for successful work experience and how to get the best out of the placement.
- How to set up a timetable and share responsibility for the student so that teams can be involved rather than one individual or Manager.
- Health & Safety queries.
- How to support a wide range of students, including those additional learning needs or disabilities.

Find out more

To offer work placements to students email Tim Edwards on Tim.Edwards@hertfordshire.gov.uk or call 01438 844766 and a dedicated member of the YC Hertfordshire team will be in touch.

Alternatively contact the Skills Lead at Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Caroline Cartwright on caroline.cartwright@hertfordshirelep.co.uk

Study programmes

What are study programmes?

Since September 2013 when the raising of participation age for young people was increased to 17, Study Programmes have been available for all young people aged 16-19. Study programmes make it possible to improve the employability of young people and help them move into employment or higher education.

Each Study Programme will be based on a student's abilities and career aspirations and is likely to include a substantial qualification (academic or vocational) and work-related activities including work experience. Work experience can take many forms including work tasters; running a student enterprise; participation in social action, volunteering or a work placement. Typically, a student has to complete a minimum of 20 hours of work experience for the duration of their Study Programme.

Principles of a high-quality work placement

The requirement for providers to arrange work placements with an external employer enables students to experience the real demands of the working environment, independent from their peers and their tutors, and put into practice the transferable and sector-specific skills they have learned. Students can often obtain employer references for their performance that provides evidence for their CV, or the offer of a job on completion of their course.

Common principles of a high-quality work placement are that it:

- is purposeful, offers challenge and is relevant to the young person's study programme and career aspirations
- allows the student to apply the technical and practical skills learned in the classroom / workshop
is managed under the direction of a supervisor to ensure the young person obtains a genuine learning experience suited to their needs
- has a structured plan for the duration of the placement which provides tangible outcomes for the student and employer

- has clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for the student and employer
- is followed by some form of reference or feedback from the employer based on the young person's performance

Integrating work placements into study programmes

There is no single 'correct' way of planning work experience and work placements – this will depend on the employers' capacity and could vary considerably by sector. Employers are more likely to respond favourably to providers that are willing to be flexible and work with them to organise work placements to suit their requirements.

For example, work placements could follow a pattern of once a week for the duration of the term, longer block placements, or a rotation of shorter placements at different employers, so that students can experience different aspects of a sector.

Find out more

Our Hertfordshire colleges and many work-based learning providers are delivering Study programmes and need to work closely with employers to provide and shape placements for their students. If you are unsure of which provider or college to get in touch with, please contact Caroline Cartwright at Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership on caroline.cartwright@hertfordshirelep.co.uk

Traineeships

What is a traineeship?

A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience that unlocks the great potential of young people and prepares them for their future careers by helping them to become 'work ready'.

Designed to help young people aged 16 to 24 (and for young people with a Learning Difficulty Assessments up to the end of the academic year in which they turn 25) who don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience, traineeships provide the essential work preparation training, English, maths and work experience needed to secure an apprenticeship or employment.

How long is a traineeship?

Traineeships can last up to a maximum of 6 months and will include:

- work preparation training provided by the training organisation
- English and maths support if required, provided by the training organisation
- a high-quality work experience placement with an employer

One unique aspect of a traineeship is that it allows for flexibility: employers and providers will tailor the training to the trainee's requirements, so they can get the most out of the time on their programme.

What happens after the traineeship?

At the end of the traineeship, each young person will be guaranteed a job interview if a role becomes available or an exit interview together with meaningful written feedback to help them secure an apprenticeship or employment with another employer.

Find out more

To find out more about offering traineeships and the benefits they can bring to a business, refer to www.gov.uk/guidance/traineeships or contact the National Apprenticeship Service.

The National Apprenticeship Service offers free, impartial advice and support to employers. This includes simplifying the process of finding a trainee through the support of employer focused teams and find a traineeship, where employers can advertise their opportunities for free.

Supported Internships

What are supported internships?

A supported internship is one type of study programme specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 who have a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health & Care plan (EHCP), who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so.

All young people should be helped to develop the skills and experience, and achieve the qualifications they need to succeed in their careers. The overwhelming majority of young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are capable of sustainable paid employment with the right preparation and support. All professionals working with them should share that presumption.

Supported internships are structured study programmes based primarily at an employer. They are intended to enable young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to achieve sustainable, paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work through learning in the workplace. Internships normally last for a year and include unpaid work placements of at least six months. Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme.

Students complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study for relevant substantial qualifications, if suitable, and English and maths to an appropriate level.

Who offers supported internships?

The supported internship programme of study is offered by all four FE colleges in Hertfordshire. It is designed to enable young people with additional needs to achieve sustainable, paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need. Most of the learning is based in the workplace within a range of employment settings. Interns are given on-the-job training by expert coaches and are expected to comply with real employment conditions.

Interns enjoy many benefits from the course, including increased confidence and motivation, improved communication skills and wider social networks. Employers will also benefit as their staff will gain valuable experience in working with and supporting a young person with additional needs.

If you would like to speak your local provider and you are unsure who to contact, speak to Caroline Cartwright, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Lead, on caroline.cartwright@hertfordshirelep.co.uk

T Levels

What are they?

T Levels are new qualifications coming in September 2020, which will follow GCSEs and will be equivalent to 3 A Levels. These 2-year courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work.

T Levels will offer students a mixture of predominantly classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 45 days. They will provide the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship.

When will they start?

The first three T Levels will be available at selected colleges and schools (providers) across England in September 2020. This means pupils who entered year 10 in September 2018 will be the first to be able to study them.

The first courses to be offered are:

- digital production, design and development
- design, surveying and planning
- education

How T Levels fit with other post-16 choices

In the future, young people will be able to make a clear choice after they have completed their GCSEs and will select whether to pursue an academic or technical/vocational path.

Academic		Technical	
A Levels		T Levels	Apprenticeships
Subject-based qualifications delivered over 2 years by school sixth-forms, sixth-form colleges and FE colleges		Classroom based programmes delivered over 2 years by an FE provider (80% in the classroom and 20% on the job)	Work based training for a minimum of 12 months (80% on the job and 20% off the job e.g. in an FE college)
<p>Purpose: <i>To prepare students for higher education</i></p> <p>We are currently undertaking a review of other qualifications at level 3 and will only keep those of high quality and with a distinct purpose.</p>		<p>Purpose: <i>To prepare students for entry into skilled employment (including higher level apprenticeships), either immediately or after higher levels of technical education (L4+)</i></p> <p>T Levels and apprenticeships are two options within the same technical education system</p> <p>Both T Levels and apprenticeships are based on the same occupational standards, developed by employers as part of Institute for Apprenticeships</p>	

How a T Level course works

1800 hours over two years (with flexibility)

Including 150 hours (on average) for Employability, Enrichment & Pastoral (EEP) provision.
TQ outline content is set by T Level panels and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

Technical Qualification (TQ)

Between 900-1400 hours

Core

20% - 50% of the total TQ time

- Knowledge and understanding of the concepts, theories and principles relevant to the T Level and the broader route
- Core skills relevant to the T Level
- Assessed through an external examination and a substantial employer-set project

Occupational specialisms (min. 1 per TQ)

50% - 80% of the total TQ time

- Knowledge, skills and behaviours required to achieve the level of competence in an occupational specialism needed to enter skilled employment
- Maths, English and digital skills integrated where they are necessary to achieve competence
- Assessed synoptically through rigorous practical assignments.

T Level Industry Placement

Between 315-420 hours

- Undertaken with an external employer
- Minimum of 45 days
- Students develop technical skills and apply their knowledge in a workplace environment
- Provider should pay for/ contribute to travel and subsistence costs, if not covered by the employer
- Employers not expected to pay students

Maths and English requirements

- Students are expected to achieve a level 2 in maths and English. This can be achieved through GCSEs (grade 4 and above) or level 2 Functional Skills (pass)
- T Level panels are free to set higher maths and English requirements, where necessary

Other requirements set by T Level panels

- Occupation-specific requirements included, where possible, if they are essential for skilled employment e.g. licence to practice qualification or professional registration

Industry Placements

What is an industry placement?

Industry placements give young people practical experience directly related to their course, helping to prepare them for the world of work. Placements help develop technical and employability skills and build confidence.

How long is an industry placement?

Placements last for a minimum of 45 working days and can be planned as single or multiple blocks, as day release or a combination. The longer duration gives students time to master the essentials and gives employers time to mould the student's abilities, so they can really add value to the organisation. The exact details of how the placement is organised is agreed between the local learning provider and the employer.

What role does the employer have?

Your role is to work with the learning provider to plan a structured placement and agree learning objectives that will give the student the experience they need to complete their course. Beyond that, you need to ensure the work environment is safe and that the student has a line manager to support, supervise and mentor them and to discuss their progress with the provider on a regular basis. At the end of the placement, you will need to provide an appraisal of the student's commitment and progress against the learning objectives.

1

Identify placement – decide where in business the placement will be, role for the student and who will line manage.

2

Partner with provider – through supported matching process identify local learning provider to work with on developing and delivering placement

3

Role description – working with provider agree full role description, learning objectives, structure of placement and selection criteria for student

4

Pre-placement checks – complete 3-way agreement with provider and student plus relevant health and safety, public liability, non-disclosure agreement etc

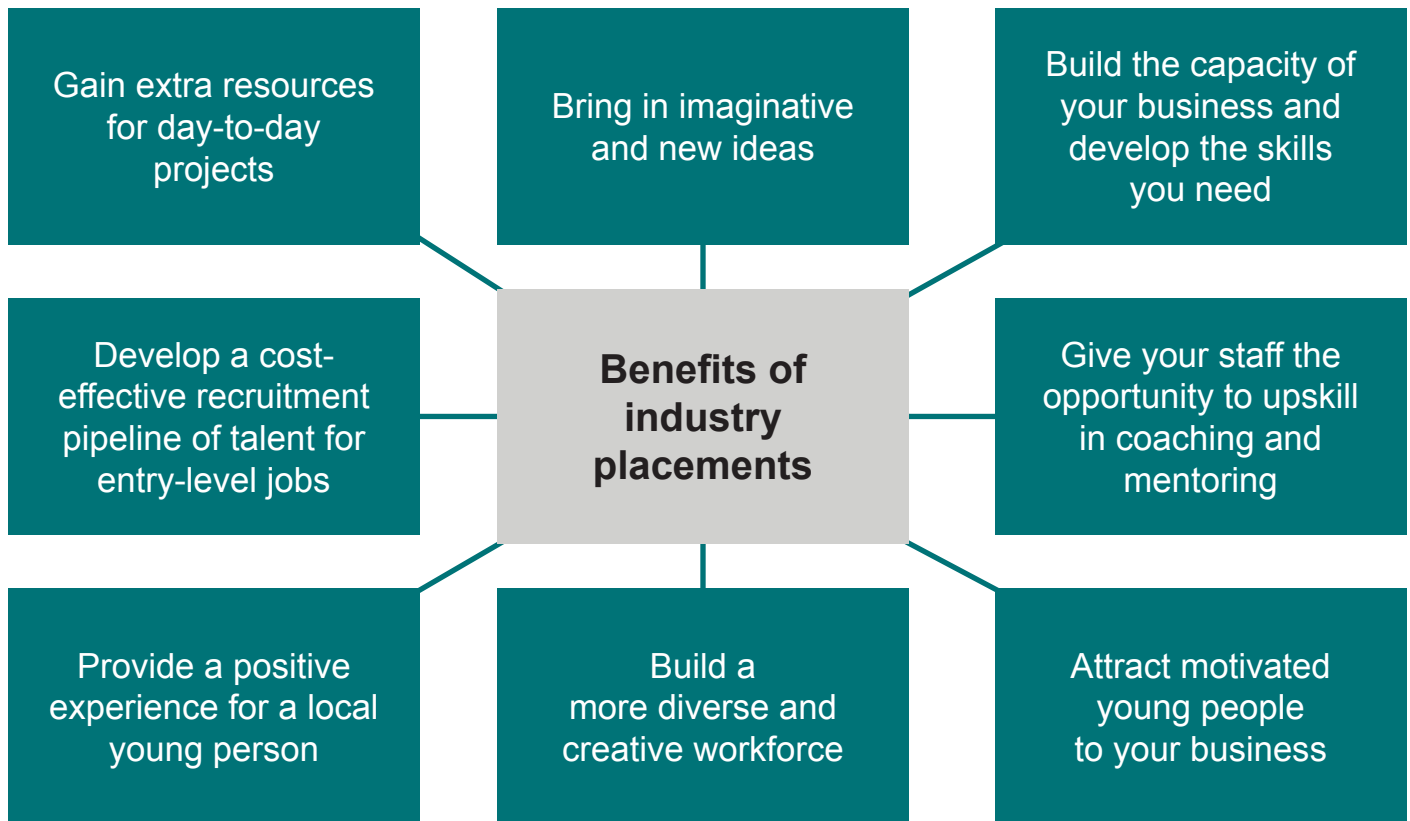
5

Preparation and induction – share joining information, dress code etc then full induction including site tour, health and safety brief etc

6

Placement – monitor progress, ensure regular contact with provider and student, complete student appraisal at end of placement

The benefits of Industry Placements



Find out more

For further information please refer to www.gov.uk/guidance/industry-placements

You can also listen to the British Chamber of Commerce podcast on T Levels and industry placements at <https://britishchambers.qumucloud.com/view/7v8zZ5v2noy>

Or contact your Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Lead on caroline.cartwright@hertfordshirelep.co.uk

You can also contact an industry placement account manager on 08000 150 600 or tlevel.placement@education.gov.uk

Working with the University of Hertfordshire

What does the University of Hertfordshire offer?

The Employment Service at the University of Hertfordshire (UH) provides a responsive and innovative service, focused on individual employer needs, making it easy for you to recruit the right candidates for roles in your organisation.

UH has more than 24,000 students, studying a wide range of subjects, covering everything from astrophysics to fine art.

The Employment Service provide effective assistance to employers looking to tap into our student talent whether it be for internships, placements, work shadowing, part-time jobs or permanent graduate roles.

Work Shadowing

Mainly aimed at first-year students, this helps to provide an insight into working in a specific industry or employer for 1 or 2 days. Work shadowing is often used by employers to talent spot future placement students and raise the profile of their organisation

Placements (often referred to as Sandwich placements)

These are paid opportunities which can be 36 to 48 weeks and are taken between the second and final academic years, supported by the University through monitoring and visits.

Part-time jobs or short-term work experience (e.g. a specific project for your organisation).

Most students will be looking for part-time work at some point during their studies. Part-time work not only helps student financially but also provides invaluable work experience.

SME internship opportunities (match funded by Santander)

The University's graduate internship scheme offers SME's the opportunity to hire a UH graduate on a 4-12 week internship where they will be paid £1200 per month / £300 per week.

Permanent graduate roles and schemes

These are roles aimed at new or recent graduates. A graduate scheme is a structured training programme run by an employer to develop future leaders of their organisation.

Recruit outstanding new talent

The Employment Service can help you at every stage of the recruitment process for UH students and graduates, including:

- Free advertising on their online careers vacancy board
- Advice on tailoring your recruitment plans for students and graduates.
- On-campus events and recruitment activities, including careers fairs, mock assessment centres and speed-networking
- Coordinating UH student visits to your company raising your profile for recruitment purposes.
- Facilitating employer interviews on campus.

Find out more

To discuss student recruitment opportunities, please email: recruit@herts.ac.uk or call: +44 (0)1707 28479

Steps to getting started with work experience

Why work experience?

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) provide a useful resource for employers, [Making work experience work](#). A summary of the key steps are described below:

Work experience

Before introducing a work experience placement scheme, it's important to be aware of the basics.

DBS requirements

The Disclosure and Barring Service, or DBS (formerly CRB), check is not compulsory for staff supervising participants aged 16–17. In the case of work experience, a DBS check will only be required if an employee's specific job purpose includes looking after under-16 work experience students. Employers have the right to refuse requests by the education provider that checks are carried out for those aged 16–17.

For more information, visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

Liability insurance

Individuals on work experience are now covered by the employer's existing employers' liability insurance policy, provided your insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers.

Risk assessments

If employers have fewer than five employees they are not required to have a written risk assessment. However, if you have not taken on a young person in the last few years or are taking on a work experience student for the first time, it's important to take care to identify the particular needs of the individual and review risk assessments before they start.

Health and safety guidance

In the past, work placement arrangements have sometimes been seen as over-bureaucratic. However, the Health and Safety Executive recently reviewed their guidance to make it easier and less burdensome for employers keen to offer work experience placements.

There are very few work activities a young person cannot do due to health and safety law. However, it's important to remember that as an employer, you have primary responsibility for the health and safety of the student and should be managing any significant risks. But it is easy to do this, by:

- explaining the risks and how they are controlled when inducting any individual undertaking work experience, checking that they understand what they have been told and know how to raise health and safety concerns
- relying on past or pooled experience when thinking about health and safety
- keeping checks in proportion to the environment the young person will be working in.

Pay and duration of placement

Young people can be taken on by an organisation in a number of different ways. However, generally speaking, if an employer takes on a young person who is of compulsory school age for a short-term work experience placement, they do not need to pay them for their time.

However, it is important that an employer understands the employment status and entitlement, including the right to the National Minimum Wage (NMW), that apply to each individual in their organisation. What matters is whether the agreement or arrangement an individual has with an employer makes them a 'worker' or an 'employee' for NMW purposes. Therefore, it's important to be clear about what you're offering those on a work experience placement to ensure it adheres to entitlement guidelines.

For information and guidance on the National Minimum Wage for organisations who offer work experience, visit www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-work-experience-and-internships

Steps to getting started with work experience

Selecting candidates

Taking on young people for work experience placements can help an employer tap into a wider talent pool and reach individuals from diverse social backgrounds. Follow our top tips to improving the diversity of your work experience candidates:

- Contact your local school or college directly to discuss a work experience arrangement.
- Be proactive and 'reach out' to education providers – more employers are increasing their 'outreach' activity, including attending careers fairs, open evenings and school events, as well as hosting assemblies which give them a chance to talk about their industry.
- Avoid recruiting by 'who you know' alone – relying on existing networks and word-of mouth means groups outside existing networks never hear of opportunities.
- When choosing who receives a placement, be flexible when considering qualifying criteria, including educational attainment, grades and pre-existing work experience.

Planning the induction

Young people on work experience should receive an induction to the workplace that will help them to integrate quickly and learn about working life. Whether joining a large organisation or an SME, a young person entering the world of work for the first time may not know how it functions and how they should behave.

The induction is an opportunity to:

- get to know the young person
- understand their previous experience
- talk about the expectations on each side
- establish the young person's goals
- provide space for the young person to ask questions.

Therefore, a good induction should include:

- ☐ An introduction to the organisation, including how the company is structured, and the key people who the individual on work experience will have contact with.
- ☐ A tour of the facilities, including where to get food from inside or outside your building, where the nearest toilets are, first aid facilities and where the fire exits are situated (and any evacuation procedures) as well as health and safety information they need to know (this is a legal requirement)
- ☐ A clear outline of what they will be doing during their time with you – this should also include room to add in the skills or experience the young person is keen to develop
- ☐ A plan or schedule for the individual's first and possibly second week in the organisation, clearly outlining what they are doing each day (for example, where they will be in the building and who to meet, and so on).

You could also consider asking the young person to send in a CV before they start so you can find out more about them and help them to feel they're experiencing the real working world.

Devising tasks and creating a work plan

It is important to give the young person a variety of tasks and if possible, rotate them between departments so they get a good insight into the workplace. High quality work experience placements involve 'trying' a variety of different roles and tasks in different areas of the business and working with different members of staff.

Steps to getting started with work experience

Supporting the young person

Organisations should ensure there is a dedicated person(s) with ring-fenced time in their work schedule to supervise the young person on work experience. This would be a good development opportunity for an employee who wants to develop their management capability. In addition, where possible a separate mentor or coach should be appointed to support the young person more informally.

Offering quality, supportive work experience is simple if you follow some basic guidelines.

- Be clear about how the young person will be supported, supervised and mentored during work experience.
- Assign a 'buddy' – this role is key to supporting a young person, therefore a buddy should be someone keen to do the role and who has a friendly, supportive manner.
- Ensure the young person is introduced to the structure of working life. If it helps, plan a schedule to help them see what they'll be doing each day.

At the end of the placement

At the end of the work experience placement a meeting with the young person should take place to review how everything went, for both the person on work experience as well as the employer. Some students may have a log or diary which they must fill in during, and at the end of, their time with an employer. If there's space to write a comment or feedback, offer to do so.

We recommend that you assess the success of the placement and, if appropriate, offer further support to the individual by agreeing to act as a referee and encouraging the young person to stay in touch.

The Careers & Enterprise Company

Enterprise Adviser Network

What is the programme?

The Careers and Enterprise Company Enterprise Adviser Network is a programme which aims to bridge the gap between education and work.

It is underpinned by the belief that young people should be given the best support available to develop their careers and to make informed choices about education and employment. It is creating lasting links between schools and employers and enabling senior figures from the local business community – Enterprise Advisers – to help enhance schools' careers advice and prepare young people for the future.

In Hertfordshire it is delivered by the Local Enterprise Partnership, in partnership with YC Hertfordshire.

There are many ways your business can help. You can:

- offer young people encounters with the world of work, such as mentoring or work experience
- encourage your staff to volunteer for local outreach activities or work encounters
- take your school engagement programmes into more schools and colleges
- volunteer as an individual Enterprise Adviser and work with a local school or college to help develop their careers plan.

Find out more

Gareth Dace is the Senior Enterprise Co-ordinator at Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Send Gareth an email

gareth.dace@hertfordshirelep.co.uk

or call 07464 678767.

