

## Work experience

**Work experience is any experience that a person gains while working in a specific field or occupation.**



### What is work experience?

A work experience placement is a temporary role, ranging from one-day tasters to month-long placements. They allow students to gain practical experience and find out what it's really like to work in a specific field.

The type of work that's expected during a work experience placement varies depending on the individual workplace and the type of placement, although they usually involve 'shadowing' alongside assisting with day-to-day responsibilities.

### Why should I offer a placement?

High quality work experience can bring considerable benefits to businesses, helping them strengthen their links with the local community, provide valuable CPD for staff and gain a fresh perspective from young people. Work experience placements also support your future talent pool and help to raise your brand awareness for employment opportunities.

For successful work placements, employers should be flexible with the time and length of work experience as different young people will need different levels of support. Work experience placements should offer a variety of roles if possible, not just 'low status' jobs to ensure that the student has a valuable, meaningful experience. Employers should also offer feedback and a debriefing at the end of the placement to give the student something to work on.

### Benefits for students

- Provides valuable insight into how specific industries works
- Informs decisions about future career options
- Develops industry network and provides opportunities for future references
- Develops employability skills
- Possibility of securing full-time position afterwards

### Tips for businesses

**Each organisation should nominate a work experience mentor/buddy who has a duty to:**

- Make the student feel welcome and treat them as a young adult who will make a valued contribution to the team.
- Be patient and supportive with the student, helping them learn if they make any mistakes.
- Provide an introduction to your corporate values and expectations of conduct.
- Conduct a risk assessment prior to the placement starting.
- Provide a full induction with a quiz to ensure that the student has understood any health and safety issues.
- Notify the school immediately if the student is absent or ill during the placement.
- Debrief with the students at the end of each day to reflect with them on what they have learned and feedback positively.
- Feedback views on the placement to the programme co-ordinator and to the school.



**European Union**  
European Structural  
and Investment Funds