

# WORKFORCE FOR THE FUTURE - INSPIRING

## WORK EXPERIENCE GUIDE FOR SMES



### Why offer a work experience?

Work experiences are vital for young people today. This is tomorrow's workforce – and it's your chance to inspire them, to present your company as a great place to work and your job role as an exciting career choice.

### What is a work experience?

Work experience is any activity which gives young people (and other jobseekers) an insight into the world of work so they can make decisions about future study and pathways to careers.

It's vital that employers engage with the education system to help guide them and their students.

### The virtual world of work experiences

2020 and the global pandemic was a game-changer for young people. Lockdowns, school, college and university closures, home-schooling and exam cancellations have meant huge challenges for students and the education system across the UK. With reduced access to learning and social interaction, work experiences have become even more vital for young people.

Employability activities have flexed and now many experiences of work can be delivered both face to face and on-line.

- Be realistic about the time your business and staff can commit, know that you will all be learning too.
- Preparation takes time, but it does get easier and will be worth it.

### Taster sessions: Short and sweet

Often taster sessions require employers to visit the education setting. But online versions are now being rolled out and so it's easier for your business to get involved.

- Sponsorship
- Talks
- Careers Fairs
- Networking
- Workshops or live project briefs
- Mock interviews / CV advice

## Experiences in the workplace

Employers are already seeing the benefits of 'online' delivery as they can reach a much wider audience with their virtual tours and demonstrations.

Young people get a real picture of what work is like and help bridge the gap between study subjects and essential skills that employers want.

- Video or case-study (job role)
- Job shadowing (1 day)
- Workplace visit / tour
- Open doors

Offering a face-to-face work experience is always going to be of great benefit to a learner. And from September 2021 we predict a growing demand for both online and face-to-face activities.

## Improving provision: Industry input

Educators and career advisors really value employer input - which helps them make strategic decisions, shape the curriculum to be more relevant and deliver up-to-date industry information to their students.

- Pathways to professions
- Train the trainers
- Curriculum co-design
- Enterprise Adviser
- STEM Ambassador

- School / FE College governor

## In-depth commitment: Developing talent

These are the most challenging activities – but the most rewarding!

Young people can develop their essential skills e.g. teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking. Through volunteering, your employees can also develop their skills (e.g. presenting, project management, mentoring), and your company will be building a pipeline of talent for the future.

- Live project briefs
- Mentoring
- Work placement
- Internships
- T Levels
- Traineeships
- Apprenticeships

## How can we help?

Business West provides impartial workforce development planning, which will help you put strategies in place to ensure your workforce is fit for the future. We'll support you to put together a work experience action plan for your business.

To find out more about contact our expert skills team today.

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